

The English musical adaptation of the iconic play *Les Belles-soeurs* takes its first step toward Broadway !

Montréal, November 14th, 2018 – Fonds Capital Culture Québec (FCCQ) has announced an investment in “**Belles On Broadway and Beyond**” (**BOBAB**). **BOBAB** a theatrical production company formed to bring global expansion and attention to the English-language musical adaptation of **Michel Tremblay**’s iconic Quebec play, *Les Belles-soeurs*. Sold out across Canada, *Les Belles-soeurs* has won numerous awards, and has been unanimously acclaimed by critics.

An investment of \$ 450,000 will allow well-known producers and rights-holders **Allan Sandler** (founder of Copa De Oro productions) and **Andy Nulman** (co-founder of Festival Just For Laughs) to amplify an A-list creative, marketing and operations team around the multiple award-winning Canadian musical, which has already successfully toured the country to sold-out houses and unanimous rave reviews. As a second step, the **FCCQ** has the option to participate up to \$ 2,550,000 in financing the production of the play on Broadway, or in other major foreign markets, which could bring its total investment in **BOBAB** to three millions of dollars.

FCCQ is extremely proud to be associated to the international development of this Quebec cultural masterpiece. “Not only is *Les Belles-soeurs* a Quebec cultural touchstone, but as an accessible, modern, musical with an all-female cast and core message of female empowerment, it is more relevant today than ever before. What’s more, the production is ideally positioned in a demographic sweet spot, given that two-thirds of the Broadway audience is female, with an average age ranging from 40-45 years.” said Jocelyne Pelchat, president of the board of **FCCQ**.

“The success of ‘intimate’ musicals like Tony Award-winners *Come From Away* and *The Band’s Visit* and the current social climate makes *Les Belles-soeurs* optimally timely,” said **Sandler**. Adds **Nulman**: “Despite its many memorable characters and show-stopping songs, the *Belles-soeurs The Musical* transcends its uplifting entertainment factor to become a true social movement. As one member of the creative team put it: ‘We give 12 women a voice so that all women can be heard’.”

After consulting with original *Les Belles-soeurs* musical collaborators **Michel Tremblay**, **Réné Richard Cyr** and **Daniel Belanger**, the **BOBAB** team is currently meeting with potential **Broadway Executive Producers** and General Managers who share not only in the will to expand the show’s horizons, but also in the reverence of its distinctive spirit.

About the FCCQ

The mission of the Fonds Capital Culture Québec (FCCQ) is to support the development of large-scale cultural enterprises in Quebec by financing projects showing a strong potential or projects with significant economic benefits for the province. The FCCQ is endowed with a \$100 million budget to support the development of Quebec’s cultural enterprises and the export of its creative talent. The FCCQ is funded in part by the government of Quebec (\$60 million)—through the *Société de développement des entreprises culturelles* (SODEC)—and by the partnering *Fonds de solidarité* FTQ (\$40 million). The FCCQ is primarily a venture capital fund.

About Belles on Broadway and Beyond

Belles On Broadway and Beyond is a partnership formed by Canadian show businesses veterans Allan Sandler and Andy Nulman. As founder of Copa De Oro Productions, Sandler is renowned for producing high-end, highly successful theatrical productions in both English and French in Canada and Europe. Some of his many award-winning hits include *Chicago*, *Grease*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Forever Plaid*, *Boom*, *The Mahalia Jackson Musical* and of course, *The Belles Soeurs Musical*. Nulman is best known as the co-founder of the Just For Laughs Comedy Festival, which he helped grow into one of the world's biggest and most successful cultural events, producing over 150 of its TV shows in Canada, the USA and around the globe. He is also co-founder of Airborne Mobile, a pioneer in the field of mobile entertainment, which he sold in 2005.

About Les Belles Soeurs

The iconic *Les Belles-soeurs* was written by Michel Tremblay in 1965. It was his first professionally produced play and remains his most popular and most translated work. More importantly, it marked a hallmark of change in Quebec culture; the language, the form of theatre, and the displacing of the guard because it dared to portray working class women doing working class things. In 2010, it was developed into a French-language musical by René Richard Cyr (book, lyrics and direction) and Daniel Belanger (composer). In 2014, Copa De Oro Productions led its conversion into an English-language musical, with Brian Hill adapting the book and Neil Bartram adapting music and lyrics.

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