

# ESSENTIAL VOICES USA

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## The Composer Speaks Series



### Conductor Judith Clurman

**Conducts Roberto Sierra's *Gloria* from *Missa Latina*, *Reason to be Thankful* by Larry Hochman and Sheldon Harnick, *Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah* and *The Cycle of Grace* by John Glover and Kelley Rourke**

**Essential Voices USA to perform**

**Tuesday, December 10, 2013 at 8:00 PM.**

**At DiMenna Space for Classical Music**

Judith Clurman conducts **The Composer Speaks: Reason To Be Thankful** at the DiMenna Space for Classical Music, 450. 37th St (between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues), New York City, at 8:00 PM on Tuesday, December 10, 2013. This event is being performed under the auspices of **The Composer Speaks** series, which is sponsored by Clurman's **Essential Voices USA**. The Composer Speaks workshops involve a presentation of musical selections followed by a discussion between the composers, librettists, conductor Judith Clurman, and audience members about musical choices and compositional techniques.

The performance on December 10 features an innovative and diverse selection of holiday music. **EVUSA** will premiere **Judith Clurman's** choral adaptation of **Roberto Sierra's *Gloria* from *Missa Latina***, give the first public performance of ***Reason to be Thankful* by Larry Hochman (composer) and Sheldon Harnick (librettist)**, and also perform ***Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah***, a thrilling new arrangement of Chanukah music by **Clurman, Hochman, and Brian Stokes Mitchell**, along with baritone soloist **Steven Moore**. During the concert, the audience will learn the Thanksgiving song ***The Cycle of Grace* by John Glover (composer) and Kelley Rourke (librettist)**. The evening will conclude with an

audience sing-a-long of traditional holiday carols! Refreshments will be served.

**TICKETS:**

Available at the door or by clicking [www.ovationtix.com/tr5/pe.c/9833333](http://www.ovationtix.com/tr5/pe.c/9833333)

Admission is \$50.00 per ticket (\$25.00 tax deductible); seating is limited.

**RAFFLE:** To be held after the event.

**ARTISTS:**

**ESSENTIAL VOICES USA**

**Judith Clurman's Essential Voices USA** (EVUSA), one of New York's preeminent choral ensembles, brings together a roster of seasoned professionals and auditioned volunteers. With this unique choral model, created by Clurman, the size of the ensemble is constantly changing, dictated by the specific musical needs of each project. The ensemble is completely at home in New York's iconic performance venues. It performs regularly on the Carnegie Hall subscriptions series with The New York Pops and at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music. EVUSA participated in the spirited Leonard Bernstein Celebration at Symphony Space. EVUSA also produces its own classical choral, musical theater, and operatic readings, workshops, and recordings. The ensemble's wide-ranging and adaptable musicality is evident from the variety of its activities. EVUSA was in residence with National Public Radio the month of February 2011. That same year the ensemble launched *The Composer Speaks*, a series of concerts in workshop format moderated by Judith and designed to encourage dialogue with composers. Past events have included the music of established and up-and-coming composers and librettists such as Linsey Abrams, Larry Hochman, Bruce Ruben, Paul Schoenfield, Shulamit Ran, and Joshua Schmidt. The group performed on the critically acclaimed CD *Celebrating the American Spirit* (Sono Luminus) featuring Kelli O'Hara and Ron Raines. The repertoire ranged from Milton Babbitt to Irving Berlin. The disc includes the exciting cycle, "Sing Out, Mr. President," a collection of sixteen short pieces based on the words of sixteen American presidents. EVUSA recorded the song "The Music in My Mind" for Marvin Hamlisch's children's book, *Marvin Makes Music*, and was honored to be invited to participate in Hamlisch's stirring memorial at The Juilliard School. In 2011 and 2012 EVUSA rocked 'the rock' on NBC's national broadcasts of the Rockefeller Center Tree Lighting. A highlight of its 2012–2013 season was EVUSA's participation in the Presidential Inaugural activities, including a sing-along of the "Sing Out, Mr. President" song cycle at the "Church of the Presidents" in Washington, D.C. The ensemble's CD was featured on NPR on Inauguration Day 2013. In 2012, EVUSA premiered the SATB arrangement of Stephen Schwartz's important and deeply moving work, "Testimony," at Carnegie Hall, under Judith's direction. In 2013–2014 the ensemble's versatility will be on display once again. Performances include Carnegie Hall concerts, exciting *Composer Speaks* programs, and a performance and recording of Mozart's *Raunchy Canons*. In addition, a new recording is on the way—the Clurman-Hochman-Mitchell arrangement of "Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah" and "Set Me as a Seal" by Nico Muhly.

**JUDITH CLURMAN**

Emmy and Grammy-nominated conductor, vocal educator, and choral specialist **Judith Clurman** has conducted and collaborated with the New York Philharmonic, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Boston Symphony, New York City Ballet, Mostly Mozart Festival, Lincoln Center's Great Performers series, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the American Songbook Series, TodiMusicFest, and the New York Pops (Carnegie Hall). She served as Juilliard's Director of Choral Activities, Co-Director for Harvard's Leonard Bernstein: Boston to Broadway Festival, faculty member/vocal specialist for the National Endowment for the Arts/Columbia University Institute of Classical Music, and as Visiting Artist at Cambridge University and Curtis Institute of Music, the Zimriya (Israel), and the Janacek Academy (Czech Republic). She created the Lincoln Center Tree Lighting, serving as musical director/conductor for nine years, and has commissioned and premiered over 50 works by America's most revered composers. As Associate Music Director of *Sesame Street* (Season 39), her work with The Muppets earned her a 2009 Emmy nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Music Direction and Composition. Judith served as founding conductor of New York

Concert Singers and Project Youth Chorus and music director of Prism Concerts and the 92nd Street Y's Music of the Spirit. The recording of Clurman's Son Sonora Voices for Tania Leon's ballet Inura, was nominated for a 2013 Grammy Award (Contemporary Classical Composition). Judith currently conducts Essential Voices USA (EVUSA) and collaborates with the Omaha Symphony as chorus master and guest conductor. She conducted *The Music in My Mind* for Marvin Hamlisch's children's book. Her critically acclaimed CD, *Celebrating the American Spirit*, (EVUSA, Kelli O'Hara, Ron Raines), was featured on National Public Radio on Inauguration Day, 2013. Judith's publications/arrangements are published by G. Schirmer, Schott, Subito, and Boosey & Hawkes. She's recorded for New World, Sono Luminus, and Delos. She is currently a member of ASCAP, ASCAP's Special Classification Committee, and the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

## **JOHN GLOVER**

**John Glover** has created music for theater, opera, dance, and the concert hall. His chamber opera *New Arrivals* for Houston Grand Opera was hailed by *Broadway World* as an "intricate and intriguing score that is easy to lose yourself in emotionally." Commissions from organizations and musicians include the New York Youth Symphony, Houston Grand Opera, American Conservatory Theater, the Five Boroughs Music Festival, Amber Sloan Dance, and Ensemble Meme. John has received numerous awards, fellowships and grants for his music from organizations including Meet The Composer, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. His recent song cycle *Natural Systems* premiered at Carnegie Hall this spring and was described, in *The New York Times*, as a "vivid score ranging from energetic swirls to a gentle, enigmatic conclusion."

## **SHELDON HARNICK**

Sheldon Harnick's musical theatre career began in the 1950s with songs (e.g. "The Boston Beguine," "Merry Little Minuet") in revues on and Off-B'way. In 1957 he teamed with Jerry Bock to create the scores for a number of memorable musicals including *Fiorello* (Tony Award, Pulitzer Prize), *She Loves Me* (Grammy), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Tony), *The Rothschilds* and *The Apple Tree*. His other musicals include *Rex* (with Richard Rodgers), *A Wonderful Life* (Joe Raposo), *A Christmas Carol* (Michel Legrand), *The Phantom Tollbooth* (Arnold Black and co-librettist Norton Juster) and *Dragons* (for which he wrote book, lyrics and music). He has contributed songs to the films *The Heartbreak Kid*, *Blame It on Rio* (Cy Coleman) and *Aaron's Magic Village* (Legrand). In the world of opera, he has provided librettos for Jack Beeson's *Cyrano*, *Dr. Heidegger's Fountain of Youth* and *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*, Henry Mollicone's *Coyote Tales* and Thomas Z. Shepard's *Love in Two Countries*. Mr. Harnick has won two Tony Awards, two Grammy Awards, three gold records and a platinum record. He is a longtime member of the Dramatists Guild and Songwriters Guild.

## **LARRY HOCHMAN**

Larry Hochman received the Tony Award in 2011 for his orchestrations for the Broadway hit musical *The Book of Mormon*. He has also received Tony nominations for Best Orchestrations of Monty Python's *Spamalot* (also Drama Desk nomination), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, and *A Class Act*. He has written orchestrations for *Big Fish*, the revival of *Pippin*, *The Addams Family* and *Jane Eyre*, as well as additional orchestrations for many other Broadway shows, including *Shrek*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Chita Rivera: A Dancer's Life*, and *King David* (Alan Menken & Tim Rice). He is the composer for Nickelodeon's hit series *The Wonder Pets*, for which he has received four Emmy awards, and has composed additional music for Disney's *Little Mermaid II*. He has composed and arranged music for two episodes of Spielberg's *Amazing Stories* and several TV documentaries, as well as the films *Not for Publication*, *The Watchman*, and *Alaska* (Omnimax film). His orchestrations for eighteen films include Marvin Hamlisch's *The Informant!* and Disney's *Lady and the Tramp II*. Larry has arranged the recordings and concerts for Sir Paul McCartney, Not the Messiah (Eric Idle), Mandy Patinkin, Audra McDonald, Marvin Hamlisch, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Barry Manilow, Dawn Upshaw, Maury Yeston, Andrea Burns, Marin Mazzie, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet's *Reflections on Duke Ellington* (Decca Records), "A Sondheim Medley" (authorized by Mr. Sondheim), Michael Feinstein, Betty Buckley, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Boston Pops Orchestra, Thomas Dolby, Amanda McBroom, Andre

de Shields, and The Big Apple Circus. Larry trained as a classical musician, and his orchestral work *In Memoriam* received its world premiere in Berlin (1994) and its US premiere with the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra. ([www.larryhochman.net](http://www.larryhochman.net))

### **STEVEN MOORE**

Steven Moore is at home on the concert stage as well as the musical theatre stage having performed leading roles throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe. In London, Steven appeared as Randy Curtis in the Royal National Theatre production of Kurt Weill's *Lady in the Dark* (directed by Francesca Zambello) and can be heard on the original cast recording. He was the Phantom in the Maury Yeston/Arthur Kopit *Phantom* in Germany. In recent years he has played the role of Emile de Becque in several productions of "South Pacific". Recent opera productions include "Le Grand Macabre" with the NY Philharmonic, "The Grapes of Wrath" at Carnegie Hall and "Les Huguenots", "Der Ferne Klang", "Die Liebe der Danae" and *Le Roi Malgre Lui* at Bard Summerscape. Mr. Moore has been a soloist with the American Classical Orchestra, the Omni Ensemble, Musica Viva, the New York Virtuoso Singers, the American Symphony Orchestra, Musica Sacra and the NY Concert Singers. He also appears regularly with NY Choral Artists and the NY Concert Chorale.

### **KELLEY ROURKE**

Kelley Rourke writes for and about music. In summer 2013, her adaptation of Verdi's *Il giorno di regno* for The Glimmerglass Festival earned high praise: "Ms. Rourke's clever, quirky libretto, easy to follow and hard to resist, tidies up some of the original opera's messy bits" (The New York Times). She is the librettist for John Glover's *Natural Systems* (New York Youth Symphony at Carnegie Hall, 2013) and *Our Basic Nature* (Nautilus Music-Theatre and American Opera Projects, 2010). Kelley's adaptation of *The Elixir of Love* for Sir Jonathan Miller's 2010 production at English National Opera (revived September 2011) was praised for a "crackingly witty translation" (*The Independent*) that "communicates vividly without mashing the music" (*Financial Times*). Kelley is the dramaturg at The Glimmerglass Festival (Cooperstown, NY) and Washington National Opera.

### **ROBERTO SIERRA**

For over 30 years, American composer **Roberto Sierra's** music has become part of the repertoire of leading US and international orchestras, ensembles and festivals. Sierra's newest works premiere in fall 2013: *Fantasia* for Manuel Barrueco and the Cuarteto Casals, and the orchestral work *Montuno* written for the Society of Music Arts Orchestra (Maplewood, NJ). Recent titles include: *Decimas* – a song cycle for the 2013 Ravinia Festival; *Mambo metalico* for the Eastman Wind Ensemble; and *Navidad en la montaña* – a solo Christmas cantata composed for soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, Leonard Slatkin, and the Detroit Symphony. His music can be heard on many labels including Naxos, EMI, New World Records, Albany Records, Koch and BMG. Born in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico (US), Sierra studied composition in both Puerto Rico and Europe; and served composer-residencies at the Milwaukee, Puerto Rico and New Mexico Symphonies and The Philadelphia Orchestra. Sierra's music is principally published by Subito Music Corporation (ASCAP).

### **WEBSITES**

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