

THE TORONTO CONSORT

Encounter the Power of *The Italian Queen of France*

The musical legacy of 16th-century Europe's most powerful woman, Catherine de Medici.

Powerful Encounters in Early Music: 2016-17 SEASON OPENER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto, ON (October 1, 2016) – The Toronto Consort launches its 2016-17 season with ***The Italian Queen of France***, a program inspired by **Catherine de Medici** – undoubtedly the most powerful and controversial woman in all of Europe during the 16th century. **Encounter the power** of early music like you've never heard before with music by Adrian LeRoy, Claude LeJeune and Guillaume Costelay, and with special guests from the **School of Atelier Ballet**, who will be performing choreography by Opera Atelier's Co-Artistic Director Jeanette Lajeunesse Zingg. ***The Italian Queen of France* runs November 11 and 12 (8pm) 2016 at Trinity-St Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. West.**

"As a true daughter of the Italian Renaissance, Catherine believed fervently in the power of art to glorify and decorate a powerful court. She made sure she was surrounded by the best musicians, dancers, painters, architects and poets, to bedazzle enemies and friends alike."

– David Fallis, Artistic Director

Backroom deals, blackmail, and espionage might sound like the qualities of a modern day TV-drama, but in the court of 16th-century's Catherine de Medici it was just a day in the life! A woman of unmatched political savvy, Henry II's Italian-born queen held significant sway over France for many tumultuous decades. Renowned for her love of all things esthetic – music, art, and even her ladies-in-waiting – Catherine de Medici surrounded herself in beauty. Seeing it as a **powerful instrument of political influence**, she used it to her advantage. Imagine the glittering entourage of artists that surrounded such power!

The Italian Queen of France concerts consist of the members of **The Toronto Consort**: David Fallis (Artistic Director), Alison Melville, Michelle DeBoer, John Pepper, Paul Jenkins, Terry McKenna, Katherine Hill, Laura Pudwell, Ben Grossman, and senior students of **Opera Atelier's School of Ballet**, performing choreography by Jeanette Lajeunesse Zingg.

French music in the 16th century is an exquisite if little known repertoire. Under Catherine's influence, dance became a central part of courtly life. (The program includes a delightful excerpt from the very first ***ballet de cour*** given under Catherine's patronage and encouragement.) Even the beautiful songs of the day were used for dancing, and the result is music, which is lively, powerful and sexy, just like dance music should always be.

The Toronto Consort presents
The Italian Queen of France
November 11 & 12 at 8:00 PM

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

Ticket Prices: *Regular:* \$24 to \$60 | 65+ : \$22 to \$55

Club Consort tickets for ages 35 and under and full-time students: \$15 (with valid photo ID)

Box Office: (416) 964-6337

Website: www.TorontoConsort.org Follow us on Facebook

Pre-Concert Lecture held one hour before each show, runs 30 minutes.

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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 the city'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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