



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Festival Vancouver* Announces Change in Name As It Wraps Up Another Year Of Extraordinary Music**

**Festival Vancouver (August 3-17)** has ended an eighth successful season, with hundreds of superb musicians from around the world entertaining tens of thousands of music fans at fifty-three music events in the fifteen-day program. In closing the Festival on Sunday August 17, **Program Director George Laverock** applauded the musicians' brilliant and diverse performances, and announced that the Festival will be returning next year with same focus and format but under a new name. As of January 1, 2009, Festival Vancouver will become ***MusicFest Vancouver***. According to Laverock, "the change is being made because the Festival has now clearly established itself as an annual presenter of high-quality music performances (classical, world and jazz) and the new name will help us to reinforce that exclusive musical focus to our current and future patrons. We're also confident that the new name will strengthen our fundraising and marketing initiatives." Festival organizers have already set their sights on next year's festival (**August 3-16, 2009**) which will include special programming that explores the celebrated musical history of **Germany** along with its vibrant contemporary classical, world music and jazz scenes.

In looking at the Festival's 2008 programming over the last two weeks, Laverock pointed proudly to the artistic success of this year's thematic salute to **Music of the Americas**, which included over 50 artists appearing from Argentina, Brazil and Cuba. Brazil's guitar virtuoso **Yamandu Costa** amazed festival-goers both in a solo concert at Christ Church Cathedral, and with his Trio at VanDusen Botanical Garden in the Festival's new and highly successful outdoor series, *World at the Garden*. Cuban piano sensation **Ernán López-Nussa** was also a hit fronting the high-powered **Salsa Dura** ensemble in the *World at the Garden* series and in a solo concert at Christ Church Cathedral. Among other highlights were concerts by the critically acclaimed early music ensemble **Il Ricercar Continuo** (Italy), the youthful and accomplished **Danish National Girls' Choir**, and two performances by France's famous **Lyon Chamber Choir**.

North America was beautifully represented by the **Gala Opera Evening**, which brought Canadian soprano and rising star **Marianne Fiset** together with internationally acclaimed US mezzo-soprano **Denyce Graves** at the Orpheum to present a program of favourite operatic repertoire along with the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**. This year's vocal offerings were extremely strong and well-attended, with a magical kickoff to the *World at the Garden* series provided by the Finnish *cappella* sensation **Rajaton**, back at the Festival for a third straight year. Also on the choral agenda was a powerful presentation of Brahms' *German Requiem* featuring two outstanding choirs from Argentina and Vancouver. The Festival's **TD Canada Trust Main Stage Series** offered a jaw-dropping display of West African drumming, dancing and singing called **Explosion Africaine**, a sparkling production of Rameau's *acte de ballet Pygmalion*, and a wildly-inventive percussion performance from the Taiwanese **Ju Percussion Group**.

Festival Vancouver as always thanks its many sponsors, donors and especially the over one hundred volunteers whose help each year is invaluable. Festival Vancouver is also grateful for the support of all three levels of government, with special thanks to the Government of Canada's Arts Presentation Canada program.

**Gold Corporate Sponsors**



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