Dear Opera Lovers,

We invite you to join fellow Metropolitan Opera members on this spectacular voyage, combining the pleasures of cruising the Celtic Sea with beautiful music from one of opera’s most exciting young stars. For this musical odyssey from Lisbon to Dublin, we are privileged to be joined by the award-winning Met soprano Ailyn Pérez, who will perform two recitals for you in unique, intimate venues during the voyage, and participate in an on-board discussion about her life in music.

Our journey takes us to the shores of Portugal, Spain, England, and Ireland—waters that have been sailed by countless explorers, marauders, merchants, and adventurers. Along the way, we will visit such cultural and historic landmarks as Lisbon’s Belem Quarter, the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, Blarney Castle in Cork, and the Tresco Abbey Gardens. Designed especially for the Metropolitan Opera Guild, this itinerary highlights the best that Europe’s Atlantic coast has to offer, while allowing ample time for both relaxation and independent exploration.

Capping off the trip will be an optional three-day extension to Paris, for those looking to take in all the opera that this glorious city has to offer. Our travelers will stay at the Millennium Hotel Paris Opéra, while being treated to a tour of the magnificent Palais Garnier opera house and attending performances of Rigoletto and Der Rosenkavalier at the Bastille Opera House.

Friends of the Metropolitan Opera Guild will comprise a small and congenial group aboard Le Boréal, and may be joined by a small number of opera enthusiasts from other leading opera companies in the United States. All of our shore arrangements are private, including the recital by Ms. Perez in the former Gothic chapel of the Hostal dos Reis Catolicos in Santiago de Compostela, and we will enjoy our own seating in the ship’s dining room. We will share Le Boréal with sophisticated international travelers from France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Australia and other countries.

Sailing to the unspoiled western coasts of Europe aboard the elegant, five-star small cruise ship Le Boréal at the height of springtime, accompanied by a world-class opera star, is truly a pleasure not easily replicated. We hope you will join our fellow opera lovers for this one-of-a-kind experience you won’t soon forget!

Sincerely,

Richard J. Miller, Jr.
President, The Metropolitan Opera Guild
Acclaimed soprano Ailyn Pérez made her Metropolitan Opera debut early in 2015 as Micaëla in Carmen, garnering praise from the New York Times as “a major soprano.” Increasingly in demand as Violetta in La Traviata, Pérez has sung leading roles at the major opera houses in Zürich, Hamburg, Munich, and Barcelona, and in her own country in Washington, Dallas, and Philadelphia, in addition to the Ravinia and Salzburg Festivals. Soon to make debuts at Milan’s La Scala and the Semperoper Dresden, she will return to the Met next spring as Mimì in La Bohème. Winner of the 15th annual Plácido Domingo Award, she was granted the Richard Tucker Award in 2012, and has joined the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s prestigious Artists’ Council. Her recordings include Opus Arte’s Poème d’un jour, and Love Duets, on Warner Classics. As Opera News observes, “The phrase ‘an embarrassment of riches’ might have been invented to describe the combination of talents that belong to Ailyn Pérez…who truly seems to have it all.”
FLY FROM USA

Saturday, May 7, 2016

FLY FROM USA

Sunday, May 8
LISBON, PORTUGAL
Upon arrival in Lisbon, transfer to the Altis Avenida Hotel, our accommodation.

Monday, May 9
LISBON | EMBARK
Visit the Alfama District, Lisbon's oldest and most fascinating neighborhood. A walking tour reveals much of its Moorish influence in its kasbah-like layout, narrow twisting alleys, and the architecture of its houses. Continue to the historic Belém Quarter, a charming riverside area linked to the 15th-century Portuguese navigators. It is from here where the city's most famous landmarks are located. Tour the São Carlos Theater, Lisbon’s opera house, built in the 18th century in neoclassical style. The exterior was inspired by Milan’s La Scala and the interior showcases five galleries and boxes adorned with neoclassical and Rococo decorations. Also see the Belém Tower and the Discoveries Monument.

Visit the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation & Museum, with an extensive collection of almost every great phase of Eastern and Western art. Transfer to the port for embarkation. (B, D)

Tuesday, May 10
VIANA DO CASTELO
The jewel of Portugal’s Costa Verde, Viana do Castelo is a quaint medieval town with leafy, 19th-century boulevards and narrow lanes lined with Manueline manors and rococo palaces. Visit the Old Town Hall, Parish Church, and charming Republica Square, lined with palaces and private houses. Visit the Municipal Museum, housed in an 18th-century palace and featuring Portuguese pottery, tiles, and furniture. (B, L, D)

Wednesday, May 11
CEÉ, GALICIA, SPAIN | SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA | LA CORUÑA
Travel to Santiago de Compostela, one of the most beautiful and historic medieval cities in Spain and a UNESCO World Heritage site. After an orientation in Obradoiro Square, embark on a tour of the Cathedral, where highlights include the tomb of Saint James, the ‘Portico da Gloria,’ dating from 1188 and one of the capital works of medieval sculpture; and the museum. Attend our first recital in the former Gothic chapel of the Hospital dos Reis Católicos, once a 15th-century royal hospital and now a parador, or heritage hotel. The opulent chapel features spectacular acoustics. Enjoy lunch and a panoramic drive back to the ship in La Coruña. (B, L, D)

Thursday, May 12
AT SEA
Spend a relaxing day aboard Le Boréal, including a conversation with Ailyn Pérez. (B, L, D)

Friday, May 13
TRESCO, ISLES OF SCILLY, ENGLAND, UNITED KINGDOM
The Isles of Scilly lie some 30 miles off the south-west coast of Cornwall and are believed to have been visited by the ancient Phoenicians. From the port, walk to the Treseco Abbey Gardens, where the warmth of the Gulf Stream, long hours of summer sunshine, and the high walls and hedges that keep out the winds have conspired to allow this garden in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean to sustain exotic plants from all over the world. (B, L, D)

Saturday, May 14
CORK, IRELAND
From Cork, travel through the Irish countryside to the 15th-century Blarney Castle, famous for its stone, which is traditionally believed to have the power to bestow eloquence on all those who kiss it. The Cobh Heritage Centre offers a dramatic exhibition of the history and legacy of Cobh. Previously known as Queenstown, this was the main port for Irish emigrants to Canada and the United States. The failure of the potato crop in 1846 and the subsequent famine convinced many to leave their homeland—some million and a half souls emigrated between 1845 and 1851. Enjoy a recital aboard ship. (B, L, D)

Sunday, May 15
DUBLIN
This lively city on the banks of the River Liffey is justly famous for its historic sites, handsome Georgian architecture, and genuinely friendly inhabitants. This morning, visit Dublin Castle to see the beautifully decorated State Apartments and the newly discovered Viking excavations as well as the Chester Beatty Library with its fine collection of oriental art and artifacts. Also explore Trinity College, with its famed library housing the Book of Kells and other treasures. In the afternoon, visit the 13th-century Gothic cathedral of St. Patrick, founded on the site of a spring where St. Patrick is said to have baptized converts, and enjoy time on your own before returning to overnight aboard ship. (B, L, D)

Monday, May 16
DUBLIN | DISEMBARK | FLY TO USA
Disembark Le Boréal and transfer to the airport for return flights. (B)
OPTIONAL POST-CRUISE EXTENSION
IN PARIS
May 16-19, 2016

Continue your European discovery with a three-night extension to Paris. In addition to ample time at leisure to stroll this fascinating city on your own, we will also delve into the City of Light’s musical legacy with a tour of the historic Garnier Opera House and attend two operatic masterpieces at the modern Bastille Opera House.

Monday, May 16
DUBLIN | DISEMBARK | PARIS
Fly from Dublin to Paris. Transfer to the deluxe Millennium Hotel Paris Opéra and spend the rest of the day at leisure. In the evening, attend a performance of Giuseppe Verdi’s Rigoletto at the Bastille Opera House. (B)

Tuesday, May 17
PARIS
Enjoy a morning tour of Paris, including the Garnier Opera House, a masterpiece of 19th-century theater architecture. Of particular interest is the Grand Foyer, the white marble staircase, and the famous ceiling, painted by Marc Chagall and depicting scenes from operas by fourteen composers. (B)

Wednesday, May 18
PARIS
Spend a second day at your leisure. In the evening, take in an evening performance of Richard Strauss’s Der Rosenkavalier at the Bastille Opera House. (B)

Thursday, May 19
PARIS | FLY TO USA
Transfer from the hotel to the airport for return flights.

FARES:

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Included:
Three-night stay at the Millennium Hotel Paris Opéra, with breakfast daily; category one tickets for the two operas featured; transfers and tours as described.

Not included:
Flight from Dublin to Paris.

While airfare between Dublin and Paris is not included, we are happy to advise on recommended flights and assist with bookings as needed.
LIFE ABOARD
Life aboard the 264-guest Le Boréal is relaxed and refined, capturing the best of the French art of living well. Your comfort and well-being are the special responsibility of the impeccably trained staff, whose discreet yet attentive service has become legendary among seasoned travelers. Our goal is to make you feel as though you are sailing aboard your very own yacht.

REDEFINING REST & RELAXATION
All suites and staterooms face outside and measure from 226 to 581 square feet (including the balcony), and all but eight have a balcony. Features and amenities include a king-size bed or twin beds, mini-bar, safe, individually controlled heat/air-conditioning, flat-screen TV, in-house movies, iPod docking station, wireless Internet access, and telephone. Bathrooms come equipped with a shower (or shower/bathtub), hair dryer, French toiletries, and bathrobes. Laundry services and 24-hour room service are available throughout.

SAFETY, COMFORT & CONVENIENCE
Le Boréal is equipped with the latest communication, navigational, and safety equipment and meets or exceeds USPHS and U.S. Coast Guard rules. It is also outfitted with a technologically advanced stabilizing system to minimize the effects of rough conditions at sea. Three passenger elevators serve all six decks. And public amenities include an outdoor heated pool, lounges, two restaurants, a theater/lecture hall, a well-stocked library, and a full-service salon, steam room, spa, and fitness center.

CUISENE
The quality of food, its preparation, and the social experience of a meal are the objects of special care aboard ship. Whether you are enjoying breakfast among friends, a sun-kissed lunch on one of the outside decks, or a delightful dinner in the elegant surroundings of the restaurants, the talented chefs showcase their expertise by bringing out the very best in local flavors. PONANT was selected as an Outstanding Culinary Cruise Line by Saveur magazine in 2014.

RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
The health of our planet, and especially its oceans, is a critical concern for us. We have taken care to certify all of our sister ships as “clean ships,” employing the most eco-friendly technology available today. As environmentally responsible ship operators, we not only comply with existing regulations; we anticipate new ones. We continually seek to share industry best practices on matters ranging from increasing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to waste treatment and recycling.
The page contains floor plans and details of different types of staterooms and suites available on a cruise ship. The text includes information about amenities such as restaurants, bars, marinas, fitness centers, spa facilities, and more. The images show various spaces within the staterooms and suites, including bedrooms, bathrooms, lounge areas, and bathrooms with showers. The text provides details about the layout and features of each category of rooms, along with information on their respective prices for double occupancy.

A special offer is mentioned: an airfare credit of $1,000 per couple ($500 per solo traveler) when you book the cruise by October 31, 2015. This offer cannot be combined with any other offers.
ALL-INCLUSIVE FARES & UNIQUE FEATURES

Our fares are truly all-inclusive. Coupled with the high-quality musical program, we provide a most attractive value.

Included

• 1 night at the Altis Avenida Hotel in Lisbon, prior to embarkation
• Cruise aboard the deluxe Le Boréal. All accommodations are outside staterooms and suites, 95% of which feature a private balcony.
• Complete program of shore excursions and activities
• Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage
• All meals aboard ship including early riser’s coffee & pastry, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, and dinner
• Complimentary open bar aboard ship
• Gratuities to shipboard personnel, porters, guides, and drivers
• Port taxes and charges
• Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard ship
• Private concerts and conversation by soprano Ailyn Pérez and accompanying pianist
• 24-hour room service
• Comprehensive pre-departure materials

Not Included

Airfare; airport taxes; passport and visa fees and/or immigration reciprocity taxes (if applicable); trip cancellation and baggage insurance; medical and repatriation insurance; meals and beverages other than those specified above; personal expenses (such as telephone, Internet, laundry service, hair salon services, à la carte spa treatments, etc.)

THE PONANT SHIPS

The only ships in their class certified as “Clean Ships”

CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Our concern for the health and well-being of the planet is demonstrated by our active involvement in organizations dedicated to the promotion of ecologically responsible tourism and to the sharing of best practices. We are a proud member of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators and a signatory of La Charte Bleue d’Armateurs de France, both of which bind us to follow the most stringent rules and regulations governing safety and environmental protection.

CLEAN SHIPS

Above and beyond participation in these organizations, we have taken the additional step of having all four of our sister ships certified “Clean Ship” by the French classification society, Bureau Veritas, one of the world’s major ship classification societies. This coveted and seldom-awarded certification recognizes that the PONANT fleet—from initial design and construction to seagoing operations—has adopted the most environmentally responsible materials, equipment, and management procedures possible.
CANCELLATION, MODIFICATION PENALTIES & REFUNDS are accepted.

Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Checks and credit cards guest is required to pay $1,500 per person. Final payment and the tour's sponsoring organization.

PAyMeNT sChEduLe:

- Within 60 days prior to departure: 100% of full fare.
- 90-61 days prior departure: 50% of full fare.
- From confirmation of booking date up to 91 days prior are applicable on all services booked with PONANT GROUP.

Any change in fare cannot be imposed less than 60 days prior increased to include an amount to cover agent's commission.

The prices given at the time of booking are based on economic conditions known on June 1, 2015 and are subject variation of the cost of transport, closure of ports, strikes and any industrial action, PONANT GROUP shall in any case not be liable for failure of incurred, such liability is limited (details available upon request).

These terms & conditions are subject to and

JuRisDictiON:

(***): L’AUSTRAL, LE BOREAL, LE LYRIAL, LE SOLEAL: 244 passengers ship capacity ***

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Passengers shall be responsible for subscribing to cancellation/luggage/assistance repatriation/medical insurance(s).

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS/LIMIT OF LIABILITY:

The passenger agrees that PONANT GROUP acts as agent and/or trustee for any person, ground and maritime agents and/or presentation errors and reserves the right to make any change in fare cannot be imposed less than 60 days prior increased to include an amount to cover agent's commission.

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For further information or reservations, please call Kimberly Goodis of The Metropolitan Opera Guild at 212 769 7062 or PONANT at 888 400 1082 (Toll-Free)