

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Sixth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts

Unless otherwise noted, all programs take place in the West Building, West Garden Court.

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Curtis on Tour
Music by Brahms, Mozart, and Puts
October 1, 3:30

—
The Canales Project, in partnership with TEDx Mid Atlantic
Sandeep Das, tabla
Lara Downes, piano
Kaoru Watanabe, shinobue bamboo flute
October 8, 3:30

—
Dalí Quartet
With Orlando Cotto, percussion
Music by Ricardo Lorenz, Guido López-Gavilan, and Jorge Mazón-Rico Melao
October 15, 3:30

—
Lina Bahn, violin, and
Matt Haimovitz, cello
With Artichoke Dance Company
Voices of the Ocean
October 22, 3:30

—
Pomerium
Flemish Musical Mastery in the Age of Bosch and Bloemaert
Celebrating *Bosch to Bloemaert: Early Netherlandish Drawings from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*
October 29, 3:30

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

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Cover Edvard Munch, *Anxiety* (detail), 1896, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Epstein Family Collection



Program

New York Opera Society *Letters from Ruth*

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017 / 3:30
WEST BUILDING, WEST GARDEN COURT

Presented in celebration of *Edvard Munch: Color in Context*

Music by Gisle Kverndokk

Libretto by Aksel-Otto Bull and Gisle Kverndokk

Based on *Ruth Maier's Diary*—

A Young Jewish Girl's Life under Nazism, by Jan Erik Vold

Commissioned by Musikkteaterforum, Norway

Cast

Ruth Maier	Alisa Jordheim
Gunvor Hofmo	Helen Karloski
Judith , multiple roles	Molly Allen
The Mother , multiple roles	Sarah Murphy
Professor Williger , multiple roles	Shannon DeVine
Herman Thimig	John Tiranno
Mr. Strøm	John Tiranno
Gustav Vigeland , multiple roles	Kenneth Overton

The Musicians

NEW YORK OPERA SOCIETY

The New York Opera Society (NYOS) develops new audiences for opera by commissioning, creating, and funding distinctive and high-quality productions. To that end, NYOS serves as a conduit to the public by disseminating important messages, musical inspiration, and seminal artistic performances via partnerships with major performance venues, corporations, nonprofits, and governments to present the work of our artists in the United States and abroad. NYOS annually tours new productions to international festivals and presents a contemporary opera or new commission in the United States. It also hosts a salon series and oversees an international artist-in-residence program and substantive outreach programs. Recent highlights include productions of *Falstaff* and *Madama Butterfly* for its annual festival in Southern France; premieres at the Lincoln Center and Teatro São Pedro, São Paulo, Brazil, of its contemporary Spanish opera, *Las Horas Vacías*, by Guggenheim fellow and Juilliard faculty member Ricardo Llorca; and three tours and a world premiere of the NYOS's commission of *Max and Moritz: A Cartoon Opera in Seven Pranks*, by Gisle Kverndokk. Other notable NYOS evenings have taken place at the Chicago Cultural Center, the Embassy of Italy, New York's World Financial Center, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, and the United Nations. Audiences have included Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, the Royal Couple of Norway, ambassadors, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Queen Sofia of Spain, Stanley Tucci and Martin Scorsese (at a gala in their honor), and nearly every European and South American embassy and consulate. NYOS has recently been favorably reviewed on PBS and in *Time*, *GQ*, *Opera News*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. The New York Opera Society is led by a dedicated board of directors and philanthropist, Lesley Silvester.

The New York Opera Society thanks the Royal Norwegian Embassy for its support on behalf of this project.

Creative Team

GISLE KVERNDOKK / COMPOSER

Gisle Kverndokk is one of Norway's foremost composers of musical theater. His works have been performed all over Norway and Germany, as well as in Canada and the United States. His opera *Around the world in 80 days* was commissioned for the opening of the new opera house in Oslo and premiered there in 2010. Kverndokk has written two children's operas for the New York Opera Society: *Max and Moritz* (2010) and *Supersize Girl* (2013). He also has produced many symphonic works, chamber music, church music, and film music and has collaborated with all the major orchestras in Norway. He has degrees from the Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo, and the Juilliard School in New York.

AKSEL-OTTO BULL / LIBRETTIST

Aksel-Otto Bull is a Norwegian stage director and playwright. He has directed over sixty theater productions throughout Norway. He has been artistic director of the National Theatre in Bergen and has for many years worked in theater education at the Nordic Institute for Stage and Studio and the Bårdar Academy in Oslo. He studied at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and the Drama Studio, London. Bull and Kverndokk's first opera collaboration was *Easter*, commissioned by the Bergen National Opera. It premiered in 2014 at Kilden Performing Arts Centre, Kristiansand, directed by Bull. Their next collaboration was the musical *Letters from Ruth*, commissioned by Musikkteaterforum in Oslo. It was presented at the New York Theatre Barn's New Works Series, 2015, in New York City.

The Cast

ALISA JORDHEIM / SOPRANO / RUTH MAIER

Soprano Alisa Jordheim is praised for her compelling and vocally assured performances in opera, oratorio, musical theater, both early and new music, and recital. A 2013 Merola Opera Program participant, Jordheim has also performed with the Florentine, Caramoor, Cincinnati, Madison, Central City, and Emerald City Operas; the Columbus Symphony and Opera Chorus; at the Grant Park Music Festival with the Madison Bach Musicians; the Columbus, Madison, Fox Valley, and Northwest Indiana Symphonies; the Greeley and Dayton Philharmonics; and the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra.

Jordheim is the recipient of a 2016 Sullivan Foundation Award and 2015 Sullivan Foundation Career Development Grant. A Fulbright scholar and a fellow of the American Scandinavian Foundation, Jordheim studied and conducted research on singing diction in the Scandinavian languages at the University of Oslo in 2013–2014. She frequently performs recitals of songs by Scandinavian composers, has published an article on Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish singing diction in the *Journal of Singing*, and has completed English and International Phonetic Alphabet translations of numerous songs by Scandinavian composers. She is also an advocate of new music for voice, having premiered works composed for her by Lori Laitman, Douglas Pew, Joanne Metcalf, Josh Deutsch, and Rodney Rogers.

Jordheim is a native of Appleton, Wisconsin, and completed her first two years of undergraduate study at Lawrence University, where she studied with Patrice Michaels. Jordheim earned her bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees from the University of Cincinnati College, Conservatory of Music.

HELEN KARLOSKI / MEZZO-SOPRANO / GUNVOR HOFMO

Mezzo-soprano Helen Karloski has been gaining recognition particularly in her portrayal of the oratorio repertoire. In 2015, she was the recipient of the Ellen Lopin Blair Award for First Place in the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition. The *Santa Fe New Mexican* wrote: "Her voice is beautifully suited for oratorio, and the sincerity of her delivery, along with her poised bearing and physical presentation, forged an almost palpable connection with the audience." Karloski made her Carnegie Hall debut in the 2016–2017 season, performing Mozart's Mass in C Minor and Bruckner's *Te Deum*, under the baton of Kent Tritle, with the Oratorio Society of New York. Additional performances last season included Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the American Classical Orchestra and the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass with Princeton Pro Musica, and a televised broadcast of Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard* with Conspirare. She was also a featured soloist on Conspirare's Grammy-winning recording *The Sacred Spirit of Russia*.

Karloski made her Lincoln Center debut in Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* with the Mostly Mozart Festival, under the baton of Iván Fischer. She has made recent appearances with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the Omaha Symphony, Musica Sacra, the American Classical Orchestra, and Sacred Music in a Sacred Space and has performed as the alto soloist in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the New York City Ballet. 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, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Choral Society of Grace Church, and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* with St. Andrew's Music Society. Favorite performances include *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Le Grande Macabre*, and *My Fair Lady* with the New York Philharmonic; *Les Huguenots* and *Oresteia* at Bard SummerScape; and the New York City premiere of Elliot Goldenthal's *Grendel*, directed by Academy Award–nominee Julie Taymor.

MOLLY ALLEN / SOPRANO / JUDITH

Molly Allen holds her bachelor's and master's degrees in vocal performance from the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music at Catholic University. She currently resides in the Washington, DC, area where she teaches at Harmonic Music Studios and is a faculty member at the Performing Arts Institute of Wyoming Seminary in Pennsylvania. When she is not teaching, Allen is pursuing a career in opera and has performed the role of Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, Miss Silverpeal in *Der Schauspieldirektor*, Jou Jou in *The Merry Widow*, Cupidon in Bel Cantanti Opera Company's production of *Orphée aux Enfers*, and Nella in the Amalfi Coast Music and Arts Festival's production of *Gianni Schicchi*. She recently won the Xi'an Music Festival Vocal Competition in Xi'an, China, as well as the Friday Morning Music Club Vocal Competition in Bethesda, Maryland.

SARA MURPHY / MEZZO-SOPRANO / THE MOTHER

Sara Murphy, "a gorgeous, deep, dark mezzo-soprano" (*New York Times*), is a vocal artist who has been called "absolutely unforgettable for her versatility and ability to conquer any sensitive soul" (*El Nacional*, Dominican Republic). The fall of 2016 marked her European debut at Rome's Teatro dell' Opera as Ulrica in Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, under the baton of Jesús López-Cobos. The current season continues with the role of the Wife in the world premiere of Gisle Kverndokk's sacred opera *Upon this handful of earth*, and concludes at Carnegie Hall as Mary Magdalene in Elgar's *The Apostles* with the American Symphony Orchestra. *Opera News* named the recent release of Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner*, in which Murphy portrays Mother Bayard and Ermengarde, as one of the "Top Ten Opera Recordings of 2015." Past season highlights include Ligeti's *Requiem*; Schnittke's *Nagasaki* and Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the

American Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leon Botstein; and Verdi's *Otello*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mahler's Symphony no. 8, Beethoven's Symphony no. 9, and Tchaikovsky's *Ode to Joy* at the Cincinnati May Festival, conducted by James Conlon. Murphy's portrayal of Britten's *Phaedra*, Barber's *Dover Beach*, and Verdi's High Priestess in *Aida* at Ravinia with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by James Conlon, won acclaim from the *Chicago Tribune*: "a rich, voluminous mezzo voice, excellent diction and an acute feeling for words and music." Murphy enjoys frequent performances of Verdi's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Mahler's Symphony no. 8, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder*, and Elgar's *Sea Pictures*. She holds degrees from Oberlin College and Catholic University and is a first-prize winner of the Oratorio Society of New York Solo Vocal Competition. She is also a grant recipient of Inter-Cities Performing Arts and the Wagner Society of New York.

SHANNON DEVINE / BARITONE / PROFESSOR WILLIGER

Baritone Shannon DeVine recently made his Carnegie Hall debut in Vaughan Williams's *Donna Nobis Pacem* and was also Michele in *Il tabarro* with the New York Vertical Players Repertory. The *New York Times* said, "Mr. DeVine is a very impressive baritone in the role of Michele," and "can't wait to see him on bigger and more important stages." In 2012, DeVine made his Opera Orchestra of New York debut under Eve Queler in the acclaimed concert of Wagner's *Rienzi*. He has also performed Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Ford in *Falstaff* in Toulouse, France, as well as Valentin in *Faust*, Marcello in *La bohème* and Count di Luna in *Il trovatore* with One World Symphony, and Germont in *La traviata* with Opera Company of Brooklyn. Recent performances include Scarpia in *Tosca* at the Festival of the Aegean in Greece, and the world premiere of *I tre compagni* with Encompass Opera in New York.

DeVine earned his master's degree from the Juilliard School, where he performed the roles of Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Silvio in *Pagliacci*. His professional debut came at age nineteen in the role of Prince Yamadori in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* with the Connecticut Opera. He has also appeared with the Aspen Opera Theater Center as Michele in Puccini's *Il tabarro* and as Ford in *Falstaff*, under Julius Rudel, and as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and as Morales and El Dancaire with the Houston Grand Opera in Ron Daniel's new production of *Carmen*, under Alain Lombard. Other roles with the Houston Grand Opera include Riolo in *Florenzia en el Amazonas* and Top in Copland's *The Tender Land*. DeVine was a winner of a 2007 Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation award and also won the Verdi Concerto Competition at the Aspen Music Festival. In 2003, he was at the Tanglewood Music Center for his debut as Jose Tripaldi in the world premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*, under the baton of Robert Spano.

JOHN TIRANNO / TENOR / HERMAN THIMIG

Tenor John Tiranno's singing has been called "ardent and mellifluous" by the *New York Times*. His notable performances include the world premiere of Gisle Kverndokk's *Upon this handful of Earth* (a coproduction of Sacred Music in a Sacred Space and the New York Opera Society); Berlioz's *Requiem* (La Jolla Symphony and Chorus); Mahler's Symphony no. 8 and Paul Moravec's *The Blizzard Voices* (Oratorio Society of New York); Richard Strauss's *Deutsche Motette* (Musica Sacra); Saint-Saëns's *Requiem* (Festival Internazionale di Musica e Arte Sacra); creating the role of Trouble in Kverndokk's *Max and Moritz* (New York Opera Society); Bach's Mass in B Minor and the US premiere of Juraj Filas' *Oratio Spei—Requiem* (Sacred Music in a Sacred Space); Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* (the Dessooff Choirs); Handel's *Messiah* (Dayton Philharmonic); and recitals at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

KENNETH OVERTON / BARITONE / GUSTAV VIGELAND

As a leading baritone, Kenneth Overton has sung with the San Francisco, Nashville, Sacramento, and Connecticut Operas, the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, the Boheme Opera of New Jersey, the Houston Ebony Opera Guild, and Operas Delaware, Memphis, and Carolina. His roles with these companies include Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Schaunard (*La bohème*), Ping (*Turandot*), Angelotti (*Tosca*), and Bello and Sid (*La fanciulla del West*). Overton's interpretation of the title role in *Porgy and Bess* has been acclaimed as "breathtaking." He recently sang the role of Porgy with L'Opéra de Montréal, the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, and the Royal Danish Opera. He made his international debut in the role at the Deutsche Oper Berlin in the critically acclaimed production from South Africa's Cape Town Opera. He also performed the role in concert with the WDR Orchestra of Cologne at the Klangvokal Music Festival in Dortmund and with the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony, and the Paducha Symphony, and throughout the British Isles. Other concert performances include the *Messiah* with the Phoenix Symphony and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and *Elijah* with the New Jersey Symphony. This season Overton returns to David Geffen Hall in Mozart's *Requiem* with the National Chorale and debuts with the Hungarian State Opera as Porgy.

ANDREW ROSENBLUM / MUSIC DIRECTOR

Andrew Rosenblum, Chicago-based pianist and harpsichordist, has worked as a staff or faculty keyboardist at Northwestern University, DePaul University, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, and the Heifetz International Music Institute. Highlights of his 2015–2016 season included coaching and performing in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's production of *Second Nature*, a children's opera by Matthew Aucoin, and soloing with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto no. 5. Rosenblum has performed in many prominent venues in the United States, including the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, and Severance Hall and has concertized internationally in Guadalajara, Mexico, Gros Islet, St. Lucia, and Banff, Canada.

RAQUEL BARBIERI VIDAL / DIRECTOR

Raquel Barbieri Vidal was born in Buenos Aires, where she graduated as a régisseur (opera director) from Teatro Colón in 1997. She has directed *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and *Der Schauspieldirektor* (Mozart); *Madama Butterfly* and *La bohème* (Puccini); *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette* (Gounod); *Werther* (Massenet); *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano); *L'occasione fa il ladro* (Rossini); *Der fliegende Holländer* (Wagner); *The Bartered Bride* (Smetana); *The Telephone* (in the presence of the composer Gian Carlo Menotti); *La serva padrona* (Pergolesi), *Háry János* (Kodály); and *La leçon de chant électromagnétique* (Offenbach), in addition to playwriting *Mujeres en la Ópera*, *Desventuras de una Diva*, *Con esa facha de tonta*, and *Malena... la del tango*. She is also the librettist of the Argentinian opera *Camila O'Gorman* and has worked for the following theaters and institutions: Teatro Colón, Teatro San Martín, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Union Avenue Opera, Ars Hungarica, Ensemble Lírico Orquesta, Scottish Opera, Dvořák Theatre, Pontificia Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul, Società Dante Alighieri, and Alliance Française.

CAITLIN RAIN / COSTUME DESIGNER

Caitlin Rain is from Dallas, Texas. Her recent projects include *Coriolanus* (Stella Adler Studios), *Awake and Sing!* (Olney Theatre Center), and *The Bomb-itty of Errors* (Second Thought Theater). Her assistant design work includes productions with the Santa Fe Opera, the Saito Kinen Festival, the Boston Ballet, and numerous regional theaters. She earned a master of fine arts degree from Southern Methodist University. This is her second project with the New York Opera Society.

Synopsis and Notes

Ruth Maier was born in 1920 and grew up in Vienna, Austria. She was an exceptionally talented writer and painter and kept a diary throughout her life. In bustling Vienna, she immersed herself in theater, literature, and the fine arts. In 1939, she fled to Norway to escape Nazi persecution and lived with a family in Lillestrøm, just outside Oslo. She learned to speak Norwegian and in 1941, met the young, budding poet Gunvor Hofmo, who became her intimate friend and lover. The two women had a stormy relationship that lasted until Ruth was deported with other Norwegian Jews in November 1942. She was killed in Auschwitz's gas chamber upon arrival. Gunvor became one of Norway's greatest poets and kept Ruth's diaries and much of her correspondence. In 1953, she approached the Gyldendal publishing house to print the materials but was turned down. After Gunvor's death in 1995, the Norwegian poet Jan Erik Vold went through Gunvor's papers and came across Ruth Maier's works. After ten years of editing, they were published in 2007. Vold was highly impressed by the literary value of the diaries, comparing Ruth Maier's talent to that of Hannah Arendt and Susan Sontag. The book was translated into English by Jamie Bulloch in 2009.

Ruth was also one of the models for the statue *Surprised*, by Gustav Vigeland, which is located in Oslo's Frogner Park. Vigeland began work on the sculpture around 1904, and the model for the statue's face was Inga Syvertsen. The sculpture was completed in 1942. Ruth was surprised by another person entering the room while she was modeling for Vigeland, and she tried to cover her naked body, hence the posture. The statue was eventually cast in bronze in 2002. Additionally, Ruth was a model for Norwegian painter Åsmund Esva.

Ruth rented a room on Dalsbergstien 3, in Oslo, in the early fall of 1942. She was arrested on November 26, 1942, and deported on the SS *Donau* the same day. Upon her arrest, she penned one last note to Gunvor: "I believe that it is good that it has come to this. Why should we not suffer, when there is so much suffering? Do not worry about me. Perhaps I would not want to trade with you." Most of Ruth's diary is preserved from 1933 to 1942. She wrote in her diary about the deteriorating conditions for Austria's Jewish population following the Anschluss in 1938, her reaction to the many changes in her life, and her yearning for her family.

In a speech delivered on January 27, 2012, on the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Norway's Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg issued an official apology for the role played by Norwegians in the deportations. As reported on the official government website, Stoltenberg delivered his speech on the same dock in Oslo where 532 Jews boarded the *Donau*, bound for Nazi camps. Stoltenberg said:

The Holocaust came to Norway on Thursday 26 November 1942. Ruth Maier was one of the many who was arrested that day. On 26 November, just as the sky was beginning to lighten, the sound of heavy boots could be heard on the stairs of the boarding house "Englehjemmet" in Oslo. A few minutes later, the slight Jewish girl was seen by her friends being led out the door of Dalsbergstien 3. Ruth Maier was last seen being forced into a black truck by two big Norwegian policemen. Five days later the twenty-two-year-old was dead. Murdered in the gas chamber at Auschwitz. Fortunately, it is part of being human that we learn from our mistakes. And it is never too late. More than fifty years after the war ended, the Storting decided to make a settlement, collectively and individually, for the economic liquidation of Jewish assets. By so doing the state accepted moral responsibility for the crimes committed against Norwegian Jews during the Second World War. What about the crimes against Ruth Maier and the other Jews? The murders were unquestionably carried out by the Nazis. But it was Norwegians who carried out the arrests. It was Norwegians who drove the trucks. And it happened in Norway.

Edvard Munch: Color in Context (at the Gallery through January 28, 2018) examines the influence of scientific discoveries, spiritual concepts, and aural discoveries of the late nineteenth-century on Munch's use of color in his work. The ideas that took hold of Europe in this period had a lasting effect on artists and informed Ruth Maier's work. Her story—from her personal interest in theater and the other arts and her direct involvement with literary figures and visual artists—is an embodiment of the convergence of stylistic thinking and development across art forms.

Ruth Maier's Diary is a selection of Maier's surviving diaries, letters, and notes from 1933 to 1942. Her texts have been edited by Jan Erik Vold for the sanctity of private life and to create a unified work of literature. Copyrights for the international editions of *Ruth Maier's Diary* are shared by Judith Suschitzky, Ruth Maier's sister, and Jan Erik Vold. Judith Suschitzky has donated her copyright earnings to Amnesty International.