



Photo by Jeff Roffman

Murry Sidlin, creator and conductor

Murry Sidlin, a conductor with a unique gift for engaging audiences, continues a diverse and distinctive musical career. He is the president and creative director of The Defiant Requiem Foundation, an organization that sponsors live concert performances of *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín* and *Hours of Freedom: The Story of the Terezín Composer*; as well as other projects including the documentary film, *Defiant Requiem*; a new docudrama called *Mass Appeal, 1943*, which was premiered in June 2017; and The Rafael Schächter Institute for Arts and Humanities at Terezín. In addition, he lectures extensively on the arts and humanities as practiced by the prisoners in the Theresienstadt (Terezín) Concentration Camp.

Mr. Sidlin began his career as assistant conductor of the Baltimore Symphony under Sergiu Comissiona and then was appointed resident conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra by Antal Doráti. He has served as music director of the New Haven and Long Beach (California) Symphonies, the Tulsa Philharmonic, and the Connecticut Ballet. For eight years he was resident conductor of the Oregon Symphony and, from 2002 to 2010, he served as Dean of the School of Music at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Murry Sidlin was principal guest conductor of the Gävleborgs Symfoniorkester in Sweden and was artistic director of the Cascade Festival of Music

in Bend, Oregon for twelve summers. He has conducted more than 300 concerts with the San Diego Symphony, and, on December 31, 2011, conducted his 18th consecutive New Year's Eve Gala at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC with the National Symphony Orchestra. The summer of 2011 marked Mr. Sidlin's 33rd year as resident artist/teacher and associate director of conducting studies at the Aspen Music Festival where, with conductor David Zinman, he developed the American Academy of Conducting.

Murry Sidlin has also appeared as guest conductor around the world. In the U.S. he has conducted the Atlanta, New Mexico, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Seattle, and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras; the Colorado, Honolulu, Houston, San Antonio, San Francisco, and Utah Symphonies; the Florida and Minnesota Orchestras; the Chicago Philharmonic; and the Boston Pops. In Canada he has led orchestras in Edmonton, Quebec, Vancouver, and Victoria. Foreign orchestras Murry Sidlin has worked with include the Czech National, Iceland, Jerusalem, Lithuanian National, MAV (Budapest), and Spanish Radio and Television (Madrid) Symphony Orchestras; the George Enescu Philharmonic; the Hungarian State Opera Orchestra; I Solisti Veneti; the Konzerthaus Orchester Berlin; the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra; the Orquestra Gulbenkian (Lisbon); and the Orchester Wiener Akademie, among many others.

While with the Oregon Symphony, Murry Sidlin created the nationally recognized *Nerve Endings* series. This series featured innovative concerts designed to attract and engage new audiences and expand the traditional role of the symphony orchestra. Each program was designed, written, and conducted by Mr. Sidlin. *Nerve Endings* attracted hundreds of new subscribers each season. Among the most popular of the more than 25 creative programs were: *Sigmund Freud and the Dreams of Gustav Mahler*, *From Lenny to Maestro*, *The Anatomy of the 9th*, *Aaron Copland's America*, *Russian David/Soviet Goliath (Shostakovich vs. Stalin)*, *Shadows and Voices: The Last Days of Tchaikovsky*, and *Do the Tango and Get Arrested*.

In April of 2002 Murry Sidlin presented the first performances of *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín* in Portland, Oregon. Since the premiere, he has led nearly fifty performances. On three occasions – in May 2006, May 2009, and June 2009 – Mr. Sidlin has led performances in the Czech town of Terezín, the site of the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. The June 2009 performance served as the conclusion to the multi-national Holocaust Era Assets conference attended by nearly 600 delegates from 47 nations and hosted by the Czech government and the Forum 2000 Foundation. On May 9, 2010, *Defiant Requiem* was presented to an audience of 5,000 people in Budapest, Hungary and broadcast live on Duna Television throughout Eastern Europe. *Defiant Requiem* was performed in Jerusalem on May 31, 2012, with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and Kühn Choir of Prague, by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus on October 11, 2012, and at the Konzerthaus Berlin on March 4, 2014. Performances have also been given at Avery Fisher Hall in New York City, Symphony Center in Chicago, and Boston Symphony Hall, among many others. On December 3, 2017, a new version of *Defiant Requiem* – for chorus, soloists, single piano, and violin – was premiered at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Sidlin's newest concert-drama, *Hours of Freedom: The Story of the Terezín Composer*, was premiered at the Municipal Riding School in Terezín on May 17, 2015. *Hours of Freedom* received its New York City premiere on May 5, 2016, and its Jerusalem premiere on June 2, 2016, as part of the Israel Festival. Showcasing music by fifteen composers imprisoned in the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp (Terezín) during World War II, this program highlights compositions by Viktor Ullmann, Gideon Klein, Zikmund Schul, Pavel Haas, Rudolf Karel, and ten others. Aware that their lives were fragile, and that deportations to the east were a constant reality, *Hours of Freedom* explores the need to create new music as affirmation of a future.

In 1987, Murry Sidlin collaborated with the celebrated American composer Aaron Copland to orchestrate a new chamber ensemble version of Copland's full-length opera *The Tender Land*. Later, he created a suite from the opera to serve as a companion work to Copland's chamber version of *Appalachian Spring*. Mr. Sidlin has performed the chamber ensemble version of *The Tender Land* over 200 times and has also recorded both the full-length opera and the suite for KOCH International. For the same label, he recorded Piazzolla's tango opera *Maria de Buenos Aires* with the Third Angle New Music Ensemble.

Murry Sidlin studied with the legendary pedagogues Leon Barzin and Sergiu Celibidache. He was appointed by Presidents Ford and Carter to serve on the White House Commission of Presidential Scholars. He won national acclaim for the television series *Music Is...*, a ten-part series about music for children that was seen on PBS for five years. In 1997, the National Association of Independent Schools of Music recognized Mr. Sidlin as Educator of the Year. He has been featured on NBC's Today Show, ABC's Good Morning America, and CBS Sunday Morning. Most recently he was asked to appear on CNN International to speak about *Defiant Requiem*. In May of 2011 Mr. Sidlin received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from his alma mater the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. The award honors alumni who have typified the Johns Hopkins tradition of excellence and brought credit to the University by their personal accomplishments, professional achievement, and humanitarian service. In September of 2011, the Archbishop of Prague presented him with the medal of St. Agnes of Bohemia for his dedication to illuminating the legacy of Terezín. In January 2013, Mr. Sidlin was nominated to the International Board of Governors of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. Murry Sidlin received the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Medal of Valor on June 11, 2013, for his extraordinary efforts to keep alive the memory of Rafael Schächter.

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To view The Defiant Requiem Foundation press kit, which includes high-resolution photos, graphics and information about the Foundation, visit www.defiantrequiem.org.