
ORATORIO SOCIETY OFFERS “POETRY FOR PEACE” WITH MARCH PERFORMANCE



Kearstin Piper Brown

Jan Opalach

Kevin Nitsch

(Rochester, NY– August 8, 2016) In a powerful, hopeful commemoration of the centennial of the U.S. entry into World War I, the Rochester Oratorio Society [ROS] performs ***Dona Nobis Pacem*** (“***Grant us Peace***”), a setting of Walt Whitman poetry composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams, on Friday, March 24, 2017, 7:30 P.M. at the Hochstein Performance Hall, 50 Plymouth Avenue North, in Rochester. Tickets (\$25) are available at <http://bpt.me/2591583> or through the ROS Office, 585.473.2234.

Joining the ROS are Rochester solo artists of international renown, bass-baritone **Jan Opalach** and soprano **Kearstin Piper Brown**. Collaborating in the performance will be the **Nazareth College Choir**, directed by **Dr. Mark Zeigler**.

Vaughan Williams’s setting of Walt Whitman’s poetry from *Drum Taps*, deployed to stunning effect in this 40-minute plea for peace, is the composer’s response to events he witnessed as an ambulance driver beginning in 1915. The U.S. entered the conflict in April, 1917, with declaration of war on Germany. For those wishing to explore the topic further, the ROS will host a series of book discussions, panels and presentations during the month preceding the performance, hosted and moderated by WXXI Public Broadcasting Evening Drive Host/Producer **Mona Seghatoleslami**.

To open the program, ROS keyboard collaborator **Kevin Nitsch** is the soloist for Ernest Bloch’s vibrant **Concerto grosso No. 1** for piano and strings. Also featured is **Psalm XXIV**, a dramatic setting dating from 1916 by the French composer, Lili Boulanger. Frank James Staneck’s ethereal choral benediction, “**Learn to love said nature**,” a setting of poetry by Ursula Vaughan Williams, closes the program in solace and reassurance.

The **Rochester Oratorio Society**, the region’s premier large mixed chorus for adults, presents 4-6 performances annually, sings with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and presents the international vocal competition, CLASSICAL IDOL, each spring. Information on the ROS and its productions may be found at <http://ROSSings.org> or by calling the office at (585) 473-2234.