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NEW TRINITY TO CELEBRATE ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY WITH BACH'S FAMOUS "ST. JOHN PASSION"

The group promises to recreate Bach's own performance of 1724

(Atlanta – Thursday, February 21, 2008) – On Saturday, 1st of March 2008 at 8 pm, Atlanta's leading period instrument ensemble, New Trinity Baroque, will present Johann Sebastian Bach's masterpiece "Johannes Passion." This concert, which will be the fourth concert of New Trinity Baroque's 2007/08 Season, will also mark the group's 10th Anniversary.

Originally founded in London, England, New Trinity Baroque has been discovering forgotten musical manuscripts of the 17th and 18th centuries since 1998. Although the group presented its first concert at London's famous St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the ensemble's founder and artistic director, Predrag Gosta, has moved to the United States few months later, and has found his home in Atlanta. Since that same year, the group has not only found its permanent place in the city's artistic life, but also in the hearts of people who love early music and period instruments.

Immediately noticed for its lively performances, New Trinity Baroque has been noted as the leader in the country's small but vibrant early music community. Proud for its contributions to the arts, the ensemble's love for the music of the earlier repertoire has been apparent through its high quality performances. With over 100 concerts since 1998, the group proudly deserves to bear the title of "Atlanta's most established early music ensemble" that *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* gave them in their latest review (in September of 2007).

One of the most important aspects of New Trinity Baroque's work is its carefully chosen repertoire, and its special attention to vocal and instrumental soloists. In the effort to offer the highest quality performances in Atlanta and the South-Eastern United States, New Trinity Baroque's founder and artistic director, Predrag Gosta, has diligently and consistently worked to acquire the best vocal and instrumental soloists that specialize in this style of music. The result is the exquisite sound and performance style that critics described with superlatives from "impeccable" (*Opera* magazine, London) to "defined, gripping, thoughtful, full of temperament, fearless." (Concert Artists Guild, New York).

Since the very beginning, the ensemble's members have included musicians from all parts of the United States as well as Europe and further. But that doesn't prevent New Trinity Baroque to call itself "Atlanta's own" early music group. "Early music community in the United States is pretty small," said Predrag Gosta, "and it is quite common to bring musicians from other cities into the ensemble." As such, NTB's core group consists of musicians from Atlanta, as well as Montana, New York, Missouri and England.

On March 1st, New Trinity Baroque will undertake one of the biggest projects ever: "Johannes-Passion" by the great Johann Sebastian Bach. This concert will also be their attempt to recreate the performance of the Passion as it may have been performed on Good Friday in Leipzig in 1724. Sung in German, the concert will feature a chamber choir of 8 vocal soloists and the orchestra of 12 instrumentalists. "This is the size of the ensemble that Bach had on his disposal at Nikolai-Kirche," said Predrag Gosta. "We will use the ensemble of 8 vocal soloists in all *turbe* choruses, which is exactly the same as what Bach did in 1724 and subsequent performances." In addition, the chorales will be sung by a larger ensemble – the Canterbury Choir of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (prepared by Brad Hughley). Predrag Gosta suggests that in Bach's own performances the congregation may have taken the part: "What we call today 'chorales' are nothing more but 'church hymns'. It seems logical that, between the recitatives, arias, and fast choruses, the congregation added to the worship experience by singing these short chorales." The question is, of course, how could this be possible, since Bach wrote them for 4 voices. Gosta further explains "...what Bach's choir sings is actually the harmonization of the chorales that Bach wrote for playing on the organ during every-day services. The congregation may have sung it *in unison*, while the choir would have sung them *in parts* at the same time – something that is quite common even today, in our own churches."

The soloists being featured at this concert will include a versatile group of performers from all over the United States and further: sopranos Kathryn Mueller (AZ) and Julia Matthews (PA), countertenors Terry Barber (FL) and Chris Conley (KY), tenors Leif Aruhn-Sólen (Sweden) and Steven Soph (MA), baritone Paul M. Tipton (MA), and bass Cameron Beauchamp (MA). The instrumental ensemble, led by Judson Griffin as its concertmaster will include musicians from New York, Massachusetts, Texas, Missouri, England and Mexico (plus, of course, Atlanta). The group will be directed from the chamber organ by Predrag Gosta.

The concert promises to be one of the most exciting concerts this concert season in Atlanta. "This will definitely be one of the largest projects we ever did, next to the Monteverdi Vespers that we recreated in 2002," said Predrag Gosta. "We anticipate a big crowd, and very much look forward to it."

The concert will be presented at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 1790 LaVista Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30329. The tickets, priced from \$9 to \$39, are available for purchase online at www.newtrinitybaroque.org or over the phone at 770-638-7574.

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