

Two vocalists sing Pergolesi sacred work 'Stabat Mater' concert benefits CCC Performing Arts Center

ASTORIA — Partners for the PAC will present a concert of Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" with vocalists Jocelyn Claire Thomas and Rebecca Sacks with accompanist Evan C. Paul at Peace Lutheran Church at 3 p.m. May 2. Admission is \$10.

Thomas and Sacks sang in the Cascadia Opera production of Beethoven's "Fidelio" that was performed as a benefit for the Clatsop Community

College Performing Arts Center this past fall. They were inspired to do more to help maintain the PAC and offered to sing the Pergolesi work as a benefit. They will both be part of the 2015 Astoria Music Festival.

Thomas, a versatile soprano praised for her haunting sound and musical intelligence, is a frequent performer in opera, concert and recital. Sacks, a mezzo soprano, is

known for her dynamic stage presence, smart musicality and stylistic versatility.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) was one of the most important early composers of comic opera. He also wrote sacred music. It is his 1736 "Stabat Mater," however, that is his best-known sacred work. It was commissioned by a fraternal group who presented an annual Good Friday meditation in honor of the Virgin Mary. Pergolesi's work replaced one composed by Alessandro Scarlatti only nine years before, but which was already perceived as "old-fashioned," so rapidly had public tastes changed.

Thomas is a two-time winner of the district level of the Classical Singer Competition, and she also recently won the National Association of Teachers of Singing Advanced Artist Competition district level. She is a two-time recipient



Submitted photo

Jocelyn Claire Thomas, pictured, and Rebecca Sacks will sing Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" on May 2 in Astoria.



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ly was chosen as a Promising Young Artist of the 21st Century and traveled with a group of singers to Costa Rica.

Recently, Sacks won first place in the Northwest region of the NATS competition and an encouragement award at the Oregon District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions. Sacks is a four-year recipient of a performance scholarship at Stanford University and a member of the University of Oregon ensemble that won second place in the National Opera Association's collegiate scenes competition. She received her bachelor's degree in music with departmental honors in vocal performance from Stanford University in 2010 and completed post-baccalaureate work at the University of Oregon in 2013. Sacks is a member of the Portland Opera Chorus and currently studies with Ruth Dobson.

'Stabat Mater'

3 p.m. Saturday, May 2

Peace Lutheran Church

565 12th St., Astoria

of the George Woodhead Prize in Voice for excellence in oratorio and sacred music. Thomas holds a Bachelor of Music in voice from the Oberlin Conservatory, a master's degree in voice from the Peabody Conservatory and a Graduate Performance Diploma also from the Peabody Conservatory. Her roles performed include Marzelline in "Fidelio," Pamina in "Die Zauberflöte," Morgana in "Aleina," Zerlina in "Don Giovanni," and Adele in "Die Fledermaus." Upcoming engagements include singing in Mendelssohn's "Elijah"

with Bravo! Vancouver and singing Susanna in "Le Nozze di Figaro" with FAVA Salzburg.

Thomas resides in Portland, where she teaches voice, piano, flute and yoga. She studies with Ruth Dobson.

Sacks has performed with Stanford University's Chamber Chorale under Stephen Sano and University Singers under Robert Huw Morgan as well as with Sospiro Vocal Ensemble, Lyric Theatre of San Jose, Cascadia Concert Opera, and the University of Oregon Opera Ensemble. She recent-