

The Washington Post

[Back to previous page](#)

Alexandria Symphony and joint chorus produce a powerful Verdi Requiem

By — **Cecelia H. Porter**, Sunday, March 13, 6:59 PM

The Dies Irae of Verdi's monumental Requiem conjures up the same terrifying images of fire and brimstone that inform Michelangelo's and Hieronymus Bosch's Last Judgment paintings, while the Sanctus evokes the grieving submission pervading Michelangelo's Vatican Pieta. It was just this force of human emotions — terror pitted against hope for redemption — that conductor Kim Allen Kluge drew from his 250-member chorus and the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra at the Schlesinger Concert Hall on Saturday (repeated Sunday). Kluge captured Verdi's truly operatic verismo, the profound sense of realism confronting human passion that soon popped up more obviously in Puccini's and Mascagni's operas.

Amazingly, the mammoth chorus opened Verdi's mass with only a whisper. Soprano Jan Cornelius, mezzo Stacey Rishoi, tenor Scott Six and bass Gustav Andreassen joined in for a bracing fugal Kyrie, followed by Andreassen powerfully intoning a chantlike chain of repeated notes. Throughout the Dies Irae, Kluge summoned a razor-sharp choral sound and precise diction to vent Verdi's setting of unrelieved horror and wrath, punctuated by clarion trumpets on the hall's balconies. Rishoi has a radiant contralto depth to her mezzo that fared well in solos but overshadowed Cornelius in Verdi's ensembles. Six's initial warmth and energy dimmed in falsetto. Andreassen proved vibrant even in his lowest notes.

An impossibly long intermission disrupted the impact of the overwhelming work, perhaps explaining the tired sound of the double-chorus fugue in the Sanctus and the flawed intonation that sometimes plagued the later ensembles. Kluge drew splendid playing from the orchestra (for example, with the mourning bassoons). The chorus combined the singers of the Alexandria Choral Society, the Metropolitan Chorus, the Heritage Signature Chorale and the NOVA Community Chorus.

— **Cecelia H. Porter**

A rectangular advertisement for Capgemini. The top half is white with the Capgemini logo (a blue stylized 'C' shape) and the text 'Capgemini' in blue, with 'CONSULTING. TECHNOLOGY. OUTSOURCING' in smaller blue text below it. Below the logo is the slogan 'People matter, results count.' in blue. The bottom half of the advertisement is a solid blue rectangle containing the text '> CLICK HERE TO VISIT' in white, followed by the URL 'us.capgemini.com/EXPERTS' in white.

Sponsored Links

SHOCKING: Apple iPad for \$24.87

TODAY ONLY: Auction site to give away 1,000 iPads for \$24.87!
NewsToday9.com

"Strange Fruit Burns Fat"

Study: Burns 12.3 Pounds of Fat Every 28 Days. Can It Work for You?
www.Post-Sentinel.com

Mom Is 55, Looks 35...

Her clever \$5 wrinkle therapy angers Botox Doctors. We reveal how...
consumer2news.com/no-wrinkle

[Buy a link here](#)

© 2011 The Washington Post Company