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MHC, School of Performing Arts Welcome Murry Sidlin for “Defiant Requiem” Residency

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Defiant Requiem

w/ special guest Murry Sidlin and performance by the Silver Duo

March 29 at 7:30 pm ▶ film screening
 March 30 at 3:00 pm ▶ lecture and performance

Minsky Recital Hall ▶ free and open to the public

Conductor **Murry Sidlin** is the president and creative director of The Defiant Requiem Foundation, an organization that sponsors live concert performances of *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezin* and *Hours of Freedom: The Story of the Terezin Composer*. He lectures extensively on the arts and humanities as practiced by the prisoners in the Theresienstadt (Terezin) Concentration Camp.

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MHC, School of Performing Arts welcome Murry Sidlin for "Defiant Requiem" Residency

March 28, 2023 | [Uncategorized](#)

On March 29-30, the McGillicuddy Humanities Center and the UMaine School of Performing Arts will welcome acclaimed conductor and educator Murry Sidlin for a two-day mini residency at the University of Maine. As part of his visit, Sidlin will present a viewing of the documentary film "Defiant Requiem" and will give a talk about the historical events on which the film is based.

At 7:30 pm on Wednesday, March 29 in Minsky Recital Hall, Sidlin will screen "Defiant Requiem," a feature-length documentary film which highlights the most dramatic example of intellectual and artistic courage in the Theresienstadt (Terezin) Concentration Camp during World War II: the remarkable story of Rafael Schächter, a brilliant, young Czech conductor who was arrested and sent to Terezin in 1941. The film explores Schächter's moral leadership under the most brutal circumstances and his determination to sustain

courage and hope for his fellow prisoners by enriching their souls through music. "Defiant Requiem" will also be available to stream at <https://vimeo.com/527542598> (password: UMAINE) from Sunday, March 26 through Sunday, April 2 for those who are unable to attend this screening in-person.

On Thursday, March 30 at 3:00 pm, also in Minsky Recital Hall, Sidlin will give a lecture about the events on which the film is based: an infamous performance of Verdi's Requiem by prisoners before high-ranking Nazi officers from Berlin and the International Red Cross to support the charade that the Camp prisoners were flourishing. Sidlin's lecture will include a performance from the Requiem by the Silver Duo, UMaine School of Performing Arts faculty Phillip and Noreen Silver.

As part of Sidlin's visit, on March 29 at 3:00 pm in the Foster Center, Libra Assistant Professor of English and theatre Rosalie Purvis will also direct a table reading of the docudrama Mass Appeal, 1943, written by Sidlin, which tells the dramatic story of prisoner and conductor Rafael Schächter arguing before the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp's Council of Jewish Elders his justification to perform the Verdi Requiem with a prisoner choir. The play forcefully presents the moral and ethical arguments, both pro and con, for a performance of the Requiem; and ultimately asks the question, why would Jewish prisoners in a Concentration Camp under brutal Nazi control sing a Catholic Mass?

Murry Sidlin, a conductor with a unique gift for engaging audiences, 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,." In addition, he lectures extensively on the arts and humanities as practiced by the prisoners in the Theresienstadt (Terezín) Concentration Camp. Sidlin began his career as assistant conductor of the Baltimore Symphony and then was appointed resident conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra. 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.

These events, which are part of the McGillicuddy Humanities Center's 2022-23 annual symposium on "Recovery, Rediscovery, and Resilience," are free and open to the public.

For more information, or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact the McGillicuddy Humanities Center at mhc@maine.edu.

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