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For Immediate Release



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Mercury musicians take the spotlight in April “Splendors of the Baroque” concerts

Renowned violinist/Concertmaster Jonathan Godfrey
leads dynamic program of works by Italian Masters
showcasing ensemble artists

Concerts part of exciting weekend of cultural and culinary arts in Houston

Houston, TX - The passion and fire of Italian Baroque music is highlighted this April in Mercury's upcoming spring concerts specially curated by Artistic Director **Antoine Plante** to shine a spotlight on the orchestra's talented musicians, especially its Concertmaster.

"These concerts are all about the energy and drive of a great violinist. Mercury's own **Jonathan Godfrey** leads the orchestra playing some of the most beautiful and spirited music by Vivaldi and his contemporaries," stated Mr. Plante, who invited Mr. Godfrey to lead/solo in the April 12 - 15, 2018 performances.

In four unique venues across Houston - the Museum of Fine Arts (MFAH), MATCH, Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church (MDPC), and Dosey Doe in The Woodlands, Mr. Godfrey will not only lead the hour-long performances featuring vibrant music by four Italian masters - Antonio Vivaldi, Pietro Antonio Locatelli, Arcangelo Corelli and Giuseppe Sammartini, but serve as soloist as well. Mercury violinist **Oleg Sulyga** and cellist **Beiliang Zhu** also perform as soloists.

The concert opens with Vivaldi's innovative Concerto for Two Violins and Cello in A minor from his first published set of concertos, "L'estro armonico," which has the two solo violinists playing off each other through the entire work, followed by the composer's lively, exuberant Concerto for Cello in A minor, RV 418. Locatelli's moving Concerto Grosso in E-flat major, "The Tears of Ariadne", is followed by Corelli's beautiful Concerto grosso in D major, Op. 6, No.4. The energetic and lyrical Concerto Grosso in A major, Op.2, No.1 by Sammartini closes the performance.

A dedicated member of the Houston community and cultural scene, Mercury has partnered with the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Hotel ZaZa, and local restaurants via a generous cultural tourism grant from Houston First to offer an exciting arts weekend April 14 and 15. Audience members can purchase a special arts package that allows for access to the special visiting [Michelangelo exhibition at MFAH](#), the Mercury concert in MFAH's Baroque Gallery, and a special rate at Hotel ZaZa as well as discounts at Houston foodie favorites Lucille's and Cuchara.

MERCURY: NEIGHBORHOOD SERIES

Splendors of Italian Baroque April 12-15, 2018

[MATCH Thursday, April 12, 2018 at 8 PM](#)

[MDPC Saturday, April 14, 2018 at 2:30 PM](#)

[MFAH Saturday, April 14, 2018 at 7 PM](#)

[Dosey Doe Sunday, April 15, 2018 at 7 PM](#)

Antonio Vivaldi

Concerto for Two Violins and Cello in A minor, Op. 3, No. 8, RV522

Concerto for Cello in A minor, RV 418

Pietro Antonio Locatelli

Concerto Grosso in E-flat major, Op. 7, No. 6 "The Tears of Ariadne"

Arcangelo Corelli

Concerto grosso in D major, Op. 6, No. 4

Giuseppe Sammartini

Concerto Grosso in A major, Op.2, No. 1

Jonathan Godfrey, violin/lead

Oleg Sulyga, violin

Beiliang Zhu, cello

The Neighborhood Series is sponsored by Phillips 66 and made possible also in part by the Houston Endowment and the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance.

Mercury's also performs "Splendors of Italian Baroque" on April 13 at the University of Houston Clear Lake's Bayou Theater. This concert is produced by the University of Houston Clear Lake, and tickets are available through [UHCL Cultural Arts](#).

ABOUT MERCURY

Innovation, accessibility and dynamism are just three of the distinguishing characteristics of Mercury, the critically acclaimed Houston-based period instrument ensemble that continues to redefine the orchestra experience. Now in its 17th season, Mercury celebrates the power of music - from the Baroque period and more - serving the Houston community and beyond through teaching, sharing and performing with passion, intimacy and excellence.

In addition to performances in multiple venues throughout the Houston area, Mercury continues to invest in the community. It offers free community performances annually, including the community concert at The Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park, and the public concerts in the Crain Garden at Houston Methodist Hospital. Recognized for its award-winning education outreach programs comprising classroom music education and performances in Houston area schools, Mercury also presents master classes for school orchestras. Active in the recording scene, to date, Mercury has released eight albums on its own label, featuring works by Corelli, Mozart, Schubert, Rameau, Vivaldi, Piazzolla, and Handel.

Following Hurricane Harvey, Mercury's 2017-18 Flagship Downtown Series takes place at Stude Concert Hall at Rice University and Zilkha Hall at The Hobby Center while the Wortham Center's Cullen Theater is being renovated. Mercury's Neighborhood Series continues in the Museum of Fine Arts (MFAH) Beck Building, MATCH, Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, and Dosey Doe in The Woodlands.

The ensemble celebrates its tenth gala May 18, 2018 chaired by Christine and Jan Spin and honoring Phillips 66.

Mercury gratefully acknowledges the following organizations and corporations for their ongoing support: the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment Inc., Texas Commission on the ARTS (TCA), the Wyatt Foundation, the Ting Tsung and Wei Fung Chao Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Of recent import is a Hurricane Harvey Relief Grant from the TCA, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, Mellon Foundation

and State of Texas, awarded to the ensemble to assist in the recovery of the business interruptions due the Hurricane Harvey this fall.

For additional information on Mercury, its events and concerts, directions to the venues, and to learn more about its recordings, please visit www.mercuryhouston.org