CAST

MARC LABRÈCHE

Professional actor since the age 18, Marc Labrèche has played in about 20 different musical and theatrical productions, ranging from the classical to the modern. One of which was the original version of Robert Lepage’s Needles and Opium, which toured in Quebec, in Europe and in Asia during two years in the mid-90s. He has also starred in more than a dozen feature film including having the lead role in Denys Arcand latest film L’Âge des ténèbres.

On TV, he was part of the cast of La Petite vie, the most popular comedy show in Quebec television, and was the host of the cult show La Fin du monde est à 7 heures, a daily satirical news bulletin addressing political and social issues. Becoming one of Quebec television’s superstar, he co-created and hosted during three years a daily talk-show called Le Grand blond avec un show sournois. He then continued working in television for another three years on Le Coeur a ses raisons, a funny take on American soaps, in which he plays four characters.

Since 2008, he has combined hosting and performing, he practically played every character in 3600 secondes d’extase, a weekly sarcastic show taking a look at current social and cultural events in Quebec.

As of now, Marc Labrèche is working on the second season of the series Les bobos, co-created with Marc Brunet, a satirical comedy revolving around the world of bourgeois bohemians. M. Labrèche has the lead role as well as being co-creator and director.

To his delight, he is once again working with Robert Lepage on the new version of Needles and Opium. At the same time, Marc is working on writing and conceptualizing his first fiction feature film.

WELLESLEY ROBERTSON III

Wellesley is very excited to be joining the cast of Needles and Opium. Wellesley was bitten by the performance bug at a very young age and his love for stage performance has grown ever since. With a background in gymnastics, breakdance and acrobatics, he has been performing on stage across the world.

He is currently a member of Toronto based performance group Abstract Breaking Systems (A.B.S. Crew) and has been touring with such groups as Cirque Sublime, on their cross-Canada tour for their show Adamo, and Circus Orange, on their tour of Bahrain.

Needles and Opium is his third production with Ex Machina, the first two being The Nightingale and Other Short Fables (Quebec City, Amsterdam, and Lyon, 2011-2012) and The Tempest (Quebec City and New York, 2012) both of which were directed by Robert Lepage.
CREATIVE TEAM

ROBERT LEPAGE - WRITER AND DIRECTOR

Versatile in every form of theatre craft, Robert Lepage is equally talented as a director, playwright, actor and film director. His creative and original approach to theatre has won him international acclaim and shaken the dogma of classical stage direction to its foundations, especially through his use of new technologies. In 1984, his play Circulations toured Canada. He followed with The Dragons’ Trilogy (1985), Vinci (1986), Polygraph (1987) and Tectonic Plates (1988).


Robert Lepage made a grand entrance in the opera world with Bluebeard’s Castle and Erwartung (1993). He continued with La Damnation de Faust presented for the first time in Japan (1999), then in Paris and New York. He then followed with 1984 based on the novel by George Orwell, with Maestro Lorin Maazel providing the musical direction (2005), The Rake’s Progress (2007) and The Nightingale and Other short Fables (Toronto (2009), Aix-en-Provence and Lyon (2010), Quebec (2011), Amsterdam (2012). Das Rheingold, Wagner’s Der Ring des Nibelungen prelude, premiered September 2010 at The Metropolitan Opera with the cycle being presented during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 seasons. His staging of The Tempest, by Thomas Adès, libretto by Meredith Oakes, based on William Shakespeare’s eponymous play, takes the stage in Québec then in New York in 2012.

Robert Lepage is the 2012 recipient of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT and the 2013 recipient of the Glenn Gould Prize.

NORMAND BISSONNETTE - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Having started in the business in 1981 in Equus at Théâtre du Bois de Coulonges and in Des frites, des frites, des frites at Théâtre du Trident, Normand Bissonnette studied at the National Theatre School of Canada. After graduating, he settled in Toronto where he lived during 14 years. During that time, he worked at the French Toronto Theatre as well as in many English TV series, among them, Power Play and Emily of New Moon. It was at that time that he first collaborated as actor or co-author for Robert Lepage’s Tectonic Plates, The Dragons’ Trilogy, Coriolan, Macbeth
Needles and Opium is his first collaboration with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage.

Lionel Arnould studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Épinal, France, and was introduced to the world of computer graphics in 1991. After moving to Canada in 1995, he discovered the artistic aspects of multimedia while working on several projects for Ex Machina (1984, The Dragon’s Trilogy, and The Busker’s Opera). Since that time he has specialized in video projection design and has worked on numerous contemporary music projects (including Gryphon Trio’s Constantinople and John Oswald’s Radiant), contemporary theatre (Théâtre Péril and Théâtre Blanc), and museum installations (Quebec’s Museum of Civilization).

Francois St-Aubin has worked with Robert Lepage since 2007, when he designed costumes for The Blue Dragon. He went on to design costumes for several other Lepage work such as Needles and Opium and the Met’s Der Ring des Nibelungen. Since graduating from Canada’s National Theatre School he has designed costumes for more than 80 theater productions, a dozen operas, and several contemporary dance companies. Work with Canada’s Stratford Festival includes costumes for The Count of Monte Cristo, An Ideal Husband, and Don Juan. He has also designed costumes for Carmen for Montreal Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, and San Diego Opera, and Macbeth in Sydney, Melbourne, and Montreal.

Bruno Matte was born and raised in Quebec City. Despite his various trips abroad he has never left his city. He studied at Cégep Limoilou and, in 2005, obtained his diploma in electronic engineering specializing in broadcasting. His first objective was to work in the movie industry, but during his studies, discovered lighting, and made it a passion. After graduating, he worked as a lighting designer on stage productions, an environment which rapidly brought him to surpass himself. At the age of 22, he was already managing teams and projects for Richard Séguin, Michel Rivard, and the Festival d’été de Québec. Bruno Matte has also worked on numerous television projects (Belle et Bum, and the gala for Les Chefs!), videoclips, movies, dance (with the company La Otra Orilla and on Cocoon by Annie Gagnon), theatre as well as working with the Cirque du Soleil (Les Chemins invisibles).

Needles and opium is his first collaboration with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage.

**Jean-Sébastien Côté - Composer and Sound Designer**

Musician and sound designer Jean-Sébastien Côté wrote musical scores for several Québec City theatre and dance productions before joining Ex Machina on The Far Side of the Moon, in 1999. Since then, he has worked regularly on the company’s projects, including The Andersen Project, The Dragons’ Trilogy, 1984, Lipsynch, The Blue Dragon, Eonnagata and Needles and Opium. In between projects with Ex Machina, he has worked with various renowned Canadian directors such as Daniel Brooks, Wajdi Mouawad and François Girard.

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**Lionel Arnould - Images Designer**

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and *The Tempest* (by Shakespeare) and *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*. These productions toured extensively and took him around the world.

In 2000, Normand Bissonnette came back to Montreal to play in tv series like *L’Auberge du chien noir* and *Un Homme mort*. In 2006, Normand came back to Quebec City to be part of the cast in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Tableau d’une exécution*, *L’asile de la pureté* and *Charbonneau et le chefd* at Théâtre du Trident, *Insomnie* with Le Niveau Parking and *Trois versions de la vie* at Théâtre Voix d’accès. In 2011, Normand played in Shakespeare’s *La Tempête* staged by Robert Lepage. To add to his acting and teaching career, in *Needles and opium*, Normand worked with Robert Lepage as assistant stage director.

**CARL FILLION - SET DESIGNER**

Born in Quebec in 1966, Fillion graduated from the Conservatoire d’art dramatique de Québec in 1991 with a diploma in set design. With its technical experience, Carl Fillion was very quickly asked to design several set designs with the most prominent theater professionals in Quebec. He stood out rapidly with original theatrical set designs and the use of cutting edge technology. As of now, he has created more than 40 set designs for theater, opera, circus and multimedia, music and museum performances.

In 1993, Carl Fillion was asked, by director Robert Lepage, to design the set of *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, which toured across Europe and Japan. Since then, he has worked with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage on more than 15 productions, including *Elsinore* (1995), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1995), and *Geometry of Miracles* (1997); the operas *The Damnation of Faust* (1999), *1984* (2005), *The Rake’s Progress* (2007), and *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* (2009), and Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* cycle at the Met (2010-11-12). He also designed the Cirque du Soleil show *TOTEM* (2010). *Needles and Opium* is his latest collaboration with Robert Lepage and Ex Machina.

Other theatre and operatic credits include *Simon Boccanegra* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, and *The Burial at Thebes* at Abbey Theatre in Dublin. From 1992 to 2002, Fillion trained new scenic artists at the Conservatoire d’art dramatique de Québec, and from 2000 to 2002 at Montreal’s National Theatre School.

**CLAUDIA GENDREAU - PROPS DESIGNER**

For Nuages en pantalon, a Quebec creation company which she is a member of, Claudia Gendreau designed all the scenographic environments from *La Pêche et autres fruits* érotiques to their latest création of the EAU trilogy. With Julie Morel, she designed the puppets for *Discours de la méthode* for Théâtre du Sous-marin jaune, from stage director Antoine Laprise in 2005. She was set designer for Anne-Marie Olivier’s *Annette* as well as for Shakespeare’s *La nuit des rois*, presented at Théâtre du Trident in September 2011.

In 2010, she received the Jacques Pelletier prize for her concept in *Charbonneau et le chefd* presented at Théâtre du Trident, directed by Jean-Philippe Joubert. At Théâtre de la Bordée, in 2012, she designed the set for *Britannicus*. Future projects include costume design for *Août, Osage County* by Tracy Letts. *Needles and Opium* is her first collaboration with Ex Machina and Robert Lepage.
This performance runs approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. There is no intermission.

Canadian Stage sponsors:

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LIONEL ARNOULD

CREATIVE

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
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SET DESIGNER
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PROPS DESIGNER
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JEAN-SÉBASTIEN CÔTÉ

LIGHTING DESIGNER
BRUNO MATTE

COSTUME DESIGNER
FRANÇOIS ST-AUBIN

IMAGES DESIGNER
LIONEL ARNOULD

DIRECTOR’S AGENT
LYNDA BEAULIEU

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE MARIE BOURGEOIS

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
VANESSA LANDRY-CLAVERIE

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
MICHEL GOSSELIN

TOUR MANAGER
CHARLOTTE MÉNARD

STAGE MANAGER
ADÈLE SAINT-AMAND

SOUND MANAGER
MARCIN BUNAR

VIDEO MANAGER
THOMAS PAYETTE

LIGHTING MANAGERS
BRUNO MATTE
DAVID DESROCHERS

COSTUMES AND PROPS MANAGER
MARILOU NADEAU

HEAD STAGEHAND
PIERRE GAGNÉ

STAGEHAND
SYLVAIN BÉLAND

RIGGER
JULIEN LECLERC

AUTOMATION CONSULTANT
TOBIE HORSWILL

VIDEO CONSULTANT
CATHERINE GUAY

MAKE-UP
JEAN BÉGIN

COSTUMES
CARL BEZANSON
JULIE SAURIOL

SET BUILDING
SCÈNE ÉTHIQUE
ASTUCES DÉCOR
PRODUCTION
EX MACHINA

The show contains excerpts from Jean Cocteau’s A Letter to Americans and Opium, the Diary of a Cure.

WRITTEN BY
ROBERT LEPAGE

DIRECTED BY
ROBERT LEPAGE

PERFORMED BY
MARC LABRÈCHE

&

WELLESLEY ROBERTSON III