

UNDER EMBARGO

For Release on March 27, 2017

Early Music Vancouver Announces Transformative 2017/18 Season and Summer Bach Festival

Ambitious Line-Up features World-Class Stars & Groundbreaking Collaborations, including EMV's First Period Instrument Performance of Handel's Messiah

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver (EMV) announces its **2017 Vancouver Bach Festival and 2017/18 Main Season**, bringing a staggering list of events to venues in and around Vancouver. Inspired by the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation, EMV's entire Festival and Season is a celebration of music's power to convert, transform and persuade. Anchored by performances of iconic works including Bach's St. John Passion, Monteverdi's Orfeo and Handel's Messiah, this is one of EMV's most varied seasons to date.

Throughout the season, EMV will play host to a dazzling array of returning favourites and world-class artists, including Angela Hewitt, Gli Angeli Genève, Austria's Ensemble Cinquecento, Karina Gauvin, Amanda Forsythe, Suzie LeBlanc, Charles Daniels, The Tallis Scholars, Stephen Stubbs and Monica Huggett. The festival and season will also introduce groundbreaking collaborations with an eclectic array of local organizations, including Vancouver Opera, Friends of Chamber Music, Vancouver Chopin Society, Vancouver Cantata Singers, and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra led by conductor Alexander Weimann.

"Almost all music lovers can describe a "Road to Damascus" moment when a performance they heard irrevocably changed the way that they looked upon the world – a sudden moment of conversion or transformation to a new way of thinking," explains Matthew White, Executive and Artistic Director of EMV. "In this 500th anniversary year of Luther's Protestant Reformation, it seems fitting to reflect upon the idea that, more than cold reason, music has always been a powerful tool of persuasion. It provides us with an expressive outlet for processing how we feel about the world, as well as the ability to influence others. Truly great music often appeals to our intellect and our emotion in equal measure, and can motivate as well as reflect significant change within us. This season is absolutely jam-packed with music that I hope will have this effect on our audience."

Following its inaugural success last summer, the **Vancouver Bach Festival** returns August 1 through August 11 for fourteen concerts over two weeks mostly centered around Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Vancouver. The festival kicks off with an intriguing new perspective on Bach's **Cello Suites** performed by star Canadian Cellist Matt Haimovitz. This programme includes new "overtures" preceding each of the suites written by composers including Philip Glass and David Sanford. Similarly intimate and exciting festival offerings include Bach's **Italian Concerto and French Overture performed by** harpsichordist Alexander Weimann, as well as virtuosic chamber cantatas performed by two of Europe's emerging stars of the baroque singing world, **American counter-tenor Terry Wey and Sweden's Jenny Högström**. Larger scale concerts include **Songs of Religious Upheaval**; an exquisite program of English Reformation polyphony from Austria's superb **Ensemble Cinquecento**; and "The **Fountains of Israel**, a transitional masterpiece written in 1623 by Johann Schein, a composer and organist who previously held Bach's posting at the Thomas Kirche in Leipzig. The festival will reach its climax with a dramatic reading of **St. John Passion**, featuring the Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Vancouver Cantata Singers, eight internationally acclaimed soloists and one of the leading "Bach Evangelists" working in the world today, English tenor Thomas Hobbs.

Soprano Amanda Forsythe will once again kick off EMV's Main Season in September, this time joined by the Boston Early Music Festival Ensemble and a cast of other distinguished vocalists for **Baroque Duets of Love and Passion**. October will bring the acclaimed Parisian ensemble specializing in Medieval music, **Diabolus in Musica**, for a concert of 14th century polyphony from the Pope's Chapel in Avignon, as well as a Chan Centre presentation of Monteverdi's ground-breaking operatic masterpiece **Orfeo**, featuring multiple GRAMMY Award-winner Stephen Stubbs leading his own **Pacific MusicWorks** with Vancouver's own Colin Balzer in the title role.

The seasonal offerings will be even richer than usual this year as EMV brings its first intimate, period instrument interpretation of Handel's iconic **Messiah** to The Vancouver Playhouse and White Rock Baptist Church. In keeping with tradition, however, just two days before Christmas, the annually sold-out **Festive Cantatas** will return to the Chan Centre, this year featuring Vivaldi's **Gloria and Magnificat**, performed as originally written for an all-female choral ensemble and orchestra.

EMV will start the New Year with a duo of two-night collaborations: First, **Friends of Chamber Music** partner for a weekend of concerts exploring the legacy of the string quartet on period instruments. Then in February, **Vancouver Chopin Society** co-presents award-winning Polish pianist Janusz Olejniczak, in two recitals of repertoire by Chopin. He will play half of both recitals on a modern Steinway and the second on a historical instrument with which Chopin himself would have been familiar – a 19th century "straight strung" Broadwood fortepiano.

The spring season continues with a parade of internationally-renowned early and classical music greats, including soprano **Suzie LeBlanc** with **Ensemble Constantinople**; pianist **Angela Hewitt** performing **The Goldberg Variations** in a continuation of EMV's multi-year "Goldberg Experience" project; **The Tallis Scholars** recognizing the centenary of WWI with a programme entitled **War and Peace**; and soprano **Karina Gauvin** performing Baroque opera arias from 18th century St. Petersburg in EMV's first co-production with **Vancouver Opera**. The season will conclude with a programme featuring English tenor Charles Daniels in a concert of 17th and 18th century music musical settings of stories drawn from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*.

The full Vancouver Bach Festival and 2017/18 Season includes:

VANCOUVER BACH FESTIVAL 2017 - CONVERSIONS

- Aug 1 **Overtures to Bach** – Matt Haimovitz, cello at 6pm and 9pm
- Aug 2 **Schumann Dichterliebe** and **Brahms Four Serious Songs** at 1pm
- Aug 2 **Songs of Religious Upheaval: Byrd, Tallis, Tye** – Music from Reformation England
- Aug 3 **Bach Italian Concerto**
- Aug 4 **Conversions: Mendelssohn, Moscheles and Bach** at 1pm
- Aug 4 **Handel in Italy: Virtuoso Cantatas**
- Aug 8 **Playing with B-a-c-H: Sonatas for Solo Violin by Telemann, Pisendel and J.S. Bach** at 1pm
- Aug 8 **Before Bach: The Fountains of Israel by Johann Schein (1623)**
- Aug 9 **Bach for Two Flutes** at 1pm
- Aug 9 **Heavenly Love: Sacred Arias for Counter-tenor**
- Aug 10 **Bach Transcriptions** – Victoria Baroque Players at 1pm
- Aug 10 **Music of Missions and Mystery: Latin American Baroque**
- Aug 11 **J.S. Bach St. John Passion** at The Chan Centre at 7:30pm

All concerts at Christ Church Cathedral at 7:30pm unless noted otherwise.

EMV MASTERWORKS 2017-2018

Aug 11	J.S. Bach <i>St. John Passion</i> – PBO with Alexander Weimann
Oct 29	Monteverdi <i>Orfeo</i>, Pacific MusicWorks with Stephen Stubbs
Nov 30	Handel <i>Messiah</i> at White Rock Baptist Church at 7:30pm – PBO with Alexander Weimann
Dec 1 & 2	Handel <i>Messiah</i> at Vancouver Playhouse at 7:30pm – PBO with Alexander Weimann
Dec 23	<i>Festive Cantatas: The Gloria and Magnificat</i> at 3pm
Mar 7	<i>Goldberg Variations</i> – Angela Hewitt
Apr 21	<i>War and Peace</i> – The Tallis Scholars
May 6	<i>Russian White Nights: Opera Arias from 18th Century St. Petersburg</i> with soprano Karina Gauvin and the PBO / Alexander Weimann, at 3pm – A collaboration with Vancouver Opera

All concerts at Chan Centre for Performing Arts at 7:30pm unless noted otherwise.

THE MAIN SERIES 2017-2018

Sep 29	<i>Baroque Duets of Love and Passion: BEMF with Amanda Forsythe, soprano and Colin Balzer, tenor</i> – Music by A. Stefani and G.F. Handel
Oct 13	<i>Diabolus in Musica: Cantores</i> – 14th Century Music from the Pope's Chapel in Avignon
Nov 3	<i>Stylus Fantasticus: Virtuoso Flights of Fancy from the 17th Century</i>
Jan 12	<i>Bach to the Future: The Legacy of the Art of the Fugue</i> – The Diderot Quartet – A collaboration with Friends of Chamber Music
Jan 13	<i>Private to Public: The Journey of the String Quartet</i> – The Eybler Quartet – A collaboration with Friends of Chamber Music
Feb 2 & 3	Janusz Olejniczak plays Chopin – A two concert collaboration with the Chopin Society
Feb 23	<i>Metamorfosi</i> – Ensemble Constantinople with Suzie LeBlanc
Mar 23	<i>A Telemann Celebration</i> – Ensemble La Reveuse
Apr 7	<i>The Little Orchestra: The Genius of the Classical Piano Trio</i> – Monica Huggett
Apr 28	<i>Ovid: Myth and Music</i> – Tenor Charles Daniels in Recital with the PBO

All concerts at Christ Church Cathedral at 7:30pm

Early Music Vancouver subscribers can attend any four Vancouver Bach Festival or 2017/18 Season performances for the price of three. All subscriptions including more than four concerts also enjoy a 25% discount. Subscriptions are available by phone through the Chan Centre Box Office at 604.822. 2697.

ABOUT EARLY MUSIC VANCOUVER (earlymusic.bc.ca)

For more than 45 years, Early Music Vancouver (EMV) has dedicated itself to fostering an understanding and appreciation of musical treasures from the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods. Currently under the leadership of Matthew White – renowned countertenor and founding director of the Québec-based ensemble *Les Voix Baroques* – EMV continues to garner international acclaim as the largest presenter of early music in Canada, and as one of the most active and innovative organizations in its field in North America. EMV is proud of its educational outreach initiatives that include its popular, annual summer festival at UBC's School of Music; a new Baroque Mentorship Orchestra; community lectures; and instrument instruction and preservation.

-30-

For further media information, contact

Sarah Ghosh T. 604.558.2400 ext. 508 C. 604.346.3774

sghosh@mpmgarts.com

MURRAY PATERSON
MARKETING GROUP

FORMERLY LAURA MURRAY PUBLIC RELATIONS