

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA INFORMATION

MIRABILIA - A MIRACLE ON GLADSTONE AVENUE

Toronto, August 22, 2012 – Canada's only Byzantine-styled Anglican church and Canada's only church with religious art by members of the Group of Seven is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding this October. *Mirabilia*, meaning 'things that cause us to wonder,' is a series of arts events and worship services marking the sesquicentennial of the historic St. Anne's Church on Gladstone Avenue in Toronto. The nine day program will run from Saturday, October 13 to Sunday, October 21, 2012 and will feature visual arts, film, music, lectures on religion and the arts, and worship.

Art installations by the NetherMind Artists' Collective will be presented in unexpected places throughout the church, including Max Streicher's inflatable horse sculpture "Quadriga." NetherMind consists of eight artists, reuniting for this exhibition, who made their mark on the Toronto art scene in the early 1990's with a series of extravagant and innovative exhibitions in vacant factories.

The rich program of music ranges from a 100 voice choir to a trio. Pax Christi Chorale, which has been performing for over 25 years, will present a program of deeply human, profoundly spiritual works. Led by Assistant Conductor (and St. Anne's Music Director) Daniel Norman, this concert will feature two well loved Bach pieces, Cantata No. 147 *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, with the Jesu Joy Chorale, and Cantata No. 80 *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, the Reformation Cantata, accompanied by a chamber orchestra. Also included will be a work specially created for the Feast of St. Anne by Toronto composer Rob Teehan.

The Junction Trio will present "Forgotten Soundscapes of the Group of Seven," inspired by the close relationship between the artists and St. Anne's. The concert will include works by Josquin des Prez, Bach and Debussy along with improvisation and evocative natural soundscapes, traditional Canadian folksong, Duke Ellington and Scott Joplin.

Workman Arts, which shares premises with St. Anne's, is premiering the feature-length documentary "The Maze" – a film about the life and art of renowned Canadian artist William Kurelek. Brothers Nick and Zack Young produced, restored and reimagined their father's unseen 1969 film about Kurelek who struggled with mental health issues and was institutionalized in hospitals that used artistic programming for his therapy. This special presentation is part of the Rendezvous With Madness Film Festival, celebrating its 20th Anniversary this Fall.

Story-telling by members of the MacGregor Park Art Club will be on the theme of "Spirits, Ghosts and Visitations" and presented throughout the church. The stories will be developed during a series of workshops, led by writer Jane Wells and sculptor Kristen Fahrig, for people from the St. Anne's and MacGregor Park communities.

Archbishop Colin Johnson, will meet the congregation, area residents and guests at a reception, including a display of St. Anne's Archives 1862 - 2012.

Worship services will bookend the events. Evensong, led by area Bishop Philip Poole, with St. Anne's choir and orchestra performing Mozart's Solemn Vespers, will open *Mirabilia*. A 150th Anniversary Eucharist, with the theme "What does God have to do with art?" will be celebrated on the final day.

"This is where the arts meet the sacred," said Priest-in-Charge Gary van der Meer.

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Mirabilia, a miracle on Gladstone Avenue
150th Anniversary Celebrations at St. Anne's Church

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Saturday, October 13 7:30 pm - Evensong led by Bishop Philip Poole, with Mozart's "Solemn Vespers," St. Anne's Choir and Orchestra, soloists
- Sunday, October 14 12:00 pm - **MacGregor Park Art Club** story-telling: "Spirits, Ghosts and Visitations"
- 12:30 pm - 4:00 pm - **NetherMind** art exhibition, official opening and reception
- Tuesday, October 16 7:30 pm - Lecture: Fr. Peter Larisey s.j. "Evidence of the Sacred in Modernism"
- Wednesday, October 17 7:30 pm - **The Junction Trio** (flute, cello, violin) presents "Forgotten Soundscapes of the Group of Seven," with Canadian folksongs, natural soundscapes, Scott Joplin, Josquin des Pres, Bach and Debussy
- Thursday, October 18 7: 30 pm - Lecture: Anne Bordeleau, "Temporalities and Materialities of Sacred Architecture"
- Friday, October 19 7:00 pm - Film screening: **The Maze** with members of the Kurelek family in attendance, discussion panel on faith and mental health featuring filmmaker Nick Young, Dr. Kwame McKenzie and Rev. Gary van der Meer
- Saturday, October 20 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm - Reception: Guest Archbishop Colin Johnson, display of St. Anne's Archives 1862 - 2012 (Skey Room, Parish Hall)
- Sunday, October 21 10:30 am - Parish 150th Anniversary Eucharist "What does God have to do with art?"
- 3:00 pm - Concert and reception, **Pax Christi Chorale** and Orchestra, St. Anne's Choir, J.S. Bach Cantatas, sacred choral music, including Cantata No. 147 *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, with the Jesu Joy Chorale, Cantata No. 80 *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, the Reformation Cantata, three Stanford motets *Justorum animae*, *Beati quorum via*, and *Coelos ascendit hodie*

About the art and architecture at Saint Anne's (www.stannes.on.ca)

The first St. Anne's was built nearby on Dufferin Street in 1862 to serve the surrounding farming community. By 1907 the congregation had grown and the present church was built to seat more than a thousand. The vaulted roof and central dome in the Byzantine Greek Cross style avoided the rows of columns common in churches up to that time. In 1923 J.E.H. MacDonald assembled Canadian artists, including Fred Varley and Frank Carmichael, two other members of the Group of Seven, to execute an elaborate decorating scheme with more than a dozen large paintings. These were to become their only religious art. Sculptors Frances Loring and Florence Wyle created decorative medallions and reliefs of the four evangelists. All artists were Canadian at a time when it was fashionable to source European talent. In addition, most windows glow with elaborate and traditional stained glass, some of which were moved from the original church. The chancel ceiling and dome are exquisitely ornamented. In the 1960's a renovation and refurbishment program added brilliant mosaic work around the altar and bronze entry doors. The building was designated a National Historic Site in 1997.

About NetherMind

The NetherMind Artists' Collective will install an exhibition of sculptures and installation works throughout St. Anne's in response to various aspect of the architecture and life of St. Anne's. NetherMind's artists – Tom Dean, John Dickson, Catherine Heard, Greg Hefford, Mary Catherine Newcomb, Reinhard Reitzenstein, Lyla Rye, and Max Streicher – create physical works that appeal directly to the senses through tactility, sound, light and movement. Their exhibitions are experiential, integrating interactive elements in unusual and unexpected locations. NetherMind made its mark on the Toronto art scene with a series of four exhibitions between 1991 and 1995 in abandoned industrial spaces.

About Pax Christi Chorale (www.paxchristichorale.org)

Known for presenting dramatic choral masterpieces, Pax Christi Chorale performs with passion, conviction and heart. Artistic Director Stephanie Martin's imaginative programming engages audiences with dramatic storytelling, particularly through oratorio and rarely-heard masterworks. Since its inception in 1987 the choir has grown to 100 singers, including a Youth Choir and Chamber Choir, and has performed ambitious works including Bach's Mass in B minor, Handel's Israel in Egypt, Brahms' Deutsches Requiem, and most recently Elgar's masterpiece The Kingdom in Toronto's Koerner Hall.

About The Junction Trio (www.the-junction-trio.com)

Now in their fourth season of monthly concerts in collaboration with St. Anne's, The Junction Trio includes Jamie Thompson (flute), Yvanna Mycyk (violin) and Lucas Tensen (cello) and is acclaimed for their engaging performance style and eclectic programming. Innovative and dynamic, The Junction Trio features rarely-seen instrumentation and an emphasis on the classical concert as a multi-dimensional, collaborative experience that celebrates spontaneity and accessibility. With their diverse repertoire and use of evocative improvisation, the trio aims to provide provocative concerts that reflect the sensibilities of its members. Jason Steidman adds liquid light projections.

About Workman Arts: 25th Anniversary (<http://www.workmanarts.com>)

Workman Arts, located in the St. Anne's Parish Hall, facilitates aspiring, emerging and established artists with mental illness and addiction issues to develop and refine their art form through its arts training programs, public performance/exhibit opportunities and partnering with other art organizations. As well, Workman Arts promotes a greater public understanding of mental illness and addiction through the creation, presentation and discussion of artistic media. Workman Arts is a partner of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

About the MacGregor Park Art Club

(<http://macgregorpark.ca/wiki/wiki.php?n=ArtsClub.FrontPage>)

The MacGregor Park Arts Club was formed out of a 12-month residency for artist Kristen Fahrig (www.kristenfahrig.com) in the park in 2006. The park, at Lansdowne and College, is close to the church and shares the same community roots. By creating art together the park has evolved for the people of the community from a deserted and dangerous place into a lively community hub. A cohesive group of artists have now developed a dynamic collaborative process with the aims of creative nourishment, area beautification and community involvement.