

The Concert Experience of a Lifetime

There are the Seven Wonders of the World, the great sports complexes, and the truly notable concert halls worldwide; La Scala, The Sydney Opera House, Bayreuth, Carnegie Hall, and the list goes on. In the world of music and concert performance relatively few, if any, venues have remained inaccessible save one – The Sistene Chapel. The official residence of the Pope in the Vatican City, it is famous for its architecture and its decoration that was frescoed throughout by Renaissance artists including Michelangelo, Botticelli, Perugino, Pinturicchio, Ghirlandaio, and others. These works are considered the crowning achievements of Western painting.

Since the time of Sixtus IV, the Sistene Chapel has maintained its function of both religious and functionary papal activity to the present day, and continues to host the important services of the Papal Calendar. It is the site of the Papal conclave, most recently the process by which Pope Francis I was selected and home to the Sistene Chapel Choir, one of the oldest religious choirs in the world.

Opening the doors of the Sistene Chapel for an outside concert performance could be described as the Holy Grail of performance venues, yet that is the recent invitation extended to and accepted by the New Jersey based Continuo Arts Foundation. No stranger to the Vatican or Vatican City's non-profit musical extension Fondazione Pro Musica E Arte Sacra, Continuo Arts Founder Candace Wicke was the first woman conductor to ever appear on the Fondazione's annual international festival in Rome and only the second American, following the great Paul Salamonovich. "To say we are excited, thrilled and humbled by this unbelievable invitation is a huge understatement; truly, sometimes there are no words" says Wicke "I don't know how to describe the nature and importance of this concert opportunity we have been given, however what we are immediately committed to is the inclusion of as many Continuo Arts ensemble members, families and surrounding communities that want to be involved; this won't happen again!"

In February, members of the Continuo Arts Intergenerational Choral Ensembles and many non-singing music and art aficionado's, will travel to Ireland with stops in Limerick, Dublin, Waterford, and Wicklo. Then it is on to Italy with performances in Assisi, St. Peter's Basilica and culminating in the concert experience of a lifetime inside the Sistene Chapel. Whether performing or in the audience attending a private concert surrounded by the world's great artistic masterpieces, everyone present will undoubtedly experience the transformative power of great music and art.

Continuo Arts is currently auditioning for the 2013-14 season and accepting new singers ages 7 to 70 plus in one of their six ensembles; Children's Chorus, Intermediate and Advanced Girls, Boys Ensemble, Adult Civic Chorale and Seniors Sing. There will be free classes for each ensemble on opening day, Tuesday, September 3rd at Historic Twin Maples, 216 Springfield Ave. in Summit. Times for the Open House Sing-In are: Children at 4:30, Middle School and High School at 6:00, Adults at 7:30. Each ensemble will have performances in local community concerts, community service appearances as well as the opportunity to travel and perform in Ireland, Italy and the Sistina. The repertoire will include selections from the Edward's Requiem; voiced for SATB chorus and treble choir, singers of all ages have the ability to perform in this historic event.

In addition to an invitation for new singers to join, Continuo Arts extends the hand of welcome to non-singing, art-loving residents in the Tri-State area to join them on what is truly a rare and extraordinary opportunity of a lifetime.

Travel and ensemble information can be found at www.continuoarts.com. To schedule an audition, call 908-264-5324.