



**Purchase College**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

## **The Performing Arts Center**

735 Anderson Hill Road • Purchase, New York 10577

Administration 914.251.6222 • Ticket Office 914.251.6200 • Fax 914.251.6171

[www.artscenter.org](http://www.artscenter.org)

---

### **Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Carol Luiken, Press and Community Relations Director  
The Performing Arts Center, 914.251.6166**

### **DENYCE GRAVES OPENS NEW 2008-09 SEASON WITH CONCERT AND GALA BENEFIT**

**PURCHASE** — **Denyce Graves**, the mezzo soprano whom *The Washington Post* called “almost too good to be true,” ushers in the new 2008-09 season at **The Performing Arts Center, Purchase College** with a concert and gala celebration on Saturday evening, Sept. 27. She will be accompanied by pianist **Brian Zeger**.

The performance by Graves and Zeger is the highlight of a grand Opening Night celebration that includes cocktails, dinner, dancing and prime seating at the concert. Proceeds from the evening benefit The Performing Arts Center Foundation, a separately incorporated, non-profit organization whose mission it is to support the continued excellence of The Center’s programs and to raise funds to ensure their availability to the broadest community.

Tickets to the 8 p.m. concert are \$72.50, \$62.50, \$52.50 and \$42.50 (includes parking), and are available at The Center's Ticket Office (914-251-6200). Specially priced Opening Night tickets are \$600, which are partially tax-deductible and may be purchased by calling 914-251-6188.

Denyce Graves is hailed for a diverse repertoire that includes classical German *Lieder*, French *mélodie* and English art song, as well as the popular music of Broadway musicals, crossover, jazz and American spirituals. *USA Today* identified her as "one of the singers most likely to be an operatic superstar of the 21st Century."

Graves has become well known to operatic audiences for her portrayals of the title roles in *Carmen* and *Samson et Dalila*. These signature roles have brought her to the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Royal Opera – Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Lyric Opera of Chicago and other major global venues. In 2005 she created the title role in Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner* in the world premiere performances at Michigan Opera Theatre, and repeated the role in productions at the Cincinnati Opera and the Opera Company of Philadelphia. Of this role, which was written for her, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* wrote, "As Margaret, Graves' journey was a tour de force ... her performance was riveting ... culminating in a scene beyond powerful," and the *Cincinnati Post* proclaimed, "her voice was dusky gold in the basement, silvery at the top, but above all, she is a singing actress."

Graves appears regularly on radio and television as a musical performer, celebrity guest and as the subject of documentaries and other special programming. Her weekly show on XM Radio is titled "Voce di donna."

In addition to an array of awards for acting and singing, Graves was named one of the "50 Leaders of Tomorrow" by *Ebony Magazine* and was one of *Glamour Magazine's* 1997 "Women of the Year." In 1999 WQXR radio in New York named her as one of classical music's "Standard Bearers for the 21st Century."

**Brian Zeger** has built an important career not only as a pianist, but also as an ensemble performer par excellence. In addition to performing chamber music and as a soloist, he is the frequent recital partner to leading vocal artists including Deborah Voigt and Susan Graham. He is also the Artistic Director of the Department of Vocal Arts at The Julliard School.

The Opening Night performance by Graves and Zeger is one of some 70 events comprising the 2008-09 season of The Performing Arts Center. The Center's multi-theatre complex will feature a wide variety of world-class artists in music, dance, theatre and film.

For more information about season events, log onto The Center's website at [www.artscenter.org](http://www.artscenter.org).

The Center's 31<sup>st</sup> season is made possible, in part, by the Basic Program Support Grant of the Westchester Arts Council with funds from Westchester County Government.

Purchase College is located in Westchester County, minutes from the Connecticut border. The college, part of the State University of New York system, is a major institution of public higher education encompassing the liberal arts and sciences, professional training in the performing and visual arts, and continuing education. The college campus is home to The Performing Arts Center and The Neuberger Museum of Art, which strive to present models of excellence for both the college and its surrounding community.

#