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## **Mercury Baroque Presents Generation Purcell!**



Antoine Plante  
Artistic Director, Mercury Baroque  
Photo by George Hixson

On Friday, November 20th at 8:00pm in Houston's Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, Mercury Baroque presents its second subscription performance of the season entitled: Generation Purcell. This special concert celebrates the 350th birthday of Henry Purcell, featuring an intimate selection of his music and the music of some of his closest contemporaries, including Locke, Croft, and Blow. Generation Purcell also marks the third collaboration between Mercury Baroque, one of the nations leading period instrument orchestras, and Canada's famed vocal ensemble Les Voix Baroques. There will be a pre-concert lecture at 7:15 in the Wortham's Green Room with Dr. Yvonne Kendall. Tickets for Generation Purcell range from \$20-\$47 and can be purchased online at [www.mercurybaroque.org](http://www.mercurybaroque.org) or by phone at 832-251-0706.

Henry Purcell is often regarded as England's greatest composer and this performance contextualizes the genius of his music by pairing it with music by some of his contemporaries. It features sacred and secular music by John Blow, William Croft, and Matthew Locke. For this performance, Antoine Plante, Mercury Baroque's Artistic Director, trades his conducting baton for his viola da gamba and joins the smaller Mercury chamber ensemble to accompany the fantastic voices of Les Voix Baroques. Les Voix Baroques' Alexander Weimann will lead the ensemble from the Harpsichord and Organ.

According to David Gordon Duke of the Vancouver Sun, "...even the music by relatively unsung masters was powerfully evocative". Les Voix Baroques' performance of this music has been hailed by the Vancouver Sun as "...collegial, collaborative music-making of the highest level." Generation Purcell will be the third collaboration between Mercury Baroque and Les Voix Baroques, the previous collaboration being for Mercury's Baroque Meditation performance last March which featured Dietrich Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*.

Mercury Baroque has been a dynamic member of the Houston arts community since 2000. Founded as a chamber ensemble, the group has grown into a Baroque orchestra performing a full subscription season of concerts in downtown Houston and touring both domestically and internationally. The organization continues to pursue its goal of building a strong tradition of Baroque music performance in Houston, starting with its educational outreach programs designed to train the city's future musicians and create the audience of the future. Although Mercury is focused on bringing the best Baroque to Houston, the ensemble has toured to other countries as well, including two tours to Quito, Ecuador. In September, 2010, Mercury will reprise its popular performance of Lully's opera *Armide* in Paris.