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HANDEL: MADE IN AMERICA

Mark P. Risinger



Terrance McKnight and the Voices of Harlem chorus. Photo credit: HanJie Chow.

A stage filled with instrumentalists and singers, all African American; a celebrated radio personality telling an intriguing personal tale mixed with biographical incidents from the life of Handel; and a variety of music by Handel, punctuating the narration at intervals and alternating with American songs and spirituals—these disparate elements were fused together to create a unique and inspiring performance experience at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium on February 15 and 16, 2024, entitled “Handel: Made in America.”

Presented under the aegis of the museum’s MetLiveArts series, the performance was a co-creation of the radio host Terrance McKnight, director Pat Eakin Young, and dramaturg and Handel scholar Ellen T. Harris. The “Creators’ Statement” included in the program presents the premise:

In the eighteenth century, the growth of Britain’s international trading companies . . . brought huge profits into the teeming metropolis of London, which became a mecca for domestic and foreign emigres

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TERENCE BEST (1929–2024)



Photo credit: Thomas Ziegler

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our dear friend and esteemed colleague Terence Best on January 10th of this year at the age of 94. Terence exemplified that noble British tradition of outstanding scholarship carried on outside the conventional confines of the academy. After graduating from Jesus College, Oxford, and doing military service in Korea, Terence joined the staff of Brentwood School in 1956 as a master in modern languages. There he remained, by all accounts a favorite teacher, until his retirement in 1990.

Meanwhile, he energetically pursued his musical interests, advancing from accomplished amateur harpsichordist to leading authority on Handel’s life

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