



Canzona puts 18th-century music on its feet with modern dance

*Recently re-launched Winnipeg professional choir
presents music by J.S. Bach and his mentor, Buxtehude*

Winnipeg, MB - In a new venture for Manitoba's premiere Baroque choir, Canzona is bringing modern dance into the realm of sacred choral music for its final concert of the 2017-18 season. On **Sunday, April 22, 2018 at 7:30 at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church**, the sublime voices of Canzona's 20-voice professional ensemble will be joined by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and dancer Alexandra Garrido to breath new life into a masterpiece by Bach's teacher, Dieterich Buxtehude.

Membra Jesu Nostris is a rarely performed masterpiece comprising seven cantatas, each pertaining to a different part of the human body and drawing texts from poetic and biblical sources. Composed as a visceral embodiment of Christ's body on the cross, the individual focus on each of seven body parts (the feet, the knees, the hands, the side, the breast, the heart, and finally, the face) leads the listener on a meditation of the physicality of death and persecution. Dancer Alexandra Garrido will explore the physical implications of the work through a contemporary lens and illuminate seven short sections throughout the approximately one-hour piece. As the first time Canzona has explored collaborations in the dance realm, this concert continues to mark new directions for the choir.

"We are delighted to be presenting this unique Baroque work in a new light," says Kathleen Allan, Canzona's Artistic Director. "I have always been fascinated with the power of dance and the interaction between movement and sound. This work lends itself so beautifully to a visual interpretation, and we are delighted to have Alexandra's creative voice in this project."

The concert will open with a cantata by J.S. Bach, a student of Buxtehude who famously walked over 400km to study with the venerated composer and organist in Lübeck. Bach, at 22 years of age, composed *Christ Lag in Todesbanden* soon after his studies with Buxtehude. The fourth of his 200+ cantatas, *Christ Lag* is one of the most beloved and most performed pieces of his prolific output.

Both works will feature soloists from within the choir's ranks.

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About Canzona:

Canzona is Manitoba's premiere Baroque choral ensemble. A love of Baroque music prompted the choir into being in 1989 under the direction of Henry Engbrecht. With new Artistic Director, Kathleen Allan, Canzona will continue to delve into the Baroque masterworks of Bach and Handel while staying committed to introducing Manitoba audiences to lesser known Baroque composers and providing context for the works of the past in the contemporary world. Canzona is proud to have collaborated with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, the MusikBarock Ensemble, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Nova and the University of Manitoba Singers.

About Alexandra Garrido, Dancer and Choreographer:

From Texas to Estonia, Garrido has traveled to unusual and wonderful places to perform. As a member of The Mariachi Ghost, her performance work has been showcased in Tallinn, Estonia, Austin, Texas, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg. In addition to her work with The Mariachi Ghost, her solo work, *Untitled* was featured in 2017 *Mujer Artista: Speaking in Tongues* at Ace Art Gallery. Garrido has a mesmerizing effect on audiences, she is an emotionally gripping performer, her fluid, natural movement is both gorgeous and raw. As an artist, her intention is to connect to the audience in a visceral way to reveal the intertwined existence of music and the human body. Garrido is a graduate of the Senior Professional Program of the School of Contemporary Dancers. She was an apprentice dancer with NAfro Dance Company (2012-2014) and is a co-founder of Nova Dance Collective in Winnipeg.

About Kathleen Allan, Artistic Director:

Kathleen Allan is the Artistic Director of Canzona, Manitoba's premiere Baroque choral ensemble. Her expertise ranges from medieval repertoire to contemporary works, and she is particularly interested in the intersections found between music of diverse genres. In 2015, she made her Asian debut conducting Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* in Osaka and Tokyo, Japan, and in 2016 was the recipient of the Sir Ernest MacMillan Prize in Choral Conducting. She is the founding co-artistic director of Arkora, a chamber music collective dedicated to interdisciplinary performance. Ms. Allan serves as the Director of Choral Studies at the Vancouver Academy of Music and is the Associate Conductor of the Vancouver Bach Choir. Ms. Allan has studied and performed with many of Baroque music's leading figures including Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Masaaki Suzuki, Nicholas McGegan, Helmuth Rilling, and Simon Carrington. She holds a degree in composition from UBC and a master's degree in conducting from Yale University.

Listing Information: Canzona presents *Membra Jesu Nostri*

Date: Sunday, Apr. 22, 2018 at 7:30pm

Location: Crescent Fort Rouge United Church
525 Wardlaw Ave, Winnipeg, MB

Ticket Price: \$30 Adult; \$24 Senior; \$12 Student

Box Office: Tickets available at McNally Robinson Booksellers or www.canzona.ca