



AMERICAN TRADITIONS VOCAL COMPETITION WELCOMES NEW JUDGES AND PIANIST FOR 2017 AS APPLICATIONS OPEN

SAVANNAH, GA – June 28, 2016 – In preparation for their most exciting season yet, the American Traditions Competition (ATC) organizers are leaving no stone unturned in their quest to equip the contest with the most talented and knowledgeable luminaries in the music business.

The legendary annual vocal competition, which celebrates classic American music, announces the appointment of two new judges, Judy Kaye and Andrew Lipka, as well as a new pianist, Dan Gettinger who is well known to Savannah audiences through his association with the Savannah VOICE Festival. In addition to new faces on the judges' panel and above the ivories, the ATC expects to draw its most impressive, gifted pool of contestants to date.

Applications for the 24th season, which is slated to run Feb. 20-24, 2017, are now being accepted online at www.americantraditionscompetition.com/Apply.html. All interested vocal artists are encouraged to apply before the Oct. 20 deadline. Those who are selected will have the pleasure of performing before Kaye, Lipka and Kurt Ollmann, who will return to the three-judge panel after his inaugural experience in 2016.

The judges, each boasting an impressive resume and remarkable experience, will critique the singers on technique, stage deportment and diversity of style.

Kaye starred on Broadway in many roles including the Fairy Godmother in “Cinderella” and Mrs. Lovett in “Sweeney Todd” and is currently starring as Madame Morrible in “Wicked”. She won Tony Awards for her parts in “Nice Work If You Can Get It” and “The Phantom of the Opera.”

Kaye’s opera credits include the Santa Fe Opera’s productions of “La Boheme,” “Orpheus In The Underworld” and “The Beggars Opera,” as well as the New York City Opera’s “Brigadoon,” “Candide” and “The Pajama Game.” Kaye has appeared with the New York Festival of Song on several occasions, performed in concert with many of the world’s greatest orchestras and twice sang at the White House. She is also the voice of Kinsey Millhone for Random House Audio’s recordings of the Sue Grafton Alphabet Mysteries.

Lippa’s most recent hit song, “Evil Like Me,” appears in Disney’s “Descendants.” The track hit No. 1 on the Billboard 200 album chart, No. 1 on the iTunes and Billboard soundtrack charts, and has been viewed over 27 million times on YouTube. Lippa composed and conducted a world premiere piece for international piano virtuoso Lang Lang and the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra in Guangzhou, China. His Broadway credits include music and lyrics for “Big Fish” and “The Addams Family,” as well as music for Aaron Sorkin’s play, “The Farnsworth Invention” and the Broadway revival of “You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown.”

His recordings include Julia Murney’s CD, “I’m Not Waiting;” “The Addams Family;” “Big Fish;” “The Wild Party;” “You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown,” which earned him a Grammy Award nomination; “A Little Princess;” and “John & Jen;” and “I Am Harvey Milk.” Lippa also produced the original cast recording of “Bat Boy.”

Lippa shares an Emmy for his work on Nickelodeon’s “The Wonder Pets” and is a recipient of the Gilman/Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation Award, The Drama Desk Award and The Outer Critics Circle Award, among many others. Originally from Leeds, England, he graduated from the University of Michigan and now serves as president of The Dramatists Guild Fund.

Ollmann, a lyric baritone and veteran ATC judge, enjoys a longstanding artistic association with Leonard Bernstein, which took root in 1986 with the first Vienna performance of Bernstein's "A Quiet Place." After that, Ollmann frequently worked with Bernstein and recorded several of his stage works, including "Candide" and "West Side Story." Ollmann appeared as the soloist in the orchestral work Bernstein penned for Carnegie Hall's reopening. Even after Bernstein's 1990 death, Ollmann continued to be identified with his work and was featured in a 1992 recording of "On the Town" with Michael Tilson Thomas. Ollmann's Mercutio is preserved on disc in a recording of Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette" conducted by Leonard Slatkin.

Pianist Dan Gettinger has participated as a music director, vocal coach and pianist in many workshops, including the VOICEperience in Savannah, New York, Orlando and Tampa; the Ravinia Festival in Chicago; Lidal North International Opera Workshop in Oslo, Norway; the Manhattan School Of Music Summer Voice Festival in New York; the International Vocal Arts Institute in TelAviv, Israel, and Montreal, Canada; and the International Institute of Vocal Arts in Chiari, Italy. Gettinger has worked as a coach and principalpianist for Palm Beach Opera, Opera Tampa, Chautauqua Opera, Santa Fe Operaand Florida Grand Opera.

"We're so pleased that the pieces of the 2017 American Traditions Competition season are already falling into place so nicely. Our administrators and board members work hard to recruit the cream of the crop, going the extra mile to seek out the best judges and accompanists," ATC President, Danny Cohen, said. "Our applicants raise the bar higher each year, and we're committed to upholding the competition's stellar reputation by featuring the best names in the music business."

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For media inquiries, interviews and photography, call Lesley Francis at 912-429-3950 or Ashley Roberts at 912-220-2976 or email lesley@francis.com or ashley@lesleyfrancispr.com.

Editor's Notes- The American Traditions Competition (ATC) was established as a world renowned arts institution based in Savannah, Georgia to provide a forum for showcasing tomorrow's vocal talents and superstars; and to celebrate the diverse repertoire of standard, classic American music. Evolving from Savannah Onstage which was established in 1992 and was the forerunner of the Savannah Music

Festival, the ATC was created as a vocal competition for classic American music. In 2011, the ATC became an independent non-profit organization.