

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2018

Third Annual Vancouver Bach Festival Welcomes Largest-Ever Lineup of World-Class Artists

EMV offers breathtaking performances by the Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Pacific MusicWorks, Gli Angeli Genève, Angela Hewitt, Benjamin Alard and more

Vancouver, BC – Early Music Vancouver (EMV) proudly presents the return of the **Vancouver Bach Festival, July 30 – August 10, 2018** at **Christ Church Cathedral** in the heart of downtown and the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts**. Since its inaugural iteration in 2016, the festival has grown to offer a remarkable 15 concerts ranging from intimate chamber music programmes to concerts featuring full orchestra, soloists, and a choir. This year’s festival includes performances by many of the top west coast artists specializing in period performance, as well as by gifted artists from all over Europe. EMV is particularly delighted to welcome back Switzerland's celebrated **Gli Angeli Genève** to participate in EMV’s first-ever ensemble-in-residence program, which will involve members of this internationally-acclaimed ensemble performing in six concerts throughout the festival.

“Earlier this summer, I had a chance to visit for the first time some of the most important places in Bach’s life. Sitting in the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, it struck me as extraordinary the extent to which the work of this deeply religious man from eighteenth-century Thuringia continues to have a life-changing effect on so many people from so many different backgrounds,” says Matthew White, Executive and Artistic Director of EMV “In a world where classical and other non-corporate music is increasingly being relegated to the edges of public awareness, his name is still one of the most powerful advocates for communicating the values inherent in deeply inspiring music of any type. The name Bach means great music – period. This is our most ambitious festival yet and we look forward to sharing Bach’s incredible music with more audiences than ever before this summer.”

This year’s expanded festival commences with another entry from EMV’s ‘Goldberg Experience’, as celebrated French harpsichordist **Benjamin Alard** puts his stamp on Bach’s beloved *Goldberg Variations*. The following evening, iconic Canadian pianist **Angela Hewitt** continues her four-year project to perform Bach’s entire keyboard repertoire by returning to play his *Well Tempered Clavier – Book 1* at the Chan Centre.

Further highlights include the return of audience favourite countertenor **Reginald L. Mobley with Pacific MusicWorks** in a programme that highlights J.S. Bach’s most famous solo cantata – *Ich Habe Genug- BWV 82*; a romantic instrumental program from **Monica Huggett and Byron Schenkman**; as well as performances of Bach cantatas by the full orchestra and choir of **Gli Angeli Genève**. The festival will reach a dramatic conclusion with a large-scale performance of J.S. Bach’s great *Trauer Ode* and *Cantata BWV 146* featuring **the soloists of Gli Angeli Genève and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra (PBO) led by Alexander Weimann**.

Last year’s popular weekday afternoon concert series will also return, offering a diverse and delightful selection of programmes including Schubert lieder accompanied on an original early 19th century guitar, Mozart Sonatas for fortepiano and violin, Britten’s *Abraham and Isaac*, and more.

J.S. Bach (1685 – 1750) is regarded as one of the greatest composers in Western musical history. His legacy includes some of the most beautiful and well-crafted music ever written. Almost three centuries after Bach’s passing, his vast catalogue of works are still revered, studied, and reinterpreted by music lovers across the globe. His name is synonymous with music.

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The Vancouver Bach Festival 2018 programme includes:

Bach - Goldberg Variations

July 30 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

EMV continues their multi-year exploration of the *Goldberg Variations* with the elegance and insight of rising star Benjamin Alard. One of the great keyboardists of his generation, Alard was awarded first prize at the 2004 International Harpsichord Competition in Bruges at the age of 19. He is currently in the midst of recording all of Bach's works for solo keyboard for Harmonia Mundi. The Globe and Mail has described him as having "impeccable phrasing and articulation."

Angela Hewitt - Bach Well Tempered Clavier – Book 1

July 31 at 7:30pm at the Chan Centre (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

Hailed by London's Sunday Times as "the outstanding Bach pianist of her generation," GRAMMY Award-winning Canadian icon Angela Hewitt continues the second season of her remarkable four-year journey through all of Bach's keyboard works.

Mozart Sonatas for Fortepiano and Violin

August 1 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

Vancouver's Marc Destrubé is the first violinist for the Orchestra of the 18th Century and is a leading figure in the period instrument movement. For this recital of Mozart Sonatas for fortepiano and violin he will be joined by Eric Zivian, one of North America's most accomplished and respected specialists in late 18th and 19th century keyboard instruments. The programme will include Variations on "La bergere Celimene" K 359, Sonata in F major K 377, Sonata in A major K 526.

Zimmerman's Coffeehouse and Garden

August 1 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

Esteemed music director and harpsichordist Alexander Weimann will lead members of the Pacific Baroque Orchestra in an energetic performance of chamber music by J.S. Bach, G.P. Telemann, C.P.E Bach, and Nicola Porpora, evoking the caffeinated atmosphere of the Café Zimmerman in 18th century Leipzig. The most successful coffeehouse in town, it provided the backdrop for a series of now legendary public concerts led by J.S. Bach featuring debuts of his own new instrumental works, as well as music by many of his favourite composers.

Schubert Lieder for Voice and Guitar

August 2 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

In this intimate recital, Canadian lyric and lieder specialist Colin Balzer will charm audiences with a selection of lieder by the prolific Franz Schubert and his contemporaries. A nod to the flourishing popularity of the guitar in 19th century Europe, Balzer will be accompanied by acclaimed guitarist Lucas Harris playing on a recently-restored 1831 guitar made by master luthier Gaetano Guadagnini.

Musica Transalpina: Vivaldi to Bach with Reginald Mobley and Pacific MusicWorks

August 2 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

Praised for his "crystalline diction and pure, evenly produced tone" (Miami Herald), countertenor Reginald L. Mobley makes his highly-anticipated Vancouver return, performing with musicians of Pacific Musicworks and led by revered GRAMMY Award-winning lutenist and conductor Stephen Stubbs. Featuring a rarely-performed dramatic cantata by Antonio Vivaldi – *Cessate Omai Cessate*, as well as one of J.S. Bach's most beloved solo cantatas – BWV 82 / *Ich Habe Genug*, audiences will be spellbound by the beauty of Mobley's voice and charmed by the warmth of his personality.

Songs without Words - Renaissance Madrigals Reimagined

August 3 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

Fans of Renaissance madrigals will be intrigued by these inventive instrumental transcriptions of vocal masterpieces. Join organist and harpsichordist Christina Hutten, violinist Chloe Myers, and lutenist Lucas Harris as they tour the madrigals of early 17th century Europe. These instrumental songs of love, loss and longing will linger in the minds of audience members long after the last notes have faded.

Bach Cantatas - Actus Tragicus

August 3 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

EMV is delighted to welcome Switzerland's celebrated ensemble Gli Angeli Genève back to Vancouver to perform a selection of Early Cantatas by J.S. Bach (BWV 4, 131 and 106), as well as G.P. Telemann's masterpiece *Du Aber Daniel*. Led by renowned baritone Stephan MacLeod, Gli Angeli Genève is an ensemble of soloists that performs vocal and instrumental repertoire of the renaissance, baroque and classical periods on stages the world over. They are widely considered one of Europe's top ensembles specializing in Bach's sacred music.

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Bach Solo Sonatas and Suites for Gamba

August 7 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

Pre-eminent gambist Romina Lischka performs solo sonatas by J.S. Bach and François Couperin, accompanied by Swiss keyboardist Francis Jacob.

De Profundis: 17th Century Cantatas for Solo Bass

August 7 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

This programme explores virtuosic sacred music from late Renaissance and early Baroque Germany giving voice to the feelings of loss evoked by the devastation of the Thirty Years War. Celebrated bass-baritone Stephan MacLeod of Gli Angeli Genève joins Vancouver's own ensemble of early wind instruments, Cappella Borealis, for this performance of works for solo bass-baritone, sackbuts, cornetto, and violin.

Britten - *Abraham and Isaac*

August 8 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

Established international stars from England, counter-tenor Alex Potter and tenor Thomas Hobbs are joined by pianist Alexander Weimann for a performance of Benjamin Britten's *Abraham and Isaac*. Based on a 15th-century Chester Miracle Play, this deeply moving chamber work has been described as an "opera in miniature".

Bach, Beethoven and Brahms

August 8 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms have been considered the backbone of the Classical canon since the late nineteenth century. Baroque violinist Monica Huggett and fortepianist Byron Schenkman explore some of those composers' most beloved works, using instruments and playing styles appropriate to the time when that canon was being established, including Early Music Vancouver's magnificent 1870 Broadwood piano. The programme includes Bach's great Chaconne in D minor for solo violin.

Pergolesi – *Stabat Mater*

August 9 at 1:00pm (Pre-concert talk 12:15pm)

An EMV Emerging Artists Event – Suggested Donation of \$20

Members of the Baroque Orchestra Mentorship Programme and recipients of EMV's Scholarship Programme perform Pergolesi's masterpiece for two solo voices and chamber orchestra.

Francois Couperin - *Leçons de Ténèbres*

August 9 at 7:30pm (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

In celebration of Francois Couperin's 350th anniversary, this programme includes his sumptuous trio sonata *L'Impériale* and a complete performance of one of the masterpieces of French baroque music, his surviving three *Leçons des Ténèbres*, for two sopranos, viola da gamba and basso continuo.

Bach - *Trauer Ode* (BWV 198) and BWV 146 at the Chan Centre

August 10 at 7:30pm at the Chan Centre (Pre-concert talk 6:45pm)

Vancouver's own Alexander Weimann leads the PBO and the soloists of Gli Angeli Genève in a dramatic reading of one of Bach's greatest works of mourning, the *Trauer Ode*. Bach composed this large-scale secular cantata for orchestra and soloists in 1727 to commemorate the death of Christiane Eberhardine, the wife of Augustus, the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. It is unusually richly scored, even for Bach, and includes not only pairs of flutes and oboes d'amore, but also of violas da gamba and lutes in addition to a full string orchestra. This great work will be performed alongside another masterpiece by Bach, his cantata BWV 146 - *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal*.

All concerts at Christ Church Cathedral unless otherwise noted.

To complement the artist lineup, EMV will offer an array of thought-provoking **film screenings** and **expert talks**, which audiences can enjoy with wine and refreshments in a relaxed atmosphere. To learn more, please visit:

<http://www.earlymusic.bc.ca/tickets/summer-festival/2017-vancouver-bach-festival-film-screenings-free/>

Enjoy any four concerts at the Vancouver Bach Festival for the price of three. Purchases of more than four concert packages will also receive a 25% discount.

**For tickets and complete details of all Vancouver Bach Festival events, please visit: [earlymusic.bc.ca](http://www.earlymusic.bc.ca)
#VanBachFest**

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ABOUT EARLY MUSIC VANCOUVER (earlymusic.bc.ca)

For 49 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: Vancouver Bach Festival

Dates: July 30 – August 10, 2018

Tickets: \$10 – \$68

Address: Christ Church Cathedral (690 Burrard Street) and
the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts at UBC
(6265 Crescent Road)

Box Office: earlymusic.bc.ca or 604.822.2697

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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
MARKETING GROUP