



1140 Ave of the Americas, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10036-5803
212-400-7255

Contact: Jennifer Wada Communications
718-855-7101

jennifer@wadacommunications.com
www.wadacommunications.com

ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK BEGINS 2019-20 CARNEGIE HALL SEASON WITH ITS 146TH ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OF HANDEL'S *MESSIAH* ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2019 –

Kent Tritle conducts, soloists are Lauren Snouffer, Heather Petrie, Brian Giebler, and Adam Lau



New York's Steinway Hall, c. 1867, and the Oratorio Society of New York's performance of *Messiah* at Carnegie Hall on Dec. 21, 2016 ([photo](#) by Claudia Huter)

In 1874, a one-year-old organization called the Oratorio Society of New York performed Handel's *Messiah* on Christmas night at Steinway Hall, then on East 14th Street. Earlier that year, New York City made its first move to grow beyond Manhattan by annexing the "West Bronx."

One of New York's first music organizations – younger than the New York Philharmonic (founded 1842) and older than the Metropolitan Opera (founded 1883) – the Oratorio Society of New York has been performing *Messiah* at Christmastime annually since 1874. This year, the 146th presentation of the holiday favorite by the 200-voice chorus, today New York's standard for grand choral performance, takes place on Thursday, December 19, 2019, at Carnegie Hall. OSNY Music Director Kent Tritle conducts, and soloists are Lauren Snouffer, soprano; Heather Petrie, contralto; Brian Giebler, tenor; and Adam Lau, bass. Both Heather Petrie and Brian Giebler were finalists in the OSNY's Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition in recent years.

Lauren Snouffer, who replaces originally-announced Leslie Fagan as the soprano soloist, makes her OSNY debut with this concert. Last year, she performed *Messiah* with the New York Philharmonic – of which Kent Tritle is organist.

The Oratorio Society's Carnegie Hall season continues with a new critical edition of a masterpiece and the world premiere of an OSNY commission:

- **Brahms's A German Requiem, New Critical Edition U.S. Premiere – Monday, March 2, 2020, at Carnegie Hall** - *A German Requiem (Ein deutsches Requiem)* is a masterpiece of choral music. A new critical edition being given its U.S. premiere performance on this program is by an international team of scholars led by the noted scholars Michael Musgrave and Michael Struck. Michael Musgrave is the author of, among other books, *The Music of Brahms* and *Brahms: A German Requiem*. The new edition is being published by G. Henle Verlag in collaboration with Breitkopf & Härtel. The performance features soloists **Susanna Phillips**, soprano, and **Takaoki Onishi**, baritone. When the OSNY performed the U.S. premiere of the work in 1877, it was the first premiere the fledgling group had presented; it was joined on the program by a Bach cantata and an excerpt from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.
- **A Nation of Others by Paul Moravec & Mark Campbell, World Premiere of an OSNY Commission – Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at Carnegie Hall** - The world premiere of *A Nation of Others*, a new oratorio for soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass soloists, chorus, and orchestra by composer Paul Moravec and librettist Mark Campbell about immigrants' arrival at Ellis Island, headlines this program, that also features Robert Paterson's 2016 work for soprano and baritone soloists, chorus, and orchestra, *Whitman's America*, settings of poems from Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. The Moravec/Campbell work is an OSNY commission, as was the pair's 2018 oratorio *Sanctuary Road*. The program's soloists are **Jennifer Zetlan** and **Maeve Höglund**, sopranos; **Raehann Bryce-Davis**, mezzo-soprano; **Isaiah Bell**, tenor; **Steven Eddy**, baritone; and **Joseph Beutel**, bass-baritone.

Sanctuary Road, by Paul Moravec and Mark Campbell, a Naxos Records Release – January 2020

In January 2020, Naxos Records will release a recording of the world premiere performance of the Paul Moravec/Mark Campbell oratorio *Sanctuary Road*, which took place at Carnegie Hall on May 7, 2018. Kent Tritle conducted the Oratorio Society of New York, and the performance featured soloists Laquita Mitchell, Raehann Bryce-Davis, Joshua Blue, Malcolm J. Merriweather, and Dashon Burton. *Sanctuary Road* is based upon the writings of William Still, a conductor for the Underground Railroad. Praising the premiere, Opera News called the work "extraordinary ... an astonishing illumination of multiple slaves and their escape experiences," and said, "Kent Tritle showed magnificent command of [this] challenging new work and his massive musical forces."

About the Soloists

Lauren Snouffer, soprano, is increasingly recognized for her unique artistic curiosity in performances of music of Claudio Monteverdi and Johann Adolph Hasse through to that of Missy Mazzoli and George Benjamin. This season, she makes her debut at the Opernhaus Zürich in the world premiere of Stefan Wirth's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, in the lead role of Griet, conducted by Peter Rundel and directed by Ted Huffman. Handel is the locus of the soprano's 2019-20 season, with performances as Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* in Moscow, Romilda in *Serse* in Karlsruhe, and the title role of *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* in San Francisco. She also performs *Messiah* with the symphonies of Kansas City and San Francisco, *Carmina Burana* with Leonard Slatkin and the Detroit Symphony, and she joins Edo de Waart for Mahler's Second Symphony with the New Zealand Symphony. <http://etudearts.com/artists/lauren-snouffer/>

Heather Petrie, contralto, has appeared as soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra, Connecticut Lyric Opera, Voices of Ascension, and Sacred Music in a Sacred Space. Petrie is a founding member of the critically acclaimed, eight-voice treble group Etherea Vocal Ensemble, and is prominently featured on both of its recordings, released by Delos. On *Hymn to the Dawn*, their sophomore album, Heather makes a “memorable solo contribution with her creamy contralto.” (Opera News)

www.heatherpetriecontralto.com

Brian Giebler, tenor, has garnered praise for his “most impressive... bright, clear tone and lively personality” (New York Times), “faultless high tenor” (Seattle Times), and “lovely tone and deep expressivity” (New York Times). While his light lyric tenor is sought after for his interpretations of the music of Bach and Handel (and their contemporaries), Giebler has also earned a reputation for his work in premieres by prominent modern-day composers such as Paola Prestini, Martin Bresnick, Julian Wachner, William Antoniou, Charles Wuorinen, and James Dashow. www.briangiebler.com

Adam Lau, called a “superb bass” by Opera News, continues a busy and active career with multiple operatic and concert dates. Last season, he appeared with Wexford Festival Opera as Creon in *Medea*, as Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Kentucky Opera, and as the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila* with North Carolina Opera. Recent concert appearances have included the Mozart Requiem with the San Diego Symphony; Haydn's *Creation* with Symphony Silicon Valley; and Handel's *Messiah* with Musica Sacra at Carnegie Hall. www.adampaulau.com

Kent Tritle, OSNY Music Director

The Oratorio Society's Music Director since the 2005-6 season, Kent Tritle is also Music Director of the professional chorus Musica Sacra, and Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, where he directs the concert series *Great Music in a Great Space*. Mr. Tritle is Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music and a member of the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School. An acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is the organist of the *New York Philharmonic* and the *American Symphony Orchestra*. www.kenttritle.com

Oratorio Society of New York

Since its founding in 1873, the Oratorio Society of New York has become the city's standard for grand choral performance. It has given world, U.S., and New York premieres of works as diverse as Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* (1877), Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette* (1882), a full-concert production of Wagner's *Parsifal* at the Metropolitan Opera House (1886), Britten's *The World of the Spirit* (1998), Filas's Requiem (2015), Moravec's *Blizzard Voices* (2013) and *Sanctuary Road* (2018), and Ranjbaran's *We Are One* (2018). On its 100th anniversary the Oratorio Society received the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest cultural award, in recognition of these contributions. www.oratoriosocietyofny.org

[Thursday, December 19, 2019, at 8:00 pm](#)

Carnegie Hall

[ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK](#)

Kent Tritle, conductor

Lauren Snouffer, soprano

Heather Petrie, contralto

Brian Giebler, tenor

Adam Lau, bass

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL *Messiah*

Tickets: \$28 - \$100

Updated December 4, 2019