



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 14, 2023  
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Alexandria, VA – The Alexandria Choral Society (ACS) is pleased to announce our new leadership as we enter our 54th season! Please help us welcome the appointment of Kathryn Harsha as Interim Artistic Director, Andre Leonard as Collaborative Pianist, and Megan Yingst as Executive Director.



Mrs. Harsha brings a strong musical pedigree to ACS. For the last four seasons, Kathryn served the Peabody Children’s Chorus in various capacities, beginning as Assistant Director and Accompanist, and later adding on the role of Chorus Manager. Prior to her work at Peabody, she was on the faculty at the Opus Community Music School, and served as Executive Director for five years, overseeing a significant transformation of the organization and expansion of musical opportunities for all ages.

"We are absolutely thrilled to have Kathryn lead our chorus into its fifty-fourth season," says President Michael Bianco. "We look forward to sharing the beautiful music we will make under her deft guidance."

Kathryn has conducted choruses and orchestras across the United States and performed in France, Italy, Austria, and Germany, recently conducting in Severance Hall and at the Kennedy Center. She holds a Master of Music in Conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music and a Bachelor of Arts in Piano Performance from Bluffton University. She currently conducts ensembles for Encore Creativity in Silver Spring, Rockville, and Annapolis, and is honored to be serving ACS as Interim Artistic Director for its 54th season.

Mr. Leonard, a Steinway Artist, is a dynamic and accomplished pianist, conductor and music director. In 2022, Andre was honored to win the Gold Medal at the Boston International Piano Competition and Gold medal recipient of the Aloha international piano competition 2017, cementing his reputation as one of the foremost pianists of his generation.

In addition to Andre’s performance achievements, he also had the privilege of serving as Music Director for the installation of the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune statue in the U.S. Capitol, as well as an Artist in Residence at the Kennedy Center and the Kettering Legacy Center.





Mrs. Yingst, a passionate leader and music educator, is excited to serve as Executive Director. She is the founder of *Megan's Marvelous Music* where she offers in-home voice, piano, and guitar lessons to students of all ages in the Northern Virginia area. Before relocating to Alexandria, Megan served five years as a Chorus Director in title one communities in Baltimore County, Maryland and Mulberry, Florida. Under her direction, her students achieved unprecedented results such as receiving superior ratings at district festivals and performing at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. As a leader in music education, Megan served as the Children's Choir Coordinator at First Presbyterian Church of Lakeland, the District 12 Coordinator-Elect for the Florida Vocal Association, and Coordinator of Polk All County Chorus.

Megan has a lifelong passion for music education advocacy beginning as early as high school, where she founded her own choir at a middle school where the chorus program was eliminated. She has represented the Florida Music Education Association (FMEA) from 2016-2018 at the National Association for Music Education's annual Collegiate Advocacy Day Summit where she met with state representatives to discuss and promote legislation that supports music education for all students. Megan holds her bachelors degree in Vocal Music Education from Florida Southern College.

*About Alexandria Choral Society:*

For half a century, Alexandria Choral Society has enriched the Alexandria community with a broad spectrum of choral works, from the Renaissance to modern American composers, from small chamber pieces to major works for chorus and orchestra, and from a great variety of musical cultures. Since its founding in 1970, ACS has delighted audiences year in and year out. We are excited to welcome Interim Artistic Director Kathryn Harsha this season. Under the leadership of our Director Emeritus Brian Fontaine-Isaac, who served as Artistic Director from 2017-2023, ACS premiered new works by Christopher Hoh, Jonathan Kolm, Lori Laitman, Tawnie Olson and Melissa Dunphy. With thoughtful programming, ACS is expanding the choral repertoire in the city of Alexandria and greater Washington region.

For more information visit [alexandriachoralsociety.org](http://alexandriachoralsociety.org). Follow ACS on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

*Our season is supported in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Ross Roberts Fund for the Arts at the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia.*

