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**Mercury Baroque presents *Baroque Meditation*
with special guest vocalists Les Voix Baroques**



HOUSTON—[Mercury Baroque](http://www.mercurybaroque.org) welcomes Canadian vocal ensemble [Les Voix Baroques](http://www.lesvoixbaroques.com) back to Houston for *Baroque Meditation*, March 20, 2009 at 8 p.m., at the Wortham Center's Cullen Theater. A pre-concert lecture will be given at 7:15 p.m.

Les Voix Baroques is a Canadian ensemble of vocal soloists that works in conjunction with prominent instrumentalists, ensembles and guest directors to present works from the Renaissance and Baroque eras.

The ensemble consists of tenor Colin Balzer, baritone Sumner Thompson, counter-tenor Matthew White and sopranos Yulia Van Doren and Catherine Webster.

Mercury Baroque takes a breather from a season of blockbuster works to bring Houston audiences a taste of the lesser-known Baroque repertoire. For this unique chamber music concert, Mercury Baroque Artistic Director [Antoine Plante](http://www.mercurybaroque.org) trades in his baton for the [viola da gamba](http://www.violadagamba.com).

German composer Dietrich Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostrī (the Limbs of Our Lord Jesus)* leads off an intimate evening of German vocal works. The piece comprises a cycle of seven sacred [cantatas](http://www.cantatas.com). Each cantata addresses a part of the body of Christ: feet, knees, hands, side, chest, heart and face. The [libretto](http://www.libretto.com) is based on *Salve mundi salutar*, a popular devotional poem of disputed origin. *Nimm Von Uns, Herr* and *Du Treuer Gott*, all by Buxtehude, will also be performed.

Buxtehude was an important contributor to the organ and vocal work of the middle Baroque era and influenced many composers who followed him. According to legend, Bach traveled more than 200 miles on foot to hear him play. *Baroque Meditation* is a rare chance to hear this gifted composer.

Mercury Baroque's highly imaginative programming brings music to a variety of audiences and venues, including the Wortham Center, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and The University of Houston at Clear Lake. The ensemble does not limit itself to concerts—it also presents a fully staged opera each season.

This year, Plante was named the *Houston Chronicle's* Ultimate Viola Da Gamba Player and hailed for "making the old-fashioned fashionable." Praised by audiences and musicians for his conducting verve and innovative programming, Plante is a young conductor who has garnered accolades for bringing Baroque music to new audiences. He is a founder of Mercury Baroque and has become known for his deftness in balancing a repertoire of great works with lesser-known and reconstructed pieces.

Tickets for *Baroque Meditation* are \$20 - \$47. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call 832-251-0706 or visit www.mercurybaroque.org.

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**Pictured: Violinists Kana Kimura, Hae-a Lee and Dorian Vandenberg-Rodes
Photo Credit: George Hixson**