

Biography – **Caroline Léonardelli**, harp

Caroline Léonardelli concert harpist and recording artist has an accomplished career as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestra musician and teacher. Caroline's solo recording *El Dorado* received a JUNO Award nomination in the category of Classical Album of the Year solo or small ensemble. Caroline received Canada Council of the Arts mid career award for preparation of the repertoire for her, latest recording, *Impressions de France*. Caroline is known for her passionate and bold interpretations of French and 20th century repertoire.

Caroline's latest recording *Impressions de France* has received exceptional critical acclaim. The recording release performance was described as "Brilliant Recital ...Extraordinary range of technique and expressive content" by Richard Todd of the Ottawa Citizen. Recording Reviews include Harp Column Magazine "World Class Harpist" "This is a French album for me like no other", "warm touch, coupled with an articulate technique" "thoughtfully chosen and laid-out repertoire, filled with surprises and all masterfully presented". WholeNote Magazine comments "it is her artistic sense of pacing and of shaping melodies within cascades of notes that help make these performances commanding." "Roussel's ingeniously chromatic *Impromptu, Op. 21* especially heartfelt, and Léonardelli's personal association with its dedicatee Lily Laskine makes this recording particularly valuable." Classical Music Sentinel noted: "What she brings or adds to the music at hand, to any piece she plays, is close to magical" "She sees beyond the notes and recreates what the composer had in mind"

Caroline will be performing recitals of *Impressions de France* for the American Harp Society in Toronto, Carnegie Hall with mezzo-soprano Julie Nesrallah, Leith Summer Festival, Music Niagara, Indian River Festival (P.E.I.), Music and Beyond Festival, and PBS/NPR live radio performance/interview show. Ensemble performances this season include performing as a soloist with the Afiara String Quartet for the Women's Musical Club of Toronto with the, and the Festival of the Sound with the Four Seasons Harp Quartet.

Caroline's recordings and live performances have been featured on CBC Radio, NPR Classical 24 network and Classical stations throughout the USA, Canada, Europe and Asia. Caroline's live radio performances include interviews and performances on PBS/NPR radio's Backstage Pass series.

Based in Ottawa, Caroline is principal harpist with the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre symphonique de Gatineau. Caroline's chamber ensembles include: Four Seasons Harp Quartet with Jennifer Swartz, Caroline Lizotte, and Lori Gemmell; Harp duo with Caroline Lizotte; vocal performance with Mezzo soprano Julie Nesrallah, and Harp & Organ with Matthew Larkin.

Born in France, Caroline graduated with first prize in harp from the Paris Conservatoire under the guidance of Jacqueline Borot at the age of 18. After arriving in Canada Caroline completed an Artist Diploma at McGill University School of

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Music. During her youth, Caroline studied in France with Lily Laskine, one of the most celebrated harpists of the 20th century.

Caroline has released six recordings on her own label and has a worldwide distribution agreement with NAXOS USA. Caroline's recording projects have all have received critical acclaim with El Dorado being awarded a JUNO nomination. Recording review excerpts: El Dorado "Léonardelli's sensitive voicing and phrasing in Songs of Nymphs sets the interpretive standard. Léonardelli's tremendous interpretive ability is matched by astonishing engineering and production." "Six out of six stars" – The Music Scene "exceptionally scintillating performance" Whole Note Magazine "A piquant potpourri of harp music tempered by melancholy expression... Léonardelli is a skilled musician." - Gramophone Magazine

Choral work is a passion for Caroline. She has performed a wide range of repertoire with numerous choral ensembles. The 2005 Evergreen Wishes CBC produced concert of the Ottawa Children's Choir, featuring Caroline performing John Rutter's Dancing Day received a Gabriel Award.

Caroline's private harp class has developed some of Canada's finest young harpists including graduates from Eastman and Yale. Caroline's former students were principal harpist with the National Youth Orchestra for five consecutive years. Caroline's students have attained national recognition including Antoine Malette-Chenier who recently received the Canada Council Michael Measures Prize. Caroline founded and ran for 20 years the harp ensemble program at the Ottawa Youth Orchestra, which was the largest in Canada.