

The **DEFIANT**REQUIEM Foundation

The Concert Performance of Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín

The signature concert of The Defiant Requiem Foundation, *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín*, tells the story of the courageous Jewish prisoners in the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp (Terezín) during World War II who performed the famous Verdi Requiem while experiencing the depths of human degradation. With only a smuggled score, they performed the famous oratorio sixteen times, including one performance before senior SS officials from Berlin and a Red Cross delegation. Conductor Rafael Schächter told the choir, “We will sing to the Nazis what we cannot say to them.”

The concert was conceived and created by Foundation President, Maestro Murry Sidlin. The concert combines the magnificent music of Verdi with video testimony from survivors of the original Terezín chorus and footage from a Nazi propaganda film on Theresienstadt. The performance also includes actors who speak the words of imprisoned conductor Rafael Schächter and other prisoners.

This is not just another performance of the Verdi Requiem, but a tribute to the inspired leadership of Rafael Schächter who was forced to reconstitute the choir three times as members were transported to Auschwitz. The performances came to symbolize resistance and defiance and demonstrated the prisoners’ courage to confront the worst of mankind with the best of mankind. The performance is powerful, dramatic and inspirational, with a contemporary message of hope.

Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín will be performed coast-to-coast in the United States in 2015, with performances in New York City, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Boston and San Diego.

Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín has been performed at prestigious venues both nationally and internationally, including Lincoln Center Avery Fisher Hall, at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, The Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, The Music Center at Strathmore in Bethesda, Maryland and the Berkshire Music Festival. It has also been performed before an audience of 5000 in Budapest, in Prague at St. Vitus Cathedral, and in Berlin, Germany at the Konzerthaus hosted by The Jewish Museum of Berlin. In 2009, *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín* was performed in Terezín itself at the closing ceremony of the Forty-six Nation Conference on Holocaust Reparations.

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For more information, please visit our website at www.defiantrequiem.org or contact General Manager and Program Director Mark Rulison at mrulison@defiantrequiem.org