Cantata Singers celebrates the holiday season
with “A Cantata Singers Christmas”
Featuring Baroque and Renaissance music for chamber chorus and orchestra

Date and Time: Friday, December 7, 2018 at 8pm
Date and Time: Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 3pm
Location: First Lutheran Church, Boston, 299 Berkeley Street, Boston
Tickets: $25-$75 can be purchased by calling 617-868-5885 or visiting www.cantatasingers.org

Boston, MA—Cantata Singers celebrates the holiday season with two opportunities to hear “A Cantata Singers Christmas”— on Friday, December 7th at 8pm, and on Sunday, December 9th at 3pm, both at First Lutheran Church in the heart of Boston’s Back Bay.

Cantata Singers’ Music Director David Hoose leads a program of radiant Baroque and Renaissance seasonal music for chamber chorus and ensemble. The program begins with Slovene composer Jacobus Gallus Handl’s (1550-1591) “Mirabile mysterium,” which features a style popular in Renaissance Venice of spatially separate choirs singing in alternation. Following is German composer Heinrich Schütz’s (1585-1672) exquisite “Dulcissime et benignissime Christe,” representing some of the best counterpoint written in the seventeenth century. Giovanni Gabrieli’s (1554-1612) “O magnum mysterium” also exhibits the Venetian polychoral style of two alternating and distinct choirs made up of four voices each.

Concluding the first half of the concert are two pieces by Danish-German composer Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707). The first, “In dulci jubilo,” is a traditional Christmas carol written for soprano, alto, bass, two violins, and continuo, featuring soprano Felicity Salmon, alto Amy Lieberman, and bass Brian Church. The text, written by German mystic and monk Henrich Suso, is one of the oldest and most famous examples of a “macaronic” song, or a text that combines both Latin and a vernacular language—in this case, German. The second work, “Das neugeborne Kindelein,” was composed to
celebrate the coming of the new year—also the sixth day of Christmas. The text sets four verses of a popular Christmas hymn, first published in 1588, that celebrates the birth of Jesus and the jubilation of the season.

The second half of the program begins with four works by English Renaissance composer William Byrd (1538-1623). A student of Thomas Tallis, William Byrd is considered one of the greatest English composers of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. His charming communion motet, “Vidimus stellam,” was written for the celebration of Epiphany—the twelfth day of Christmas that recognizes the arrival of the three magi in Bethlehem to the baby Jesus. The delightful “Out of the Orient Crystal Skies,” one of Byrd’s Consort Songs, also celebrates Epiphany with resplendence, sung by mezzo-soprano Jennifer Webb. “Hodie beata Virgo,” a motet for four voices rearranged for strings for this performance, and “Surge, illuminare, Jerusalem,” a celebratory motet about Jerusalem, conclude the quartet of musical works by Byrd.

The program concludes with music by English composers Henry Purcell (1659-1695) and Robert Parsons (1535-1572). Purcell's “O Sing Unto the Lord" is a triumphant anthem based on Psalm 96, which is often read during Christmas Eve mass. The work was written specifically for John Gosling, an outstanding baritone active in the Chapel Royal in the 1680s. Soloists include bass Mark Andrew Cleveland, soprano Janet Ross, alto Jennifer Webb, and tenor Jeffrey Wang. Parsons’ beautiful five-part motet, “Ave Maria," the most famous composition from his short life, will bring the concert to a sparkling close.
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 55 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 15 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
2018-2019 SEASON

CONCERT SERIES

Saturday, November 3, 2018
8 p.m. at NEC’s Jordan Hall
Pre-concert talk at 7pm
David Hoose, Music Director
J.S. Bach: “Wachet auf,” BWV 140
John Harbison: Sacred Trilogy
  The Flight Into Egypt
  But Mary Stood
  The Supper at Emmaus
  First Complete Performance

Friday, December 7, 2018
8 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, Boston
Sunday, December 9, 2018
3 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, Boston
David Hoose, Music Director
Jacobus Gallus Handl: Mirabile mysterium
Heinrich Schütz: Dulcissime et benignissime Christe
Giovanni Gabrieli: O magnum mysterium
Dieterich Buxtehude: In dulci jubilo
Dieterich Buxtehude: Das neugeborene Kindelein
William Byrd: Vidimus stellam
William Byrd: Out of the Orient Crystal Skies
William Byrd: Hodie beata Virgo
William Byrd: Surge, illuminare, Jerusalem
Henry Purcell: O Sing Unto the Lord
Robert Parsons: Ave Maria

Friday, January 25, 2019
8 p.m. at NEC’s Jordan Hall
Pre-concert talk at 7pm
David Hoose, Music Director
James Primosch: Matins
Peggy Pearson, oboe
Béla Bartók: Divertimento for Strings
Arvo Pärt: Te Deum
Friday, March 22, 2019  
8 p.m. at NEC’s Jordan Hall  
Pre-concert talk at 7pm  
David Hoose, Music Director  
Franz Joseph Haydn: The Creation

Friday, May 17, 2019  
8 p.m. at St. Paul Church, Cambridge  
Pre-concert talk at 7pm  
David Hoose, Music Director  
Anton Bruckner: Mass No. 2 in E minor  
Igor Stravinsky: Mass  
Giovanni Gabrieli: Jubilate Deo

CHAMBER SERIES

Friday, February 8, 2019  
7:30pm at American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge  
Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm  
Allison Voth, Chamber Series Director  
Clara Schumann: Liebst du um Schönheit  
Clara Schumann: Liebeszauber  
Alma Mahler: Waldseligkeit  
Fanny Mendelssohn: Ferne  
Fanny Mendelssohn: Bergeslust  
Pauline Viardot: Madrid  
Lili Boulanger: Parfoi, je suis triste  
Lili Boulanger: Un poët disait  
Nadia Boulanger: J'ai frappé  
Nadia Boulanger: Le couteau  
Cécile Chaminade: J'avais douté de votre amour  
Cécile Chaminade: Villanelle  
Germaine Tailleferre: Vrai dieu, qui m'y confortera  
Germaine Tailleferre: Mon marie m'a diffamé  
Pauline Viardot: Les Bohémiennes  
Elizabeth Maconchy: On Stepheners Day  
Rebecca Clarke: Shy One  
Judith Weir: The Romance of Count Arnaldos  
Jenni Pinnock: Bells in the Rain  
Régine Wieniawski (Poldowski): Colombine  
Rhian Samuel: In Memorium  
Florence Aylward: The Window
Emily Hall: Stillborn
Charlotte Bray: While the Bell Tolls
Thea Musgrave: Daffodils
Thea Musgrave: Willie Webster
Thea Musgrave: Hate whom ye list

Friday, April 26, 2018
7:30pm at American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge
Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm
Allison Voth, Chamber Series Director
Amy Beach: "The Year's at the Spring," Op. 44, No. 1
Amy Beach: "Forgotten," Op. 41, No. 3
Amy Beach: "In the Twilight," Op. 85
Margaret Bonds: "Poème d'Automne"
Margaret Bonds: "Summer Storm"
Libby Larsen: My Antonia
Marjorie Merryman: Allison Joseph Songs
Lori Laitman: And Music Shall Not End
Ruth Crawford Seeger: "Chinaman! Laundryman!"
Tania León: "Mi Amor Es"
Susan Botti: "Listen, it's Snowing"
Kamala Sankaram: "The Last Blast of Anthony the Trumpeter"
Sheila Silver: "A Visit to the Asylum"
Sheila Silver: "Recuerdo"
Sheila Silver: "I, being born a woman"
Sheila Silver: "First Fig (Round II)"
High resolution photos available on our website at: http://www.cantatasingers.org/press-kit

Please contact eweddle@cantatasingers.org for information and questions.

Cantata Singers
Photo Credit: James Luo

Music Director David Hoose
Photo Credit: Michael McVey