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**Experience the peak of High Baroque instrumental music  
as Mercury Baroque opens its 2008-09 season with *The Essence of Mercury***



HOUSTON—Worlds collide when Mercury Baroque opens its 2008-09 season with *The Essence of Mercury* on October 3, 2008 at 8 p.m. at the Wortham Center's Cullen Theater.

With its authentic yet distinctive approach to the world of Baroque music, Mercury Baroque will perform the brilliant concerti grossi of George Frideric Handel's Opus 6 on period instruments so audiences can experience the music as it was originally heard in Handel's time.

"We are thrilled to open the season at the Wortham showcasing our strings—Houston musicians that make up the heart of the Mercury ensemble," said artistic director Antoine Plante.

Handel composed the 12 concertos of his Opus 6 in only two months, September and October of 1739. Noted not only for their elegance, but also their accessibility, the concertos are a wonderful representation of the genius of Handel and the peak of High Baroque instrumental music.

Mercury Baroque strings are comprised of local musicians, many of who have been with the ensemble since its inception.

The night's featured soloists include Mercury Baroque Concertmaster and founding violinist Jonathan Godfrey, as well as violinist Oleg Sulyga and cellist Barrett Sills.

Godfrey has performed with many fine ensembles, including the Houston Symphony, Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, Houston Ballet Orchestra and the Grand Teton Music Festival Orchestra. In addition to his work with Mercury Baroque, Godfrey is also Assistant Concertmaster of the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and the Houston Ballet Orchestra.

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.

Tickets for *The Essence of Mercury* are \$20 - \$47. To purchase tickets, call 832-251-0706 or visit [www.mercurybaroque.org](http://www.mercurybaroque.org).

Also in concert Saturday, October 4 at 8 p.m. at The University of Houston, Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Houston, Texas 77058. For tickets to Saturday's performance, call 281-283-2560.

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Pictured: Violinists Andrés González and Oleg Sulyga Photo credit: George Hixson