

# THE TORONTO CONSORT

*Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz*  
With guest director and lutenist **Žak Ozmo**  
December 11 & 12 at 8pm  
December 13 at 3:30pm

“terrifically animated, wonderful energy... gorgeous!” - *BBC Radio 3*

“Is it possible to be more multinational and multitalented than Žak Ozmo, director, archlute player and baroque guitarist?” — *The Press* (U.K.)

Toronto, November 13, 2015 ... **The Toronto Consort** presents **Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz** programmed and guest directed by lutenist and director of the “wildly successful” *L’Avventura* London, **Žak Ozmo** – a Christmas concert unlike anything Toronto audiences have heard before. As one critic declared, “The musical monks of the monastery of Santa Cruz at Coimbra must have been a jolly lot if this concert represents their style. Even the serious religious numbers, enriched with the philosophy of St Augustine, had more than a hint of the dance which just bubbled up from the ever supportive accompaniments. It made for a really joyful concert!” (*The Latest.co.uk*)

**The Toronto Consort** celebrates the holidays with **Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz**. Guest director **Žak Ozmo** programs his re-envisioning of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese Christmas celebration at the Monastery of Santa Cruz. “I’ve chosen villancicos and romances that deal with the Divine Mystery and the birth of Jesus in ways that are reflective, philosophical, and quite often humorous. The language is a mixture of Portuguese, Spanish, and Creole. These villancicos and romances will be offset by some of the most popular dances of the day, including those of African origin, which were a staple of musical life in both 17th century Portugal and Brazil and are also found in the Coimbra archives.”

**Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz** takes place at **8:00 PM on December 11 & 12** and at **3:30 PM on December 13**, at Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, Jeanne Lamont Hall. For tickets and information, visit [TorontoConsort.org](http://TorontoConsort.org) or call the box office at (416) 964-6337. **Rick Phillips** interviews **Žak Ozmo** for the pre-concert talk at all performances, free with concert admission.

**Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz** features the members of **The Toronto Consort**: Alison Melville, Michele DeBoer, John Pepper, Paul Jenkins, Katherine Hill, Terry McKenna and Ben Grossman, joined by singer Jessica Wright and violinist Christopher Verrette.

The program’s **Guest Director Žak Ozmo** is a music director, lutenist, and scholar currently based in London. Hailed by *Classical Music* magazine as an ‘expert on early plucked instruments’ **Žak** has performed as a continuo player, chamber musician,

and as a soloist across Europe, North America, and Asia on the archlute, theorbo, Renaissance lute, and Baroque guitar. His performances include engagements with some of the world's finest ensembles. Currently much of his focus is on working with **L'Avventura**, in addition to appearances as a guest director of various ensembles, orchestras, and opera companies internationally. Upcoming projects include musical direction of Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* for Opera Memphis, as well as a solo recording of equally-tempered music by Vincenzo Galilei with Hyperion Records.

Born in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Žak** moved from his war-torn native country to Canada. After being introduced to the world of the lute by Consort ensemble member **Terry McKenna**, this pursuit then took him to the United States and Britain, and included studies with James Tyler, Pat O'Brien, and William Carter. **Žak** studied conducting with Noel Edison, Lucinda Carver, and William Dehning, and musicology with Bruce Alan Brown and Giulio Ongaro, among others. He holds a doctorate in early music performance from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, and has completed postdoctoral studies in the same area from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

**The Toronto Consort presents**

**Christmas at the Monastery of Santa Cruz with Žak Ozmo**

December 11, 12 & 13, 2015

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

**Ticket Prices:** *Regular:* \$27 to \$64 | 65+ : \$22 to \$58

**Club Consort tickets for ages 35 and under: \$10 (with valid photo ID)**

**Box Office:** (416) 964-6337

**Website:** [www.TorontoConsort.org](http://www.TorontoConsort.org) | Follow us on Facebook

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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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