

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **ALTAMURA/CARUSO INTERNATIONAL VOICE COMPETITION FINALS TO HONOR VERDI**

**Union City, New Jersey. September 18.** Inter-Cities Performing Arts, Inc. will present the 13<sup>th</sup> Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition on October 3, 4 and 6 at Christ and St. Stephen's Church in Manhattan, giving a special nod to Giuseppe Verdi on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composer's birth. Contestants will compete for \$25,000 in cash grants and performance opportunities.

Preliminary auditions for participants from 10 countries will begin on Thursday, Oct. 3 at 10 a.m. and continue through Friday, October 4.

Soprano and competition founder, Carmela Altamura, said, "Every participant must prepare five arias. This year we thought it especially appropriate that at least one aria by Verdi be among them."

On Sunday, October 6 at 12:30 p.m., prior to the competition finals, a special commemorative ceremony honoring the famous and innovative composer will take place at Verdi Square on W. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street.

There singers from the Verdi Square Festival of the Arts will join with Altamura Competition participants in presenting arias and choruses from Verdi operas. Dignitaries and others representing the Italian and Italian American community will participate. At the conclusion, musicians will perform the well-known chorus, "Va, pensiero," from *Nabucco*, proceeding down Broadway, much in the manner of Verdi's own 1901 funeral procession, to the church where a special Verdi commemorative concert will take place before the competition winners' performances.

Documentarian, Vincent Ruiz, will film the proceedings.

Two decades earlier, the Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition established a precedent by abolishing age limits. Other major international voice competitions soon followed suit, affording opportunities to those whose voices mature later. Ms. Altamura said, "We understood that roles in operas by Verdi, Wagner, Richard Strauss and others require more vocal stamina and psychological maturity, and this takes longer to develop."

This year's Altamura Competition will be held under the auspices of the Consul General of Italy, Natalia Quintavalle, and the Italian Cultural Institute director, Riccardo Viale. The Agnes Varis

Foundation will present the 1st prize, Leonard and Carmela Altamura, the competition founders, the 2nd prize, and the Colombians of New Jersey the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.

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### **Schedule of Events**

Thursday and Friday, October 3, 4, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan, competition preliminaries

Sunday, October 6, 12:30 p.m., Verdi Square, W. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street between Amsterdam and Broadway, Verdi commemoration and procession

Sunday, October 6, 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.), Christ and St. Stephen's Church, Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition winners' concert and Verdi celebration

Admission: \$35, gen; \$25, seniors; \$15, students (under 18)

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