

<p style="text-align: right;">PRONUNCIATION KEY: TEREZÍN: ter-e-ZEEN FAZAL: fuh-ZAHL</p> <p>HUW PRIDAY: hyoo (as conventional Hugh); Priday rhymes with Friday</p>
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---- For immediate release ----

***ORATORIO TEREZÍN* – A POWERFUL WORK FOR LARGE ORCHESTRA, CHORUS AND SOLOISTS BY RUTH FAZAL – TO BE GIVEN ITS U.S. PREMIERE WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2007, 8 P.M., AT THE TILLES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, AND THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 8 P.M., IN CARNEGIE HALL**

**PERFORMERS TO INCLUDE YOUNG PEOPLE’S CHORUS OF NEW YORK CITY, SINGERS FROM TORONTO’S NEW STREAMS CHILDREN’S CHOIR AND BRATISLAVA BOYS CHOIR, TORONTO MENDELSSOHN SINGERS, CONDUCTOR KIRK TREVOR, AND SOLOISTS TERESA MARIA GOMEZ, HUW PRIDAY, AND NATHANIEL WATSON**

The U.S. premiere of *Oratorio Terezín*, a powerful work for large orchestra, chorus and soloists by British-Canadian composer Ruth Fazal, will be performed on Wednesday, 7 February 2007, at 8 p.m. at Tilles Center for the Performing Arts (on the C. W. Post campus of Long Island University in Brookville, New York) and in Carnegie Hall’s Isaac Stern Auditorium (57th Street and Seventh Avenue) on Thursday, 8 February 2007, at 8 p.m.

Inspired by the book, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, the work sets poetry by children in the Terezín concentration camp and text from the Hebrew scriptures. *Oratorio Terezín* is scored for orchestra, children’s chorus, mixed adult choir and three vocal soloists, juxtaposing the children’s and adults’ voices, along with those of the Voice of the Prophet, the Voice of God, and the Voice of Suffering. The young singers’ preparation for the concerts is not only musical, but also includes Holocaust education and cultural awareness and exchange.

The work will be led by conductor Kirk Trevor, and will feature the 35-member Young People's Chorus of New York City joined by singers from Toronto's New Streams Children's Choir and the Bratislava Boys Choir. The performances will also feature the adult choir Toronto Mendelssohn Singers and soloists including the soprano Teresa Maria Gomez, tenor Huw Priday and baritone Nathaniel Watson.

Tickets for the Tilles Center performance range from \$20 to \$45, and are available at the Tilles Box Office, or by calling TillesCharge at 516-299-3100 or online at [www.tillescenter.org](http://www.tillescenter.org). Tickets for the Carnegie Hall performance range from \$25 to \$55 and are available at the Carnegie Hall box office beginning December 8th or by calling CarnegieCharge at 212/247-7800; or online at [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org). Discounted tickets for students and seniors are available for both performances.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION THE ORATORIO**

"In the summer of 1998," says composer Ruth Fazal, "I was given a book called *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, a collection of poetry and art by children from the Terezín concentration camp from 1941 to 1943. Inspired by the book, I was compelled to memorialize the children's naiveté and hope, beautiful in contrast to the awful suffering. I created *Oratorio Terezín* as a love song of hope, in the midst of darkness." Survivors from Terezín whose poetry was published in *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* are expected to attend the New York performances, as well as the survivor and Holocaust spokesperson Elie Wiesel.

### **THE TEREZÍN CONCENTRATION CAMP**

In 1941, the small town of Terezín (northwest of Prague in Czechoslovakia) was converted by the Nazis into a transit concentration camp for Jews. To the outside world, Terezín (formerly known as Theresienstadt) was identified as a "model Jewish settlement" – a resort-like atmosphere with stores, a cafe, bank, kindergarten, school, and flower gardens. In reality, Terezín was an overcrowded way station for the death camps, used for purposes of propaganda. The transports would come regularly and take both adults and

children to the gas chambers of Auschwitz. Many died in Terezin itself, as overcrowding bred untold misery and disease. Many of those kept as prisoners in this town were musicians, writers, poets, artists and intellectuals. Even in the horror of their situation, their creativity could not be stifled; they and their children used art to transcend the pain. From 1941 to 1944, over 15,000 children were numbered among thousands of Jews who were held captive in Terezín. While regular schooling was prohibited, classes were held clandestinely and the children were encouraged to paint and write. Of the 15,000 children who passed through Terezín, only about 100 survived.

### ORATORIO TEREZÍN PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Since the world premiere of *Oratorio Terezín*, presented in November, 2003, at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, this work has been accomplishing its mission: to bring together people of all ages from around the world in mutual understanding. Repeat performances have joined the Bratislava Boys Choir with the Canadian New Streams Children's Choir and Israel's Bat Kol Children's Choir. The oratorio was presented in a European tour through Bratislava (Slovakia), Vienna (Austria), Brno (Czech Republic), and Prague (Czech Republic) in 2004. The *Oratorio Terezín* performances in Bratislava and Prague were the catalysts for a public forum in both the Slovak and Czech Republic Parliament on the subject of the Holocaust and Anti-Semitism. Forum participants included leaders in the Jewish community, representatives from the Christian community, politicians, historians, and Holocaust survivors. On Holocaust Memorial Day in May, 2005, an *Oratorio Terezín* performance took place in Tel Aviv. This concert was featured by the city as the main cultural event commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day. More than 2500 audience members filled the hall, including hundreds of Holocaust survivors who were granted free admission. Performances followed in Jerusalem and K'armiel.

### CD RECORDING

A CD recording of the 2003 Toronto world premiere performance is available at [www.oratorioterezin.com](http://www.oratorioterezin.com).

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### **NOT FOR PUBLICATION:**

For additional information, interview access, photographs and CDs, please contact Nancy Shear Arts Services, Press Representatives, at T: 212/496-9418, [sheararts@nancyshear.com](mailto:sheararts@nancyshear.com) and [www.nancyshear.com](http://www.nancyshear.com).

For more information, please visit, [www.oratorioterezin.com](http://www.oratorioterezin.com).

## ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### BIOGRAPHIES:

#### RUTH FAZAL, COMPOSER

Born and educated in England, Ruth Fazal began her musical studies on the piano and the violin. She received a scholarship to study the violin and composition at Dartington College of Arts, and from there went on to study the violin at the Guildhall School of Music in London. After graduating with honors from the Guildhall, Fazal won a French Government Scholarship to study violin in Paris with Nell Gotkovsky.

Since arriving in Toronto in 1975, Fazal has performed with all the major orchestras in the city including the Toronto Symphony, Canadian Opera Company and the National Ballet, as well as being actively involved in many chamber music ensembles. She has frequently performed on CBC Radio. Fazal is currently concertmaster of all three orchestras of the Mississauga Symphonic Association, including the acclaimed string orchestra Sinfonia Mississauga, as well as concertmaster of the Elora Festival Orchestra and the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir Orchestra. She is also first violinist of the Lorien String Quartet.

The performance and recording of Ruth Fazal's first classical composition *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, a concerto for spoken voice and violin with orchestra, premiered in 2002. In 2003, *Oratorio Terezín* was given its world premiere at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, followed by a European tour in 2004 and a tour to Israel in 2005. All concerts were received with great enthusiasm and acclaim. Ruth Fazal is also well known as a Christian singer/songwriter and accomplished keyboard player. In recent years, she has traveled extensively across North America as well as to Europe and Africa. Ruth Fazal has recorded 18 albums of her songs and of instrumental music.

#### KIRK TREVOR, CONDUCTOR

Kirk Trevor is an internationally known conductor and teacher. Trevor has been Music Director of the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra since 1988, and the Missouri Symphony since 2000. He was Music Director of the Knoxville

Symphony from 1985 to 2003, thus forging a strong musical partnership with three of America's leading regional orchestras.

From 1995 to 1999, he was Chief Conductor of the Martinu Philharmonic Orchestra in the Czech Republic, and, in 2000, established a new relationship with the famed Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra in Bratislava. With the SRSO, he began a new series of recordings of American music for various record companies. To date, he has made forty-eight albums of new American music. In 2003, he was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the orchestra and toured Japan and Europe. In the 2004, Trevor led the orchestra on a European premiere tour of *Oratorio Terezín*.

Born and educated in England, Trevor trained at London's Guildhall School of Music and graduated cum laude in cello performance and conducting. He was a conducting student of the late Sir Adrian Boult and Vilem Tausky and went on to pursue cello studies in France with Paul Tortelier, arriving in the U. S. on a Fulbright Exchange Grant where, in 1982, his conducting skills led him to the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor position with the Dallas Symphony. In 1990, Trevor was recognized as one of America's outstanding young conductors, winning the American Symphony Orchestra League's Leonard Bernstein Conducting Competition which resulted in performances with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center.

Since 1991, Trevor has been Director of the International Workshop for Conductors held annually in the Czech Republic and in 2005, joined Ball State University as Director of Orchestras and the graduate conducting faculty.

#### **TERESA MARIA GOMEZ, SOPRANO**

Teresa Maria Gomez has been a featured soloist with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Wind Symphony, Plano Symphony, El Paso Symphony, Knoxville Symphony, Missouri Chamber Orchestra, the Symphonic Orchestra of Slovak Radio, and the Israel Chamber Orchestra.

A graduate with honors in music from the University of North Texas, Gomez received the Grady Harlen Award for the Most Outstanding Performer in the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition. She has performed a wide variety of music including opera, oratorio, musical theater, and jazz. In 1998, Gomez made her Carnegie Hall debut as the soprano soloist in the Mozart Requiem. Gomez has sung the role of The Voice of Suffering in the World Premiere performances of *Oratorio Terezin* in Canada, Europe, and Israel.

### HUW PRIDAY, TENOR

Huw Priday was born in Brecon, Wales , and studied in London at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and at the Royal College of Music. Huw Priday is highly acclaimed as a concert artist both in the U. K. and abroad and has an extensive concert repertoire including over 20 operatic roles. His performances of Verdi's Requiem have received critical acclaim and he specializes in the works of Elgar. Recent performances have included *The Kingdom* and *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Liverpool Philharmonic; Verdi's Requiem; Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* (Royal Opera House, Stockholm), Handel's *Messiah* (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra), Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; and Rossini's *Messe Solenne* and *Stabat Mater*. Priday made his debut with the Royal Philharmonic in a performance of the *Messiah* and recorded a duet album with the orchestra in 2001. In 2003, he sang the role of God in the world premiere of *Oratorio Terezín* at the Toronto Centre for the Arts and in performances in Israel in 2005. Priday's concert schedule for 2006 takes him to South Africa, India, the Middle East, Europe, America, Canada and Ireland.

### NATHANIEL WATSON, BARITONE

Baritone Nathaniel Watson is a versatile artist who performs with the leading early music ensembles of North America and an array of international symphony orchestras and opera companies. Highlights include *Der Freischütz* with the New York Philharmonic under Sir Colin Davis; Beethoven's Ninth under Kurt Masur and in Carnegie Hall with Sir Roger Norrington. He appeared in the title role in the Boston Early Music Festival production of Cavalli's *Ercole amante* in Boston, at Tanglewood, and at the Utrecht Festival in Holland in 1999, and in the 1998 Salzburg Festival in the Brecht/Weill *Mahagonny*. He appears on the newly released CD of Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher* with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic, and a CD of Scarlatti's *Agar et Ismaele esiliati* with Seattle Baroque. He is also featured in recordings of both of the Bach Passions -- the St. John with Eric Milnes, and the St. Matthew with Jeffrey Thomas and the American Bach Soloists. Also with Eric Milnes, he sings Polyphemus on the *Acis and Galatea* recording from Les Boréades de Montréal on the ATMA label.

### THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS OF NEW YORK CITY

The Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC), the resident choir of both the 92nd Street Y and WNYC, New York public radio and one of today's most exciting and innovative youth choruses, is an award-winning, internationally acclaimed ensemble that performs more than 70 concerts, operas, and workshops annually in New York and beyond. Under its founder

and artistic director Francisco J. Nunez, the multicultural ensemble celebrates its 10th anniversary as an independent chorus in 2006-07. Over the past 10 years their engagements have taken them from Carnegie Hall and the White House to cities in Austria, Canada, the Czech Republic, England, Germany, Japan, and Spain where they have sung in such illustrious venues as Smetana Hall in Prague and St. Martin in the Fields in London, as well as with professional symphony orchestras and some of today's top artists. The chorus won two gold medals at the 2004 Choir Olympics in Bremen, Germany and received the 2005 Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming. They represented the U.S. at the Seventh World Symposium on Choral Music in Kyoto, Japan last year and recently headlined the Eastern Division of the American Choral Directors Association conference and performed at the national conference of Chorus America in Washington, D.C. YPC's second Transient Glory recording of works commissioned and premiered by the chorus from many of the most distinguished composers of our time is scheduled for release this fall.

---End of background information---

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For additional information, interview access, photographs and CDs, please contact Nancy Shear Arts Services, Press Representatives, at T: 212/496-9418, [sheararts@nancyshear.com](mailto:sheararts@nancyshear.com) and [www.nancyshear.com](http://www.nancyshear.com).

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