



PRESS RELEASE

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Passionate Music and Consummate Performances Offer a Seductive Combination in Boston Secession's The Big Oh!

BOSTON, MA – September 25, 2007 – Boston Secession launches its eleventh concert season on November 9th in Framingham and November 10th in Cambridge with **The Big Oh!**, a reprise of the group's popular May, 1999 concert. Proving that nothing is taboo on the classical music stage, the evening promises a no-holds-barred exploration of passion and sensuality through choral music. With first-rate performers and an engaging theme, this concert fulfills Secession's mission of bringing great choral music to Boston audiences.

Jane Ring Frank, Boston Secession's Artistic Director, describes **The Big Oh!** as an opportunity to consider an often-ignored theme in choral music. In Frank's view, "We tend to think of classical music, and choral music in particular, as very chaste. We've put together a concert that shows that nothing could be farther from the truth, and I'll admit we've had a lot of fun in the process. Secession has always been committed to giving our audience a truly extraordinary musical experience, and make no mistake, we've selected an outstanding repertoire for this concert. But with **The Big Oh!**, the concert experience will be leavened with a healthy dose of merriment."

Boston Secession's professional ensemble, which includes soprano Jessica Cooper, tenor Jason McStoots, and alto Martin Near, has earned a reputation for delivering concerts of impeccable beauty and precision. The group is pleased to welcome for this performance two extraordinary guest artists, Vytas J. Baksys, who is currently pianist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Justina Golden, celebrated vocalist and Artistic Director of the early music ensemble The Amiable Consort. The concert is scored for 25 voices, string quartet, and keyboard.

2007-2008 Season

November 9 & 10, 2007
The Big Oh!

December 7, 2007
Cabaret Noel
Singalong Secession

February 8, 2008
(Un)Lucky in Love
Alternative Valentine Celebration

March 15, 2008
Handel in the Strand

April 13, 2008
**Justina Golden and The
Amiable Consort**

Fall, 2008 Preview

November, 2008
Testimony of Witnesses
An Oratorio of Remembrance

Thematically, the concert's program encompasses the 19th century patriarchal model of sensual fulfillment as well as the female-centered model of friction to heat. Choral excerpts from Verdi's *Macbeth* illustrate the 19th century stereotype of the rampaging femme fatale, as well as the period's commitment to form and symmetry. Richard Wagner's *Isoldens Liebestod*, famous for being one of the most obvious musical displays of sensual climax coupled with death, is offered as a counterpoint, showcasing the composer's release from the strictures of form and symmetry. Women also find fulfillment in this concert with works by Pergolesi and Mozart, in which musical patterns of tension are followed by release in a combination of dissonance and pleasure.

Program highlights include the third movement from Arnold Schönberg's *String Quartet II in f sharp minor*, "Litanei," Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei*, Léo Delibes sweeping *Lakmé* duet, and Anton Bruckner's lesser-known *Christus Factus Est* [1873].

Audiences will have two opportunities to enjoy **The Big Oh!** On November 9th, the concert will debut in Framingham, Massachusetts, at 8:00 p.m. at the Heineman Ecumenical and Cultural Center at Framingham State College. On November 10th, also at 8:00 p.m., Secession will perform the concert in Cambridge at the First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden Street, Harvard Square. Tickets are currently on sale through the *Boston Secession* website (www.bostonsecession.org) or by calling 617-499-4860.

Boston Secession was founded in 1997, by Jane Ring Frank, the ensemble's conductor and artistic director. The group quickly established a reputation for offering superlative performances. Looking forward to the upcoming season, Frank observes, "It's a joy and a privilege to work with a group of musicians who are not only singularly talented, but passionate and committed as well. Their skill and dedication has enabled Secession to earn a place of great respect in the classical music community." Secession is equally dedicated to making classical music accessible to audiences, offering intelligent thematic programs accompanied by commentary.

Boston Secession's 2007 – 2008 concert season also includes **Cabaret Noël: Singalong Secession** on December 7th, **(Un)Lucky in Love**, Secession's popular Alternative Valentine Celebration, on February 8th, **Handel in the Strand** on March 15th, and **Justina Golden and the Amiable Consort** on April 13th.

Concert Program for The Big Oh!

[not this]

The Big Bad Oh! Medley

arr. Baksys and Eastburn

(includes excerpts from Orff, Bizet, Victor Herbert, John Dowland, Carole King/Gerry, Goffin, Peggy Lee, Blackwell/Presley, Donaldson/Kahn, Lerner & Lowe, Adler & Ross and Tom Jones

featuring special guest artist, Vytas J. Baksys, piano

[men are from mars, women are from venus]

“Si ch’io vorrei morire”

from Madrigals: Book 4 [1603]

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

The Paper Bag Cantata [1975]

Yngve Gamlin

[the century of the phallus]

“Schiudi, inferno, inghiotti”

from *Macbeth* [1847]

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

“Isoldens Liebestod”

from *Tristan und Isolde* [1859]

transcr. Franz Lizst

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

III. “Litanei”

String Quartet II in f sharp minor [1907-08]

Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951)

Christus Factus Est [1873]

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

REFRACTORY PERIOD (Intermission)

[my secret garden]

“Dum Sigillum”

Perotin (c.1155-1205)

featuring special guest artists, Justina Golden & Martin Near

I. “Stabat mater dolorosa”

from *Stabat Mater* [1736]

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736)

III. “Sequenz: Recordare”

from *Requiem* [1791]

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

“Viens, Mallika... Sous le dôme épais”

from *Lakmé* [1883]

Léo Delibes (1836-1891)

Bach Again [1976]

decomposed Edwin London (b.1929)
J.S. Bach, harm. F. Melius Christiansen

[the rhythm method]

“Tempus est iocundum - Dulcissime - O Fortuna”
from *Carmina Burana* [1937]
featuring special guest artist, Jessica Cooper

Carl Orff (1895-1982)

[i'll have what she's having]

Agnus Dei [1936]
transcription from “Adagio for Strings” by the composer

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Photos available for download at www.bostonsecession.org Press Room

Boston Secession's 2007 - 2008 Season Details

Boston Secession 2007 - 2008 season subscriptions are \$130 (5 shows for the price of 4, and a \$25 discount off the single ticket price) for all five season performances, including tickets to *Secession's* repeat sell-out (Un)Lucky in Love alternative Valentine's concert. Tickets are currently on sale through the *Boston Secession* website (www.bostonsecession.org) or by calling 617-499-4860. The subscription package includes:

The Big Oh!

Friday, November 9, 2007, 8:00 pm

Heineman Ecumenical and Cultural Center, Framingham State College

Saturday, November 10, 2007, 8:00 pm

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden Street, Harvard Square

A let-'er-rip romp through the sexier strains of music from 999 to today. This is a seductively silly, positively PG-13 program that explores the earthier mechanics of 'friction to heat' conjugal counterpoint, tests the tortured romanticism of Wagnerian love-death, and takes a humorous look at love "from both sides, now." Repertoire highlights run the gamut – from Pergolesi to Rossini, Barber, Schönberg, Bruckner and more.

Cabaret Noël: Singalong Secession

Friday, December 7, 2007, 8:00 pm

St. Paul's Church, 15 St. Paul Street, Brookline

Join us for Boston's new holiday tradition, a joyous cabaret performance overflowing with seasonal favorites, this year featuring renowned soprano Nancy Armstrong and Artists of Boston Secession. Croon along or wail away on all your holiday favorites, from *White Christmas* to *Silent Night* and through the top tunes from Handel's *Messiah*. Lift your voice in song with Jane Ring Frank and the professional singers of Boston Secession and enjoy a few funny, heartwarming and poignant Secession solo surprises along the way. ...and if you have a *Messiah* score, don't leave home without it!

(Un)Lucky in Love

Featuring special guest artist, Justina Golden

Friday, February 8, 2008, 8:00 pm

Veronique Ballroom, Longwood Towers, Brookline

Cupid might be stupid

And forget to shoot the beau

But you don't have to sit alone

And wish it weren't so...

Come share an empathizing laugh with fellow fools for love at Boston Secession's annual Alternative Valentine celebration – presented for the first time in the gorgeous Veronique Ballroom of the Longwood Towers in Brookline! Join featured Secession artists – in solos, duets and wee ensembles – as they celebrate the vicissitudes of love. Featuring an all new program, including works by Mozart, Sondheim, Bernstein, Jason Robert Brown, and others.

Handel in the Strand

Saturday, March 15, 2008, 8:00 pm

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden Street, Harvard Square

In the Baroque period, J. S. Bach beetled away in Germany as the introverted, provincial genius, while George Frideric Handel took London by storm, becoming the era's extroverted, cosmopolitan superstar. A German who wrote in the Italian style in England, Handel was wildly popular in his day – and it is his musical style that has left an indelible mark on nearly all the greatest composers after his death in 1759. This concert traces the musical inheritance of Handel's heirs – from the man himself to works by Mendelssohn, Brahms, Weill, Stravinsky and even Percy Grainger!

Boston Secession presents

Justina Golden and The Amiable Consort

Featuring Robert Eisenstein, medieval fiddle, founding member of the Folger Consort

Friday, April 11, 2008, 8:00 pm

Gordon Chapel, Old South Church, Boston

Boston Secession is pleased to welcome guest artist Justina Golden and her new ensemble, The Amiable Consort, featuring the best of Boston Secession's early music voices. Specializing in Hildegard von Bingen and solo and multi-part chant, this early music ensemble presents deeply moving performances of exceptional quality, imbued with a rare accessibility both for those in the know and those who are new to this music. Praised for her "honey rich, deep voice" and the "lush richness" of her expressive vocal work, Justina brings to her performances a boldness and passion rarely heard in this form.

About Boston Secession

It's not every night that the chemistry of a concert's performance and program leads to spontaneous audience combustion. Welcome to Boston Secession: utterly superlative musical performances combined with witty, original programs that reframe the very notion of what a "classical music" concert can be.

Here's Boston Secession's formula for the city's most stunning and entertaining concerts:

First, start with Boston's best, most disciplined singers. Add Artistic Director Jane Ring Frank's commitment to world-class musicianship coupled with a lushly transparent sound, achieved through applying typically orchestral techniques to her professional ensemble. After plundering nine centuries of repertoire to find compositions—both famous and obscure—Ring Frank then puts this unique sound to work in creative thematic programs of depth and originality.

The result? Performances that demonstrate "a commitment to serious musicianship leavened with a friendly sense of *joie de vivre*," (*The Hub Review*), and an aural effect "so precise" — according to Richard Dyer of *The Boston Globe* — "[it makes] the ears ring."

So, why the name Boston Secession?

Over a hundred years ago, Austrian painter Gustav Klimt's artist's co-operative, the Vienna Secession, created a sensation by displaying paintings at eye level for the first time. Now the common practice for all art galleries, the Secessionists' approach modernized the presentation of fine art forever. Inspired by the original Secession, Jane Ring Frank founded Boston Secession in 1996 as a professional studio for modern vocal performance, bringing classical music to "eye level."

Join this "superb choral group" (*Boston Phoenix*) as we embark on our second decade of exceptionally fine performances, bringing new audiences to classical music and fresh inspiration to classical music lovers everywhere.