

# MUSICA SACRA

PROFESSIONAL CHORAL MUSIC AT ITS FINEST

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SCOTT LETHBRIDGE, PRESIDENT | KENT TRITLE, MUSIC DIRECTOR | RICHARD WESTENBURG, FOUNDER

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## MUSICA SACRA PRESENTS “MOZART AND A WORLD PREMIERE” FEATURING *DEBORAH*, A MAJOR COMMISSIONED WORK, AT ALICE TULLY HALL, LINCOLN CENTER

New York, NY, January 20, 2016

On **Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 7:30pm**, Musica Sacra returns to Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall for the third event of its 2015-2016 season with a major commissioned work — in its world premiere performance — by New York-based composer **Evan Fein**. This cantata for soloists, choir, and orchestra is set to texts drawn from and inspired by the Old Testament story of Deborah in the Book of Judges. The *Solemn Vespers*, K. 339 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart completes the evening’s program.

Led by Music Director **Kent Tritle**, hailed as “NYC’s foremost choral conductor” by *Time Out New York*, this performance features the Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra with a superb cast of soloists: soprano **Lianne Coble**, mezzo-soprano **Helen Karloski**, tenor **Marc Day**, and bass **Kevin Deas**.

Music director Kent Tritle spoke of the program, saying, “Musica Sacra has a long history of doing new music, so we are very excited to be embarking on this world premiere. Deborah is an important Old Testament character, though infrequently written about and certainly rarely composed for.”

For composer Evan Fein, “The commission for *Deborah* from the renowned chorus Musica Sacra came as a complete surprise. Immediately upon accepting, I found myself torn between excitement and the suddenly pressing question of what business a twenty-first-century composer might have creating an oratorio on an Old Testament subject. After much deliberation and research, I decided my telling would have to interpolate the details of the narrative while addressing the larger questions it poses: What does faith require, and can a war ever be just?”

“The text is derived primarily from Judges: 4-5, but also draws from the other prophetic texts of the Old Testament, including Exodus, Deuteronomy, Samuel, and Isaiah. The Book of Psalms was used extensively, particularly Psalm 88, which serves as the text to the Prologue. With reference to the flight from Egypt, Talmudic passages were also folded in. Rather than a convenient twisting of events, I hope my version of the drama demonstrates that, in spite of their difficulties, stories like this one are ready to meet us if we make ourselves ready to meet them.”

Lianne Coble, who will originate the role of Deborah, noted that the experience is “daunting and exciting at the same time. The music that Evan has composed is really beautiful, and Deborah’s music is flowing and lyrical, often over a lovely orchestral ostinato. Through the music you can see what he wants out of the character. The interesting thing will be taking his ideas and making some of that my own, while interpreting her sense of connection to the divine, but also as human being doing her best to lead her people.”

The commission and performance are underwritten by a major grant from the Tikkun Olam Foundation, Inc.

Individual tickets for this performance range from \$75 to \$15. For ticket information, please visit [MusicaSacraNY.com](http://MusicaSacraNY.com), e-mail [tickets@musicasacrany.com](mailto:tickets@musicasacrany.com), or call 212-330-7684. Tickets are also available through Center Charge at <http://www.lincolncenter.org/visit/boxoffice>, at 212-721-6500, or the Alice Tully Hall box office: Broadway at 66<sup>th</sup> Street.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Now in his ninth season as Music Director of Musica Sacra, **Kent Tritle** is one of America’s leading choral conductors. Concurrently serving as Director of Cathedral Music and organist of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, as well as Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, Maestro Tritle was described as “the brightest star in New York’s choral music world” by *The New York Times*. A dedicated educator, Mr. Tritle is Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music, where he was also recently appointed Chair of the Organ Department, and he is also a member of the graduate faculty of the Juilliard School. Also an acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra, and is in demand internationally as a recitalist. Mr. Tritle led the “Mass Appeal Mass” of the “Make Music New York” festival for three years, including the 2012 premiere of a work by Philip Glass in Times Square. And in 2013 Mr. Tritle was the Chorus Director of the Carnegie Hall National High School Choral Festival, preparing three choruses from high schools across the country in Mozart’s Requiem. Kent Tritle has made more than a dozen recordings on the AMDG, Epiphany, Gothic, Telarc, VAI, and MSR Classics labels. CDBaby.com recently made available his recording of Juraj Filas’ Requiem, *Oratio Spei*, dedicated to the victims of 9/11, with the Prague Symphony Orchestra. His most recent release is “Four Quarters of Jerusalem” with the Cathedral Choir of St. John the Divine and Rose of the Compass, on the Pro Organo label.

Composer **Evan Fein** was born in Cleveland, Ohio and currently resides in New York City, where he is a member of the Ear Training Teaching Faculty at the Juilliard School Precollege and Evening Divisions. His music, known for its strongly lyrical and narrative qualities, has been widely performed at home and abroad — including in France, Germany, Iceland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands — and has been commissioned by organizations including Musica Sacra, Opéra de Poche, the Albany Symphony, the Juilliard School, the New York Choreographic Institute, and Cleveland Public Theater. He is the recipient of awards from the ASCAP Foundation, Boston Metro Opera, and the American Scandinavian Society.

Evan Fein’s first opera, *The Raven’s Kiss*, based on Icelandic folk stories, was premiered in concert at Juilliard in the spring of 2011. His second opera, *L’Île des sept sœurs*, was given its premiere in Paris in October 2013 by Opéra de Poche. A third opera, *City of Ashes*, also commissioned by Opéra de Poche, was presented in November 2015 in Paris.

Evan Fein began playing the piano and composing at the age of six. He holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts and a Master of Music from the Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music. In

addition, he pursued auxiliary studies at the Freie Universität Berlin and L'École Normale de Musique de Paris. His primary teachers included Robert Beaser, Samuel Adler, Michel Merlet, and Margaret Brouwer. His dissertation "*The Ghosts of Versailles*" by John Corigliano: *An Evolutionary Study* was completed in 2014. The first comprehensive study of the work commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera for its centennial, it is now available to scholars around the world. Equally at home in cinema, Evan holds an IMDb credit as primary orchestrator on the 2011 film *Sedona*, featuring Frances Fisher.

Praised for her voice of "melting, devotional sweetness" (New York Times), and as a "luminous soprano [who made] singing seem so easy" (Dallas News), soprano **Lianne Coble** maintains an active and varied performance schedule of concert, operatic, chamber, and choral music. Recent achievements include national finalist recognition in the Oratorio Society of New York Solo Competition, her debut at the Carmel Bach Festival as a Virginia Best Adams Fellow, and her appointment as a full-time member of the Metropolitan Opera Chorus. Ms. Coble has been a soloist with the America Classical Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Musica Sacra, Wichita Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, New York City Chamber Orchestra, New England Symphonic Ensemble, Concert Royal, Riverside Choral Society, Greenwich Choral Society, and the Dallas Bach Society. She has sung lead roles with Apollo's Fire, Syracuse Opera, Opera Colorado, Ash Lawn Opera Festival, Berkshire Opera Company, and the CRS Barn Studio in Ithaca, NY.

Ms. Coble is also an active collaborative musician, and performs frequently with professional ensembles such as the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, Musica Sacra, the Clarion Music Society, Seraphic Fire, the American Classical Orchestra Chorus, Vox Humana, Manhattan Chorale, Ensemble Origo, and the choirs of the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Ms. Coble's achieved finalist recognition in the Oratorio Society of New York Competition, the Jensen Foundation Competition, the American Bach Society Vocal Competition, and Shreveport Opera's Singer of the Year Competition, as well as national semi-finalist recognition in the Joy in Singing Competition. She was also a Regional Winner of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions. Originally from Syracuse, NY, Ms. Coble received her undergraduate training from State University of New York (SUNY) College at Fredonia, and her master's degree from Florida State University. She received further training at the Lake Placid Institute for Music and the Humanities, the Austrian American Mozart Academy, and the V.O.I.C.Experience program. She lives in New York City, and studies with Mark Oswald. Ms. Coble can also be heard on the Musica Sacra recording "Messages to Myself," on the MSR Classics label, and Seraphic Fire's "Reincarnations: A Century of American Choral Music."

**Helen Karloski** a Pittsburgh native, is an in-demand mezzo-soprano based in New York City. A versatile artist, she is at home in a variety of musical styles including oratorio, opera, and chamber music. She is the recent recipient of the Ellen Lopin Blair Award for First Place in the 2015 Lyndon Woodside Oratorio Solo Competition. Ms. Karloski's 2015-16 season includes performances of Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the Omaha Symphony, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* under the baton of Harry Bicket with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Copland's *In the Beginning* with Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, Bach's *St. John Passion* with the St. Andrew Chorale and Orchestra, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Choral Society at Grace Church in New York City.

*The New York Times* wrote of her performance in Georg Philip Telemann's rarely performed oratorio *Der Tag des Gerichts*: "Helen Karloski commanded attention as Reason." Ms. Karloski made her Lincoln Center debut in Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* with the Mostly Mozart Festival under the baton of Iván Fischer. Her other solo engagements include Vivaldi's *Gloria* with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Haydn's *Theresienmesse* with Voices of Ascension, Bach's *Magnificat* with the Victoria Bach Festival, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody* with St. Andrew's Music Society, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* with the Tucson Chamber

Artists, and Duruflé's *Requiem* with Ars Musica and the Delaware Valley Chorale. Favorite performances include *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Hen), *Le Grande Macabre*, and *My Fair Lady* starring Kelsey Grammar and Kelli O'Hara with the New York Philharmonic, *Les Huguenots* and *Oresteia* at Bard SummerScape, and the New York City premier of Elliot Goldenthal's *Grendel*, directed by Academy Award-nominated Julie Taymor. An accomplished ensemble singer, Ms. Karloski performs regularly with Conspirare, where she was featured on the Grammy-winning recording *The Sacred Spirit of Russia*, Voices of Ascension, Musica Sacra, Santa Fe Desert Choral, and Handel and Haydn Society.

Tenor **Marc Day** began his music education at the Cathedral of the Madeleine Choir School in Salt Lake City, Utah. While studying at the Choir School, he performed two roles with the San Francisco Opera beside Frederica von Stade and David Daniels. He earned a Bachelor's of Music from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. While at the university, he performed the title role in Bernstein's *Candide* with the late Jerry Hadley performing the role of Pangloss. In addition to *Candide*, Mr. Day performed the roles of Goro, Gastone, Paco (in Manuel de Falla's *La Vida Breve*), First Rock Singer (in Bernstein's *Mass*), as well as roles in *The Coronation of Poppea* and Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. Mr. Day earned a Master's in Music from the Manhattan School of Music and performed the role of Tony from *West Side Story* with the school's Opera Scenes. He currently serves in the professional choir at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine under the direction of Maestro Kent Tritle. He enjoys performing regularly with Musica Sacra, Clarion Society, Voices of Ascension, St. Ignatius Loyola, American Classical Orchestra, and other prominent choral ensembles throughout the greater New York City Metropolitan area. Mr. Day premiered the role of Wilbur Wright in Aaron Siegel's *Brother Brother*, part of the Experiments in Opera series, which specializes in contemporary works. Most recently, he was the tenor soloist in Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with St. Georges Choral Society and the tenor soloist for Bach's Magnificat at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

**Kevin Deas** has gained international renown as one of America's leading bass-baritones. He is perhaps most acclaimed for his signature portrayal of the title role in *Porgy and Bess*, having performed it with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, and the symphonies of Atlanta, Baltimore, Calgary, Columbus, Detroit, Florida, Hartford, Houston, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Montreal, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Utah, and Vancouver, and at the Ravinia, Vail and Saratoga festivals. He repeats the role during the 2015-2016 season with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Minería and the Dallas and Buffalo Symphonies. Mr. Deas' other engagements include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Bach Festival Society of Winter Park and the Pacific, Phoenix, and Richmond Symphonies; Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, the Duruflé *Requiem*, and a concert of Bach Cantatas with the National Philharmonic; *Messiah* with Pacific MusicWorks and the Alabama Symphony; Frank Martin's *Golgotha* with the New Amsterdam Singers; the Brahms Requiem with Vox Ama Deus; Mozart Requiem with the Baltimore Choral Arts Society; and Elgar's *The Apostles* with the Bucks County Choral Society.

A strong proponent of contemporary music, Kevin Deas was heard at Italy's Spoleto Festival in a new production of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in honor of the composer's eighty-fifth birthday, which was videotaped for worldwide release. He has also performed the world premieres of Derek Bermel's *The Good Life* with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Hannibal Lokumbe's *Dear Mrs. Parks* with the Detroit Symphony. His twenty-year collaboration with the late jazz legend Dave Brubeck has taken him to Salzburg, Vienna and Moscow in *To Hope!*, and he performed Brubeck's *Gates of Justice* in a gala performance in New York during the 1995-96 season.

## ABOUT MUSICA SACRA

Founded in 1964 by Richard Westenburg, Musica Sacra is the longest continuously performing professional chorus in New York City. Musica Sacra presents performances each year at prestigious venues throughout New York City, including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. “Presented with musical skill and stylistic insight” (*The New York Times*), the chorus and orchestra’s performances of Handel’s *Messiah* are a New York holiday tradition. In addition, the Musica Sacra Chorus is frequently invited to perform with such ensembles as the New York Philharmonic, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, New York City Ballet, New York City Opera, and concert presenters throughout the region. The mission of Musica Sacra is to create definitive, professional choral performances of the highest caliber for the widest possible audience. It supports its mission by presenting concerts; recording, commissioning and performing new choral works; and educating audiences, students, and the general public in the appreciation and history of choral music.  
www.musicasacrany.com

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## UPCOMING MUSICA SACRA PERFORMANCES

### RACHMANINOV *VESPERS*

**Wednesday, October 5, 2016, at 7:30pm**

Cathedral of St. John the Divine  
Musica Sacra Chorus  
Kent Tritle, Conductor

### HANDEL’S *MESSIAH*

**Thursday, December 22, 2016, at 7:30pm**

Carnegie Hall  
Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra  
Kent Tritle, Conductor

### A CAPPELLA MASTERWORKS

**Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 7:30pm**

Cathedral of St. John the Divine  
Musica Sacra Chorus  
Kent Tritle, Conductor

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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