

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EARLY MUSIC VANCOUVER

Artistic Director Matthew White

**Early Music Vancouver Presents the Celestial Sounds and Angelic Voices
of Globally Celebrated *Choir of King's College, Cambridge***

**A choir with a history spanning over 600 years shares a programme chronicling
more than 500 years of sacred and secular song**

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver (EMV), proudly presents one of the world's most respected and recognized choral ensembles, ***The Choir of King's College, Cambridge*** at the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts, March 26, 2017 at 2pm** in the **Chan Shun Concert Hall**. In a rare Vancouver appearance, revered Director of Music, Dr. Stephen Cleobury, will lead the iconic choir of Men and Boys in a mixed programme of repertoire from across the centuries.

"Founded by King Henry VI in 1441, ***The Choir of King's College, Cambridge*** has been a center for musical excellence for over 600 years. Its alumni include literally hundreds of important musicians who, in their time as choir members, received a unique and rigorous training preparing them for professional careers in music," explained Matthew White, Early Music Vancouver Artistic Director. "The contributions of this institution to international-music making have been profound. For many years, Vancouver's very own music scene was lucky enough to be led by an ex-choral scholar at King's College Cambridge. Choral Conductor, Bruce Pullan, a beloved figure in this city, was President of the Vancouver Academy of Music from 1993 to 1997, Professor and Head of Choral Music at the University of British Columbia, and conductor of the Vancouver Bach Choir. Gerald Finley, who began life as a chorister at St. Matthew's Church in Ottawa, was also choral scholar at King's and has gone on to become one of the finest baritones of his generation. He happened to sing in the choir at the same time as a local EMV favourite, frequent guest tenor – Charles Daniels!"

The Choir of King's College, Cambridge, clad in their iconic red and white robes, has become one of the world's most recognized all-male choral ensembles. Every Christmas Eve, over 30 million people across the globe tune in to listen to the ensemble perform the legendary "Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols" service. This event has been broadcast by the BBC since 1928 and has helped to make the choir a household name all over the globe. As a result, the ensemble now regularly tours all over the world, selling out performances wherever they go.

Described by The New York Times as 'fresh, lean and worldly,' the choir is comprised of 16 boy sopranos or "trebles" (aged between nine and 13 years), 14 male undergraduates who sing the alto, tenor and bass parts, as well as two organ scholars. Current Director of Music, Dr. Stephen Cleobury, took over from the late Sir Philip Ledger in 1982. In addition to his role at King's, Dr. Cleobury was chief conductor of the BBC Singers from 1995 to 2007 and the conductor of the Cambridge University Musical Society from 1983 to 2007. His influence as a choral conductor and organist now extends far beyond the UK to many other choirs around the world through the many organ scholars and choral conductors he has trained.

The English choral tradition, of which King's is a shining example, is one of the strongest and most disciplined choral traditions in the world. When Henry VI founded King's College almost 600 years ago, he insisted that those chosen to sing in the choir must be poor boys of strong constitution and 'honest conversation.' They had to be under twelve years of age when admitted, and already able to read and sing at sight. With the exception of a few years in the 1550's under the reign of Edward VI and during the period

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of the Commonwealth in the 1650s when choral services in the Chapel were forbidden, the Choir has been singing services continuously for more than 500 years.

The choir's international reputation benefited in the 70s and 80s from the release of multiple award winning recordings under esteemed directors Sir David Willcocks and Sir Philip Ledger. This tradition has since been continued under the direction of Dr. Stephen Cleobury and in 2012, the group launched its own recording label. The choir has to date released more than 100 albums, selling millions of copies worldwide.

For their performance at the Chan Centre, the choir will perform works by European composers spanning four centuries including Byrd, Mundy, Gibbons, Ravel, Messianen, Fauré, and Durufle as well as Poulenc, Gabrieli, Purcell, Bruckner, Stanford, Whitlock and Brahms.

"I would happily sit in King's College Chapel listening to this choir sing for the rest of my days." - *The London Times*

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: *The Choir of King's College, Cambridge*

Date: Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 2pm

Pre-Concert Talk: Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 1:15pm with Matthew White and Dr. Stephen Cleobury

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

Ticket prices: From \$18.00

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

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