

Händel's *Athalia* Fully Staged

On Wednesday, June 7, 2006 at 7:30 P.M. the Church of the Transfiguration ("The Little Church Around the Corner") will perform a fully-staged and costumed production of Händel's *Athalia*, considered the first great English oratorio. The production is staged in modern dress.

The singers are Adam Ali (boy soprano), Amy Bartram (soprano), Alan Dornak countertenor), Arthur Kriek (tenor), Andrew Martens (bass), and Jacqueline Thompson (soprano) as Athalia. The chamber orchestra features the Queen's Chamber Band: Elaine Comparone, director. Costumes are by Terri Bush. Production: Richard Olson. Claudia Dumschat, conductor.

This is an Arnold Schwartz Memorial Concert.

The church is located at 1 East 29th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues. Admission is \$25 (\$20 if ordered in advance); students and seniors, \$15. Reservations: (212) 684-4174. Subways: 1, N/R/W, or 6 to 28th Street.

Amy Bartram, soprano, is a frequent soloist in works from the renaissance to the present day, and sings with such ensembles as the Trinity Choir (Wall St.), and Vox. With Trinity, she has been a soloist in concerts broadcast on WQXR, as well as on the bestselling Naxos CD, "Christmas at Trinity." This May, she sang the role of Belinda in Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" with the Greenwich Village Singers. She was a soloist in last May's performance of Purcell's "Come Ye Sons of Art" at the Church of the Transfiguration. In June 2004, she created the title role in the premiere of Kioulaphides' opera "The Vision of Perpetua" with Nexus Arts Ensemble. A specialist in early music, she often gives recitals of 17th c. repertoire with lutenist Ekko Jennings, and is the artistic director of Machicoti, a medieval ensemble.

Alan Dornak has triumphed in performances of standard countertenor repertoire such as Oberon in *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (directed by Axel Köhler) in Munich and Regensburg and the title role of *Giulio Cesare* in Dresden and New York. His extensive oratorio experience includes performances throughout Germany, Holland and the United States of Handel's *Messiah* and Joshua, Bach's *St. John's Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Mr. Dornak's numerous stage performances have been repeatedly praised as *Klassik Heute* noted that he "is not only an impressive singer, but an impressive actor as well." Mr. Dornak made his countertenor stage debut in 2001 with the Berliner Kammeroper as Valerius in Kaiser's *Der Tempel des Janus*. His success continued with notable engagements with the Berliner Lautten Compagny including roles in two Pallavicino operas, singing Hermia/Aristo in a touring production of *L'Antioppe* and Ubaldo in *La Gerusalemme Liberata* at the Dresden Music Festival. In both 2002 and 2003, he performed the role of Cleone in Graun's *Orfeo* with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin (conducted by Ralf Popken) at the Music Festival Potsdam-Sanssouci and the roles of Eris and Sophimene in numerous touring performances of Meder's *Die beständige Argenia*, inspiring a German television documentary *Behind the Scenes with a Countertenor*. As a respected recitalist throughout Europe and North and South America, Mr. Dornak sang at Carnegie Hall (Weill Hall) with The Queen's Chamber Band in October of 2003 and spent the summer of 2004 touring Brazil with the Ensemble Il dolcimelo.

Arthur Krieck, tenor, violist and violinist, is a native of New York City, educated at the High School of Music and Art (now LaGuardia Arts), the Mannes College of Music, HB Theater Studio and the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied viola, violin and chamber music with Lillian Fuchs. His voice teachers include David Alexander Terry, Bruce Detrick, Alice Wells Story and Arabella Hong Young. As soloist, ensemble player, singer and actor, he has performed in orchestras, choruses, music festivals and theater companies in the Northeast for over thirty-five years. He has toured, performed and recorded with the Gregg Smith Singers since 1990, has been its Assistant Conductor since 1994, and was tenor soloist at Saint Peter's Lutheran Church at Citigroup Center from 1991-2001. He is currently a member of the Choir of Men and Boys at the Church of the Transfiguration, is a freelance singer and string player, and maintains a private teaching studio (voice, violin and viola) here in Manhattan.

Andrew Martens, bass, has recently made debuts at Carnegie Hall and Chicago's Orchestra Hall. He has worked with such notable artists as Seiji Osawa, Patrick Summers, Francesca Zambello and David Kneuss. Mr. Martens received his BA in Music and German from Duke University and a Masters and Graduate Diploma in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory. He has been an apprentice artist at the Central City Opera and pursued an Artist Diploma in Opera from the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati. A member of the San Francisco Opera Center's Young Artist Program, Merola and the Western Opera Theatre, he toured the US and Japan.

Jacqueline Thompson, soprano, is following in the footsteps of the American singers of the "Golden Age." A versatile performer, she has succeeded in a broad range of styles including opera, operetta, concert, and musical theater. In 2007 she will return to Opera in the Heights as Adina in their production of *L'elisir D'Amore*. In June she will appear as in the title role of Handel's *Athalia* with the Transfiguration Ensemble. Recently Ms. Thompson performed in the world premiere of Michael Sahl and Margaret Yard's *Sally Ann* at the Tribeca New Music Festival. Last summer, she sang Musetta in *La Boheme* at Metro Lyric Opera and Hilda in Matrin Halpern's *The Scaffolding* at the Theatre for the New City. Recently Ms. Thompson was the soprano soloist with the Lumina String Quartet's performance of Mary-Carol Warwick's *Quintessence*, and performed *Fruhling Stimmer and Russlan* and *Lydmilla* with the Columbus Symphony. She performed the roles of Alice in *The Secret Garden* and Jean in *Brigadoon* with the Utah Festival Opera and was the cover for Gilda in *Rigoletto*, a role she also covered with Indianapolis Opera. She sang the title role in Opera in the Heights production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, was featured in Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's "Yultide Celebration" concerts, and Valencienne in *The Merry Widow* with the Jefferson Performing Arts Society. As an oratorio soloist she has sung Kodaly's *Te Deum* and Poulenc's *Gloria* and Handel's *Messiah*. She has also appeared as a soprano soloist in pop's concerts with Palm Beach Opera, Ocean City Pops Orchestra, Brevard Music Festival Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra and Kentucky Center for the Arts.

Claudia Dumschat, conductor, is Organist and Choirmaster at Church of the Transfiguration and Co-Artistic Director of neXus Arts (nexusarts.org), which combines music with dance, poetry, and the visual arts.. She received her Doctor of Musical Arts from the Manhattan School of Music and studied conducting with Dennis Keene and Giampolo Bracali. For eight years she was Associate Organist at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University and currently serves on the board of the Manhattan chapter of the American Guild of Organists. She has been the organist or music director of a church continuously for thirty years, beginning when she became Music Director of her hometown church in Livingston, New Jersey. She recently recorded a new CD on the organ at Transfiguration.

Richard Olson (production), a graduate of Princeton and the Yale Drama School, is a playwright and, with Dr. Dumschat, the Co-Artistic Director of neXus Arts. In 2001 he wrote the libretto for and directed the world premiere of *The Gilded Cage*, by Victor Kioulaphides, about the celebrated poet and slave, Phillis Wheatley. He recently completed a collection of poems written every day for a year, "*365: A Journey to the Present.*" Mr. Olson is also an improvisational performance artist, appearing at various downtown venues.