



Edited by: B.T. Sculac Stern

February 2016

Please join us for our upcoming concert:

Golgotha

A rare opportunity to hear this masterpiece by Frank Martin

Sunday March 13, 2016 at 3 p.m.

(Note: Daylight saving begins on this day)

Trinity Church

75 Broadway (at Wall Street)

A dramatic oratorio in the tradition of Bach's Passions - for chorus, orchestra and soloists.

Meredith Lustig, soprano

Avery Amereau, alto

Dann Coakwell, tenor

Tyler Duncan, baritone (Jesus)

Kevin Deas, bass

Tickets:

Premium seating: \$60 - *Premium Section is almost SOLD OUT! Buy your tickets now!*

General admission: \$30 (\$35 at the door)

Seniors: \$25

Students: \$20

Read the [press release](#) or [**Purchase your tickets now!**](#)

Invitation to Director's Talk and Reception

Information about *Golgotha's* soloists

A closer look at soloist Tyler Duncan

Golgotha: The Gospel According to Frank Martin

Invitation to Director's Talk and Reception

Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 8 P.M.

SPACE IS LIMITED! Reserve your tickets now!

The Board of New Amsterdam Singers is honored to invite you to hear Music Director Clara Longstreth discuss preparations for our upcoming performance of Frank Martin's *Golgotha*, a remarkable major work for chorus, soloists, and full orchestra that has rarely been heard live in this country since its New York premiere in 1952.

In a venue on West 57th Street overlooking Central Park, Clara will share musical insight and nuances, and will address some of the unique musical, cultural, linguistic and logistical challenges of presenting such a complex work. Questions from the audience will also be welcome. Joining in this intimate event will be a perfect prelude to the concert!

Wine and light refreshments will be served. **Space is limited, so reserve your seat today!**

Tickets: \$50

Special Offer: Reserve a premium seat for the concert and a seat for the Director's Talk for \$100, a savings of \$10!

You may also order tickets by mail or phone:

New Amsterdam Singers
PO Box 373
Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025
914-712-8708

Information about *Golgotha's* soloists



Photos courtesy of the artists

Compiled by Lucy Kraus

Soprano **Meredith Lustig**'s appearances this season include Eurydice in an English translation of Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers* with Virginia Opera, as Fiona in Lerner and Loewe's *Brigadoon* with Gulfshore Opera, and in Robert Paterson's *The Whole Truth* with the American Modern Ensemble in New York. Most recently, Miss Lustig appeared as a soloist and member of the Street Chorus of Bernstein's *Mass* with the The Philadelphia Orchestra led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Other performances from the 2014-15 season included workshops with the NYU Graduate Musical Theater Writing program and multiple appearances with NYFOS: Next, where Miss Lustig premiered the music of Adam Guettel, George Steel, and Paul Moravec. A former resident artist with Pittsburgh Opera, Miss Lustig made her New York City Opera debut in 2011 as Giannetta in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and returned in 2012 to sing the role of Cephisia in Telemann's *Orpheus*. She has enjoyed multiple summers as a Young Artist with the Glimmerglass Festival, and in 2012 sang the role of Daisy Buchanan in John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* under the baton of Anne Manson at the Aspen Music Festival. She enjoys a close collaboration with Michael Barrett and Steven Blier at the New York Festival of Song, and has participated in Caramoor's Vocal Rising Star Program. A New Hampshire native, Miss Lustig holds bachelor and master degrees from The Juilliard School. She is a 2012 district winner and 2013 third-place regional winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a 2015 semi-finalist in the American Traditions Competition, and the first recipient of the Juilliard Novick Career Grant in 2011.

Mezzo-soprano **Avery Amereau**, a native of Jupiter, Florida, made her operatic debut last season at The Juilliard School as Olga in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, followed by Mme. de la Haultière in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. She also portrayed Lucretia in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, a part she covered at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera in Fiona Shaw's acclaimed production. In addition, she made her role debut as Carmen with the New York Opera Exchange. Ms. Amereau fosters a love for historical performance, having appeared with renowned early-music conductors Helmuth Rilling, William Christie and Maasaki Suzuki. She debuted at the Bachfest Leipzig and the Boston Early Music Festival in an all-Bach tour with Juilliard and the Royal Academy of Music under Mr. Suzuki and, with a vast concert repertoire, has performed numerous shared and solo recitals in New York, Florida, and Germany, the last broadcast on Bavarian Radio. Ms. Amereau received her bachelor of music degree at The Mannes College of Music, studying with Dan Marek, and a master of music degree at The Juilliard School, studying under Edith Wiens. During the summers of 2011 to 2014, she studied at the Internationale Meistersinger Akademie, where she received coaching and consultations from Malcom Martineau, Ann Murray, John Fisher, and Matthew Horner, among others. She will continue at Juilliard for an artist diploma in opera studies, where she is a proud recipient of a Kovner Fellowship.

Tenor **Dann Coakwell** is much sought after as a performer of Bach, Handel, and their contemporaries, and specializes in the Evangelist roles of J.S. Bach, but is also an enthusiast of Benjamin Britten and other composers within the last century. He has

served as soloist under Masaaki Suzuki in Italy (Evangelist, Bach's St. Matthew Passion), as well as in The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Mexico (various Bach cantatas), where he has appeared with the Bach Collegium (BCJ) Japan. In June 2015 he rejoined Suzuki and BCJ for Bach cantatas, and for Handel's Messiah in December 2015. In Germany, under Helmuth Rilling, Coakwell served as soloist for many of Bach's cantatas, most recently in Weimar, in August 2014. At Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall Coakwell has collaborated as a soloist since 2010 with musicians such as early music specialist William Christie, vocal ensemble TENET under conductor Julian Wachner, piano virtuoso Boris Berman, and with horn player William Purvis. He appeared at Alice Tully Hall as the Evangelist in Bach's St. Matthew Passion, and at Avery Fisher Hall in the world premiere of Bradley Ellingboe's Star Song in 2014. Since 2007 he has appeared numerous times as a soloist with Helmuth Rilling and Matthew Halls at the Oregon Bach Festival, and has appeared with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in the San Francisco Bay area led by Nicholas McGegan and Suzuki. He can be heard as a soloist on the Grammy-winning *Conspire: The Sacred Spirit of Russia*, 2014 (Harmonia Mundi). A native of Austin, Texas, Coakwell is a specialist in historically informed performance, and serves as instructor of voice at Yale University.

Baritone **Tyler Duncan** (Jesus) performs this season in six productions at The Metropolitan Opera; Poulenc's *Le bal Masqué* with musicians from the New York Philharmonic; and Mahler's Eighth Symphony with the Calgary Philharmonic, following a summer that included returns to the American Spoleto and Oregon Bach Festivals. His numerous other engagements have included appearances in Orff's *Carmina burana* with the San Diego Symphony and Calgary Philharmonic; Mahler's Eighth Symphony with the Toronto and American Symphony Orchestras; Mendelssohn's *Christus* and Bach's *Magnificat* with the New York Philharmonic; Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* with the symphony orchestras of Montreal, Winnipeg, and Quebec; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich; Handel's *Messiah* with Tafelmusik, the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Seattle, Newfoundland, and Toronto, among others; and Brahms's *Requiem* with the Rochester Philharmonic and at the Chautauqua and Berkshire Choral Festivals. He has also appeared in Bach's St. Matthew Passion; Mozart's *Requiem*; and in Vaughan Williams's *Five Mystical Songs* at Carnegie Hall with the Oratorio Society of New York, and has worked often with Les Violons du Roy under Bernard Labadie. A native of British Columbia, the American-based baritone has earned prizes from Wigmore Hall (London), ARD (Munich), Joy in Singing, Naumburg and Oratorio Society of New York competitions for his work in art song. He holds music degrees from the University of British Columbia, Hochschule für Musik (Augsburg) and Hochschule für Musik and Theater (Munich). His recordings include the title role of John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, Bach's St. Matthew Passion with Portland Baroque; Purcell works and Carissimi's *Jepthe* with Les Voix Baroque, and a DVD of *Messiah* with Kent Nagano and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

American-born bass-baritone **Kevin Deas** is perhaps most acclaimed for his signature portrayal of the title role in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, which he has performed with the New York Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, and the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, and Houston, among others, and at the Ravinia, Vail, and Saratoga festivals. He repeats the role during the 2015-16 season

with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Minería, and with the Dallas Symphony and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Other 2015-16 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 in Maryland; Handel's Messiah with Pacific MusicWorks and the Alabama Symphony Orchestra; the Brahms Requiem with Vox Ama Deus; and Mozart's Requiem with the Baltimore Choral Arts 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 85th birthday, which was videotaped for worldwide release. He also performed the world premieres of Derek Bermel's The Good Life with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and Hannibal Lokumbe's Dear Mrs. Parks with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. His 20-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. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

A closer look at soloist Tyler Duncan

Interview facilitated by Lucy Kraus

NAS: You started out wanting to be a jazz singer. Why did you switch to classical singing, and how difficult was it to make the change?

T. Duncan: I switched because my jazz teacher never showed up to my lessons, and I wanted to learn how to sing.

NAS: Do you incorporate any of that early jazz singing in your performances now?

T. Duncan: Jazz singing has helped the classical side immensely. I find it has given me an internal sense rhythm that I would not have if I had just studied classical voice. It has also made me a more versatile performer, adding a larger color palette to my sound.

NAS: What attracted you to Golgotha?

T. Duncan: Golgotha has given me another perspective to the voice of Jesus in the Passion setting. I love the immensity of the work, and the beautiful compositional style of Martin.

NAS: You have sung the role of Jesus in Bach's Passions. How would you compare the experience of singing those versions of Jesus with Martin's? Do you see similarities between Golgotha and Bach's St. Matthew Passion, which was a great inspiration for Martin in writing Golgotha?

T. Duncan: Golgotha is by far the largest setting of the Passion that I have come across. I do feel a similarity of approach between Martin and Bach, Martin goes further to the extremes of what the voice can do, and has a much larger orchestra to contend with. Both Bach and Martin set the text in a declamatory manner, using the words of Christ to guide where the musical phrase is going to. Singing the role of Jesus is a very difficult task no matter who the composer. I like to say that he has big sandals to fill... It is

difficult to find a balance between accessing the emotions that the role requires and respecting the church and the composer's setting. Luckily great composers like Bach and Martin make their intentions quite clear.

NAS: What is the most challenging aspect of Golgotha for you?

T. Duncan: The vocal accompaniment is at times very sparse, and it can be difficult to find where you fit into the harmonies.

NAS: You are singing with The Metropolitan Opera this season. Do you have a favorite role so far? What do you look for when you accept a role?

T. Duncan: I have had a lot of fun at the Met, and have learned a great deal about the world of Opera. I have enjoyed being a member of the cast of Lulu this season, though working through the subtle Japanese inspired moves in Madama Butterfly has also brought me great joy.

NAS: How do you spend your time when you're not rehearsing or performing?

T. Duncan: Spending as much time as possible with my family. Working at the Met this season has allowed me to stay close to home, and tuck in my son almost every night.

Golgotha: The Gospel According to Frank Martin

Editor's note: Recognizing the Passion story may be challenging or distressful, the following article provides information that may make the music more accessible. The "Golgotha" libretto contains a combination of biblical texts and theological reflections. While the music can be appreciated on its own merit, understanding the historical context of each selected text, as well as the time period and life experiences of Martin, may help the listener to move beyond some challenging imagery and encounter the music as its own expression of theological reflection. //

Written by: Andy James

A few historical notes...

In the Christian Bible, the story of the Passion appears in each of the four gospels with different details and themes. Matthew, Mark, and Luke share many details, as most scholars believe that Mark was written first (about 35 years after the events that it retells) and was used as the basis for Matthew and Luke. These three accounts tend to focus on narrative details and limit their direct commentary and theological interpretation of the events beyond their need to affirm the key tenets of the early church around death and resurrection.

John, though, takes a very different perspective. The fourth gospel has substantially different details, including an entirely different timetable for these events that cannot be reconciled with that told in the other gospels. It further bears a clear theological message addressed to a late first-century community of Christians who were enduring persecution from a particular group of Jewish leaders in Jerusalem following the

destruction of the second temple.

In these days, when the distinctions and differences between Christians and Jews were still being sorted out, many Christians were viewed as threats to the unity of the Jewish people. If there was to be any hope of recovering political sovereignty from Rome, many Jewish leaders felt that the various sects of Judaism (of which Christianity was at that time one) needed to be united. When John speaks of “the Jews” as being responsible for the death of Jesus, he seems most likely to be referring to this group of religious leaders, not the whole of the Jewish people. The resulting blame and criticism hurled at “the Jews” in John went unquestioned in the church for far too long, but many contemporary readers seek to place these words in their original context and look not at the group of people named in the text but rather examine the symbol of power that this group held over John’s first readers.

Martin, the Gospels, and the Passion story

Most biblical scholars resist the temptation to “harmonize” these four different accounts of the Passion narrative. Martin chooses to do exactly that, but his story is built not with the most “reliable” or “historically accurate” elements but rather with the most effective narrative elements of the varied gospel accounts, interspersed with moments for meditation from the words of St. Augustine. By choosing different portions of the gospel stories, Martin is not limited by a single narrative but in some way creates his own version of it.

The gospel according to Martin as told in Golgotha is designed to direct our attention to the events of the Passion more than the creedal aspect of it. Martin drew a clear distinction between the earlier Passions of J.S. Bach and his intentions for his own work:

[Bach’s] work was church music, written for his church, and his Passions communicate primarily the feelings of believers confronted by the Passion... Bach’s Passions worship the Passion and are intended for devout Christians, whose various emotions and faith they communicate. The Golgotha that I intend to complete attempts to depict the event itself, allowing the listener to draw his own conclusions. It will definitely be an Oratorio intended for performance in church, but it will not be church music. It will be a performance of the tragedy of the Passion, but not a glorification of it.

Even so, Martin very much approached Golgotha as a person of faith. His father was a pastor in the Swiss Reformed church, and he remained a practicing Christian throughout his life. He crossed paths with Swiss theologian Karl Barth, who worked in much the same period as Martin. Barth directly and vocally opposed the anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany and was the primary author of the Theological Declaration of Barmen, adopted by a minority of Christian churches in Germany in 1934 in objection to Hitler’s actions that co-opted the church for political ends. The Theological Declaration of Barmen sums up Barth’s theology: “Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.”

The centrality of Christ for Barth was very much present in Martin’s understanding of the

Passion in Golgotha. Beyond the texts of the gospels and St. Augustine, Martin was directly inspired by Rembrandt's etching The Three Crosses. As he viewed this gory depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus, Martin's eye was drawn to a beam of light coming from heaven to illuminate the cross. In assembling Golgotha, he therefore set out to depict this light shining into the darkness of the world. He sought to "focus all the light on the figure of Christ, leaving all other characters in shadow."

Outline of the movements

The first movement, an introductory chorus, offers a summary of the Passion through the lens of basic Christian doctrine. The opening word "Père!" would mean nothing in Christian belief without the life, death, and resurrection of Christ that made such an address for God possible. The details of the Passion do not matter here, for this meditation sets the stage for how to understand the story that is ahead.

The second movement shines direct light on Christ for the first time in a depiction of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what is now known as Palm Sunday. Martin then shows us Jesus praying with his disciples in a scene from John, when a voice came from heaven to assure them that Jesus had already been glorified and would be glorified again in his death. Jesus concludes his speech with a promise: "And I, when I have risen from the earth, I shall draw all men to me." The closing meditation by the chorus reflects the power of this moment in deeper, more passionate words.

The next movement takes us to a scene at the temple originally told in Matthew where Jesus stands in the long tradition of Hebrew prophets to offer a long series of "woes" that shall befall the scribes and the pharisees. Jesus knew that the prophets had never been well-received, and so he offers his own prophetic word regarding the prophets who are yet to come: "You will kill and crucify some, you will flog the others in your synagogues and you will persecute them from city to city, so that all the innocent blood shed on the earth will fall upon you." The closing meditation stands in stark contrast to this message of destruction as it reflects on the beauty of the temple, perhaps because of the setting of this prophetic message there.

As the story moves quickly to a later day in the week, the fourth movement tells Martin's version of the Last Supper. This setting combines a story indicating that Judas Iscariot would betray Jesus as told in John with the traditional understanding of a meal that Jesus shared with his disciples on the night before his crucifixion.

Without a meditative interlude, Martin's telling takes us to the garden of Gethsemane in the fifth movement. Jesus goes here to pray before his death, asking that God take away the cup of his death that lies ahead. The disciples fall asleep as they try to keep vigil, and they are awakened only by the arrival of Judas and the officials who have come to arrest Jesus. The closing meditation uses the words often sung in Latin as "Agnus Dei" to point our attention to Jesus "the Lamb of God."

The second part of the oratorio begins with the sixth movement that combines a solo alto voicing a somber search for Jesus out of the words of Augustine—"What shall I say? What shall I do? Where shall I find my beloved?"—with the chorus singing Psalm

121: "I lift up my eyes to the hills. Where shall I find my help? Help comes from the Lord, who created heaven and earth."

Out of this peaceful moment Martin turns us to Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin as told in the gospel of Mark in the seventh movement. In this trial before one group of religious leaders, the prosecuting priests, elders, and scribes sought to provide evidence to prove the charge of blasphemy. Jesus refuses to answer the accusations and only responds when the chief priest demands that he "tell us if you are the Christ, the son of blessed God." Jesus responds by noting that the chief priest himself said it, and in that moment the trial court convicts him and pronounces a sentence of death. The officers restraining Jesus begin to attack him, and the meditation that follows focuses on this unjust treatment.

The eighth movement turns away from the religious trial and to a Roman trial before Pilate (following the gospel of John). The religious leaders bring Jesus before the Roman governor because they cannot carry out the sentence of death that they desire for Jesus. Pilate interrogates Jesus for himself and decides that he can find no fault in him, so he offers to release Jesus back to them as the customary prisoner released at the Passover. The crowd that has gathered, incited by the religious leaders, cries out that they wish to have the robber Barabbas released and Jesus crucified. The crowd continues their shouts to kill him as Pilate fans their anger, finally asking the crowd, "Shall I crucify your king?" They respond, "We have no king but Caesar."

The ninth movement portrays the actual death of Jesus, with him hanging on a cross between two others, a sign above him saying, "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews." The soldiers there divided his clothing among themselves and cast lots for his valuable seamless tunic. Jesus then offers three statements from the cross. First, he instructs the "disciple that he loved" to care for his mother. Then he calls out, "I am thirsty!" and the soldiers bring him a taste of wine vinegar. Finally, after he gets this small drink, he cries out, "It is finished!" and dies. The meditation that follows goes into the detail of the crucifixion and death, calling for God to take note of this servant upon his death.

The tenth and final movement proclaims the resurrection. Martin does not use any of the gospel accounts of this moment but rather chooses words from First Corinthians (quoting Isaiah and Hosea) and Augustine's reflections on the meaning of resurrection for the faithful. This resurrection is almost non-literal, as the emphasis is less on its reality and more on its meditative meaning. Jesus never reappears in voice, but his presence is no less certain for Martin. Interestingly, the text Martin chose lifts up not Easter morning but a blessed and holy night. While the Easter morning celebration has become prominent in recent centuries, for much of its history the Christian church celebrated Easter with an evening vigil of light leading up to the morning. Here the light that illuminated Christ on the cross shines with new hope and certainty for a broken and weary world.

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<http://www.nasingers.org/>



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