



Contact: Reva Cooper, (718) 965-0486; [revacooper@earthlink.net](mailto:revacooper@earthlink.net)  
(From Aug 22-31, contact Helene Davis at (212) 354-7436; [helene@helenedavispr.com](mailto:helene@helenedavispr.com))

**NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG 2008-2009, 21<sup>ST</sup> SEASON  
OPENS SEPTEMBER 23 IN NYC WITH *A BERNSTEIN / BOLCOM CELEBRATION***

**NEW YORK CONCERTS AT MERKIN CONCERT HALL, WEILL RECITAL HALL,  
THE JUILLIARD SCHOOL**

**SASHA COOKE, JOAN MORRIS AND WILLIAM BOLCOM, KATE LINDSEY,  
JOSEPH KAISER, DINA KUZNETSOVA, RINAT SHAHAM AMONG GUEST ARTISTS**

**NATIONALLY: TOURING TO KENNEDY CENTER, CARAMOOR FESTIVAL,  
CONNECTICUT, MARYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS, UTAH**

**BRIDGE RECORDS CD OF *BASTIANELLO / LUCREZIA* SCHEDULED FOR  
DECEMBER RELEASE**

*New York Festival Of Song* (NYFOS, [www.nyfos.org](http://www.nyfos.org)), co-founded and directed by pianists **Steven Blier** and **Michael Barrett**, who “reinvented the song recital during the 1990’s with daring and dramatic programming” (*The New Yorker*), announces its 21<sup>st</sup> season (2008-2009).

The company’s New York City concerts begin on September 23 at the newly renovated Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center, with *A Bernstein / Bolcom Celebration*. The concert pays tribute to two of NYFOS’s guiding lights, Leonard Bernstein and William Bolcom; Bolcom and his wife, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris, will cap the evening with a selection of songs from their vast repertoire. The program also celebrates the ninetieth birthday of NYFOS’s Founding Advisor, Leonard Bernstein, who bestowed the American premiere of his last work, *Arias and Barcarolles*, to the newly-formed company. Their subsequent recording of the work in 1989, with Judy Kaye and William Sharp, earned the composer a posthumous Grammy Award for Best New Composition.

Other concert programs this year include *Fugitives* (Nov. 18 and 20), works by composers who fled Europe during Hitler’s rise to power; *Voices of the Jewish Diaspora* (Feb. 10 and 12), songs in many languages from the worldwide Jewish community; *Songs of the Irish Poets*, scheduled for St. Patrick’s Day, featuring the lyricism of the Emerald Isle’s greatest writers set to music by Beethoven, Britten and others; and *The Welcome Shore* (May 19 and 21), songs of rivers and oceans, by composers ranging from Brahms to Noël Coward. Special events include *Latin Lovers* (January 14), the fourth annual *NYFOS@Juilliard* concert. The collaboration between NYFOS and The Juilliard School’s Vocal Arts Department celebrates the students’ creative energy and superior vocal talent; alumni of the program have begun to participate in NYFOS’s regular season

concerts. NYFOS will also have a Gala Concert on April 17 at Weill Recital Hall, program to be announced.

In December, 2008, Bridge Records will release an original cast recording of John Musto's *Bastianello* and William Bolcom's *Lucrezia*, the critically acclaimed one-act comic operas commissioned and premiered by NYFOS last season. Both operas have librettos by Mark Campbell. *Bastianello* is a family fable of love and folly based on a poignant Italian folk tale; *Lucrezia* retells Machiavelli's *La Mandragola* from the point of view of its wise and captivating heroine. This wickedly funny seduction story is set in Argentina – "A Latin American zarzuela as imagined by the Marx Brothers," according to the composer. The recording features soprano Lisa Vroman, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Paul Appleby, baritone Patrick Mason and bass Matt Boehler, with pianists Steven Blier and Michael Barrett.

Curtain time for all concerts is 8 PM. Single ticket prices are \$40 to \$55, with half-priced student tickets (as available) a half hour before curtain, and a limited amount of \$15 student tickets available by calling NYFOS at (646) 230-8380. Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center is at 129 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10023. Subscriptions are available by writing to the box office at Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center, or by calling (212) 501-3330, or online at [www.kaufman-center.org](http://www.kaufman-center.org). Free tickets for the January 14 concert at Juilliard will be available at The Juilliard School's box office beginning January 5.

Guest artists at NYFOS for 2008-2009 include mezzo-soprano **Sasha Cooke**, the *Lucrezia* in *Bastianello / Lucrezia* last spring, and soon to sing Kitty Oppenheimer in the Metropolitan Opera's New York Premiere of *Doctor Atomic*; mezzo-soprano **Kate Lindsey**, who will be seen as Cherubino and in many other roles at the Metropolitan this season; tenor **Joseph Kaiser**, the Tamino of the Kenneth Branagh film version of *The Magic Flute*, and Narraboth in the Met's *Salome* this year as well as at Covent Garden; soprano **Dina Kuznetsova**, featured in NYFOS's *Obsession à la Russe*, who will star as Alice Ford in a new production of *Falstaff* at Glyndebourne, and will appear with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; and mezzo-soprano **Rinat Shaham**, who will be featured in opera and concert at Paris' Theatre de la Champs-Élysées and the Lucerne Festival.

On its touring schedule, NYFOS brings *Bastianello / Lucrezia*, the acclaimed double-bill of one-act comic operas by William Bolcom and John Musto with librettos by Mark Campbell, to the Moab Music Festival in Utah on September 5; *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, French song from The Jazz Age to post-World War II, to the Robbie Colomore Concert Series in Chester, Connecticut (October 26) and the Andover Chamber Music Series in Massachusetts (November 9); *Fugitives* to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., presented by the Vocal Arts Society (November 14); *Voices of the Jewish Diaspora* to the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland at College Park (February 15); and *Songs of the Irish Poets* to the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts in Katonah, NY (March 14), which culminates a week-long professional training residency, *Caramoor Vocal Rising Stars*, sponsored by and presented at Caramoor. Leading the week's events will be NYFOS artistic directors and pianists Steven Blier and Michael Barrett who will be working with a select group of young singers from around the country invited to participate in this auspicious project. The program will be repeated as part of NYFOS's New York City 2008-2009 concert season at Merkin Concert Hall on March 17, 2009.

The initial season of the *Caramoor Vocal Rising Stars* Program will be underwritten, in part, by The Terrance W. Schwab Fund for Young Vocal Artists.

## NEW YORK SEASON SCHEDULE

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 & 25, 2008

Merkin Concert Hall

### **“A Bernstein / Bolcom Celebration”**

A tribute to two of New York Festival of Song’s guiding lights, Leonard Bernstein and William Bolcom, quintessential American composers and great spirits who have long provided wisdom, guidance, and music to NYFOS. Songs from Bernstein's *Peter Pan*, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, *Songfest*, *Wonderful Town*, *On the Town*, *Arias and Barcarolles*; Bolcom's *Cabaret Songs*, *I Will Breathe a Mountain*, *Briefly It Enters*, *McTeague*; and a special appearance by Joan Morris and William Bolcom, who will share signature songs from their repertoire.

**Artists: Sari Gruber, soprano; Rebecca Jo Loeb, mezzo-soprano; Joan Morris, mezzo-soprano; Renée Tatum, mezzo-soprano; Alex Mansoori, tenor; William Sharp, baritone; Marc Webster, bass; William Bolcom, Steven Blier and Michael Barrett, piano**

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18 & 20, 2008

Merkin Concert Hall

### **“Fugitives”**

An evening of songs from the concert stage, the movies, Broadway, and Berlin's cabarets that trace the varied fortunes of the gifted composers who fled destruction during Hitler’s rise to power--some to begin new lives and brilliant careers abroad, others to meet with darker fates. Music by Kurt Weill, Franz Schreker, Arnold Zemplinsky, Kurt Tucholsky, Erich Korngold, Hanns Eisler, Friedrich Hollaender, Emmerich Kálmán, and many others.

**Artists: Kate Lindsey, mezzo-soprano; Joseph Kaiser, tenor; Steven Blier, piano**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2009

Peter Jay Sharp Auditorium at The Juilliard School

**“Latin Lovers: An Evening of Cuban and South American Song,”** the fourth annual NYFOS@Juilliard concert.

Songs by Guastavino, Astor Piazzolla, Carlos López-Buchardo, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Ernesto Lecuona, and many others.

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10 & 12, 2009

Merkin Concert Hall

### **“Voices of the Jewish Diaspora”**

Songs in many languages celebrate the culturally diverse Jewish communities that flourished as the tribes of Israel spread out across the globe. Sephardic melodies arranged by Alberto Hemsí and Roberto Sierra; Second Avenue specialties by Irving Berlin and Joseph Rumshinsky; art songs by Ravel, Milhaud, and Rubinstein; plus music by Gershwin and Bernstein.

**Artists: Dina Kuznetsova, soprano; Rinat Shaham, mezzo-soprano; Steven Goldstein, tenor; Steven Blier and Michael Barrett, piano**

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2009

Merkin Hall

### **“Songs of the Irish Poets”**

The lyricism of the Emerald Isle's greatest writers, including Thomas Moore, W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, and Paul Muldoon, as set to music by Beethoven, Britten, Balfe, Barber and others; with a group of traditional Irish songs featuring the fiddle playing of Paul Woodiel.

**Artists: Paul Appleby, tenor; other members of Caramoor's Terrence W. Schwab Vocal Rising Stars Program; Steven Blier and Michael Barrett, piano**

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009  
Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall  
**Spring Gala**  
Program TBA

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, MAY 19 & 21, 2009  
Merkin Concert Hall  
**"The Welcome Shore"**

A hymn to rivers and oceans stirs the heart and the imagination as the summer season draws near. Music by Elgar (the magnificent *Sea Pictures*), Fauré, Guastavino, Rachmaninoff, Brahms, Noël Coward, Pauline Viardot, and many others.

**Artists: Michelle Areyzaga, soprano; Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano; Philip Cutlip, baritone; Steven Blier and Michael Barrett, piano**

**New York Festival of Song** was founded in 1988 by Steven Blier and Michael Barrett. NYFOS is dedicated to creating intimate song concerts of great beauty, humor and originality, combining music, poetry, and history to entertain, educate and create community among audiences and performers. With a far-ranging repertoire of art songs, concert works and theater pieces, its thematic recitals have included programs from Brahms to the Beatles, from the nineteenth-century salons of Paris to Tin Pan Alley, from Russian art song to Argentine tangos, from sixteenth-century lute songs to new music. NYFOS particularly celebrates American song literature and culture, and specializes in premiering and commissioning new American works. They have produced five recordings on the Koch label, including a Grammy Award-winning disc of Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles*, as well as the Grammy-nominated recording of Ned Rorem's *Evidence of Things Not Seen* on New World Records, and the Bridge Records release of the NYFOS program *Spanish Love Songs*. NYFOS's concert series, touring programs, radio broadcasts, recordings, and educational activities have inspired a new interest in the creative possibilities of the song program, and have inspired the creation of thematic vocal series around the world.

Artistic Director **Steven Blier** has programmed, performed, translated and annotated over 100 song programs with repertoire spanning the entire range of American song, art song from Schubert to Szymanowski, and popular song from early vaudeville to Lennon-McCartney. In addition, Mr. Blier enjoys an eminent career as an accompanist and vocal coach. Among the many artists he has partnered in recital are Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, Samuel Ramey, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Susan Graham and Frederica von Stade. Associate Artistic Director **Michael Barrett** is also the CEO of Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts, and General Director of the Caramoor International Music Festival. In 1992 Mr. Barrett and his wife Leslie Tomkins founded The Moab Music Festival in Utah, for which he serves as music director. He has conducted major orchestras here and abroad in the symphonic, operatic, and dance repertoire, and is the former director of the Tisch Center for the Arts at the 92nd Street Y. Mr. Barrett has

conducted and played premieres by Bernstein, Blitzstein, Bolcom, Kernis, Sellars, Harrison, Takemitsu, Del Tredici and John Corigliano.

Funding for the *Bastianello / Lucrezia* CD release on Bridge Records was provided by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc. Commission and first performance of *Bastianello* by John Musto and Mark Cambell and *Lucrezia* by William Bolcom and Mark Campbell by New York Festival of Song, Inc. were supported by the New York State Music Fund, established by the New York State Attorney General at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

NYFOS's New York City concert series is funded, in part, by the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts. ###