

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 5, 2018

**EMV Finishes 2017-18 Season with Canadian Soprano Karina Gauvin
in Programme of Virtuoso Opera Arias from 18th Century St. Petersburg**

***EMV and Vancouver Opera Collaborate for the First Time
As Part of the Russian White Nights Opera Festival***

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver (EMV), in collaboration with the **Vancouver Opera** and the **Pacific Baroque Orchestra (PBO)**, presents ***Russian White Nights – Opera Arias from 18th Century St. Petersburg*** at the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts** on **Sunday May 6, 2018 at 3pm**. Joined by Music Director Alexander Weimann and the PBO, soprano Karina Gauvin performs a unique programme of virtually unknown opera arias from 18th century St. Petersburg, a period when the ruling Czars and Empresses of Russia spent lavishly on transforming the City into a great modern European cultural capital.

“Paradoxically, despite being known for presentation of music from the past, EMV audiences have always appreciated our role in providing them with exposure to “new” experiences,” says EMV Executive & Artistic Director Matthew White. “This is a programme made up entirely of repertoire that I am sure has never been performed in Canada. It has been meticulously researched, requiring all new performing editions and translations. Furthermore, this is a chance to hear thrilling and beautiful music sung by a national treasure at the height of her interpretive powers.”

At the turn of the 18th century, Tsar Peter I, “The Great”, began to drag Russia, often kicking and screaming, toward the rest of Europe. His new capital, St. Petersburg, was to be a window to the West, and to that end, Peter imported Germans, Czechs, Italians, and others in his quest to modernize and ultimately “civilize” his native land. Peter and his successors, especially Anna Ivanovna, Elizabeth, and Catherine the Great, saw the opera house as an opportunity to show off their cultural wealth as a modern European nation.

Featuring works premiered between the years of 1736 and 1787, the composers represented in this programme are far from household names: Araia, Berezovsky, Borniansky, Fomin, and Dall’Oglio. While these composers themselves are relatively unfamiliar, their operatic creations go far beyond scholarly interest and represent a unique and beguiling amalgam of established Baroque and Classical convention with a distinctive Russian influence.

The arias will be given voice by Canada’s very own superstar soprano in baroque and classical operatic repertoire, Karina Gauvin. She has impressed audiences and critics the world over with her luscious timbre, profound musicality, and wide vocal range. The Globe and Mail calls her “one of the dream sopranos of our time.” A regular collaborator with conductors as diverse as Nagano, Nézet-Séguin, Bichkov, Norrington, Hogwood, Rilling, Labadie, Rousset, Curtis, and Haim, Gauvin is one of the most respected sopranos of her generation.

Gauvin will perform alongside the Pacific Baroque Orchestra (PBO) who have expanded to late classical proportions (25 musicians), under the musical direction of its Artistic Director Alexander Weimann. 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 all of the region's best "period" instrumentalists, the orchestra uses original 18th century instruments or copies of original instruments and are experts in what is known as "historical performance practice". This gives modern audiences the opportunity to hear the music played in a way that the composers would still recognize today. Far from being an exercise in historical recreation, this approach can make this music sound as fresh and exciting as when it was first composed.

Russian White Nights: Opera Arias from 18th Century St. Petersburg is presented as part of the 2018 Vancouver Opera Festival. Tickets and information available at: earlymusic.bc.ca.

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, Vancouver Opera Festival, and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra present *Russian White Nights: Opera Arias from 18th Century St. Petersburg* – Featuring Karina Gauvin

Date: Sunday, May 6, 2018 at 3pm

Pre-Concert Talk: A dialogue with Karina Gauvin and Alexander Weimann hosted by EMV's Executive & Artistic Director Matthew White
2:15pm at Chan Centre

Address: Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
6265 Cresecent Rd. Vancouver, BC

Ticket prices: From \$18.00

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

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