

PRESS RELEASE

For release: Immediately

Contact: Lisa Pemstein, PR Director, tel. 857-222-8262, [lpemstein@terezinmusic.org](mailto:lpemstein@terezinmusic.org)

Photos and additional details at [www.tmfgala.org](http://www.tmfgala.org)

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**Virtuoso pianist Peter Serkin, conductor Ken-David Masur, and members of BSO perform at Terezín Music Foundation Gala, October 19 at Boston’s Symphony Hall**

**Survivors join Boston Children’s Chorus to sing music of resistance they performed in Terezín concentration camp**

**“Monuments Man” Harry Ettlinger receives the Terezín Legacy Award**

**Concert program features two Terezín Music Foundation Commissions**

BOSTON – The October 19, 2014 Symphony Hall Gala Concert of the Terezín Music Foundation (TMF) will feature internationally celebrated musicians to mark the seventieth anniversary of the production of the Nazi propaganda film *The Fuhrer Gives the Jews a City*, performed in Terezín by imprisoned artists and children who were soon after murdered at Auschwitz. Under the baton of Boston Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor **Ken-David Masur**, **members of the BSO** will perform **Pavel Haas’** *Study for String Orchestra*, composed in Terezín. Survivors **Ela Weissberger** and **Michael Gruenbaum**, who performed in the original 1944 Terezín production of Hans Krasa’s *Brundibar*—a children’s opera with a message of resistance against the Nazis—will join the **Boston Children’s Chorus** to perform the opera’s finale. Distinguished American virtuoso pianist **Peter Serkin** will perform from his extensive repertoire. The Boston Children’s Chorus will also perform TMF Commissions by Boston-area composers **Thomas Oboe Lee** and **Stephen Feigenbaum**.

Following the 4:00 p.m. concert will be a 6:00 p.m. private benefactors’ dinner with the artists, where original **“Monuments Man” Harry Ettlinger** will receive the Terezín Legacy Award, a sculpture by luminary glass artist **Stephen I. Weinberg**.



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The October 19 Gala is the annual fundraiser for the Terezín Music Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to honoring the legacy of the Terezín artists with new commissions, concert events, and programs in Holocaust education. TMF Commissions are an enduring memorial to the artists lost in the Holocaust and a voice of resistance and hope in contemporary times.

**“TEREZÍN 1944—SYMPHONY HALL 2014: THE MUSIC ENDURES.”**

“Shortly after the Nazis showed children singing *Brundibar* in *The Fuhrer Gives the Jews a City*—the notorious 1944 propaganda film that hid their crimes from the world—they sent nearly all the participants to their deaths at Auschwitz,” explains TMF Executive Director Mark Ludwig. “And so it is immensely powerful, seventy years later, to have Ela Weissberger and Michael Gruenbaum—two of three child performers who survived—join the vibrant, young voices of the Boston Children’s Chorus to sing out *Brundibar’s* words of resistance: ‘We won a victory over the tyrant mean . . . since we were not fearful, since we were not tearful, because we marched along singing our happy song.’ The music and its spirit endure.”

**BACKGROUND ON PIANIST PETER SERKIN**

Recognized as an artist of passion and integrity, the distinguished American pianist Peter Serkin is one of the most thoughtful and individualistic musicians appearing before the public today.

Throughout his career he has successfully conveyed the essence of five centuries of repertoire and his performances with symphony orchestras, recital appearances, chamber music collaborations and recordings are respected worldwide. Mr. Serkin’s musical heritage reaches back to his grandfather, violinist and composer Adolf Busch, and his father, pianist Rudolf Serkin. His stellar career began at the age of twelve with performances with the Philadelphia and Orchestras and has continued with the world’s major symphony orchestras under the baton of Seiji Ozawa, Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim, James Levine, and many others. A dedicated chamber musician, Mr. Serkin has collaborated with Alexander Schneider, Pamela Frank, Yo-Yo Ma, the world’s top string quartets, and TASHI, of which he was a founding member.



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Mr. Serkin is an avid proponent of the music of many of the 20th and 21st century’s most important composers and has performed many premieres written for him. His Grammy nominations include recording of the six Mozart concerti with Alexander Schneider and the English Chamber Orchestra, and Olivier Messiaen's “Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus” and “Quartet for the End of Time” on BMG, plus solo recording of works by Stravinsky, Wolpe and Lieberson for New World Records. Mr. Serkin teaches at Bard College Conservatory and the Longy School. He lives in Massachusetts with his wife, Regina, and is the father of five children.

**BACKGROUND ON CONDUCTOR KEN-DAVID MASUR**

In May 2014, Ken-David Masur was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and he begins with the 2014-15 term. He made his BSO conducting debut in 2012, sharing the podium with his father, Kurt Masur. As a conductor and Grammy-nominated producer, Ken-David Masur has been hailed as “a brilliant and commanding conductor with unmistakable charisma” [*Leipzig Volkszeitung*]. His recent engagements include the BSO; Dresden Philharmonic; Russian National Philharmonic; Israel Philharmonic; Orchestre National de Toulouse; Hiroshima Symphony; Japan Philharmonic; and the San Diego, Memphis and Portland Symphony Orchestras. He currently serves as Principal Guest conductor of the Munich Symphony as well as Associate Conductor of the San Diego Symphony.

**BACKGROUND ON “MONUMENTS MAN” HARRY ETTLINGER**

Harry Ettlinger is one of the nine surviving members of the Monuments Men, a group of men and women from thirteen allied nations who worked to recover treasures stolen by Hitler and have become better known via the 2014 George Clooney film, *The Monuments Men*. He will receive the 2014 Terezín Legacy Award at the private Benefactors’ Dinner with the Artists.

Mr. Ettlinger was born in Karlsruhe, Germany, in January 1926. In 1938, he and his family fled Germany and settled in Newark, New Jersey. Six years later, Harry was drafted by the Army and returned to Europe as an infantryman in the 99th Division. Because he was fluent in German, he was re-designated as an interpreter. While awaiting assignment in Munich, Harry volunteered his services to work with the MFA&A section, aka “The Monuments Men.” He had a hand in



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combing through 40,000 cases of cultural objects hidden in the Heilbronn mines and in recovering Rembrandt’s original self-portraits, and, in Baden-Baden, he found his own

grandfather’s treasured art collection. “For the first time in history, (the U.S.) adopted a policy of ‘to the victors do not belong the spoils of war,’” he says. “The fact that we adopted that policy made me very proud to be an American.”

**BACKGROUND ON SURVIVORS ELA WEISSBERGER and MICHAEL GRUENBAUM**

Ela Stein Weissberger and Michael Gruenbaum were child performers in Hans Krasa’s Terezín children’s opera, *Brundibar*. At our Gala concert, they will join the [Boston Children's Chorus](http://weebly-link/356134737223529548) to

perform the opera’s finale. Of the 15,000 children who passed through Terezín only 100 survived; these two survivors were among them.

**Ela Stein Weissberger** arrived at Terezin in February 1942 at the age of eleven with her mother, sister, and grandmother, and she sang the role of the Cat in all fifty-five Terezín performances of *Brundibar*. “When we sang, we forgot where we were. We forgot hunger, we forgot all the troubles that we had to go through,” Mrs. Weissberger says. “When we sang *Brundibar*, we didn’t have to wear the Jewish star on our clothing. The Nazis didn’t realize that the Victory Song at the opera’s end had a double meaning. In our eyes, Brundibar was Hitler. . . . We wanted a victory over a terrible man.”

**Michael Gruenbaum** was born in Prague in 1930 to a family of deeply religious Jews. In 1941, his father was arrested by the Nazis and tortured in a Prague prison; he died in Terezín’s fortress. A year later, Michael, his sister, and their mother were sent to Terezín, where they remained until the end of the war. Michael’s mother several times managed to get them excused from transports to “the east” (Auschwitz), the last time in October 1944, when the Nazis needed her to make teddy bears for their children for Christmas.



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**BACKGROUND ON THE TEREZÍN MUSIC FOUNDATION**

TMF Commissions are quickly established in the chamber music repertoire and form a living memorial to the musicians held in the Terezín Concentration Camp and to all voices silenced in the Nazi Holocaust. Commissions also enable TMF to fulfill the Terezín artists’ unrealized roles as composers, performers, and mentors. These works are premiered by artists of the highest caliber, including Garrick Ohlsson, Leon Fleisher, Simone Dinnerstein, Alisa Weilerstein, Sir Simon Rattle, and other major artists who have headlined TMF’s annual Gala benefit in recent years. TMF performs its Commissions (by André Previn, Nico Muhly, Miroslav Srnka, Clint Needham, David Post, Thomas Oboe Lee, Stephen Feigenbaum, and others), alongside music rescued from the Nazi camps, in venues ranging from the world’s great concert halls to schools in the U.S. and Europe.

THE 2014 TEREZÍN MUSIC FOUNDATION GALA is Sunday October 19 at Boston’s Symphony Hall and includes a 3:00 p.m. reception, 4:00 p.m. concert, and 6:00 p.m. private benefactors’ dinner and award ceremony with the artists. Tickets are tax-deductible and support Terezín Music Foundation; they are available at www.tmfgala.org and by phone at 857-222-8263.

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