

**EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY 29 JULY 2008**

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL  
**FESTIVAL 08** 8-31 AUGUST

After the resounding success of last year's **Early Music** programme, **Edinburgh International Festival 2008** continues to give special attention to the genre with a string of special concerts at the **Usher Hall** and **Queens Hall** series as well as a week-long series of traditional choral music from Europe and the Middle East at the atmospheric **Greyfriar's Kirk**.

**Usher Hall** highlights include:

- Baroque music luminaries **Les Arts Florissants**, led by **William Christie** and joined by mezzo soprano **Anne Sofie von Otter** present a night of French arias and orchestral music by **Rameau, Lambert and Charpentier**
- **The Monteverdi Choir** and the **Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique**, founded and conducted by **Sir John Eliot Gardiner** joined by English soprano **Katharine Fugue** and bass baritone **Matthew Brook** give an exquisite performance of **Schütz's Musikalische Exequien**
- **Scottish Chamber Orchestra**, together with our very own **Edinburgh Festival Chorus**, perform **Handel's** biblical oratorio *Israel in Egypt* conducted by baroque star **Emmanuelle Haïm**

**Greyfriar's Kirk** *Song and Civilization* series includes:

- **Kudsi Erguner Ensemble** performs **The Music of Buhurizade Mustafa Itri Efendi** - music composed for the entrancing Whirling Dervishes ceremony and for the glorification of the classical Ottoman Court
- **Sister Marie Keyrouz & L'Ensemble de la Paix** perform chants from the Byzantine, Melkite and Maronite traditions of the Eastern Catholic church
- Two of Europe's most innovative ensembles specialising in medieval music - Benjamin Bagby's **Sequentia Ensemble** and Katarina Livljanic's **Dialogos** - join forces to explore Gregorian Chant across Medieval Europe with **Chant Wars**
- An intoxicating evening of primal harmonies of Corsican vocal polyphony with **Sacred and Secular Songs from Corsica** by **A Cumpagnia**
- The twelve male voices of the **Anchiskhati Choir** present **Secular and Spiritual Music from Georgia** - Georgian polyphonic choral music of religious celebration

**Queen's Hall** Early Music concert highlights include

- Early music ensemble **Lyriarte** are joined by **Irvinne Arditti** and baroque violinist **Rüdiger Lotter** for a very special late morning celebration of the music of 17<sup>th</sup> century **Heinrich Biber** and 21<sup>st</sup> century **Luciano Berio**

## **CONCERT DATES:**

### **USHER HALL**

**Les Arts Florissants**

Friday 22 August 8pm

**The Monteverdi Choir**

Tuesday 19 August 8pm

**Scottish Chamber Orchestra**

Wednesday 20 August 8pm

### **GREYFRIAR'S KIRK**

**The Music of Buhurizade Mustafa Itri Efendi** by the **Kudsi Erguner Ensemble**

Monday 11 August 5.45pm

**Psalms and Canticles from the Eastern Churches** by **Sister Marie Keyrouz & L'Ensemble de la Paix**

Tuesday 12 August 5.45pm

**Chant Wars**

Wednesday 13 August 5.45pm

**Sacred and Secular Songs from Corsica** by **A Cumpagnia**

Thursday 14 August 5.45pm

**Secular and Spiritual Music from Georgia** by the **Anchiskhati Choir**

Friday 15 August 5.45pm

### **QUEEN'S HALL**

**Lyriarte**

Monday 25 August 11am

ENDS

### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

Hub Tickets: +44 (0)131 473 2000

Online booking and information: [www.eif.co.uk](http://www.eif.co.uk)

Further information and images, are available from the press office. Please get in touch if we can help.

The Edinburgh International Festival is one of the most exciting places in the world to experience the arts - the chance to see and hear some of the world's greatest companies and performers and to experience something out of the ordinary over three heady weeks in August each year.

The Edinburgh International Festival was established in 1947. Long ranked as one of the most important cultural celebrations in the world, from the beginning the Festival has presented programmes of classical music, opera, theatre and dance of the highest possible standard, involving the best artists in the world. The founders of the Festival believed that the Festival should enliven and enrich the cultural life of Europe, Britain and Scotland and 'provide a platform for the flowering of the human spirit'. They also recognised that, if the Festival succeeded in its artistic ambitions, it would create a major new source of tourism revenue for Edinburgh and for Scotland.

2008 marks the second Edinburgh International Festival under Festival Director, Jonathan Mills. Artists perform at the Festival at the Director's invitation, with the Festival administration being responsible for all aspects of the promotion and management of its events.

***The Edinburgh International Festival is supported by The City of Edinburgh Council, the Scottish Arts Council and The National Lottery through the Scottish Arts Council.***

**For further information please contact Susie Burnet in the EIF press office on 0131 473 2020 or [press@eif.co.uk](mailto:press@eif.co.uk)**