

THE TORONTO CONSORT

Beowulf
Featuring Benjamin Bagby
March 11 & 12 at 8pm

Beowulf: A The Lecture
by Benjamin Bagby
March 13 at 2pm

"A double tour de force of scholarly excavation and artistic dynamism. Enthralling..."
-SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Toronto, February 24, 2016 ... **The Toronto Consort** presents the Canadian premier of **Beowulf featuring Benjamin Bagby**, which takes place at **8:00 PM on March 11 & 12** at Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Jeanne Lamon Hall. For tickets and information, visit TorontoConsort.org or call the box office at (416) 964-6337. **Professor David Klausner**, University of Toronto (Centre for Medieval Studies and the Department of English), will give a pre-concert talk, '**Be hearpan singende**' - **the performance of Anglo-Saxon poetry** at 7pm on both evenings - free with concert admission. A post-performance Q&A with **Benjamin Bagby** will take place in the hall following each of the performances.

Beowulf featuring Benjamin Bagby is a remarkable one-man *tour de force*, with **Bagby**, accompanying himself on an Anglo-Saxon harp, which delivers this gripping tale — in the original Old English — as it could have been experienced more than 1000 years ago. This is a performance which will speak to many: lovers of *Beowulf* and oral epic, early music enthusiasts, Tolkien fans, medievalists, and anyone searching for virtuoso storytelling, great theater, or a glimpse into the fascinating beginnings of the English language.

The Beowulf weekend continues with **Beowulf: A lecture by Benjamin Bagby**. A fundraiser in support of the Toronto Consort on Sunday, March 13, 2016, 2:00 pm at the Alliance Francaise, 24 Spadina Road (one block n. of Bloor Ave, at Lowther), Toronto. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at www.TorontoConsort.org or by calling 416-966-1045. Advance purchase recommended.

Benjamin Bagby is descended from a Germanic clan which emigrated from Jutland to northern England in ca. 630, where they remained until his branch of the family emigrated to the colony of Virginia almost a millennium later. Following 321 years of subsequent family wanderings, he was born on the shores of Lake Michigan, and twelve years later was captivated by **Beowulf**. Several years after returning to Europe in 1974 he founded — together with the late Barbara Thornton — the **Sequentia** ensemble for medieval music, which was based in Cologne, Germany, for 25 years; both **Mr. Bagby** and **Sequentia** are now based in Paris.

A DVD production of **Mr. Bagby's Beowulf** performance, filmed by **Stellan Olsson** in Sweden, was released in 2007 and includes interviews with noted Anglo-Saxonists and with the performer. Copies of the DVD will be available for sale at the concert and the lecture.

In addition to his activities as researcher, singer, harper and director of **Sequentia**, **Benjamin Bagby** writes about performance practice and teaches widely in Europe and North America. Since 2005 he has been on the faculty of the University of Paris – Sorbonne, where he teaches in the master's program for medieval music performance practice.

**The Toronto Consort presents
Beowulf featuring Benjamin Bagby**

March 11 & 12 at 8pm

Venue: Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Jeanne Lamon Hall 427 Bloor Street West (just west of Spadina)

Ticket Prices: *Regular:* \$36 to \$57 | 65+ : \$33 to \$52

Club Consort tickets for ages 35 and under: \$20 (with valid photo ID)

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The Toronto Consort is Canada's leading ensemble specializing in the music of the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Early Baroque — roughly 1200 to 1675. Founded in 1972, **The Toronto Consort** was one of Canada's first professional period music ensembles. Over the past four decades, **The Toronto Consort** has continued to expand listeners' appreciation through inventive programming that breathes life into period music. The ensemble has become internationally recognized for its excellence in live and recorded period music, and has collaborated on a number of film and television projects including Atom Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter* and two Showtime series, *The Tudors* and *The Borgias*.

The Toronto Consort gratefully acknowledges the support of:

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