



The Cathedral  
Church of **Saint John**  
the **Divine**

**M** Manhattan  
School of Music



Oratorio Society of New York

1047 Amsterdam Ave.  
at 112th Street  
New York, NY 10025  
T (212) 316-7490  
stjohndivine.org

**RELEASE**

For further information please call

Isadora Wilkenfeld, Cathedral of St. John the Divine  
(212) 316-7468 / [iwilkenfeld@stjohndivine.org](mailto:iwilkenfeld@stjohndivine.org)

Dan Johnson, Rubenstein Communications  
(212) 843-9336 / [djohnson@rubenstein.com](mailto:djohnson@rubenstein.com)

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**THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE PARTNERS WITH ORATORIO  
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK AND MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC TO  
PRESENT BRITTEN'S PACIFIST MASTERPIECE,  
THE *WAR REQUIEM* ON APRIL 6 & 7**

**Kent Tritle conducts; soloists are Susanna Phillips (singing her first *War Requiem*),  
John Matthew Myers, and Matthew Worth**

*(March 3, 2017 – New York, NY)* – At a time when global instability and domestic turmoil have reached new heights and communities worldwide are grappling with the human toll of armed conflict, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in collaboration with the Oratorio Society of New York and the Manhattan School of Music Symphony and Symphonic Chorus, will present Benjamin Britten's powerful invocation of the perils of battle, the *War Requiem* **on Thursday, April 6th, 2017 and Friday, April 7th, 2017 at 7:30 pm, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112<sup>th</sup> Street).**

Under the artistic direction of **Kent Tritle**, Director of Cathedral Music, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine continues its 2016–17 Great Music in a Great Space concert series with the first performance of the *War Requiem* at the Cathedral since 1991. More than 350 choral singers, with full symphony orchestra, organ and soloists will gather to perform the powerful musical statement about man's inhumanity to man. The traditional text of the Requiem Mass, also known as "the Mass for the dead," is interspersed with the poetry of Wilfred Owen, who died in World War I a century ago.

The Cathedral has been a convening space for dialogue on many of the great issues of our times, from American civil rights to the moral questions posed by international conflicts, and its music program, drawing upon the great works of classical and modern composers, eloquently echoes that longstanding commitment. Britten's *War Requiem*, composed in the wake of World War II, aptly expresses the horror of that epochal conflagration, emphasizing once again the fragility of human life and the necessity of a lasting peace.

The performance will feature soloists Susanna Phillips, soprano, who is singing the work for the first time; John Matthew Myers, tenor; and Matthew Worth, baritone.

Tickets start at \$25, with discounts available for students. For more information on this and future 2016–17 series performances or to purchase tickets, please visit <http://www.stjohndivine.org/music/great-music>.

Revived in 2011, *Great Music in a Great Space* reprises the legendary concert series first held at the Cathedral in the 1980s. The 2016–2017 season is comprised of three concert series: the Great Choir choral series, the Great Organ recital series, and our holiday concerts celebrating the Christmas season and New Year's Eve. The repertoire of the choral series encompasses a musical palette from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary compositions, and also features explorations of less familiar traditions such as Spanish Renaissance music and Eastern Orthodox hymnody.

### **About Kent Tritle**

Kent Tritle is one of America's leading choral conductors. Called "the brightest star in New York's choral music world" by the *New York Times*, Tritle is in his fifth season as Director of Cathedral Music and organist at New York's Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. He is also Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York and of Musica Sacra. He is Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music and on the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School. He is organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Tritle holds graduate and undergraduate degrees from The Juilliard School in organ performance and choral conducting. He has been featured on *ABC World News Tonight*, *National Public Radio*, and *Minnesota Public Radio*, as well as in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

### **About Susanna Phillips**

Alabama-born soprano Susanna Phillips, recipient of The Metropolitan Opera's 2010 Beverly Sills Artist Award, continues to establish herself as one of today's most sought-after singing actors and recitalists. The 2016-17 season will see Ms. Phillips return to the Metropolitan Opera for a ninth consecutive season, starring as Clémence in the Met premiere of *Kaija Saariaho's L'Amour de Loin* conducted by Susanna Mälkki, as well as a return of her acclaimed Musetta in Puccini's *La Bohème*. In March 2017, Ms. Phillips will make her Zurich Opera debut as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. She also appears as Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with Boston Baroque and Martin Pearlman. 2016-2017 orchestra engagements include a return to the San Francisco Symphony with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting a program of American songs, Mozart's "Exsultate Jubilate" and his Mass in C Minor with Jane Glover and the Music of the Baroque, the Britten *War Requiem* with Kent Tritle and the Oratorio Society of New York, as well as Euridice in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* with Robert Spano leading the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

### **About John Matthew Myers**

Tenor John Matthew Myers has garnered acclaim for his "smooth and rich" tenor and for giving "insightful and beautifully nuanced performances." Highlights from his 2016-17 season include a debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic as Mao Tse-Tung in John Adams' *Nixon in China*

conducted by the composer, and role debuts of the Duke of Mantua in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Edgardo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Prince Sinodal in Rubinstein's *The Demon*. Highlights from his recent seasons included Bellini's *Norma* with the Los Angeles Opera, Trin in Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*, 6th Diener and 3rd Jew in Strauss' *Capriccio* and *Salome*, the world premiere of Higdon's *Cold Mountain*, and workshop of Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* as Steve Wozniak with the Santa Fe Opera.

### **About Matthew Worth**

Matthew Worth is quickly becoming the baritone of choice for innovative productions and contemporary works on the operatic leading edge. His performances in 2016-17 include the world premiere of *Naga* with Beth Morrison Projects, his debut with the Aspen Chamber Symphony led by Robert Spano and his debut with the Cathedral of St. John the Divine for Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, led by Kent Tritle. This season he also returns to the Atlanta Opera for Kevin Puts' *Silent Night* and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra for Fauré's *Requiem* led by Donald Runnicles. Highlights of recent seasons include the world premiere of *JFK* with Fort Worth Opera as John F. Kennedy, the world premiere of *The Manchurian Candidate* with Minnesota Opera, his European debut with Wexford Festival Opera in *Silent Night*, and *Moby Dick* at Washington National Opera. Lauded for his work in the standard operatic repertoire, Matthew's Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) was deemed "vocally impeccable... open and incisive" by the Boston Classical Review.

### **About The Cathedral**

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. It is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership.

People from many faiths and communities worship together in services held more than 30 times a week; the soup kitchen serves roughly 25,000 meals annually; social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs; the distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders; Adults and Children in Trust, the renowned preschool, afterschool and summer program, offers diverse educational and nurturing experiences; the outstanding Textile Conservation Lab preserves world treasures; concerts, exhibitions, performances and civic gatherings allow conversation, celebration, reflection and remembrance—such is the joyfully busy life of this beloved and venerated Cathedral.

### **About the Manhattan School of Music**

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 950 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; a world-renowned artist-teacher faculty; and innovative curricula. The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing postgraduate studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants Bachelor of Music, Master of Music, and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees, as well as the Professional Studies Certificate and Artist Diploma.

True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege program continues to offer superior music instruction to young musicians between the ages of 5 and 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

### **About the Oratorio Society of New York**

Since its founding in 1873, the Oratorio Society of New York, New York's own 200-voice avocational chorus, has become the city's standard for grand, joyous choral performance. "The sheer energy of the Society's sound had an enveloping fervor," said *The New York Times* of a presentation of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, and of a performance of *Messiah*, the *Times* said, "this was . . . a vibrant and deeply human performance, made exciting by the sheer heft and depth of the chorus's sound."

The Oratorio Society has performed the world, U.S., and New York premieres of works as diverse as Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (1877), Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette* (1882), a full-concert production of Wagner's *Parsifal* at the Metropolitan Opera House (1886), Tchaikovsky's a cappella *Legend* and *Pater noster* (1891) and *Eugene Onegin* (1908), the now-standard version of *The Star Spangled Banner* (1917; it became the national anthem in 1931), Bach's B minor Mass (1927), Dvořák's *St. Ludmila* (1993), Britten's *The World of the Spirit* (1998), Juraj Filas' *Song of Solomon* (2012), and Paul Moravec's *Blizzard Voices* (2013), as well as works by Handel, Liszt, Schütz, Schubert, Debussy, Elgar, and Saint Saëns, among others. On its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Oratorio Society received the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest cultural award, in recognition of these contributions.

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