



**Boston Camerata Speaks Truth to Power  
with the *Play of Daniel***

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**PHOTOS**

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**CHICAGO** – On **Sunday, January 21, at 2 PM, in Rockefeller Chapel**, the **Boston Camerata**, America’s preeminent early music ensemble, presents ***The Play of Daniel***, a powerful eight centuries old medieval theater piece, on the **Howard Mayer Brown International Early Music Series**.

One of the earliest known musical dramas, *The Play of Daniel* finds new life and relevance today under the artistic leadership of the Boston Camerata’s **Anne Azéma**. Premiered in 13<sup>th</sup> century Beauvais, France, the play tells the story of Daniel, a prisoner in the court of the Babylonian ruler Belshazzar, who interprets the (literal) writing on the wall, foretelling the fall of Babylon.

The play was first revived in the United States in 1958 by New York Pro Musica under the direction of Noah Greenberg, becoming one of the first and most famous revivals of medieval music and drama. The Boston Camerata staged its first production in 1982 under the group’s first director, Joel Cohen. Anne Azéma’s production, which premiered in 2014, combines old and new in a performance relevant to today. She describes the play as “a story of speaking truth to power, a prisoner of war who told the tyrant in place that he cannot go on that way.”

This is not the first that Azéma has produced politically relevant programs since being named Artistic Director of the Boston Camerata in 2008. In 2016, Boston Camerata presented *City of Fools*, a program of troubadour songs commenting on the social realities of medieval life. “A large part of our work is actually to look at the world around us and notice these things – these fears, these disappointments, these hopes, these joys. All of that is part of the human psyche,” she says. “By looking at the past and making it alive – by sharing it with passion – you reveal a part of your own soul and being in 2018.”

A full interview between University of Chicago Presents and Anne Azéma is available on request.

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**SUNDAY / JANUARY 21 / 2 PM / ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL**

The Boston Camerata  
with the Rockefeller Chapel Choir  
and the Trebles of the Choir of St. Luke’s (Evanston, IL)

***The Play of Daniel: A Medieval Masterpiece Revisited***

## **CONCERT LOCATION**

Rockefeller Chapel, 1414 E 59<sup>th</sup> St, Chicago, IL 60637

## **TICKETS**

\$38 / \$20 under 35 / \$10 students

Call 773.702.ARTS (773.702.2787) or visit [tickets.uchicago.edu](http://tickets.uchicago.edu)

## **BOX OFFICE**

UChicago Arts Box Office, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60<sup>th</sup> Street  
Regular hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 12 pm – 6 pm and through concert intermission;  
1 – 4 pm on concert Sundays.

Concert information online at [chicagopresents.uchicago.edu](http://chicagopresents.uchicago.edu)

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## **ABOUT THE BOSTON CAMERATA**

The Boston Camerata was associated until 1974 with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. It was founded at that institution by Narcissa Williamson, and was directed in its early seasons by Anne Gombosi, Howard Mayer Brown, Daniel Pinkham, and Victor Mattfeld. Camerata incorporated as a nonprofit entity, and began self-producing its own local concert series, in 1974. From 1968 to 2008, Joel Cohen directed the ensemble's activities, which grew exponentially under his leadership. He is now Music Director Emeritus.

In the United States, Camerata has participated in early music festivals at Berkeley and San Antonio, as well as in many of the biennial Boston Early Music Festivals. The ensemble has maintained an extensive touring schedule across the entire United States. Camerata's second, third and fourth invitations to the renowned Tanglewood Festival came in 1992, 1994 and 1995, respectively. A widely praised national tour of Cantigas in 2000 marked Camerata's first collaboration with the Sharq Arabic Music Ensemble; the two groups performed together again in Paris in 2007. Other important Camerata appearances in the United States include music making at Lincoln Center, New York, The Cloisters, New York, The Smithsonian Institute, The National Cathedral (Washington), The Library of Congress, and The Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Under the initial auspices of Radio France, Camerata began touring overseas in 1974, and has maintained an international presence ever since. In recent seasons, Camerata has been heard in Canada, England, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Singapore, and Israel. Camerata undertook its first Japanese tour in 1995; it gave its first Scandinavian performances in 1996. Other distinguished overseas venues that have hosted Camerata include: Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, Stationers' Hall, London, the Cité de la Musique, Paris, the Royal Opera of Versailles, the Arsenal of Metz, the Popes' Palace, Avignon, the Palau de la Música, Barcelona, the Opera Real, Madrid, and the Pitti Palace, Florence.

Presented in collaboration with the Tero Saarinen Company, Borrowed Light, a dance production integrating live performances of Shaker songs, has toured extensively in Europe, America, (France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom, USA) since 2004, with a south Asian tour recently completed in 2008, to critical acclaim. The Boston Camerata, by now one of the world's oldest continually functioning professional early music ensembles, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2005 with festive productions in Boston (Boston Early Music Festival) and Paris (Théâtre de la Ville). At the latter appearance, longtime director Joel Cohen was decorated by the French government.

Additional Camerata tours are scheduled for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 in the U.S., Germany, France, Colombia. Media appearances by the Boston Camerata have included a nationally syndicated radio series in the U.S. and numerous broadcasts on French, English, Canadian, Dutch, Spanish, Swiss, Norwegian, Swedish, Israeli, Australian and New Zealand radio. The ensemble has made several appearances on French television; in the spring of 1992 its video production of the Roman de Fauvel was telecast nationwide in France. In the United States, Camerata provided the music for Guardian of Memory, a 1993 TV project for the Library of Congress. Camerata's video of Shall We Gather at the River received numerous "plays" on American cable television during the winter of 1992-93. Simple Gifts (1995), and The Golden Harvest, (2007) the group's Shaker music projects, have been the subject of extensive coverage on national television, on American public radio and the BBC.

## ABOUT THE HOWARD MAYER BROWN EARLY MUSIC SERIES AND UCHICAGO PRESENTS

Founded in 1981, the Howard Mayer Brown International Early Music Series spans from medieval and Renaissance to the Baroque and features artists dedicated to historically researched, informed programming and original instrument practices.

Now in its 74<sup>th</sup> year of bringing the world's best artists to Chicago, The University of Chicago Presents offers 25 unique performances in six distinct series in the 2017/18 season, from early music to classical, contemporary, and jazz. This season celebrates the richness that music has to offer with unrivaled musical experiences that bring passion and virtuosity to the stage.

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