

Fox Cities Performing Arts Center  
*presents*

# HANDEL'S *Messiah*

Under the artistic direction of Brian Groner  
With chorus master Austin Boncher

**Featuring**

Maria Jette ~ Soprano  
Lisa Drew ~ Contralto  
Dan Dressen ~ Tenor  
Aaron Larson ~ Baritone

accompanied by **The Fox Valley Symphony**  
and a Fox Cities Community Choir

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Saturday, December 11, 2010

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## About *Messiah*

Composed by George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759)

George Frideric Handel, arguably the most cosmopolitan and versatile theatrical composer of the baroque period, was born and trained in Germany, achieved mastery and success in every musical genre while in Italy, and then settled for nearly five decades in England. During this time he assimilated all those nations' musical styles and specialized in operas and oratorios. These oratorios were almost always dramatic narratives, functioning like English operas composed for concert performances.

Handel composed *Messiah* from August 22 to September 14, 1741. He had been devoting increased effort to the oratorio form in his later years, having met with great success in English opera prior to that time. The oratorio afforded the composer a vehicle for similar compositional techniques, without the extravagance of costumes, scenery or staging.

Shortly after the *Messiah* score was complete, Handel was invited to give some concerts of his music in Dublin. Handel appears to have been reluctant to present such a sacred subject matter in a London theater for fear of sanction. He left London in early November and began his successful series of concerts in December that same year. It was not until 1750 that the composer himself conducted *Messiah* in a London performance. Thus began annual performances of *Messiah*, which have led to its unparalleled popularity among musical masterpieces.

*Messiah* remains unique as a musical masterpiece that appeals to audiences of all ages and backgrounds and performers from the humblest amateur choral singer to the great composers who succeeded Handel.

We hope you enjoy tonight's performance of Handel's *Messiah*.

## ENCORE!

Please join us in singing a special encore of the "Hallelujah!" chorus. You'll find music and lyrics in your program insert.



### BRIAN GRONER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Brian Groner has been the music director of the Fox Valley Symphony in Wisconsin since 1995. He also serves as music director for the Harper Symphony, the Elkhart County Symphony and since 1993 has been the conductor of the Symphony Session at the Birch Creek Music Center in Door County, Wisconsin.

As a guest conductor he has appeared on the podium for many notable ensembles including the San Diego Symphony, Czech National Symphony Orchestra (Prague), International Contemporary Ensemble and Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. He has conducted for Moscow Classical Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Ballet Chicago, Nashville Ballet, Butler Ballet and Blair Ballet. He also served as cover conductor on the farewell tour of the late Rudolf Nureyev.

He holds an advanced degree in conducting from Northern Illinois University in collaboration with Northwestern University. His concerts have been broadcast via satellite, by National Public Radio, in over 50 major radio markets across the nation. He has also conducted the world premieres of over twenty substantial new American compositions.



### AUSTIN BONCHER, CHORAL DIRECTOR

Austin Boncher retired from the Appleton Area School District in 1968 as director of music/fine arts, following a 35-year career of serving area youth through his love of music. Earlier in his career, he served as choral and

instrumental (band) instructor in Appleton and Menasha Schools.

During his tenure in Appleton, he initiated and/or led several music programs in the community and Appleton Schools, including the introduction of the Suzuki inspired string program in 1971, the Fox Valley Youth Symphony in 1972, the Fox Valley Symphony Chorus in 1976 and co-founded the Appleton Boychoir in 1979. He also served as director of music and adult choir director for Trinity Lutheran Church (Appleton) from 1968-2003.

He has Bachelor of Music degree from Lawrence University Conservatory of Music and a Master's in music education from Indiana University, Bloomington. As a baritone soloist, he has performed in the Lawrence University Opera, Waupaca Fine Arts Festival, Lawrence Choral Society, Green Bay Community Chorus, Fox Valley Symphony and area churches. He currently plays French horn in the UW-Fox Community Band.

Although he is technically "retired," Boncher is still a source of musical leadership in the Fox Valley. He currently conducts the MasterSingers, a men's

choral ensemble affiliated with the Appleton Boychoir and assists Lawrence University student teachers in music. In 2003 he directed a community chorus and orchestra at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center in a Wisconsin premiere of "Sing for the Cure," a breast cancer benefit, featuring actress Ann Jillian as narrator. In 2004, he conducted Renee Clausen's *Memorial* with New York's singing policeman, Daniel Rodriguez, as soloist, in commemoration of the 9-11 tragedy as part of, "The Spirit Within: A Concert in Celebration of Healing, Hope and Community." In 2007 he assembled and prepared a 150-voice community chorus for a performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Fox Valley Symphony.

In addition to receiving the Distinguished Service Award (1998) from the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association, the local arts community awarded him the Renaissance (1992) and Hanns Kretzschmar (2003) Awards for Excellence in the Arts. He is a Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow, and his alma mater, Lawrence University, awarded him the George B. Walter Service to Society award (2003) for outstanding service.



### DAN DRESSEN, TENOR

Dan Dressen keeps himself engaged in a variety of functions. He is a professor of music and associate dean for the Fine Arts at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, where he also is building a center for Nordic art song. He edited a seven-

volume anthology of opera arias by Benjamin Britten for Boosey and Hawkes and recently served on the Commission on Accreditation for the National Association of Schools of Music and as a site visit panelist for the Minnesota States Arts Board. Formerly president of the Minnesota chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and the Minnesota College and University Council on Music, he currently serves on the Northfield Arts and Culture Commission and on the board for the Minneapolis/St. Paul chapter of the Edvard Grieg Society.

Mr. Dressen's career as a tenor spans nearly thirty years. His operatic performances include appearances with Washington Opera in its production of *Carmen* and the world premiere of Dominick Argento's opera, *The Dream of Valentino*. He has numerous Minnesota Opera productions to his credit including the role of Flute in its production of Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Basilio in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Gastone in *La Traviata*, Sellem in *The Rake's Progress* and Valzacchi in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Recently he was seen as the Doctor in Poul Ruder's *A Handmaid's Tale* and in the world premiere of *The Grapes of Wrath* by Ricky Ian Gordon. This past season he performed the

role of the Marquis de Lisle in *Casanova's Homecoming* by Dominick Argento and as the First Jew in Strauss' *Salome*.

An active concert performer and recitalist, Mr. Dressen has performed in Minneapolis and St. Paul with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Chorale, Dale Warland Singers, Bach Society, and most recently in the Schubert Club's Summer Art Song Festival. He has a long and active relationship with VocalEssence of Minneapolis, with whom he is heard as Martin in the recording of Aaron Copland's opera, *The Tenderland*, and as Johnny Inkslinger in *Paul Bunyan* by Benjamin Britten. Other appearances with VocalEssence include the title roles in Britten's *St. Nicolas Cantata*, Handel's *Samson*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Dominick Argento's *Revelations of St. John* and *Jonah and the Whale*, *Mass in D* by Dame Ethel Smythe, the role of Rajar in the world premiere of *The Fourth Wiseman* by Randall Davidson. Recently he performed with VocalEssence in the world premiere of *The Passion of the Christ* by Francis Grier and *The Songs of Innocence and Experience* by William Bolcom. Mr. Dressen has performed in several Aldeburgh Festivals in England. Performances there include the tenor solos in Britten's *The Company of Heaven*, which he also recorded in London. He is the tenor soloist at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis.



**LISA DREW, CONTRALTO**

Lisa Drew, contralto, has been quoted as "amazing the audience with her rich voice" and "rejoices in a mezzo-soprano of trombone-like resonance."

Ms. Drew has appeared as soloist in Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody* and Horatio Parker's *Hora Novissima* at the Berkshire Choral Festival, William Bolcom's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience*, and for the American Guild of Organists Annual Convention Finale Concert of the U.S. premiere of Siegfried Matthus' *Te Deum* at The Cathedral of St. Paul.

Ms. Drew received acclaim as contralto soloist "singing with a gorgeous, full, dark sound and magnetic stage presence" in the United States professional premiere of the *Sandstrom High Mass* at Orchestra Hall as well as Honneger's *King David*, and she garnered international acclaim as the mezzo-soprano soloist in Steve Heitzeg's *Nobel Symphony* also at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis.

Lisa Drew's opera roles have included Genevieve in The Minnesota Opera's production of *Pelleas and Melisande*, The Sorceress in *Glorious Revolution*, Baroque's production of *Dido & Aeneas*, Bradamante in Ex Machina's production of *Alcina*, Mrs. Ott in the Berkshire Opera Company's production of *Susannah*, and The Fairy Queen in The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light

Opera Company's production of *Iolanthe*. In addition, she has performed in over 75 productions with San Diego Opera Chorus and The Minnesota Opera Chorus.

Since 2002, Lisa Drew has been actively performing and touring with the internationally acclaimed early music chamber vocal group, The Rose Ensemble and is the alto soloist at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis under the direction of Philip Brunelle. In 2011 Lisa Drew will be releasing a CD of lute songs for alto with lutenest, Phil Rukavina.



**MARIA JETTE, SOPRANO**

Maria Jette has appeared with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Houston, Kansas City, San Luis Obispo, Santa Rosa, Charlotte, Buffalo, Grand Rapids, Austin and San Antonio Symphonies, New York Chamber Symphony

and Portland Baroque Orchestra. She has appeared for many merry seasons with Ex Machina Antique Music Theatre in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis – St. Paul), where she's often heard locally with VocalEssence, Chamber Music Society of Minnesota and Lyra Baroque Orchestra. With conductor Helmuth Rilling, she's sung Bach, Mozart and Haydn around the U.S., Germany, Spain, Venezuela, Japan and Canada. She's performed her own production of Seuss/Kapilow's *Green Eggs & Ham* for over 40,000 kids around the U.S. She has been a regular guest over many seasons at the San Luis Obispo Mozart and Oregon Bach Festivals, the Oregon Festival of American Music, and is often heard nationally on Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion."

2010-2011: Grand Forks Symphony (Britten's *Eight British Folk Songs* in the composer's orchestrations); Miami Symphony (Haydn's *Creation*); Musica Angelica, Los Angeles (Bemba, Pergolesi and Vivaldi); San Luis Obispo Symphony (New Year's Eve Gala); Lyra Baroque Orchestra, St. Paul (Pergolesi & Handel); VocalEssence, Minneapolis (Bach's *Mass in Bm*); Music St. Croix (Argento's *Elizabethan Songs*); Chamber Music Society of Minnesota (Berg's *Seven Early Songs*). More at mariajette.com.



**AARON LARSON, BARITONE**

Baritone Aaron Larson has garnered notice for his dynamic stage presence, musical versatility and artistic insight. Recent and upcoming concert performances include Bach's *Mass in B minor* with VocalEssence and Lyra

Baroque Orchestra, the title role of Telemann's comic opera *Pimpinone* with Lyra Baroque Orchestra, cantatas with Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity NYC, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the National Lutheran Choir and Ensemble Sebastian, and the world premiere of Paulus' *When Church Bells are Ringing* with the Minnesota Orchestra. Recent opera performances include Mega in Paulus' *The Star Gatherer* with the St. John's University Boys' Choir, Le Dancaire in the Minnesota Orchestra's staging of *Carmen*, and Ruggiero in Francesca Caccini's *La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina* with the New York Continuo Collective. He has toured with the Waverly Consort since 2003.

Aaron earned his Master's Degree in Vocal Performance at Boston University where he studied under William Sharp on a School of Fine Arts Music Scholarship. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he studied with Ilona Kombrink and was awarded the Dara Welty Memorial Scholarship. aaronjlarsen.com.

**FOX VALLEY SYMPHONY MUSICIANS**

**VIOLIN 1**

Yuliya Smead (principal)  
 Jerad Miller (assistant principal)  
 Lori Murphy Janet Bond Sutter  
 Jennifer Coopman Brian Sas  
 Audrey Nowak Caroline Brandenberger  
 Marvin Suson Mary Perkinson

**VIOLIN 2**

Melissa Gurholt (principal)  
 Ann Wendel (assistant principal)  
 Sarah Koenigs Dorothy Hollenbach  
 Jill Schultz Megan Nickchen  
 Nori Kalman John Kelley

**VIOLA**

Barbara Beechey (principal)  
 Theresa Ablar (assistant principal)  
 Tara Stevenson Cheryl Konkol  
 Hilary Mercer Jonathan Kamps

**VIOLINCELLO**

Laura Henckel (principal)  
 Erik Kramer (assistant principal)  
 Carrie Willer Heather Anderson  
 Catherine Smith John Kasper

**DOUBLE BASS**

Mark Urness (principal)  
 Scott Breyer Ronna Swift  
 Ann Boeckman

**FLUTE**

Beth Kinzel (principal)  
 Suzanne Jordheim

**OBOE**

Andy Olson (principal)  
 Karli Larsen

**CLARINET**

Katherine Kohler (principal)  
 Penny Wilson

**BASSOON**

Susan McCardell (principal)  
 Sharon Peterson

**HORN**

Wes Hatch (principal)  
 Kristin Bryan

**TRUMPET**

Mike Henckel (principal)  
 Rand Skelton

**TROMBONE**

Kyle Samuelson (principal)  
 Roy Fine Eric Larsen

**TIMPANI**

Scott Elford

**HARPSICHORD**

Carol Leybourn

**COMMUNITY CHOIR**

**SOPRANO**

Kathy Alan Kim Albrecht  
 Alice Anderson Susan Bakken  
 Karen Blohm Judy Boncher  
 Mary Catterton Elisa DeGroot  
 Carolyn Dargevics Jean DiPietro  
 Teresa Dutcher Ruth Franger  
 Joan Frost Jo Hammen  
 Linda Hash Joan Hendry  
 Nancy Hoffman Annmarie Horan  
 Deb Jepson Ellen Jepson  
 Sharon Johnson Katie Jones  
 Mary Kinderman Joanne Klinkert  
 Mary Beth Kovanen Shirley Lemke  
 Jean McKnight Lynn Michler  
 Laura Rice Kristene Sager  
 Laura Schauburger Lori Schiebel  
 Victoria Stauber-Pufall Lucy Valitchka

**ALTO**

Juli Baxter Katy Baxter  
 Nancy Boll Gloria Brickham  
 Lois Dalke Nicole Doebert  
 Crystal Gosz Lori Gosz  
 Susan Gosenick Hall Hall  
 Betsy Hamby Janet Hemmen  
 Connie Henkel Marguerite Jansen  
 Anne Knapp Marianne Kolb  
 Lynn Kolbe Gale Korth  
 Jill Kruger Judy Kurschner  
 Michelle Matz Elizabeth Melchert  
 Tracy Meyer Peggy Munson  
 Tammy Nettekoven Gail Oliver  
 Gina Petersen Connie Raether  
 Mary Ann Rossi Robin Rupnow  
 Ann Sager Gwen Schwandt  
 Kate Schwarzenbart Judith Shwonek  
 Gladys Smith Amy Stephenson  
 Nancy Stowe Suzanne Swanson  
 Rhonda Tedlie Arlene Trettin  
 Cindy Van Beckum Cheri Vande Yacht  
 Krista Wager

**TENOR**

Jordan Adamson Anne Baerbock  
 Mark Beitz Owen Berendes

**TENOR (continued)**

Alfred Bowers	Bruce Casner
Jae Cho	Scott Dickson
David Dodd	Scott Dreger
Gerold Grosenick	Jack Harris
Dale Jepson	Spencer Jones
So Nam Ju	John Kellogg
James Klinkert	Michael Lauer
John Meyer	Larry Miller
John Pierce	Richard Redman
Benjamin Salm	Eric Schramm
George Sorrells	Kelly Stephenson
Roy Valitchka	Jon Van Dyke
Dennis Van Eperen	Daniel Vogel
Matthew Walsh	

**BASS**

Bryan Bengstom	William Block
Dennis Bowman	Chad Bromelst
Martin Dargevics	Lee Davis
Charles Dreger	Steve Dreger
Adrian Elzey	Al Follendorf
Stephen Franger	Randy Hamby
Mark Higley	Barry Hoff
Paul Holte	Kenneth Huizenga
Eric Ihde	Kenneth Kamprath
Gary Krueger	Allan Kurschner
Ken Lederer	Thomas McGreevey

Norman Munson	Thomas Phillips
Douglas Pomeranke	Thomas Powell
Lon Rupnow	Ed Sabish
Otto Schley	Paul Schley
Robert Schwandt	Scott Smith
Ivan Spangenberg	Rick Stark
Philip Stenz	Craig Taylor
Skip Wilson	

**ABOUT THE  
FOX CITIES PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

The Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in downtown Appleton, provides a premier venue for live performing arts. The Center proudly serves as a gathering place for the community to engage in educational opportunities while enhancing a greater understanding and appreciation of the live performing arts. For more information on upcoming events, education programs and community involvement go to [foxcitiespac.com](http://foxcitiespac.com). The Fox Cities Performing Arts Center – *Where the Arts Come Alive!*



Fox Cities Performing Arts Center stage personnel  
provided by I.A.T.S.E. Local #470.

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