



News Release

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CANTORES CELESTES WOMEN'S CHOIR *WRAPPED IN LIGHT* SPRING CONCERT

TORONTO, ON, January 30, 2018 – Cantores Celestes Women's Choir will perform its *Wrapped in Light* spring concert on Saturday, April 21, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at Runnymede United Church in Toronto. Under the direction of Kelly Galbraith, the 50-voiced women's choir will perform music by Michael Haydn, Henry Purcell, Hildegard von Bingen, Kim Andre Arnesen and Ola Gjeilo.

"We start the program with a chant by abbess and mystic Hildegard von Bingen who was born more than 900 years ago," says Kelly Galbraith, who founded Cantores Celestes in 1989. "A line from her chant: *'First voice through whom all creation was summoned'* bookends the final piece on the program by one of our favourite composers, Norwegian Ola Gjeilo. His *Song of the Universal* inspired our title: *'All, all for immortality! Love, like the light, silently wrapping all.'*"

The choir will perform Michael Haydn's delightful *Missa Sancti Aloysii*. "The piece that skips along casting sunbeams in its wake," says Galbraith. Michael was the less famous brother of Franz Joseph but his Mass is a masterpiece. Saint Aloysius (for whom it was named) is the patron saint of students, youth and those who suffer from AIDS. "He was a caring, loving man, who lived embracing light and spreading goodness," says Galbraith.

Purcell's suite *Come Ye Sons of Art* is a charming and joyous ode written for the birthday of the British Queen Mary in 1696. *Shen Khar Venakhi*, a Georgian Chant written more than 1000 years ago, is a Cantores Celestes favourite and ends with the line *'You yourself are the sun brightly shining.'* Norwegian composer Kim Andre Arnesen's sublime *Even When He is Silent* is a heartfelt petition of angst that reflects on life with the words, *'I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I feel it not'*.

Musicians joining the choir in this concert are The Emperor String Quartet, organist Matthew Coons and accompanist Kate Carver – an in-demand pianist and vocal coach who teaches at the Canadian Opera Company.

"This program is an antidote to fear and negativity," says Galbraith. "It embraces the light within all of us."

Cantores Celestes will continue its tradition of giving to charity with a \$1,000 donation to Music at the Towers, a beginning level orchestra program for 6 to 14 year olds from Brampton Towers. This program supports new Canadian, low income, single parent residents of Brampton Towers.

Concert Information

Saturday, April 21, 2018, 7:30 pm – Runnymede United Church – 432 Runnymede Road, Toronto
Admission: \$25.00. No reserved seating

About Cantores Celestes Women's Choir

Concluding its 29th season, this auditioned choir began in 1989 by Artistic Director Kelly Galbraith. The members of Cantores Celestes have donated more than \$60,000 to various charities. Cantores Celestes has appeared on CBC Radio One and Radio Two, as well as the commercially released CBC video Clyde Gilmour: A Celebration in Words and Music. The choir has recorded music for three films and has released six CDs: Wassail!, Bright Shining as the Sun, Love's Pure Light, The Circle Never Ends, Wake Up in the Moonlight Singing and Women of Light. Cantores Celestes has toured the Canadian maritime provinces and performed throughout western and eastern Ontario. It was one of the choirs invited to participate in Festival 500 in Newfoundland and in the opening concerts for Barrie's 2010 Colours of Music Festival and the 2012 Toronto Vocal Arts Festival. The members of Cantores Celestes were thrilled to be part of the mass choir performance celebrating International Women's Day in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center on March 10, 2014. Cantores Celestes was the only women's choir invited to sing in the 1,000-performer production of R. Murray Schafer's *Apocalypse* for the 2015 Luminato Festival at Toronto's Sony Centre. This performance resulted in a new Analekta recording release in 2016. Cantores Celestes will sing *Snowforms* by R. Murray Schafer on March 26 at the Arts and Letters Club as part of a presentation featuring a documentary about the composer's life and work. They will perform a new work by Sir John Rutter under his director at Carnegie Hall on May 28 and will finish recording their 7th CD this year.

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