

Distinguished Concerts Artist Series

Todd Randall Miller, Tenor

Marion Russell Dickson, Soprano

Jay Whatley, Piano

Shannon Hesse, Piano



T. Miller



M. Dickson

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2009, 8:30 PM

Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

Saturday, March 14, 2009, 8:30 pm

Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY)

Iris Derke, Co-Founder and General Director

Jonathan Griffith, Co-Founder and Artistic Director

Presents

Distinguished Concerts Artist Series

Todd Randall Miller, Tenor
Marion Russell Dickson, Soprano
Jay Whatley, Piano
Shannon Hesse, Piano

Richard Faith (b. 1926) - Annabel Lee

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

Lori Laitman (b. 1955) - *Four Dickinson Songs*

Will there Really be a Morning

I'm Nobody

She Died

If I ...

Marion Russell Dickson, soprano • Shannon Hesse, piano

Carlisle Floyd (b. 1926) - Selections from *Soul of Heaven*

I. Soul of Heaven (Robert Herrick)

II. Scarlet is no color... (John Case)

III. Music is love in search of a word
(Sydney Lanier)

IV. A rich man bought a Swan and Goose (Aesop)

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

Randolph L. Partain (b. 1973) - Selections from *Chasms*
Wild Asters
The Mystery
Dusk at Wartime
The Kiss
The Sanctuary

Marion Russell Dickson, soprano • Shannon Hesse, piano

Richard Faith - Though I Speak

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

Richard Faith / Michael Ard - Love Duet from *Sleeping Beauty*

**Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Marion Russell Dickson, soprano
Jay Whatley, piano**

Intermission

Benton Hess (b. 1947) - Selections from *Metamorphosis*

Metamorphosis: Fish
Ophelia

Ned Rorem (b. 1923) - The Silver Swan

Marion Russell Dickson, soprano • Shannon Hesse, piano

Richard Faith - Drifting

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

Carlisle Floyd - Sam's Aria from *Susannah*

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

David Conte (b. 1955) - Della's Aria from *The Gift of the Magi*

Marion Russell Dickson, soprano • Shannon Hesse, piano

Lucy Simon (b. 1943) - A Bit of Earth from *The Secret Garden*

Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944) - Bring Him Home from *Les Misérables*

Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Jay Whatley, piano

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) - One Hand, One Heart

Tonight

from earlier, more operatic version of *West Side Story*

**Todd Randall Miller, tenor • Marion Russell Dickson, soprano
Jay Whatley, piano • Shannon Hesse, piano**

Please switch off your cell phones and other electronic devices.

Todd Randall Miller, Tenor



Houston-based tenor Todd Randall Miller returns to Carnegie Hall for this debut recital, having appeared with DCINY last June in Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore*. He previously made his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in 2007 with the Kingwood Area Grand Chorus and the New England Symphonic Ensemble.

Miller has a broad range of performance experience with opera houses, musical theaters, symphonies, and choral societies, including performances with the Houston Symphony, Houston Choral Society, San Antonio Symphony and Opera, Opera in the Heights, The Woodlands Symphony, Da Camera Society, The Houston Chamber Choir, the American Radio Chamber Orchestra, and Des Moines Metro Opera. Recent solo performances have included Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* with the Houston Symphony Orchestra under Hans Graf, Stravinsky's *Les Noces* with Da Camera Society/Houston Chamber Choir (under Dutch conductor Reinbert de Leeuw), and Mendelssohn's oratorio *St. Paul*, also with the Houston Symphony and Chorus (Charles Hausmann, conductor). Upcoming projects include a crossover album (produced by Paul English for Ebb and Flow Music) that will be available in August, 2009. For more information visit www.toddmillermusician.com.

A proponent of American music, Miller has collaborated with several living composers, including Carlisle Floyd, Richard Faith, and Henry Mollicone. Last year Miller presented a series of recitals at colleges and universities around the country which focused on the music of Americans Carlisle Floyd, Floyd's teacher Ernst Bacon, and Richard Faith. Miller is thrilled and honored to have Richard Faith in the audience tonight for this performance, which will premiere his new song "Drifting."

Todd Randall Miller holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in voice performance and conducting from the University of Houston, where he studied with Katherine Ciesinski, Elena Nikolaidi, Carlisle Floyd, and Charles Hausmann. He also holds cum laude vocal performance degrees from the University of Louisville and the University of Arizona. Dr. Miller is professor of music at Lone Star College - Kingwood (formerly Kingwood College), where he teaches voice and directs the Summer

Opera Workshop. He is also the artistic director and conductor of the Kingwood Chorale and Chamber Orchestra.

Marion Russell Dickson, Soprano



Marion Russell Dickson, soprano, holds a Master of Music Degree in Performance and Literature and a Performer's Certificate from Eastman School of Music. She received her Bachelor of Music Degree in Voice Performance from Westminster Choir College. Ms. Dickson is the First Place Helen Boatwright Award Recipient of the 2000 Civic Morning Musical Competition held in Syracuse, New York. Public performances as a soloist across the country include locations

such as Houston, Texas, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Rochester, New York, Charleston, West Virginia, Princeton, New Jersey, and New York City.

Ms. Dickson enjoys performing soloist works in oratorios, operas, and recital settings. Her experiences as a soloist include Haydn's *The Creation*, Bach's *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, BWV 140, Mozart's *Vesperare solennes de confessore*, Handel's *Messiah*, DuBois' *Seven Last Words of Christ*, and Mozart's *Requiem*, among others. Operatic and light opera appearances include the title role in the Eastman Opera Theatre's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*, in which *Opera News* noted Marion Russell Dickson as one of four standout performers, noting: "Marion Russell's clarion *Patience*..." She also portrayed Céile in *Signor Deluso*, Jennie in Opera Rochester's production of Kurt Weill's *Down in the Valley*, as well as singing Lakmé in the famous duet by Delibes under conductor David Gilbert with the Eastman Philharmonia.

The Song Recital setting is close to Ms. Dickson's heart, having worked this repertoire with coaches such as Dalton Baldwin, Thomas Jaber, Benton Hess, Dr. Russell Miller, Dr. J.J. Penna, and others. Ms. Dickson also enjoys collaborating with contemporary composers, and traveled to New York City to work with composer Robert Baksa on his settings of Sara Teasdale poems, which resulted in a private premier of these works for the composer. In May 2007 Ms. Dickson performed the Houston Premiere of *Chasms*, a cycle of nine songs composed for her by composer Randolph Partain. As a lover of Sacred Music, Ms. Dickson,

as a part of the Aquinas Ensemble, recently participated in performing a concert of Sacred Music in the mesmerizing Chapel of St. Basil at the University of St. Thomas, in Houston, Texas.

Collegiate teaching experiences for Ms. Dickson include teaching Studio Voice, Diction, Master Classes, Opera Workshop, Art Song Literature, and other music courses at institutions such as the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas, Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, Lone Star College - Kingwood and Lone Star College - Montgomery in greater Houston, Houghton College in Houghton, New York, Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, and Eastman School of Music (Graduate Assistant).

Spring 2008 began Ms. Dickson's exciting appointment at the University of Saint Thomas, in the Arts District of Houston. Ms. Dickson also continues to maintain a private studio in Kingwood, where she lives with her husband, musician and educator Chris Dickson, and their children. Marion Russell Dickson is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and currently serves as President for the Greater Houston Chapter of NATS.

Jay Whatley, Pianist



Jay Whatley is Associate Professor of Music at Lone Star College - Kingwood, where he coordinates the applied keyboard, class piano & theory programs. He holds both the BM & MM in Piano Performance & Pedagogy, and completed coursework for the DMA in Piano Performance & Pedagogy with Betty Mallard, Martha Hilley & Sophia Gilmson, and in Organ Performance with Frank Speller, at the University of Texas at Austin. Additional study and master classes have

been with Jane Abbott-Kirk and William Doppmann (piano) and Lenora McCroskey, Jesse Eschbach, and William Mathias (organ).

In high demand as a collaborative artist, chamber musician, & continuo player, Whatley maintains an active & varied career at the state, regional & national levels. He has performed with such notable choral conductors as Robert Sund, Maria Guinand, Craig Jessop, Charles Bruffy, and Sigrid Johnson. He was recently selected to accompany the 2009 Texas Music Educators Association All-State Men's Choir under the direction of Larry

Kaptein, and also a large festival choir under the direction of Andre Thomas in February 2009. He collaborated with Allen Hightower and the SHSU Chorale in performances at TMEA (San Antonio) and ACDA (Miami), as well as on the Chorale's tour of Italy. Solo organ recitals include Salzburg's Dome Cathedral and Bath Abbey; he was guest soloist in a performance of Poulenc's Organ Concerto at St. John's Smith Square, London.

Whatley is a successful vocal coach and répétiteur, with students repeatedly winning Regional Auditions of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and also the coveted Grady Harlan Award from the Texoma Region of NATS.

As an active member of Music Teachers National Association, Texas Music Teachers Association, and Cypress Creek Music Teachers Association, Whatley is in his first year of a three-year appointment as Piano Competitions Chair for TMTA.

Shannon Hesse, Pianist



Shannon Hesse, pianist, is on the faculty at Texas Southern University and Houston Baptist University where she teaches piano, song literature, and is principal coach/accompanist for the voice department. As a collaborative pianist, she has performed with colleagues in recital both nationally and internationally at College Music Society (CMS), Society of Composers, Inc (SCI) and National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) conferences and regularly appears in recital with Houston Symphony musicians.

Hesse spends her summers teaching at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan, where she serves as Co-coordinator of Collaborative Pianists. She holds a doctorate in Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music from the Eastman School of Music, and degrees from Catholic University and Westminster Choir College. She also spent summers at the Aspen Music Festival and the American Institute for Musical Studies (AIMS) in Graz, Austria. Her teachers have included Jean Barr, Ingrid Clarfield, Marilyn Neeley and Rita Sloan.

Distinguished Concerts International New York

Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY) was founded by Iris Derke, General Director, and Jonathan Griffith, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor. DCINY provides opportunities for choral, instrumental, jazz, and chamber ensembles, as well as conductors and soloists, to perform at major venues such as Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Town Hall in New York City. A strong component of DCINY's mission, as stated in the DCINY motto, "The Art of Performance - The Power of Education," is to enhance the concert experience through educational programs and incentives. These include support in meeting performance standards and optional master classes and seminars.

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DISTINGUISHED CONCERTS INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK
250 W. 57TH STREET, SUITE 831
NEW YORK, NY 10107