



Newburyport Choral Society

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Newburyport Choral Society Performs Honegger's "King David" with orchestra and chorus and featuring best-selling author Anita Diamant as Narrator

NEWBURYPORT, MA – The Newburyport Choral Society, under the direction of Gerald Weale, will hold its Spring Concert Series on May 14 and 15, 2011, performing Arthur Honegger's *KING DAVID*, with professional soloists and orchestra and a chorus of 100 voices.

Special guest Anita Diamant -- best-selling author of *The Red Tent* -- will take on the unusual role of Narrator in this symphonic oratorio of the biblical story of King David - from his early years as a shepherd to his triumph over Goliath and Saul and finally to his death.

It is a "first" for the Choral Society to offer such a highly theatrical production. The music is dramatic, full of contrast and great excitement, with an orchestra of mostly wind and percussion instruments providing vibrant color for this ancient story.

King David is a rarely performed choral masterpiece. Honegger's interpretation of King David is ecumenical and as relevant today as when Honegger wrote it during the aftermath and turmoil of World War I. It is theatrical: Ms. Diamant's reading of the narration links all of the solo arias, other spoken parts and choruses.

Ms. Diamant said she was drawn to this project because it was "a unique opportunity to be part of a musical/spoken word piece that is rarely performed. And King David is such a complicated biblical character – a poet more than a paragon. I love the challenge and feel honored by the opportunity."

A short lecture about King David by Ms. Diamant will be held before each concert in the Chapel in the meeting hall adjacent to Belleville Congregational Church on High Street in Newburyport . Lecture times are 7 p.m. for the Saturday May 14th concert, which begins at 8 p.m., and Sunday May 15th at 1:30 before the concert, which begins at 2:30 p.m. She will be available for book signings at a reception following each concert.

Ms. Diamant's first work of fiction, *The Red Tent*, published in 1997, won the 2001 Booksense Book of the Year Award. Based on the biblical story of Dinah, *The Red Tent* became a word-of-mouth bestseller in the U.S. and overseas, where it has been published in 25 countries. A Boston-area resident, she has published three other novels: *Good Harbor* and *The Last Days of Dogtown*, which are set on Boston's North Shore, and most recently, *Day after Night*.

This year is the four hundredth anniversary of the King James translation of the Bible. In the course of *King David* there are several settings of Psalms from the Bible, so it seems particularly appropriate for the Choral Society to present this choral masterpiece based on the familiar words that come to us via the King James version.

CONCERT INFORMATION

Saturday, May 14 at 8:00 p.m. & Sunday, May 15 at 2:30 p.m.

Belleville Congregational Church, 300 High St., Newburyport, MA

Adult tickets \$20, Students & Seniors \$18 & Parties of 12 or more \$15

***For more information go to the NCS Web site www.newburyportchoralsociety.org
phone 978-462-0650***

The Newburyport Choral Society is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to excellence in performance and to bringing outstanding choral music to the North Shore of Boston. In two concert series each year, NCS presents choral masterpieces accompanied by well-known soloists and full, professional orchestras. The Society performs music from the Renaissance to the 21st century including commissioning world premiere works.

[Formally established in 1934](#), Newburyport Choral Society continues a choral tradition dating back to 1848 when the first community chorus was formed in Newburyport. It is now the largest volunteer arts organization on the North Shore. NCS attracts more than 100 volunteer members each year from nearly 40 communities in eastern Massachusetts and southeastern New Hampshire, and members range in age from teens to 90s.