

WELCOME from the Artistic Director



ANTOINE PLANTE
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
LYNN WYATT CHAIR

Dear friends,

It is always exciting to prepare for and perform a masterpiece like Mozart's Requiem, which is his setting of the mass for the dead. This is Mozart's last composition; in fact, it was left unfinished at the time of his death. No other piece of music has been the subject of more mysteries, gossip and lies!

The version of the Requiem that we perform tonight was completed by Mozart's friend, Franz Xavier Sussmayr. Although the stories behind its composition are fascinating, what makes this piece so special is its profound quality. Death is a subject that inspires composers and audiences alike with its mystery, terror, but also its reconciliation and even comfort. The beautiful text of the Requiem mass becomes so powerful when supported by Mozart's glorious music. It really makes this piece one of my favorites to perform.

In the first half of the concert, a different ceremony for the dead is being imagined. Henry Purcell's Music for the *Funeral of Queen Mary* provides beautiful vocal quartet music as the core of the arrangement for orchestra and chorus. In between Purcell's movements, a little bit like readings in a funeral ceremony, our four soloists share music that defines different experiences of loss and hope.

I am grateful for the many friends of Mercury who have given gifts to support this evening's concert to honor those special in their lives. I hope you will enjoy this concert that brings our 2016-17 season to a close.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antoine Plante". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.