

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 15, 2016

EARLY MUSIC VANCOUVER

Artistic Director Matthew White

Early Music Vancouver Heralds the Holidays
with Joyous Baroque Celebration
– Festive Cantatas: J.S. Bach Magnificat –

Vancouver's Pacific Baroque Orchestra joins internationally-renowned vocal soloists for beloved Christmas tradition at the Chan Centre

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver (EMV), in collaboration with the Pacific Baroque Orchestra (PBO), presents ***Festive Cantatas: J.S. Bach Magnificat at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts, December 18, 2016 at 3pm***. This program features one of J.S. Bach's greatest masterpieces for choir and orchestra as it was heard during a Christmas Vespers service in Leipzig in 1723. PBO's Juno Award-winning Music Director Alexander Weimann leads the Pacific Baroque Orchestra and five internationally-renowned guest soloists in this seasonal celebration and annual tradition.

"I can imagine no better way of celebrating Christmas and the holidays than with this joyous and uplifting music," says Matthew White, Artistic Director of EMV. "Like the B Minor Mass, the Magnificat includes celebratory trumpets and timpani in several movements that make you want to get up and dance! This is as overtly positive, virtuosic, and full of invention as Bach's choral writing gets. The use of soloists for the chorus parts allows the music to move extremely freely, as well as for the counter-point to be heard crisply and transparently."

Early Music Vancouver's presentation will include four rarely heard and delightful carol inserts that help to illuminate the Nativity story. These inserts harken back to the German custom of giving a dramatic representation of the Nativity story at Christmas Vespers. Their subject matter is the announcement to the shepherds, the angel's song of praise and cradle song at the manger. The programme also includes Telemann's uplifting *Concerto for 3 Trumpets in D Major* (TWV 54) and Bach's beloved *Cantata 140* (Wachet auf).

The solos and choral parts will be taken on by the voices of five internationally acclaimed guest soloists. **Molly Quinn**, making her debut in Vancouver, is a "radiant" soprano, possessing an "arresting sweetness and simplicity" (New York Times). Soprano **Danielle Sampson**, last heard in Vancouver for EMV's Praetorius Christmas celebration, continues to be celebrated all over North America for her beautiful and passionate interpretations of Bach, Handel, and Purcell. **Meg Bragle** is now established as one of the world's greatest Bach specialists. She recently made her BBC Proms debut with John Eliot Gardiner and the Monteverdi Choir and sings regularly with such esteemed ensembles as London's Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Netherlands Bach Society, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra of New York, Les Violons du Roy, and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, among others.

American tenor **Aaron Sheehan's** voice has been described as "superb: his tone classy, clear, and refined, encompassing fluid lyricism and ringing force" by the Boston Globe. He is one of the busiest tenors singing Bach in North America, and recently won a 2015 Grammy Award for his interpretation of the title role in the Boston Early Music Festival's recording of Charpentier's opera "La Descente D'Orphée". Baritone **Jesse Blumberg** is equally at home on opera, concert, and recital stages, performing repertoire from the Renaissance and Baroque to the 20th and 21st centuries. This year he will perform major roles with the

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Boston Early Music Festival and Opera Atelier as well as in concert tours with the American Bach Soloists in San Francisco, Arion Baroque Orchestra in Montreal, and with Boston Baroque.

These singers will perform alongside the Pacific Baroque Orchestra (PBO). Recognized as one of Canada's most exciting and innovative ensembles performing "early music for modern ears," PBO brings the music of the past up to date by performing with cutting edge style and enthusiasm. Featuring many of the region's best "period" instrumentalists, the orchestra all use original 18th century instruments or copies of original instruments. All of the musicians are experts in what is known as "historical performance practice". This approach allows modern audiences to hear this exquisite music played in a style that the composers would still recognize today. Far from being an exercise in historical recreation, this approach makes the music sound as fresh and exciting as when it was first composed.

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.

LISTING INFORMATION

Early Music Vancouver presents: *Festive Cantatas: J.S. Bach Magnificat*

Date: Sunday, December 18, 2016 at 3pm

Pre-Concert Talk: Hosted by Matthew White
Sunday, December 18, 2016 at 2:15pm

Address: Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
University of British Columbia
6265 Crescent Road

Ticket prices: From \$17.50

Box Office: earlymusic.bc.ca or 604-822-2697

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