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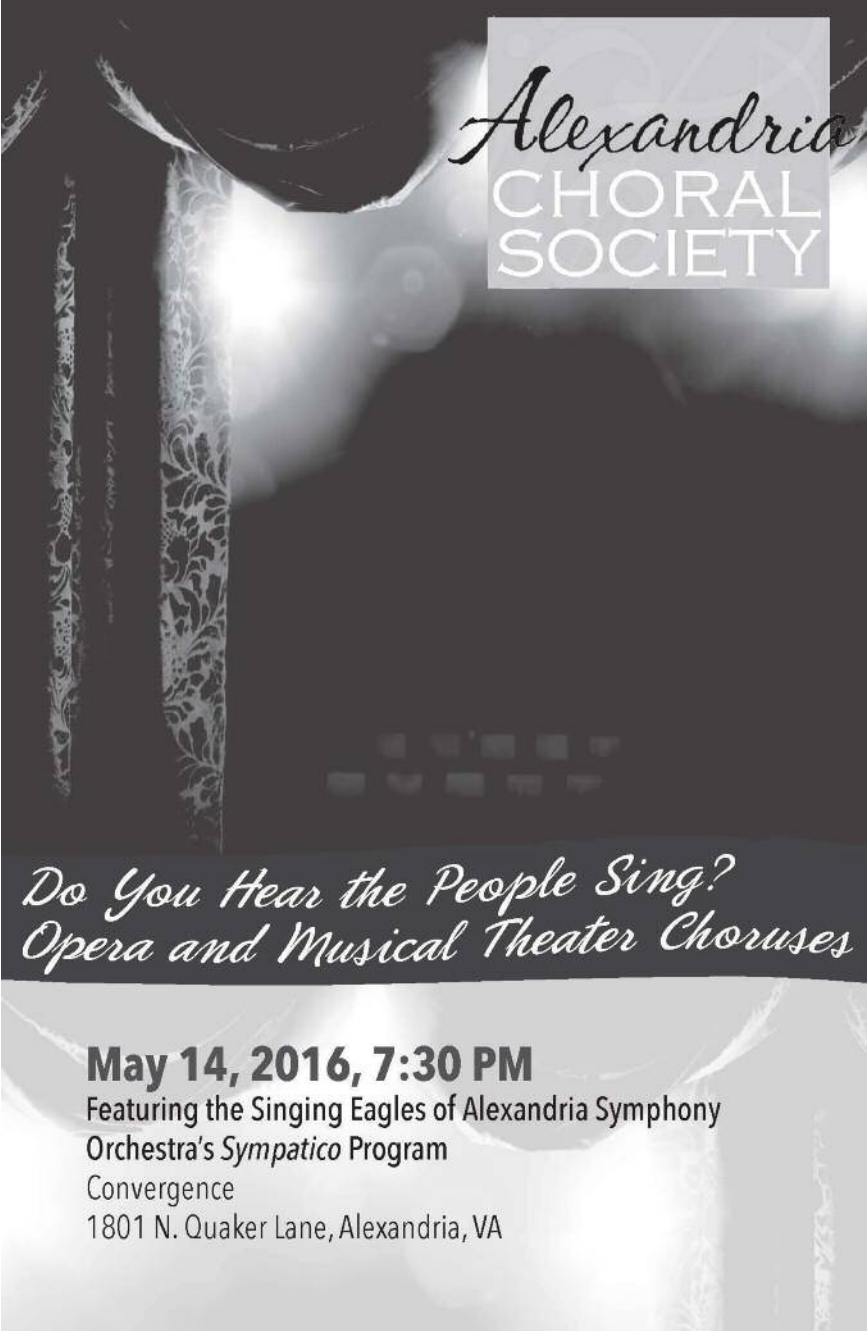
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Soldiers' Chorus  
from *Il trovatore* Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Humming Chorus  
from *Madama Butterfly* Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Masquerade  
from *Phantom of the Opera* Andrew Lloyd Webber, arr. by Ed Lojeski  
Sara Alipanah, Kristina Meacham,  
Jeff Simmons, and Tim Slattery, *soloists*

Chorus of Scottish refugees  
from *Macbeth* Verdi

Chorus of peasant girls  
from *Eugen Onegin* Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Sunday  
from *Sunday in the Park with George* Stephen Sondheim

The Ballad of Sweeney Todd  
from *Sweeney Todd* Sondheim

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**TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS  
OF OPERA CHORUSES**

**BRIDAL CHORUS**

Richard Wagner

Treulich geführt ziehet dahin,  
*Faithfully guided, draw near*  
wo euch der Segen der Liebe bewahr!  
*to where the blessing of love shall preserve you!*  
Siegreicher Mut, Minnegewinn  
*Triumphant courage, the reward of love,*  
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten Paar.  
*joins you in faith as the happiest of couples!*  
Streiter der Tugend, schreite voran!  
*Champion of virtue, proceed!*  
Zierde der Jugend, schreite voran!  
*Jewel of youth, proceed!*  
Rauschen des Festes seid nun entronnen,  
*Flee now the splendour of the wedding feast,*  
Wonne des Herzens sei euch gewonnen!  
*may the delights of the heart be yours!*  
Duftender Raum, zur Liebe geschmückt,  
*This sweet-smelling room, decked for love,*  
nehm' euch nun auf, dem Glanze entrückt.  
*now takes you in, away from the splendour.*  
Treulich geführt ziehet nun ein,  
*Faithfully guided, draw now near*  
wo euch der Segen der Liebe bewahr!  
*to where the blessing of love shall preserve you!*  
Siegreicher Mut, Minne so rein  
*Triumphant courage, love so pure,*  
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten Paar.  
*joins you in faith as the happiest of couples.*  
Wie Gott euch selig weihte,  
*As God blessed you in happiness,*  
zu Freude weihn euch wir.  
*so do we bless you in joy.*  
In Liebesglücks Geleite  
*Watched over by love's happiness,*  
denkt lang' der Stunde hier!  
*may you long remember this hour!*



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Treulich bewacht bleibet zurück,  
*Faithfully guarded, remain behind*  
wo euch der Segen der Liebe bewahr!  
*where the blessing of love shall preserve you!*  
Siegreicher Mut, Minne und Glück  
*Triumphant courage, love and happiness*  
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten Paar.  
*join you in faith as the happiest of couples.*  
Streiter der Tugend, bleibe daheim!  
*Champion of virtue, remain here!*  
Zierde der Jugend, bleibe daheim!  
*Jewel of youth, remain here!*  
Rauschen des Festes seid nun entronnen,  
*Flee now the splendours of the wedding feast,*  
Wonne des Herzens sei euch gewonnen!  
*may the delights of the heart be yours!*  
Duftender Raum, zur Liebe geschmückt,  
*This sweet-smelling room, decked for love,*  
nahm euch nun auf, dem Glanze entrückt.  
*has now taken you, away from the splendour.*  
Treulich bewacht bleibet zurück,  
*Faithfully guarded, remain behind*  
wo euch der Segen der Liebe bewahr!  
*where the blessing of love shall preserve you!*  
Siegreicher Mut, Minne und Glück  
*Triumphant courage, love and happiness*  
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten Paar.  
*join you in faith as the happiest of couples.*

## SOLDIERS' CHORUS

Salvatore Cammarano

Squilli, echeggi la tromba guerriera,  
chiami all'armi, alla pugna, all'assalto;  
fia domani la nostra bandiera  
di quei merli piantata sull'alto.  
*Let the warlike trumpet sound and echo,  
call to arms, to the fray, the attack;  
may our flag be planted tomorrow  
on the highest of those towers.*

No, giammai non sorrise vittoria  
di più liete speranze finor!  
Ivi l'util ci aspetta e la gloria,  
ivi opimi la preda e l'onor.  
*No, victory has never smiled  
on happier hopes than ours!  
There glory awaits us - and the needful.  
There wait spoil, booty and honour.*

Squilli, echeggi, ecc.  
*Let the warlike trumpet, etc.*

No, giammai non sorrise vittoria, ecc.  
*No, victory has never smiled, etc.*

CHORUS OF SCOTTISH REFUGEES

Francesco Maria Piave

Patria oppressa! il dolce nome	<i>Oppressed land of ours! You cannot have</i>
No, di madre aver non puoi,	<i>the sweet name of mother</i>
Or che tutta a figli tuoi	<i>now that you have become a tomb</i>
Sei conversa in un avel.	<i>for your sons.</i>
D'orfanelli e di piangenti	<i>From orphans, from those who mourn,</i>
Chi lo sposo e chi la prole	<i>some for husbands, some for children,</i>
Al venir del nuovo Sole	<i>at each new dawn a cry goes up</i>
S'alza un grido e fere il Ciel.	<i>to outrage heaven.</i>
A quel grido il Ciel risponde	<i>To that cry heaven replies</i>
Quasi voglia impietosito	<i>as if moved to pity,</i>
Propagar per l'infinito,	<i>oppressed land, it would</i>
Patria oppressa, il tuo dolor.	<i>proclaim your grief forever.</i>
Suona a morto ognor la squilla,	<i>The bell tolls constantly for death</i>
Ma nessuno audace &grave; tanto	<i>but no-one is so bold</i>
Che pur doni un vano pianto	<i>as to shed a vain tear</i>
A chi soffre ed a chi muor.	<i>for the suffering and dying.</i>

CHORUS OF PEASANT GIRLS  
(sung in Russian)

K.K. Shilovsky and the composer,  
after Pushkin

Pretty maidens, dear companions,  
Come on out and play, girls,  
Trip merrily, my friends!  
Strike up a song, a favorite song,  
to lure a handsome lad to join our dance.

When we've lured the handsome lad,  
When we catch sight of him,  
Let's run away, my friends,  
pelting him with cherries,  
with cherries and berries,  
with red currents.

Don't you come eavesdropping  
on our favorite songs,  
Don't you come spying  
on our girlish play.

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Ginger Hannums  
The Hour

## PROGRAM NOTES

Opera and musical theater are not generally associated in a single concert, but the line separating them is less solid than you might suppose. In tonight's concert the traditional "operas" were all written in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the choruses taken from "musical theater" date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and later.

The program opens with "Circle of Life," the opening song from the 1997 Broadway musical *The Lion King*. Based on the 1994 Disney animated feature, it is one of the longest-running musicals on Broadway. "Circle of Life" is one of seven songs in the show written by Elton John with lyrics by Tim Rice. Other composers and lyricists have also contributed to the songs in this highly successful musical. In an interview quoted on Wikipedia, Rice said he was amazed at the speed with which John composed: "I gave him the lyrics at the beginning of the session at about two in the afternoon. By half-past three, he'd finished writing and recording a stunning demo."

Based on the epic novel by Victor Hugo, which was published in 1862, *Les Misérables* appeared in Paris in 1980, with original text by Alain Boublil and Jean-Marc Natel. An English adaptation with libretto by Herbert Kretzmer was created, and opened in London in 1985. The Broadway production ran from 1987 into 2003, with 6,680 performances.

*Les Misérables* has contributed two songs to our program. The first is "Castle on a Cloud," performed by the Singing Eagles. Appropriately, it is a child's song, describing young Cosette's dreams of a better life than the one she is living as an ill-treated foster child in an unpleasant family.

For a fully child-themed musical, nothing could be more appropriate than *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, based on the beloved characters created by Charles M. Schultz. Compare and contrast the things that the Peanuts characters offer as their definitions of "Happiness" with those expressed by Cosette who "lived" over a century before.

In contrast to many large-scale Broadway musicals, *Charlie Brown* has a small cast of characters, making it easily accessible for amateur productions. Clark Gesner had started writing songs for the Peanuts characters in the early 1960s, but had been unable to get performance permission from the publisher until he sent a recording to Schultz, who encouraged him. The stage adaptation went into rehearsal off-Broadway in 1967, and the first Broadway production opened in 1971.

The Singing Eagles close their set with "Corner of the Sky" from the not nearly well-enough known musical *Pippin*. Composed by Stephen Schwartz, the play premiered on Broadway in 1972. It is the story of a king's son who is trying to find his purpose in life; the King is Charlemagne, and Pippin is also a real historical figure.

Even those who have never had any interest in opera would find it difficult to avoid recognizing the "Bridal Chorus" from *Lohengrin*, though they would be more likely to have heard it in the non-choral version known as the

“Wedding March,” and may not even have known that it had words. Appearing in the opera at the beginning of Act III, it celebrates the marriage of the thus-far unnamed hero to the beautiful Elsa. Although the opera, based on Teutonic legends of a mythical Knight of the Holy Grail, was first performed in 1850, Wagner had been forced into exile for political reasons and did not see it performed until 1861.

Many songs from musical theater have become so much a part of our culture that we never stop to think where they came from. Arranger Mark Hayes has taken two of those songs, both by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, and woven them together: “You’ll Never Walk Alone” from *Carousel*, and “Climb Every Mountain” from *The Sound of Music*. *Carousel* is the earliest of the musicals featured tonight, written in 1945. The original Broadway production of *The Sound of Music* opened in 1959. Though the two plays are very different, both songs have an inspirational theme, making this an appropriate pairing.

The first half of the concert ends with our other selection from *Les Miz*. The Alexandria Choral Society is again joined by the Singing Eagles for a rousing chorus of “Do You Hear the People Sing?” This song appears in Act I as the students realize that the time is ripe for incitement to revolution, and it is reprised in the finale.

Giuseppe Verdi is recognized as the grand master of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Italian opera, with *Il Trovatore* as one of his most popular works. Milton Cross, who for many years was the voice of the Metropolitan Opera’s Saturday radio broadcasts, said that its melodies are “perhaps more widely known than those of any other opera.” Certainly many people recognise the “Anvil Chorus” when they hear it, and even the “Soldiers’ Chorus” may resonate in memory. This is the chorus the soldiers of the villainous Count sing as they prepare to besiege the fortress where the sad heroine is preparing to enter a convent. Like many opera plots, this one involves intrigue, revenge, mistaken identity, and tragic death, but the music is what matters.

Choruses in opera are often used to set a mood, and may or may not participate in the plot. The “Humming Chorus” from Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* is more like an aural set decoration, lacking even words. The opera is based on a play by Belasco, about an American naval officer who goes through a fake “marriage” with a 15-year-old Japanese girl known as Butterfly, then sails away, leaving her pregnant. She believes that he will return. And so he does, three years later – with his wife. The humming is heard at the end of Act II as Butterfly is awaiting his arrival.

Some of the best blend of opera and musical theater in recent times has been the work of Andrew Lloyd Webber. “Masquerade,” from *The Phantom of the Opera*, has been described as “an excellent piece for the large choir.” The musical premiered in 1986, and has been long-running in both New York and London, and one of the highest-grossing musicals ever.

Lloyd Webber had difficulty finding a lyricist; Alan Jay Lerner had signed on but had to resign due to ill health. Charles Hart and Richard Stilgoe took

## Alexandria Choral Society

### Sopranos

Sara Alipanah  
Vida Antolin-Jenkins  
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Sara Ratcliffe  
Mary Grace Sheets  
Andrea Steinacker  
Marianne Stonefield

### Altos

Jen Andresen  
Jennifer Anvari  
Bridget Baker-White  
Trudy Beddow  
Anne Buckborough  
Patricia Burson  
Katie Campbell  
Sarah Coster  
Heather Cruz  
Emily Goodell  
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Amanda Ridlington  
Megan Rogers  
Sunrita Sarkar  
Anne Simpson  
Clarice Snyder  
Erin Sutherland  
Mimi Stevens  
Jessica Thurnes  
Cathy Walker

### Tenors

Michael Gale  
Howard Jaffe  
Jason Kezmarsky  
James Martin  
Alan Morris  
JJ Norman  
Brent Schultheis  
Jeff Simmons

### Basses

Zach Byers  
Peter Carlson  
Rocky Ebener  
Clifford Gay  
Tom Giannetti  
Greg Gloor  
Joshua Heit  
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David Pritzker  
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Tim Slattery  
Scott Snyder

### Singing Eagles

Emily Bsatidas  
Katie Bectel  
Maya Belay  
Amir Beshir  
Amira Beshir  
Danica Boykin  
Kennedy Champ  
Ava Cole-Williams  
Hewen Dalton  
Molly Dawit  
Awa Dia  
Salma el Gourchal

Kimberly Gabino  
Velasco  
Maya Gleaton  
Niko Hiebert Tejada  
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Lucy Hunnicutt  
Ikra Hussein  
Marcos Jimenez  
Ginny Jones  
Lucy Jones  
Nadia Lach Hab  
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Christopher Paz  
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Diarra Sangare  
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Sammy Tejada

Simultaneously, and independent of the ASO, music educators at John Adams Elementary School in Alexandria were building the school's musical capacity. A strong foundation was already in place as a result of Wes McCune's 20+ year tenure with the Orff Ensemble, which had long been a staple at John Adams. Adding to this rich history, music teachers Emily Smith and Lindsey Serrao established their own ensembles in 2013 – the Singing Eagles and Strings at Sunrise, respectively.

In October 2014, the ASO hired Sympatico's first Program Director, in an effort to craft and implement a vision for sustainable program growth while accentuating the uniqueness of the program. Two more ensembles, Keetman and JABBA, were added to Sympatico. The program's mission and quick start earned Sympatico a Distinguished Music Education Partnership Award from the Yale School of Music in 2015.

Sympatico offers free before- and after-school music education programming for K-5 students. All ensembles are hosted at John Adams Elementary School, a Title I and minority-majority school that benefits from a longstanding dual-language program (English and Spanish) and a Kennedy Center arts integration partnership (Changing Education through the Arts).

**Emily Smith** is the Sympatico program coordinator, and director of Sympatico's choral ensemble, the Singing Eagles. Emily received her BME from Shenandoah Conservatory; currently, she is completing her MM in choral conducting, also at Shenandoah. Emily has performed with and conducted various groups from the Northern Virginia area, both nationally and internationally.



Sympatico's resident performing choral group, the **Singing Eagles** (SE), has been meeting every day after school since the 2013-2014 school year. The group consists of 30+ students, all of whom have the ability to match pitch, learn music aurally and visually while following a conductor, and have intermediate rhythmic proficiency. SE is taught by Emily Smith, and the group often sings in languages other than English, in an effort to reflect the multi-cultural character of the John Adams community. A particular trademark of the Singing Eagles rehearsal process is their end-of-week mini-performances, which allow students to practice both performance and audience etiquette. SE has worked with guest artists from the international music collective Creative Connections, developing original work through the collaborative composition process.

over and are credited in the score, but Lerner had contributed, uncredited, to the lyrics of "Masquerade." Listeners will hear the familiar Phantom theme in the piano just as the song ends.

Back to opera, this time to the "Chorus of Scottish refugees" from Verdi's *Macbeth*. This was the first of several operas that Verdi based on Shakespeare's plays. First performed in 1847, it was later revised for a performance in Paris in 1865. The chorus is heard at the opening of Act IV; a group of Scottish refugees stand near the English border, lamenting the loss of their homeland.

Tchaikovsky's opera *Eugen Onegin* is based on a narrative poem by Pushkin, a "novel in verse" which appealed to him because of its somber and tragic theme. Hearing only the "Chorus of peasant girls," you might wonder at the description of "somber and tragic" because the girls are lightheartedly telling how they will "lure a handsome lad" and then pelt him with cherries. But this serves to provide a contrast to the unhappiness of the heroine, who is being rejected by the man she loves.

The final two choruses on our program are both by Stephen Sondheim, and provide a window into the versatility of this most contemporary master of musical theater. *Sunday in the Park with George*, a musical improbably inspired by Georges Seurat's painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte," won the 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The music of "Sunday" evokes the pointillistic style of Seurat's painting.

Who would expect that the same composer would also have been inspired by the story of *Sweeney Todd* (also known as "the demon barber of Fleet Street")? "The Ballad of Sweeney Todd" introduces the play, and reappears multiple times during the course of the action. Listen carefully, though – you'll only get to hear it once!

~ Mimi Stevens



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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Founded in 1970, the **Alexandria Choral Society** aspires to enhance the cultural life of the city of Alexandria and surrounding communities by presenting engaging musical programs at the highest artistic level. ACS ensembles consistently offer meaningful and exciting musical experiences to both singers and audiences through diverse repertoire, education, community outreach, and performance excellence.



**Brian Gendron** serves as Artistic Director of Alexandria Choral Society. Since he joined the organization in 2009, the choir has shared the stage with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra for Mozart's *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, Holst's *The Planets*, and the world premiere of Kim Allen

Kluge's *River Poem*. They have presented Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, Brahms' *Schicksalslied*, Haydn's *The Creation*, Pärt's *Berliner Messe*, and Vivaldi's *Gloria*, and have led Handel's *Messiah* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Pro Coro Alexandria, a chamber choir founded in 2012 as the organization's outreach ensemble, premiered Truman Harris and David Teie's *...again and ever again* with Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. They have also collaborated with Virginia Chamber Orchestra and performed at the National Gallery of Art.

With a great passion for choral-orchestral repertoire, Gendron was on the podium for Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, and Mozart's *Coronation Mass*. He prepared Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* for the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* for the New River Valley Symphony. Gendron conducted the Kansas City Baroque Consortium in a performance of Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, and led a series of concerts featuring the cantatas of J.S. Bach, as well as his *Mass in B minor*.

Previously, Gendron served as Artistic Director of the Grammy Award winning Maryland Boy Choir, who appeared at the Music Center at Strathmore and Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, as well as in concert performances of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* with Mariinsky Opera and Puccini's *La Bohème* with Baltimore Concert Opera. His previous teaching appointments include Conductor-in-Residence at Hollins University and Director of Choral Activities at Virginia Tech. His university ensembles appeared in Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn Academy of Music's Howard Gilman Opera Theater, and the Washington National Cathedral.

Gendron served as Chorus Master for Opera Roanoke productions of Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, Verdi's *Macbeth* and *Otello*, and Beethoven's *Fidelio*. He also joined the American Opera Theater

team for Charpentier's *David et Jonathas*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, and a staged production of Handel's *Messiah*. Gendron conducted the world premiere of Sean Pflueger's *Children in the Mist* for Riverbend Opera and was Music Director for Michael Gordon's *Lightning at Our Feet*, which was co-produced by Virginia Tech Theater Arts and New York City's Ridge Theater.

Gendron earned degrees from Central Michigan University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has presented interest sessions and conducted invitational performances for the American Choral Directors Association, Virginia Music Educators Association, and Virginia Music Teachers Association. Gendron currently leads the choirs at St. James Catholic Church in Falls Church, Virginia.



**Robin Beckman** enjoys a versatile career as a pianist and singer working as a soloist, chamber ensemble singer, piano teacher and accompanist. With a voice that "gently glides into heaven" (*Washington Examiner*), she has performed with the Bach Consort, the Boston Early Music Fringe Festival, Washington Master Chorale, at the National Cathedral, and in the quartet Third Practice, which got rave reviews in both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* for its performance of Andriessen's *La Commedia* with the Great Noise Ensemble. You can also hear her on the

Dorian Sono Luminus label singing the Bach Motets and Carissimi's *Jephte*, in which she is a soloist. As a pianist, she also accompanies Six Degree Singers, a choir based in Silver Spring, MD. She studied at Shenandoah University where she accompanied several ensembles, master classes and recitals.



**ASO Sympatico** was born out of a commitment to education, the youth of Alexandria, and social justice. In 2012, various members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra (ASO) staff and board, including Music Director Kim Allen Kluge, began thinking about the best way for the ASO to give back to its community. After learning about the growth of El Sistema-inspired programs around the United States, the ASO began looking for local models that it could learn from.