

Boston Early Music Festival

INTERNATIONAL BAROQUE OPERA • CELEBRATED CONCERTS • WORLD-FAMOUS EXHIBITION

Boston Early Music Festival
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2016

BEMF opens its 2016–2017 Season with viol consort Fretwork and soprano Suzie LeBlanc performing masterworks by Byrd, Gibbons, Dowland, and Purcell—October 7 in Harvard Square

ARTISTS: **Fretwork** (United Kingdom)
Asako Morikawa, Richard Boothby, Reiko Ichise, Emily Ashton, & Sam Stadlen, *viols*

Suzie LeBlanc, *soprano* (Canada)

WHEN: **Friday, October 7, 2016 at 8:00pm**
First Church, Congregational, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA

PROGRAM: **Music for a While: Masterworks of Byrd, Gibbons, Dowland, and Purcell**

William Byrd: *My mind to me a kingdom is*
Byrd: *Browning*
Byrd: *Constant Penelope*
Orlando Gibbons: *What is our life?*
Gibbons: *In Nomine in 5 parts*
Byrd: *O that most rare breast*
Byrd: *In Nomine*
Byrd: *Content is rich*
John Dowland: *Lachrimae Tristes*
Dowland: *In Darkness let me dwell*
Dowland: *The Earl of Essex's Galliard*
Dowland: *Shall I strive with words to move?*
Henry Purcell: *Music for a while*
Purcell: Two Fantazias in four parts
Purcell: *O Solitude*
Purcell: Two Fantazias in four parts
Purcell: *The Evening Hymn*

TICKETS: Tickets are priced at **\$20, \$39, \$51, and \$70** each, and can be purchased at **www.BEMF.org** and **617-661-1812**; a \$5 discount for students, seniors, and groups is available by calling 617-661-1812. Subscription discounts are available with the purchase of three or more programs on the 2016–2017 Season.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

Celebrating their 30th anniversary, viol consort **Fretwork** has delighted audiences through their concert tours and acclaimed recordings, particularly those in collaboration with other elite Early Music artists

and ensembles. Joining them to open BEMF's 2016–2017 Season is soprano **Suzie LeBlanc**, one of the most sought after Early Music singers of her generation. These exceptional artists explore a beguiling program of aural beauty and refined elegance for voice and viol consort from English masters Byrd, Gibbons, Dowland, and Purcell.

The viol consort began its life playing vocal music, the same madrigals and motets that the singers enjoyed. Works such as Orlando Gibbons' 1612 collection of madrigals were published with the note, "apt for voyces or viols." The music could be performed with five voices, five viols, or one voice and four viols. This last format—the consort song—became the most popular form of vernacular polyphony in England in the late sixteenth century. These songs varied widely in character, from simple psalms to dramatic elegies, as did the purely vocal works they grew from. In contrast, the works for viols alone became increasingly specialized for the instruments. The program explores the full depth of this evolution in England, from the refined elegance of Byrd and Gibbons to the remarkable beauty of Dowland and Purcell

ASSOCIATED EVENTS:

A pre-concert talk will be given at 7pm at First Church, Congregational, Cambridge featuring **Richard Boothby**, founding member of Fretwork.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Celebrating three decades of music-making, few ensembles can match the breadth of Fretwork's repertory, which ranges from the first printed music published in 1501 in Venice to contemporary music commissioned by the ensemble itself from some of the most prominent composers of our time. Their pioneering work has taken its members all over the world, bringing their consistently high standards as they introduce audiences to the inspiring sound-world of the viol. Their award-winning recordings of the classic English viol repertory have become the benchmark by which other performances are measured. They celebrated their 30th anniversary this past June with a gala concert at Kings Place and have plans to return to the recording studio for four new albums.

Soprano Suzie LeBlanc is one of the most sought after Early Music sopranos of her generation, as well as a gifted interpreter of lieder, French mélodies, Acadian repertoire and contemporary music. Concerts engagements have led her around the world, and she has made over 50 recordings with the world's leading early music ensembles. On the opera stage, she has performed for De Nederlandse Opera, Festival de Beaune, Opéra de Montréal, the Boston Early Music Festival, Tanglewood and Early Music Vancouver. The recipient of four honorary doctorates for her artistic achievements and research, she also played the lead role in the award winning film *Lost Song* (Best Canadian Feature Film at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2008). With Alexander Weimann and Marie-Nathalie Lacoursière, she founded Le Nouvel Opéra, which gives workshops in Baroque Opera and produces chamber operas at the Orford Arts Centre, east of Montreal.

RESOURCES:

Download artist photos: <http://www.bemf.org/pages/press/images.htm>

BEMF's 2016–2017 Season Press Release: http://www.bemf.org/pages/press/052416_1617season.htm

ABOUT THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL:

Recognized as the preeminent early music presenter and Baroque opera producer in North America, the **Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF)** has been credited with securing Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*The Boston Globe*). Founded in 1981, BEMF offers diverse programs and activities, including one GRAMMY Award-winning and four GRAMMY Award-nominated opera recordings, an annual concert series that brings early music's brightest stars to the Boston and New York concert stages, and a biennial week-long Festival and Exhibition recognized as the "world's leading festival of early music" (*The Times*, London). The 19th Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 11–18, 2017, and will feature fully staged performances of André Campra's *Le Carnaval de Venise* as the Centerpiece Opera. BEMF's Artistic Leadership includes Artistic Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**, Opera Director **Gilbert Blin**, and Orchestra Director **Robert Mealy**.

The 2016–2017 Boston Early Music Festival Concert Series is presented with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, ConstellationCenter, WGBH Radio Boston, Harpsichord Clearing House, Zuckermann Harpsichords International, and The Gregory E. Bulger Foundation.

For more information, images, press tickets, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email kathy@bemf.org.

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