

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 22, 2018

EMV Presents World's Premiere Vocal Ensemble Specializing in Renaissance Polyphony – War & Peace: The Tallis Scholars –

***Music Director Peter Phillips Honours Those Who Fought & Died in WWI
in a Programme Inspired by the Glory and Tragedy of Battle***

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver presents ***War and Peace: The Tallis Scholars***, on **April 21, 2018 at 7:30pm** at the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts at UBC**. Led by director Peter Phillips, the renowned vocal ensemble perform a programme commemorating the centenary of the end of the First World War. Their meticulously curated program draws from nearly 500 years of composition and ranges from the Renaissance works of Palestrina and Mouton, to contemporary compositions by Arvo Pärt and John Tavener. The pieces are combined into a complete but varied setting of the Catholic mass that manages to evoke both the glory and intensity of battle and the serene melancholy of senseless loss.

“Fifteenth century Europe was a time and place ravaged by war. During this period, an anonymous French secular song, *L’homme armé*, or “the armed man” became well-known and was used by many composers as a “cantus firmus,” a sort of melodic theme, upon which they based whole settings of the Latin Mass,” says Matthew White, Executive and Artistic Director of Early Music Vancouver. “On the centenary of the end of the First World War, Peter Phillips has put together an exquisite programme centred around this song that demonstrates the power of text and music to transform the sadness and tragedy of war into something beautiful.”

War and Peace uses the traditional Catholic mass as a basic framework to create a pastiche of movements sourced from various masses written by different Renaissance composers inspired by the theme of war. These mass movements are followed and complemented by peaceful elements in the programme including two movements from Victoria’s six voice Requiem Mass and several deeply moving funeral motets: Tavener’s work was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana; Mouton’s at the funeral of Anne of Brittany; and Lobo’s at the funeral of Philip II of Spain. The concert also features Estonian composer Arvo Pärt’s haunting *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*.

The Tallis Scholars were founded in 1973 by their director, Peter Phillips. Through their recordings and concert performances, they have established themselves as the leading exponents of Renaissance sacred vocal music throughout the world. Phillips has worked with the ensemble to create, through good tuning and blend, the purity and clarity of sound. He feels this tonal quality best serves the Renaissance repertoire, allowing every detail of the musical lines to be heard. This resulting beauty of sound is what has helped The Tallis Scholars to become so widely renowned.

Phillips has made an impressive if unusual reputation for himself in dedicating his life’s work to the research and performance of Renaissance polyphony. Having won a scholarship to Oxford in 1972, Phillips studied Renaissance music with David Wulstan and Denis Arnold, and gained experience in conducting small vocal ensembles, already experimenting with the rarer parts of the repertoire. With The Tallis Scholars, he has now

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appeared in over 2000 concerts and made over 60 discs, encouraging interest in Renaissance polyphony all over the world. As a result of Phillips' work, through concerts, recordings, magazine awards and publishing editions of the music and writing articles, Renaissance music has come to be accepted for the first time as part of the mainstream classical repertoire.

ABOUT EARLY MUSIC VANCOUVER (earlymusic.bc.ca)

For close to 50 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

EMV presents *War & Peace: The Tallis Scholars*

Date: Saturday, April 21, 2018 at 7:30pm

Pre-Concert Talk: 6:45pm with Peter Phillips, hosted by EMV's Executive & Artistic Director Matthew White

Address: Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
6265 Crescent Road, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

Ticket Prices: From \$18

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

Website: earlymusic.bc.ca

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For further media information, contact
Sarah Ghosh T: 604.558.2400 ext. 508 C: 604.346.3774
sghosh@mpmgarts.com

MURRAY PATERSON
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