

Sunday, October 20, 2013, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Les Violons du Roy

Bernard Labadie, *music director*

with

Stephanie Blythe, *mezzo-soprano*

PROGRAM

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767) Suite in C major, TWV 55:C6 (Ouverture à 7)

Ouverture: Grave — Allegro — Grave
Harlequinade
Espagnol
Bourée en trompette
Sommeille
Rondeau
Menuet I and II
Gigue

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) *Arianna a Naxos*, Hob. XXVIIb:2 (1789)
(anonymous arrangement for string orchestra)

Teseo mio ben
Dove sei, mio bel tesoro
Ma, a chi parlo?
Ah! che morir vorrei

Stephanie Blythe, *mezzo-soprano*

INTERMISSION

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Suite No. 4 in D major, BWV 1069
(original version) (1718)

Ouverture
Bourrées I and II
Gavotte
Menuets I and II
Réjouissance

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) Selections from *Giulio Cesare*, HWV 17
(1723–1724)

Empio, dirò, tu sei
L'empio, sleale, indegno
Dall'ondoso periglio...Aure, deh, per pietà

Stephanie Blythe, *mezzo-soprano*

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Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)
Suite (Overture) for Three Oboes, Strings,
and Continuo in C major, TWV 55:C6

With the condescending pronouncement, “Since the best man could not be obtained, mediocre ones would have to be accepted,” City Councilor Platz announced the appointment of Johann Sebastian Bach in 1723 as Cantor for Leipzig’s churches. Platz’s “best man” was Georg Philipp Telemann, then the most highly regarded composer in all Germany. Telemann’s association with Leipzig went back to 1701, when his mother forbade him to follow music as a profession, and sent him to register as a law student at Leipzig University. On the journey from his hometown of Magdeburg to Leipzig, however, Telemann stopped in Halle, where he met another teenage musician, one George Frideric Handel, who was also nurturing the flame of his parentally proscribed musical desire under cover. (Literally. Young Handel copied manuscripts beneath the bed clothes.) Even before he matriculated into the study of jurisprudence, Telemann was lost to that discipline—“from my acquaintance with Handel, I again sucked in so much of the poison of music as nearly overset all my resolutions,” he confessed in one of his three autobiographies.

Telemann’s roommate in Leipzig was also a music lover and an occasional singer at one of the local churches. He took some of Telemann’s compositions to a rehearsal at the Thomaskirche for a reading one day, and the young composer was soon receiving regular commissions from the City Council for new service music. Telemann thereafter gave up the pretense of studying law, and devoted himself entirely to music. In 1702, he became director of the local opera house, and began churning out specimens of that genre to fill his own stage. Two years later, he started a *Collegium Musicum* with some of his talented University friends in a local coffee house to give concerts of instrumental music. (This endeavor, which Sebastian Bach took over after he came to Leipzig, was the direct predecessor of the Gewandhaus concerts, thus making it the oldest continuous concert-giving organization in the world.) Also in 1704, Telemann was appointed organist and Kapellmeister of Leipzig’s

Neukirche, a job whose requirements forced him to give up another facet of his burgeoning career: singing at the local opera house. A year later, Count Erdmann von Promnitz lured Telemann to his estate at Sorau, a hundred miles southeast of Berlin, to become his music master. In 1708 or 1709, Telemann was appointed court composer at Eisenach, Sebastian Bach’s birthplace, and in 1712, he moved to the post of city music director in Frankfurt-am-Main. Nine years later, he was appointed director of music at Hamburg’s five main churches, a position he retained for the rest of his long life. During his tenure, he also headed the municipal opera house (known throughout Europe as the *Gänsemarkt*, because of its proximity to the city’s goose market), and oversaw Hamburg’s flourishing concert series. When the city fathers vented their displeasure over Telemann’s mixing of secular and sacred activities, he gained significant leverage by applying for the church job in Leipzig recently vacated by the death of Johann Kuhnau, and ended up being retained in Hamburg—with a raise in pay. He composed with staggering prolificacy for the rest of his days (“a good composer should be able to set public notices to music,” he insisted; Handel said Telemann could compose a cantata as easily as most men compose a letter), being slowed only in his last years, like Bach and Handel, by problems with his eyesight. He died of (probably) pneumonia in 1767 (Mozart turned eleven that year), and was succeeded in his Hamburg post by his godson, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach.

Telemann’s music was well suited to the *galant*, mid–18th century German taste. (It should be kept in mind that Bach—“old Bach,” as even his sons called him—was hopelessly out of fashion for the last 20 years of his life.) Combining the lyricism of Italian opera, the grandeur of French dance music and the harmonic invention of the German instrumentalists, Telemann’s work was so highly prized that he could boast of subscribers for his publications as far distant as Spain and Russia. His creative output includes at least forty operas, a dozen full series of cantatas and motets for the liturgical year (perhaps 3,000 individual items), 44 Passions and other sacred works, hundreds of

Overtures (i.e., instrumental suites), dozens of concertos, and an immense flotilla of miscellaneous chamber, keyboard, and vocal works.

During the nine years (1712–1721) that Telemann served as music director for the city of Frankfurt, he had regular contact with the court of Darmstadt, 20 miles south, where the music-loving Landgrave (and composer-*manqué*) Ernst Ludwig maintained a top-notch orchestra, a large library of performance materials and a prodigious schedule of programs; city and court frequently traded musicians for occasions when the local forces proved insufficient. Telemann remained in touch with Darmstadt for the rest of his life—in 1765, two years before he died, he wrote a suite for Ernst Ludwig’s successor, Ludwig VIII of Hesse-Darmstadt, which included parts for two horns in honor of the younger Landgrave’s passion for hunting. The Darmstadt library is one of the most important repositories of Telemann’s scores, and holds nearly a hundred suites that would have been perfectly suited to the court’s taste and instrumental resources. As is typical of the genre, the “Darmstadt” Suite in C major for Three Oboes, Strings, and Continuo (TWV 55:C6) opens with a majestic *Overture* in the French manner that juxtaposes sections in broad dotted rhythms with lively imitative passages. (These works, especially in Europe, are sometimes called “*Overtures*” after this opening movement.) A set of four descriptive movements with theatrical implications follows: *Harlequinade* evokes the energy and antics of Harlequin, the buffoon of the Italian *commedia dell’arte*; *Espagnol* is a graceful dance in the mood and manner of a sarabande; *Bourée en trompette* includes a fanfaronading imitation of trumpets by the oboes; and *Sommeille* suggests a somewhat melancholy state of sleep. The Suite closes with a stately *Rondeau* encompassing two returns of its opening strain, a pair of courtly *Menuets*, and an energetic *Gigue*.

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)
***Arianna a Naxos*, for soprano and**
string orchestra

Composed in 1789.

Though the cantata is today most readily associated with the German-language, sacred masterpieces of Johann Sebastian Bach, the form’s origin and major historical development were in Italy. For more than a century after its introduction in the 1620s at the musically sophisticated courts of northern Italy, the cantata was the principal genre of vocal chamber music. Its most common realization was as a series of two or three arias for a solo singer accompanied by chamber ensemble; each aria was prefaced by a recitative. The texts were taken from (or written anew in the style of) existing opera librettos, so that the Italian cantata was, in effect, a small-scale solo operatic scene. The form reached its peak of popularity in the decades around 1700; Alessandro Scarlatti (father of the celebrated keyboard composer, Domenico) wrote at least 600 examples.

By the years of Joseph Haydn’s maturity, the solo cantata had slipped largely out of fashion. Among the half-dozen of his such works is the splendid *Arianna a Naxos* (“Ariadne on Naxos”), composed at the end of 1789. The motivation for the work’s creation is uncertain. It was published the following year in Vienna by Artaria as “*Cantata a voce solo, accompagnamento del clavicembalo [harpsichord] o fortepiano*,” so it may just have been written on speculation, but biographical evidence suggests that it was more likely composed for 16-year-old Josepha von Genzinger, then a voice student of Haydn. The girl’s father, Dr. Peter Leopold von Genzinger, was the personal physician of Haydn’s employer, Prince Nicholas Esterházy, and he and his wife, Marianne, became close friends of the composer. The Genzingers not only hosted one of Vienna’s most fashionable musical salons, with Mozart, Albrechtsberger, and Dittersdorf as frequent guests, but they also provided Haydn with an emotional fulfillment that had long been missing from his childless marriage to his shrewish wife (“the household dragon,” he

called her, privately). He developed a genuine affection for Marianne, not least because of her considerable talent as a keyboard player (the Piano Sonata in E-flat major, H. XVI:49, was composed for her in 1789), and she became the most important correspondent of his later years. Josepha is known to have performed *Arianna* at the Genzingers' home in 1790; on March 14th, Haydn wrote to her mother, "I am delighted that my favorite *Arianna* is well received at the Schottenhof." That further performances there were anticipated is suggested by his postscript: "Please tell Fräulein Pepperl [Josepha's family nickname] to articulate the words very clearly, especially the passage '*chi tanto mai*.'"

Haydn took the cantata with him when he went to London in January 1791, and it created a sensation when the noted castrato Gasparo Pacchierotti performed it (with Haydn at the keyboard) on February 18th. "They speak of it in rapturous recollection," the reviewer from the *Morning Chronicle* reported of *Arianna's* auditors, "and Haydn's cantata will accordingly be the musical *desideratum* for the winter." Closely attuned to commercial opportunity, the London publisher John Bland issued a new edition of the score a few weeks later for the delectation (and purchase) of English music lovers. *Arianna* enjoyed great popularity in public and private performances from Venice to London to Vienna during the following years; when Lord Nelson spent four days at Prince Esterházy's palace in Eisenstadt in September 1800 to hear a performance of the Mass partly inspired by his successful exploits against Napoleon in Egypt, his mistress, the beautiful and talented Lady Emma Hamilton, gave her rendition of the cantata for the composer.

In the ancient tale on which an unknown writer based the cantata's text, Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete, has been abandoned on the island of Naxos by her former lover Theseus, whom she has helped to slay the dreaded Minotaur of Crete by playing out a skein of thread to allow him to find his way out of the labyrinth that was the monster's lair. The two paired recitatives and arias in *Arianna a Naxos* express Ariadne's love for Theseus, her anxiety at his disappearance, and the stunning realization that he has deserted her. *Arianna* is among

Haydn's finest and most moving vocal creations. Rossini declared it the "prime example of Haydn's gifts as a vocal writer," and the words of the London *Morning Chronicle's* critic still ring true: "It abounds with such a variety of dramatic modulations and is so exquisitely captivating in its larmoyant [tearful] passages, that it touched and dissolved the audience."

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Suite (Overture) No. 4 in D major, BWV 1069

Composed around 1718.

From 1717 to 1723, Bach was director of music at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen, north of Leipzig. He liked his job. His employer, Prince Leopold, was a well-educated man, 24 years old at the time he engaged Bach. (Bach was 32.) Leopold was fond of travel and books and paintings, but his real passion was music. He was an accomplished musician who not only played violin, viola da gamba, and harpsichord well enough to join with the professionals in his house orchestra, but also had an exceptional bass voice. He started the court musical establishment in 1707 with three players (his puritanical father had no use for music), and by the time of Bach's appointment the ensemble had grown to nearly 20 performers equipped with a fine set of instruments. It was for this group that Bach wrote many of his outstanding instrumental works, including the *Brandenburg Concertos*, the *Orchestral Suites*, the *Violin Concertos* and much of his chamber music. Leopold appreciated Bach's genius, and Bach returned the compliment when he said of his Prince, "He loved music, he was well acquainted with it, he understood it." Though the exact dates of Bach's *Orchestral Suites* are uncertain, all four were apparently composed during or immediately after the Cöthen period.

These Suites follow the early–18th-century German taste of deriving stylistic inspiration from France. It was Jean Baptiste Lully, composer to the legendary court of Louis XIV, whose operas and instrumental music set the fashion. Lully filled his operas with dances to please the taste of his ballet-mad King. If the mood struck

him, Louis would even shed his ermine robes and tread a step or two with the dancers on stage. (Reports, all—understandably—laudatory, had it that he was excellent.) For formal ballroom dancing or dinner entertainment or concert performance, Lully extracted individual dance movements from his operas, prefaced them with the opera's overture, and served them up as suites. This type of work, virtually the only Baroque genre for orchestra that did not involve soloists or singers, was carried to Germany by one of Lully's students, Georg Muffat (1653–1704). Bach's cousin Johann Bernhard (1676–1749), a talented organist in Johann Sebastian's hometown of Eisenach, was one of the German musicians who became acquainted with this recent bit of French fashion. He concocted four suites of dances in the Lully/Muffat manner for the local town band, and Bach probably learned the French style from him. When Bach came to compose his *Orchestral Suites*, he was familiar not only with the French tradition of Lully through cousin Bernhard, but also with that of Italy (many German musicians of Bach's generation were trained in Italy), and he was able to synthesize these two great streams of Baroque art in music which is both surpassingly majestic and melodically inspired.

Each of Bach's four Suites is scored for a different orchestral ensemble. Three trumpets, timpani, three oboes and bassoon join the strings and continuo (bass and harpsichord) in the Fourth Suite. Each Suite comprises a grandiose Overture followed by a series of dances of various characters. These aptly named "French" Overtures are based on the type devised by Lully—a slow, almost pompous opening section filled with snapping rhythmic figures and rich harmony leading without pause to a spirited fugal passage in faster tempo. The majestic character of the opening section returns to round out the Overture's form. The procession of dances that follows varies from one Suite to the next, though Bach's sense of musical architecture demands that they create a careful balance of tempos and moods. The first such movements in this Suite are a pair of *Bourrées*, a dance of French origin that is joyful and diverting in character. When it was danced, the steps began

with a brisk opening jump, a characteristic mirrored in Bach's quick upbeat rhythm pattern. Next is a *Gavotte*, a dance of moderate liveliness whose ancestry traces to French peasant music. The two following *Menuets* are examples of the most famous of all the old courtly dances. Originally a quick peasant dance from southwestern France, the *minuet* had become more stately and measured by Bach's time. The closing triple-meter *Réjouissance* is light and playful, a rousing ending to this richly hued work.

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)
Selections from *Giulio Cesare*

Composed 1723–1724. Premiered on February 24, 1724, in London.

Giulio Cesare, based on the timeless events that transpired in Egypt in 48–47 B.C., treats the love of Cleopatra and Caesar, the intrigues, battles and treachery surrounding them, and the reconciling of forces and feelings that have echoed down through history. Before the curtain rises, Caesar has defeated his rival, the Roman general Pompey, at Pharsalia in Greece, and followed him to Egypt, then jointly ruled by Cleopatra and her brother, Ptolemy. Following his arrival at the Nile, Caesar receives a grisly gift of welcome from Ptolemy—the severed head of Pompey. He responds with scorn in the aria *Empio, dirò*.

Cleopatra seeks an alliance with Caesar to wrest sole control of Egypt from Ptolemy, who sings in the brilliant aria *L'empio, sleale, indegno*—"The impious one, the unworthy traitor"—of his determination to thwart their plan by killing Caesar.

Cleopatra and Caesar combine their forces, but they are defeated by Ptolemy at the edge of the Mediterranean Sea. Cleopatra is captured, and Caesar, having struggled to shore alone, tells of the scene surrounding him and his grief over the loss of his beloved in the magnificent aria *Dall'ondoso periglio...Aure, deh, per pietà*.

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LES VIOLONS DU ROY

Bernard Labadie, *Music Director*

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Nicole Trotier
Angélique Duguay
Pascale Gagnon
Véronique Vychytil

SECOND VIOLIN

Pascale Giguère
Maud Langlois
Michelle Seto
Noëlla Bouchard

VIOLA

Jean-Louis Blouin
Annie Morrier
Marina Thibeault

CELLO

Benoît Loïselle
Raphaël Dubé

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The chamber orchestra *Les Violons du Roy* borrows its name from the renowned string orchestra of the court of the French kings. The group, which has a core membership of 15 players, was brought together in 1984 by music director Bernard Labadie and specializes in the vast repertoire of music for chamber orchestra, performed in the stylistic manner most appropriate to each era. Although the ensemble plays on modern instruments, its approach to the works of the Baroque and Classical periods has been strongly influenced by current research into performance practice in the 17th and 18th centuries; in this repertoire *Les Violons du Roy* uses copies of period bows. The orchestra also regularly delves into the repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries, as witnessed by its recordings of works by Piazzolla, Bartók, and Britten.

Les Violons du Roy is at the heart of the music scene in Québec City, where it has been in residence at the Palais Montcalm since 2007. Since 1997, it has also been an important part of Montreal's cultural scene. The orchestra is well known throughout Canada thanks to numerous concerts and recordings broadcast by Société Radio-Canada and the CBC and its regular presence at music festivals. *Les Violons du Roy* made its European debut in 1988 and has since gone on to give dozens of performances in France, Germany, England, Spain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands in the company of such renowned

soloists as Magdalena Kožená, David Daniels, Vivica Genaux, and Alexandre Tharaud, including two guest appearances at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw. The orchestra has also toured in Mexico, Ecuador, and Morocco.

Since its first performance in Washington in 1995, *Les Violons du Roy* has extended its performance network in the United States and now makes regular stops in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The orchestra is heard frequently on NPR in the United States, and is now represented by the Opus 3 Artists agency. A recent high point was the performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with La Chapelle de Québec and an outstanding array of soloists (Rosemary Joshua, David Daniels, Jan Kobow, Andrew Foster-Williams, and Joshua Hopkins), part of a U.S. tour that took the orchestra and choir to Carnegie Hall in New York and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. The concerts received remarkably positive reviews, in particular from *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. In March 2012, the orchestra returned to Carnegie Hall with La Chapelle de Québec to present Bach's *St. John's Passion*. Then in October, the musicians toured several American cities with flautist Emmanuel Pahud, and made their fourth visit to Mexico for concerts in Guanajuato (Festival internacional Cervantino) and Saltillo (Festival internacional de las artes Coahuila).

The 24 recordings made by *Les Violons du Roy* have been acclaimed by critics and earned various distinctions and awards at the national and international levels. Of twelve CDs released by Dorian, two won Juno Awards (*Handel's Apollo e Dafne* and Mozart's *Requiem*). Since 2004, the association with the Québec label Atma has led to six CDs, including *Water Music*, winner of a Félix Award in 2008; *Piazzolla*, conducted by Mr. Zeitouni and winner of a Juno Award in 2006; and Britten's *Les Illuminations* with soprano Karina Gauvin, also directed by Jean-Marie Zeitouni and released in summer 2010. The CD *Bonbons*, also on the Atma label, came out in fall 2010. The group's first collaboration with the multinational Virgin Classics label led to the release in fall 2006 of a CD of cantata

arias by Handel and Hasse with mezzo-soprano Vivica Genaux. Two other Virgin Classics discs released in 2011 feature C.P.E. Bach's cello concertos with the Norwegian cellist Truls Mørk and J. S. Bach's keyboard concertos with the French pianist Alexandre Tharaud. A recording of opera arias by Mozart, Haydn, Gluck, and Graun with contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux was launched in 2012 under the Naïve label. The ensemble's most recent disc, which features Haydn concertos with pianist Marc-André Hamelin, came out under the Hyperion label in March 2013. Les Violons du Roy is a proud member of Orchestras Canada, the national association representing Canada's orchestras.



Bernard Labadie is an internationally recognized expert on 17th- and 18th-century repertoire and founded Les Violons du Roy and La Chapelle de Québec in 1984 and 1985, respectively. He continues to direct their regular seasons in Québec City and Montreal and throughout the Americas and Europe on tour. He has made 20 recordings with the ensembles on the Virgin Classics, Dorian, Atma, and Hyperion labels.

His services as guest conductor are much sought after, and he regularly accepts engagements with major North American orchestras including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, the Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, St. Louis, Houston, and Toronto symphonies, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. In Europe, he has taken the podium with Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, the Bavarian Radio Symphony, Orchestre philharmonique de Radio-France, and the orchestra of Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu. He is regularly invited to conduct the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in Australia.

Increasingly in demand among period-instrument orchestras, Mr. Labadie regularly directs the Academy of Ancient Music and has worked with the Orchestra of the Age

of Enlightenment, the English Concert, and Collegium Vocale Gent Orchestra.

As a leading ambassador for music in his native city of Québec, Mr. Labadie was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2005 and a knight of Ordre national du Québec in 2006. In 2008, he received the Banff Centre's National Arts Award for his contribution to the development of the arts in Canada, as well as an honorary doctorate from Laval University.



Mezzo-soprano **Stephanie Blythe** is considered one of the most highly respected and critically acclaimed artists of her generation.

Ms. Blythe has sung in many of the renowned opera houses in the United States and Europe, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco

Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, and the Opera National de Paris. Her many roles include the title roles in *Carmen*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *La Grande Duchesse*, *Tancredi*, *Mignon*, and *Giulio Cesare*; Frugola, Principessa, and Zita in *Il Trittico*, Fricka in both *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*, Ježibaba in *Rusalka*, Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*, Mere Marie in *Dialogues des Carmélites*; Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*; and Ino/Juno in *Semele*.

Ms. Blythe has also appeared with many of the world's finest orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Orchestra of New York, Minnesota Orchestra, Halle Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Ensemble Orchestre de Paris, and the Concertgebouworkest. She has also appeared at the Tanglewood, Cincinnati May, and Ravinia festivals, and at the BBC Proms. The

many conductors with whom she has worked include Harry Bicket, James Conlon, Charles Dutoit, Mark Elder, Christoph Eschenbach, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Alan Gilbert, James Levine, Fabio Luisi, Nicola Luisotti, Sir Charles Mackerras, John Nelson, Antonio Pappano, Mstislav Rostropovitch, Robert Spano, Patrick Summers, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

A frequent recitalist, Ms. Blythe has been presented in recital in New York by Carnegie Hall (both in Stern Auditorium and Zankel Hall), Lincoln Center's Great Performers Series at Alice Tully Hall and its American Songbook Series at the Allen Room, Town Hall, the 92nd Street Y, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She has also been presented by the Vocal Arts Society and at the Supreme Court at the invitation of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in Washington, D.C.; the Cleveland Art Song Festival, the University Musical Society in Ann Arbor, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Shriver Hall in Baltimore, and San Francisco Performances.

A champion of American song, Ms. Blythe has premiered several song cycles written for her, including *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson* by the late James Legg; *Covered Wagon Woman* by Alan Smith, which was commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and recorded with the ensemble (CMS Studio

Recordings); and *Vignettes: Ellis Island*, also by Alan Smith and featured in a special television program entitled *Vignettes: An Evening with Stephanie Blythe and Warren Jones*.

Ms. Blythe starred in the Metropolitan Opera's live HD broadcasts of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Il Trittico*, *Rodelinda*, and the complete *Ring* cycle. She also appeared in PBS's *Live from Lincoln Center* broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic's performance of *Carousel* and her acclaimed show *We'll Meet Again: The Songs of Kate Smith*. Her recordings of works by Mahler, Brahms, and Wagner and of arias by Handel and Bach are available on the Virgin Classics label.

This season, Ms. Blythe returns to the Metropolitan Opera for the new production of *Falstaff* and makes her debut at San Diego Opera in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. She also appears in concert with the New York Philharmonic, tours the United States with Les Violons du Roy, and will be presented in recital in San Francisco and Princeton.

Ms. Blythe was named *Musical America's* Vocalist of the Year for 2009. Her other awards include the 2007 *Opera News* Award and the 1999 Richard Tucker Award.

Stephanie Blythe is represented by Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South, Ninth Floor North, New York, New York, 10016, www.opus3artists.com.

Kobie Van Kenningburg

Luc Delisle