Cantata Singers, Inc.
729 Boylston Street, Suite 405
Boston, MA 02116

617.868.5885
cantatasingers.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts: Emily Weddle, eweddle@cantatasingers.org
Nina Berger, ninajberger@hotmail.com

Cantata Singers presents *A Seasonal Celebration*

Festive holiday concert features music by Monteverdi, Schütz, Distler, and Schoenberg

Date and Time: Friday, December 16, 2016 at 8pm

Location: Cary Hall, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA

Date and Time: Saturday, December 17, 2016 at 8pm

Location: St. Paul Church, 29 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, MA

Pre-Concert Talks at 7pm, free to all ticketholders

Tickets: $25-$69, can be purchased by calling 617-868-5885 or visiting www.cantatasingers.org

Boston, MA—Cantata Singers rings in the holidays with a program that melds music old and new, bridging 400 years of music created for this season of celebration. Featuring works by Lassus, Victoria, Monteverdi, Schütz, Biber, Distler, and Schoenberg, two performances of *A Seasonal Celebration* will be held on Friday, December 16, 2016 at 8:00pm at Cary Hall in Lexington, and on Saturday, December 17, 2016 at 8:00pm at St. Paul Church in Cambridge.

This will be the first of two programs that Cantata Singers will present in Cary Hall during the 2016-2017 season. "Boston does not have a large number of fine venues for classical music. It is our hope to find unexpected places where our audiences are comfortable, the musicians are happy, and the sound is beautiful, and Cary Hall is coming into its own on that front," said Music Director David Hoose.

The Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi's (1567-1643) "Laetatus sum" and "Gloria a 7" are the oldest works on the program. Regarded as a transitional figure from the Renaissance to the Baroque, Monteverdi is best known for his remarkably innovative and beautiful vocal music. Both "Laetatus sum" and "Gloria a 7" are two sacred works written for pairs of soloists, chorus, 2 violins, bassoon,

trombones, and continuo. Their delicate, spinning vocal lines and complex modal harmonies showcase Monteverdi's virtuosic work for human voice.

Additional music by Orlande de Lassus, Tomás Luis de Victoria, and Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, as well as two compositions by German composer Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), round out the evening's early music offerings. Schütz, a frequent visitor to Italy, was an important linking figure between Italian music and German music during the 17th century, and studied with Monteverdi himself. Regarded as one of the last great Renaissance composers, most of his music that remains are sacred vocal works. The motets "Nun danket alle Gott" and "Ach Herr, du Schöpfer aller Ding" reflect Schütz's sensitive understanding of sacred texts, as both are settings of German prayers, with wondrously fluid vocal lines.

Hugo Distler's (1908-1942) sublime choral variations on the popular German holiday carol "Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen" come from his larger work, *Die Weihnachtsgeschichte* or *The Christmas Story*. Written for a cappella choir, Distler was directly inspired by Schütz's settings of the Passions while composing this work. Cantata Singers will be performing Distler's variations on the popular German carol, translated to English as "Lo, how a rose e'er blooming," in which he modifies the voicing in various ways, from its original four-part harmony to a double choir, bringing out the tenderness and lushness of the beloved music.

Concluding the program is Arnold Schoenberg's (1874-1951) uplifting *Friede auf Erden*, one of the last pieces from his early tonal period, as it was composed over a decade before he developed the twelve-tone method that he is known for today. The text is taken from a poem by Swiss writer Conrad Ferdinand Meyer; the title translates to *Peace on Earth*, and describes the Nativity story.

About Cantata Singers

A singular desire to bring to Boston's listeners music that isn't being heard anywhere else has inspired Cantata Singers' programming for 53 years.

In 1964, that music included the cantatas of J.S. Bach. Today, it may be hard for us to believe, but when Cantata Singers was founded in 1964, live performances of Bach cantatas were quite a rarity. In fact, Cantata Singers' early concerts featured the first Boston performances of many of the cantatas.

Bach's music, from the cantatas to the B-minor Mass to the Passions, remains an essential part of Cantata Singers' repertoire. However, the ensemble's repertoire has expanded to include music from the 17th century to today. Cantata Singers has commissioned 14 works for choir and orchestra—including one that was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music—and has presented more than fifty Boston premieres of music both old and new.

Many of Boston's most talented musicians perform regularly with Cantata Singers. The chorus is made up of singers who have careers as musicians, educators, doctors, and architects. Many of these members appear as soloists with Cantata Singers, as well as with other highly respected organizations; some conduct other choruses and orchestras in the area. Although many of our musicians perform actively as solo singers, they choose to sing with Cantata Singers because of the reward they find in performing music of the choral canon at the highest possible level.

Cantata Singers has always focused on the music—be it by Bach, Verdi, Harbison, or Pärt—and its audiences do, too. Our audiences return year after year to hear fresh visions of iconic music, or an intriguing unfamiliar work that is—in fact—quite approachable. Each Cantata Singers concert is often surprising, sometimes challenging, always beautiful, and ultimately inspiring.

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CANTATA SINGERS
2016-2017 SEASON

CONCERT SERIES

Saturday, October 15, 2016
8pm at NEC's Jordan Hall
Pre-concert talk with Scott Allen Jarrett at 7pm
Bach: Cantata BWV 147, "Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben"
Zelenka: *Laetatus sum* for soprano, mezzo-soprano, and ensemble ***U.S. Premiere*
Bach: Cantata BWV 109, "Ich glaube, lieber Herr"

Friday, December 16, 2016
8pm at Cary Hall, Lexington
Saturday, December 17, 2016
8pm at St. Paul Church, Cambridge
Pre-concert talks at 7pm
Lassus: "Sibylla Persica" from *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*
Monteverdi: *Laetatus sum*
Distler: "Es ist ein Ros' entsprugen" Variations from *The Christmas Story*
Victoria: *O magnum mysterium*
Schütz: "Nun danket alle Gott"
Biber: "The Annunciation" from *Rosary Sonatas*
Schütz: "Ach Herr, du Schöpfer aller Ding"
Monteverdi: Gloria a 7
Lassus: "Sibylla Europaea" from *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*
Schoenberg: *Friede auf Erden*, op. 13

Friday, February 24, 2017
8pm at NEC's Jordan Hall
Pre-concert talk with Ellen Exner at 7pm
Sunday, February 26, 2017
3pm at Cary Hall in Lexington
Pre-concert talk with Ellen Exner at 2pm
David Hoose, *Music Director*
Bach: B Minor mass

Friday, May 12, 2017
8pm at NEC's Jordan Hall
Pre-concert Kabbalat Shabbat at 7pm
David Hoose, *Music Director*

Honegger: *King David*
Yehudi Wyner: Torah Service
Lazar Weiner: Yiddish Art Songs and Choruses

CHAMBER SERIES

Friday, November 18, 2016 / 7:30 p.m.
American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge
Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm
Allison Voth, Chamber Series Music Director
Kurt Weill: "Berlin im Licht"
Arnold Schoenberg: "Wanderlied"
Arnold Schoenberg: "Am Strande"
Hanns Eisler: Selections from *Galgenlieder*
Berthold Goldschmidt: *Zwei Lieder*
Erich Kornbold: Selections from *Songs of the Clown*, op. 29
Alexander von Zemlinsky: "Liebe Schwalbe"
Alexander von Zemlinsky: "Blaues Sternlein"
Alexander von Zemlinsky: "Fensterlein, nachts bist du zu"
Alexander von Zemlinsky: "Der Wind des Herbstes," from op. 27
Alexander von Zemlinsky: "Afrikanischer Tanz," from op. 27
Egon Wellesz: Selections from *Kirschblutenlieder*
Paul Hindemith: *3 Hymnen*, op. 14
Ernest Krenek: Selection from *O lacrymosa*, op. 48
Hans Gál: Selections from Op. 33
Franz Schreker: Das feurige Männlein
Franz Schreker: Und wie mag die Liebe
Ernst Krenek: Selections from *Fiedellieder*, op. 64
Hanns Eisler: Selections from *Balladenbuch*, op. 18
Arnold Schoenberg: Selections from *Brettl-Lieder*
Wilhelm Grosz: Selections from *Bänkel und Balladen*
Kurt Weill: "Ballade von Cäsars Tod" from *Der Silbersee*
Kurt Weill: "Youkali" from *Marie Galante*

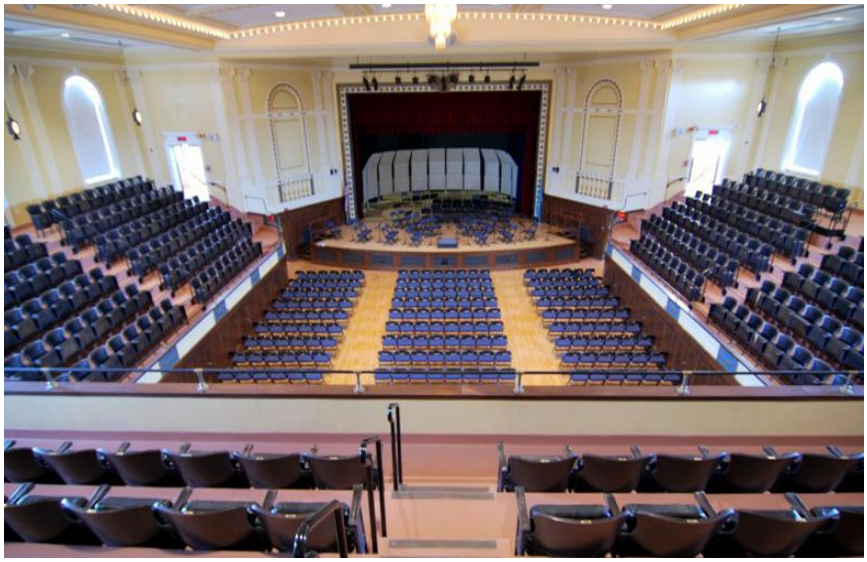
Friday, January 20, 2017 / 7:30 p.m.
American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge
Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm
Allison Voth, Chamber Series Music Director
Lazar Weiner: "A gebet"
Lazar Weiner: "Volt majn tate raych geven"
Lazar Weiner: "Shtile tener"
Lazar Weiner: "Der Scholem-zokher"

Lazar Weiner: “Tsela-tseldi”
Kurt Weill: *Ofrah’s Lieder*
Lazar Weiner: “Unter dayne vayse shtern”
Lazar Weiner: “A Papir Vil Bageyn Zelbsmord”
Lazar Weiner: “Bald vet zayn a regn”
Lazar Weiner: “Shtile likht”
Lazar Weiner: “Der yid mitn fidl”
Kurt Weill: *Maikaterlied*
Kurt Weill: *Abendlied*
Kurt Weill: Selections from *Five Songs from Huckleberry Finn*
Lazar Weiner: “Mayn Shprach”
Lazar Weiner: “Farbaygeyer”
Lazar Weiner: “Arop un Aroyf”
Lazar Weiner: “Meyn Lid”
Lazar Weiner: “Di Dame mitn Hintl”
Kurt Weill: *Four Walt Whitman Songs*
Kurt Weill: *Zu Potsdam unter den Eichen*

Friday, March 31, 2017 / 7:30 p.m.
American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge
Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm
Allison Voth, Chamber Series Director
Erik Satie: Excerpt from *Trois morceaux en forme de poire*
Arthur Honegger: Selections from *Six Poésies de Jean Cocteau*
Francis Poulenc: Selections from *Cocardes*, FP 16
Darius Milhaud: *Trois Poèmes de Jean Cocteau*, op. 59
Erik Satie: *Trois Mélodies*
Louis Durey: Selections from *Chansons Basques*, op. 23
Georges Auric: Selections from *Huit poèmes de Jean Cocteau*
Arthur Honegger: Selections from *Six Poèmes d’Apollinaire*
Francis Poulenc: Selections from *Quatre Poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire*, FP 58
Francis Poulenc: Excerpts from Sonata for Piano Four Hands, FP 8
Georges Auric: *Alphabet (7 Quatrains de Raymond Radiguet)*
Louis Durey: *Le bestiaire*, op. 17a
Darius Milhaud: Suite for violin, clarinet, and piano, op. 157b
Germaine Tailleferre: *Six Chansons Françaises*
Francis Poulenc: Selections from *Chansons gaillardes*, FP 42

High resolution photos available on our website at:
http://www.cantatasingers.org/news/press-kit/
Please contact eweddle@cantatasingers.org for information and questions.

Cantata Singers
Photo Credit: James Luo



Cary Hall