



PURE DELIGHT!

The Boston Camerata announces its 2024–25 concert season, celebrating seven decades

Something extraordinary is about to happen: [The Boston Camerata](#), America's leading early music ensemble, is about to celebrate a milestone anniversary.

[Seven Decades of the Camerata](#) | [Watch the Season Trailer](#)



For immediate release (Boston, MA) – It's hard to believe that 70 years ago, at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, an intrepid woman named Narcissa Williamson launched The Camerata, a company now treasured far beyond America's shores. Music-lovers around the world have built our music into their lives, and three generations of young musicians have been inspired by our programs and recordings.

"Camerata is a unique institution. I feel very fortunate to be a part of it", said Artistic Director **Anne Azéma**. "The music of this small, enterprising company travels around the globe, and I love the feeling of discovery and adventure that accompanies practically everything we do."

This institution has a great deal to celebrate in this 70th anniversary season, with a lineup of performances that recall our roots, and highlight us in the here and now.

Commemorating our founding, we open the season at the [Museum of Fine Arts](#) with ***Lands of Pure Delight: 70 Seasons of Music Making with the Boston Camerata*** on **October 6**. The music in this program will range through seven centuries across the world, from Medieval France to the early Americas.

December brings, not one, but two holiday programs. ***Hodie Christus Natus Est***, a retelling of the Nativity, tours New England in early December. Then, ***In Dulci Jubilo: A German Christmas***, with its lush sounds from Renaissance music of the Germanic world, comes to **Cambridge, MA on December 22**.

For our fans of music theatre, join us in January for one of the Camerata's emblematic works, ***Daniel: A Medieval Masterpiece Revisited***. The themes of justice, and of truth spoken to power, are front and center as the captive Daniel confronts the tyrannical Belshazzar!

We'll be there! American Spirituals Black and White 1800-1900 tours the West Coast **January 25–February 3**. The most recent in Boston Camerata's long series of Early American musical productions, this program stands for the shared musical and spiritual experiences of America's peoples.

And, shortly thereafter, we travel across the pond for a revival of ***Borrowed Light*** – a stark, powerful production based on Shaker songs, created in collaboration with the [Tero Saarinen Company](#) – in **Finland and France**. A reprise will follow in **Germany and Austria in the summer of 2025**.

Returning from abroad, we offer ***Trav'ling Home: American Spirituals 1770-1870*** in **Springfield and Boston, MA** at the end of April. You will encounter early American songs from the Puritans of New England, the Amish and Mennonites of Pennsylvania, the newly-freed African-American religious communities, and the Shakers and their visionary monodies.

Presented by the [Boston Early Music Festival](#), ***A Gallery of Kings: Uses and Abuses of Power ca. 1300*** has its U.S. premiere on **June 10**. Commissioned by the Reims Festival for the 800th anniversary of its cathedral, these ancient songs of kingship and its snares resonate strongly down the centuries, into our own, turbulent time.

Please be on the alert, as well, for related events and activities as our season unfolds. One can find much of our media catalogue on Warner - Erato, Nonesuch, Harmonia Mundi, Music and Arts labels.

We look to the past, in all its rich diversity, to better understand the present, to inform the future, and to encourage living human connection via the shared joy of great music. **To 70!**



70th Anniversary Season At-A-Glance

Ticketing for our Boston Season *now open!*
Other ticketing available through presenters.

Oct. 6 [The Museum of Fine Arts](#), Boston MA

Lands of Pure Delight: 70 Seasons of Music Making with the Boston Camerata

Camerata, born at the Museum of Fine Arts in 1954, joins again with our mother institution to celebrate a milestone anniversary. Our superb singers and instrumentalists will recreate some of those first, pioneering Museum performances, echo in live music some of the visual treasures of the Museum collections, and showcase some of our present-day adventures in sound.

Dec. 1 Stroudsburg, PA
Dec. 5 Damariscotta, ME
Dec. 6 Belmont, MA
Dec. 7 Newburyport, MA
Dec. 8 Boston, MA

A Medieval Christmas: Hodie Christus Natus Est

The sounds of Christmas spirituality from Medieval France, Italy, England, and Provence, including music of the church and songs of private devotion around the joyous theme of the Nativity. Included are songs to the Virgin Mary, processions from Saint Martial of Limoges, hymns, lyrics, and miracle ballads sung in Latin, Old French, Old Provençal, and Saxon, interlaced with Medieval English texts of the Nativity. A program created in 1979 and revisited many times in different configurations. A recent Harmonia Mundi CD, available on all platforms.

Dec. 22 Cambridge, MA

In Dulci Jubilo: A German Christmas

In the European North, the forests are deep; the nights are dark and long. Perhaps this is why, in reaction, the early Christmas music of the German-speaking peoples is so intensely joyful and profoundly rich. Our program explores the marvelous music of German Christmas festivity through chants and chorales, simple carols, grandiose polyphony, and instrumental fantasias of the 15th to early 17th centuries.

Jan. 19 Boston, MA

Daniel: A Medieval Masterpiece Revisited

The fiery prophecies of Daniel, young captive in corrupt Babylon, ring forth again! A piece of medieval musical theatre, *Daniel* is an emblematic piece for the Camerata and the U.S. Early Music world. First performed by the Camerata in 1960, this staged production was re-edited and created for our 50th anniversary in 2014. Toured in 2017, 2018, 2020.

Jan. 25 – Feb. 1 San Francisco, CA
Feb. 2 Salem, OR

We'll be there! American Spirituals Black and White 1800-1900

The Camerata continues its trailblazing exploration of the American spiritual tradition, with folk hymns derived from English and Celtic folklore, African-derived call-and-shout group songs, links in the Black tradition to the experience of slavery, reminiscences of the Civil War, and shared celebrations of striving, freedom, and salvation.

Feb. 14 – Mar. 1 Helsinki, Finland
Mar. 5–9 Mulhouse, France
Jul. 18 Ludwigsburg, Germany
Jul. 22–23 Bregenz Festival, Austria

Borrowed Light with the [Tero Saarinen Company](#)

Drawing inspiration from Shaker movement and music, this production is a dedication to work, community, and minimalistic aesthetics. Created in 2004, performed 80+ times, seen by well over 50 000 people, on three continents.

Apr. 26 Springfield, MA
Apr. 27 Boston, MA

Trav'ling Home: American Spirituals 1770-1870

This pioneering program of early American music traces migratory currents and flows of early American song, largely spiritual but also secular. The musical sources of this program are drawn from European and New World oral traditions, hymns, psalms and chants in English, German dialects, early songbooks of Black churches, as well as gems from the still largely unpublished Shaker manuscript archive at Sabbathday Lake, ME.

Jun. 10

[Boston Early Music Festival](#), Jordan Hall, Boston, MA

A Gallery of Kings: Uses and Abuses of Power ca. 1300

Commissioned by the Reims Festival for the 800th anniversary of its cathedral, *A Gallery of Kings* makes its U.S. premiere! Songs and stories of powerful Kings, both good and bad, were abound in the Middle Ages. “May he reign forever!” sings the crowd, but the monarch’s power is limited: by his fallible judgment, his formidable adversaries, his love of power, and his own, precarious mortality. These ancient songs of kingship and its snares resonate strongly down the centuries, into our own, turbulent time.

About the Boston Camerata

The Boston Camerata occupies a unique place in the densely populated universe of European and American early music ensembles. Camerata’s distinguished rank stems partly from its longevity: founded in 1954, when the field of endeavor was in its infancy, as an adjunct to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts’ musical instruments collection, Camerata is now one of the longest-lived groups to be vigorously functioning up to the present day.

But length of service, by itself is not sufficient to account for Camerata’s preeminence, nor are its numerous distinctions including the American Critics’ Circle Award, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, residencies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Tennessee, and the Grand Prix du Disque. The Boston Camerata has achieved its eminence in large part because of its willingness to approach, with consistent success, many kinds of historical repertoires from many centuries, from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, and from many places and cultures, stretching from the Middle East to early New England, with numerous intermediate stops in Renaissance and Baroque Europe and Latin America.

Directed from 1969 to 2009 by Joel Cohen, and from 2009 to the present day by Anne Azéma, the Boston Camerata has continued to create, over more than a half-century of activity, a large number of concert and media productions. These typically combine scholarship, much of it original, with high performance standards maintained by a distinguished roster of outstanding vocal soloists and instrumentalists. Camerata’s productions regularly combine dramatic flair with a certain humane, overarching perspective on the role music has played in (wo)mankind’s search for meaning and fulfillment. Camerata’s signature approach, as embodied in its touring, pedagogy, and media projects, has won the ensemble many listeners and followers on five continents as the ensemble presents new projects all the while maintaining in active repertoire many of its historic achievements.

For artistic questions, please reach out to Artistic Director, Anne Azéma: director@bostoncamerata.org

For other questions, please reach out to Administrator, Victoria Bocchicchio: admin@bostoncamerata.org

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