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Alexandria, VA – The Alexandria Choral Society closes out its 53rd season with an exceptional program, showcasing a world premiere and a diverse set of women composers from all over the world.



Led by Artistic Director Brian Fontaine-Isaac, *On the Other Side of Change* features the world premiere of *You Birth the Seeds* by composer Melissa Dunphy, with text from the City of Alexandria's Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam.

"I'm incredibly excited to continue Alexandria Choral Society's tradition of adding new music to the choral repertoire and to highlight women composers," said Fontaine-Isaac.

Zeina Azzam is a Palestinian American poet, writer, editor, and community activist. Her poetry appears in a number of literary journals, and is published in many anthologies and edited volumes. In addition to her post as Poet Laureate of Alexandria, she serves as a mentor for We Are Not Numbers, a writing program for youth in Gaza, and volunteers for humanitarian organizations that support Palestinian development. She is also active in Grassroots Alexandria, a local group that advocates for the civil rights of vulnerable communities in Alexandria.

"What a meaningful experience to write a poem that celebrates women, and then have the world class composer Melissa Dunphy put it to music. It has been an honor for me. And I cannot wait to hear the Alexandria Choral Society sing this piece! We are all so grateful for ACS and Artistic Director Brian Fontaine-Isaac, whose vision continues to nurture and expand the repertoire of fresh, community engaged, and innovative choral music," writes Azzam.

Born to refugee parents and raised in Australia, composer Melissa Dunphy immigrated to the United States in 2003 and has since become an award-winning and acclaimed composer specializing in vocal, political, and theatrical music. Her works have been performed by internationally recognized groups such as Chanticleer, Cantus, and VOCES8.

Additional works presented by ACS include *Ilus Hää* by Laura Jekabsone, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* by Eleanor Daley, *Schöne Fremde* by Fanny Hensel, *Laus Trinitati* by Faith Zimmer, *We Shall Walk Through the Valley* by Undine Smith Moore and *To Sit and Dream* by Rosephanye Powell.

ACS will be joined on *You Birth the Seeds* by the Langley High School Madrigal Singers, the recipient of ACS's 2022 Sing-Off Grant. Led by Caroline Player, the talented members of this chamber ensemble will perform a special set of repertoire, complementing an enriching, special night that you won't want to miss!

About the Program:

The world premiere performance of *On The Other Side of Change* will be presented on Saturday, May 6, at 7 pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church. ACS, in collaboration with the City of Alexandria's PARKnership program, will also host a community matinee performance on Sunday, May 7, at 4 pm at Patrick Henry Recreation Center in Alexandria.

Tickets are available at <https://www.alexandriachoralsociety.org/on-the-other-side-of-change>

As a non-profit performing arts organization, ACS strongly believes that financial capacity should never be a barrier to experiencing quality choral programming and has adopted a "Pay What You Can" model. The suggested ticket price is \$30.

About Alexandria Choral Society:

For half a century, Alexandria Choral Society has striven to enrich the 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. Under the current leadership of Brian Fontaine-Isaac, who was selected as Artistic Director in 2017, ACS has premiered new works by Christopher Hoh, Jonathan Kolm, Lori Laitman and Tawnie Olson. With thoughtful programming, ACS is expanding the choral repertoire in the city of Alexandria and greater Washington region.

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

Our season is supported in part by the City of Alexandria, PARKnerships, 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.

