

WASHINGTON WOMEN



ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY
KATHRYN HARSHA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

WITH
THE ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR
JORDAN MARKWOOD, DIRECTOR

MARCH 8, 2025 | 7 PM
GEORGE WASHINGTON
MASONIC MEMORIAL

PROGRAM

WASHINGTON WOMEN

ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY

KATHRYN HARSHA

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JUSTIN STRELETZ

COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

FEATURING

THE 2025 SING OFF GRANT RECIPIENTS

THE ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR

JORDAN MARKWOOD

DIRECTOR

JENNIFER QUIÑONES

ACCOMPANIST

OPENING REMARKS

Catherine Dehoney, *former CEO of Chorus America*

ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY

The March of the Women

Ethel Smyth

Washington Women

Judith Clurman and

Jihea Choi, cellist

David Chase

Elizabeth Everson, Emily Goodell, Celia Grove,

Chrissy Juergens, Erika May, Laurie Ann Taylor, soloists

ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR

We Sing As One

B.E. Boykin

From Dusk to Dawn

Gwyneth Walker

Raine Surla, soloist

TOGETHER

Still I Rise

Rosephanye Powell

Baylee Cicheskie, Ryann Ratcliff

Kristi Meacham, Jenna Dawkins, Rasneek Gujral, soloists

ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY

Keep Marching

Music by Shaina Taub &

from the Broadway Musical

Andrea Grody; Arranged by

Suffs

Andrea Grody

Celia Grove, solo

THANKS

The Alexandria Choral Society wishes to express its appreciation to the following persons and organizations:

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Catherine Dehoney for her opening remarks
Composer Judith Clurman for traveling here to join us today
Josh Heit & Radka Movrova for their assistance in coordinating this event
Mike Bianco for providing the printed lyric programs
And thanks to all of our volunteers who help run our box office

Program funding is provided by our donors, and in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the City of Alexandria, Alexandria Commission for the Arts.



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ABOUT ACS

For over half a century, the Alexandria Choral Society has presented a broad spectrum of choral works, delighting audiences and fostering an inclusive environment of belonging and collaboration in the City of Alexandria and beyond. Since its founding in 1970, ACS has captivated audiences year in and year out. Most recently, ACS commissioned and presented the world premiere of "You Birth the Seeds," a work by acclaimed composer Melissa Dunphy, with text by Alexandria Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam. Under the direction of Artistic Director Kathryn Harsha, ACS is committed to enhancing the cultural life of the City of Alexandria by presenting diverse and engaging vocal music programs at the highest artistic level.

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PROGRAM NOTES

The March of the Women - Dame Ethel Mary Smyth (1858-1944) was taught piano and theory as a proper young English lady. Much to her father's horror, she took to music passionately and insisted on receiving further training. He refused, but she openly rebelled for long enough that he finally relented and allowed her to go to Leipzig to study music at the Conservatorium, where she met and was encouraged by Brahms, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, and Dvorak.

Smyth wrote "The March of the Women" in 1911, and it was premiered by a chorus of suffragists at a fundraising concert at the Albert Hall on March 23, 1911. This piece quickly became the battle cry of the British suffrage movement. Its most famous, though least public, performance occurred at Holloway Prison in London in 1912: over 100 suffragists were serving prison time for a coordinated protest. Ethel Smyth, ever the boisterous rebel, reportedly conducted the group with her toothbrush waving vigorously in her hand, while the suffragists sang and marched around the exercise yard.

WASHINGTON WOMEN

for SATB, Cello and Piano

by **David Chase** and **Judith Clurman**

***Washington Women** is a collection of choral songs with iconic texts taken from speeches, opinions, and interviews of sixteen remarkable women from across the political spectrum, all of whom spent part of their lives associated with Washington DC: First Ladies, Senators, Congresswomen, Supreme Court Justices, Secretaries of State, Vice President, and Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

I. THE ESSENCE OF AMERICA

"The essence of America - that which really unites us - is not ethnicity, or nationality, or religion - it is an idea -and what an idea it is: That you can come from humble circumstances and do great things."

—**Condoleezza Rice**, Secretary of State: *Republican National Convention Speech, August 29, 2012*

PROGRAM NOTES

II. FOR CENTURIES NOW

"For centuries now, people have come to this country from every corner of the world to share in the blessing of religious freedom. Our Constitution promises that they may worship in their own way, without fear of penalty or danger, and that in itself is a momentous offering. Yet our Constitution makes a commitment still more remarkable - that however those individuals worship, they will count as full and equal American citizens."

—**Elena Kagan**, Supreme Court Justice: *Town of Greece, New York Petitioner v. Susan Galloway*, May 5, 2014

III. FREEDOM

"Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility."

—**Eleanor Roosevelt**, United Nations Diplomat, First Lady: *This is My Story*, 1939

"Human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights once and for all."

—**Hillary Rodham Clinton**, Secretary of State, Senator, and First Lady: *Remarks for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing, China, September 5, 1995*

"The search for human freedom can never be complete without freedom for women."

—**Betty Ford**, First Lady: *International Women's Year Conference*, October 25, 1975

IV. THOSE OF US WHO SHOUT

"Those of us who shout the loudest about Americanism in making character assassinations are all too frequently those who, by our own words and acts, ignore some of the basic principles of Americanism: The right to criticize; The right to hold unpopular beliefs; The right to protest; The right of independent thought."

—**Margaret Chase Smith**, Senator and Congresswoman: *Declaration of Conscience*, June 1, 1950

V. IN THE FIELD OF EQUAL RIGHTS

"In the field of equal rights ... laws can be used to provide protection for those who are most abused, and to begin the process of evolutionary change by compelling the insensitive majority to reexamine its unconscious attitudes."

—**Shirley Chisholm**, Congresswoman: *Rights for Women Speech - Address to The United States House of Representatives*, May 21, 1969

PROGRAM NOTES

VI. WE PRIDE OURSELVES

"Americans pride ourselves on being a moral nation... We pride ourselves on believing that people should be seen for the content of their character, not the color of their skin. We pride ourselves on acceptance."

—**Laura Bush**, First Lady: *The Washington Post*, June 17, 2018

VII. WE NOT ONLY DREAM

"We not only dream - we do. We not only see what has been. We see what can be. We shoot for the moon and then we plant our flag on it. We are bold, fearless, and ambitious."

—**Kamala Harris**, Vice President and Senator: *First Speech as Vice President of the United States*, January 20, 2021

"In all that we do, let us be For The People - recognizing the beautiful diversity of America, so that no one is left out and no one is left behind."

—**Nancy Pelosi**, Speaker of the House, US House of Representatives: *Speech on the house floor after being re-elected as Speaker of the House*, January 5, 2021

VIII. IT IS NECESSARY

"In order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity."

—**Sandra Day O'Connor**, Supreme Court Justice: *Grutter vs Bollinger*, June 23, 2003

IX. REMEMBER THE LADIES

"Remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands."

—**Abigail Adams**, First Lady: *Letter to John Adams, Braintree, Massachusetts*, March 31, 1776

X. IT TOOK ME QUITE A LONG TIME

"It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent."

—**Madeleine Albright**, Secretary of State: *Spoken at various times, including The Huffington Post*, June 15, 2010 (updated December 6, 2017)

PROGRAM NOTES

XI. BELIEVE

"Believe in something larger than yourself... Get involved in some of the big ideas of our time."

—**Barbara Bush**, First Lady: *Commencement speech at Wellesley College, June 1, 1990*

XII. I AM EVER HOPEFUL/I WANT A PRESIDENT

"I am ever hopeful that if the court has a blind spot today, its eyes will be open tomorrow."

—**Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, Supreme Court Justice: *National Review Interview with Katie Couric, July 31, 2014*

"I want a President who will teach our children that everyone in this country matters - a President who truly believes in the vision that our founders put forth all those years ago:

That we are all created equal, each a beloved part of the great American story."

—**Michelle Obama**, First Lady: *Speech at the Democratic National Convention, July 25, 2016*

We Sing As One - B.E. Boykin (born 1989). B.E. Boykin's "We Sing As One" is a powerful anthem of unity and resilience. In this work, Boykin draws on the strength of collective voice to convey a message of shared purpose and empowerment. The piece is rich in rhythm, melody, and dynamic contrasts, offering both a celebration of individuality and the beauty of togetherness. The music builds with a sense of urgency, conveying the message that when voices join in harmony, they become a force greater than the sum of their parts. The text encourages us to stand together, to lift one another up, and to sing as one in pursuit of justice, equality, and peace. This piece carries a particular resonance today, reminding us of the importance of collective action in advancing women's rights and equality. The choir's voices become a reflection of the many women whose contributions often go unrecognized but whose unity and strength shape the world in profound ways. - *Jordan Markwood*

PROGRAM NOTES

From Dusk to Dawn - Gwyneth Walker (born 1947). Gwyneth Walker's "From Dusk to Dawn" is a beautiful, evocative work that explores the cycle of the day, capturing the transitions between night and day, rest and awakening, darkness and light. Walker's sensitive treatment of the choir's voices, paired with lush harmonies and shifting textures, illustrates the gradual unfolding of time from the quiet of evening to the radiant arrival of the morning sun. The work's emotional arc takes the listener through moments of reflection, rest, and renewal, symbolizing not only the natural world but also the internal journey toward strength and empowerment. "From Dusk to Dawn" speaks to the resilience and courage that women display in the face of adversity—much like the transition from darkness to light, there is always a new dawn, offering hope and the promise of transformation.

Both this piece and "We Sing As One," performed by the Rock Ridge Chamber Choir, celebrate the strength of the human spirit, the power of community, and the eternal possibility of hope. These pieces serve as anthems for the women of today and as a reminder of the continual journey toward equality and justice for all women. - *Jordan Markwood*

Still I Rise - Rosephanye Powell (Born 1962) has been hailed as one of America's premier women composers of solo vocal and choral music. Dr. Powell's works have been premiered at distinguished halls around the country, including Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center, and Spivey Hall, and commissioned by professional choral ensembles, including Cantus and the Grammy award-winning men's vocal ensemble Chanticleer. Dr. Powell serves as Professor of Voice at Auburn University. An accomplished singer and voice professor, Dr. Powell's research focuses on the art of the African-American spiritual and voice care concerns for voice professionals. Still I Rise is based on a poem by Maya Angelou.

PROGRAM NOTES

Keep Marching (from the Broadway musical *Suffs*) -

Shaina Taub (Born 1988) is a classically trained pianist and self-taught accordion player, composer, and singer who worked with Sara Bareilles and Josh Groban to co-write the Emmy Award-nominated opening number for the 2018 Tony Awards. She recently teamed up with Elton John to pen the lyrics for the upcoming Broadway musical *The Devil Wears Prada*.

Shaina starred in her own original musical *Suffs*, which premiered in spring 2022 at Off-Broadway's Public Theater. *Suffs* follows suffragist Alice Paul (Taub) as she joins forces with Carrie Chapman Catt and the National American Woman Suffrage Association for the right to vote. However, Paul's desire for direct action clashes with the stoic Catt, who wants to keep women's virtue at the center of the suffrage campaign to win over President Woodrow Wilson. "Keep Marching" is the closing piece in the musical, a rousing reminder that "progress is possible, not guaranteed," and we all must carry on even if the work is never completely finished.

- Kathryn Harsha

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ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



DAVID CHASE

David Chase has been Music Director, Music Supervisor and/or Arranger for 40 Broadway musicals, as well as for numerous productions in London's West End. He continues his longstanding associations with the Boston Pops, Radio City Music Hall, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and has written and arranged numerous choral works that have been recorded by Judith Clurman's Essential Voices USA and

published by Hal Leonard. As Music Director and arranger for NBC's *The Sound of Music Live!* and *Peter Pan!*, he was at the forefront of bringing live musicals back to television, and Emmy-nominated for Outstanding Musical Direction for both programs. Other TV includes Music Direction and coarranging for Apple TV's *Schmigadoon!*, and arrangements and orchestrations for *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. He has been nominated for a Grammy for his work on the Broadway musical *Nice Work if You Can Get It*, and an Olivier for *Anything Goes*.



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ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



JUDITH CLURMAN

As a conductor, chorus master, and educator, Judith Clurman has collaborated with some of the world's most distinguished ensembles, composers, and institutions. A passionate advocate of new music and innovative programming, Clurman has commissioned premieres, developed ensembles, and directed work from the classical, theatre, television, and film repertoires. She has received two Emmy nominations and conducted Tania Léon's music on the Grammy and Latin Grammy nominated CD, *In Motion*.

Judith is the musical director for Essential Voices USA, an ensemble that has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts and NBC television. In addition, she is Resident Conductor for the Choral Society of the Hamptons and teaches voice at the Manhattan School of Music.

She has worked with many of the world's finest symphonies, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestra of St Luke's, and she previously conducted The New York Concert Singers, a group that appeared on Lincoln Center's Great Performers and Carnegie Hall's concert series. Highlights of her career include conducting performances at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, conducting the nationally televised "Music of the Spirit" (NBC and PBS), conducting performances with the New York City Ballet, supervising and conducting the choral music for the SONY movie *The Song of Names*, co-directing/music directing Harvard University's Bernstein: Boston to Broadway project, music directing (associate) of all things vocal for the 39th season of *Sesame Street*, creating and conducting the Singing Christmas Tree Float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and conducting the nationally televised July 4th Macy's Fireworks Spectacular (NBC), with the Diva Jazz Orchestra. She has commissioned and conducted new works by over seventy American composers, ranging from works by Milton Babbitt and Pierre Jalbert to Jason Robert Brown and Stephen Schwartz.

As an educator, Judith was Director of Choral Activities at The Juilliard School from 1989-2007. She has served as a visiting artist/teacher at numerous institutions, including Cambridge and Harvard Universities, and was the vocal specialist at the National Endowment for the Arts/Columbia University Institute of Classical Music. Judith edits two choral series for Hal Leonard. Her own music and arrangements are published by G. Schirmer, Hal Leonard, and Schott, and have been performed by major symphony orchestras and choruses throughout our nation. Judith is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

SINGERS

ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY

SOPRANO

Lucy Bachmeyer
Betsy Ballard
Katie Batterberry
Cienna Breen
Samantha Calkins
Sharon Collins
Jenna Dawkins
Monique Doussard
Katrina Dubee
Caroline Duchin
Diane Erbland
Liz Everson
Ankur Garg
Rasneek Gujral
Dr. Doreen Hamilton
Hana Kovaci
Kennedy Levinson
Carmen Lodato
Laura MacDonald
Shannon Maloney
Erika May
Margaret McLaughlin
Karen Minatelli
Megan Murchie-Beyma
Jennifer Nightingale
Lesley Parilla
Laurie Ann Taylor
Nicole Thompson

TENOR

Adam Comfort
Caroline Hale
Jonathan Hung
Alan Morris
Jeffrey Nickeson
Kyle Peterson
Brent Schultheis
Kevin Seiger-Cottoms
Kevin Simpson
Mimi Stevens
Troy Tanner
Jacob Yeston

ALTO

Sarah Begeman
Lisl Brunner
Patricia Burson
Meagan Dewsbury
Alison Fitzgerald
Kathleen Fritz
Emily Goodell
Celia Grove
Peggy Heiser
Heather Hurley
Allison Jones
Chrissy Juergens
Marion Lange
Janie Lee
Kerry McGowan
Kristina Meacham
Sue Purvis
Erin Riley
Benita Robertson
Erin Sutherland
Anne Simpson
Katherine Sykora
Stacy Tanner
Akosua Tuffuor
Allison Wickens
Megan Yingst

BASS

Michael Bianco
Zach Byers
Harrison Clark
Rocky Ebener
Clifford Gay
Joshua Heit
Terry Langendoen
Charles Morrison
David Pritzker
Vell Rives
Brian Schiff
Richard Simpson
David Smith
Wallace Wason Jr.

SINGERS

THE ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR

SOPRANO

Laura Adams
Sanjana Chandok
Jhansi Chilakapati
Kailyn Fetterman
Hannah Howell
Wardah Islam
Shritha Khandavalli
Hasini Kotinadhuni
Avery McCarty
Annabelle Monte
Drithi Pinnamaneni
Cheluvi Potineni
Smithi Punna
Sreeja Punuru
Pranathi Purushothamaiah
Kaylie Rivers
Yoshi Sarkar
Raine Surla
Isha Veera

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



KATHRYN HARSHA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Kathryn Harsha holds a Master of Music in Conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music and a Bachelor of Arts in Piano Performance from Bluffton University. While studying at the Sorbonne in Paris, she served as Assistant Conductor of the Chorale des Étudiants

Etrangères and studied conducting at the Conservatoire Messiaen in Saint-Maurice, France.

An active conductor in choral, opera, and orchestral music, Ms. Harsha has worked with ensembles across the country, conducting most recently in Severance Hall and the Kennedy Center, and in France, Italy, Austria, and Germany. Kathryn served for many years as Music Director and Conductor of the Lakeland Civic Orchestra in Cleveland, Ohio, and as the Music Director of Opera per Tutti, now the Cleveland Opera Theater. For more than 20 years, she was the Music Director of the Sing Out! for Cleveland Rape Crisis Center benefit concert, where the Visionary Voice Award was named in her honor in 2018.

Ms. Harsha enjoys working with musicians of all ages, including young people at the Peabody Children's Chorus and Opus Community Music School, and mature singers at Encore Creativity for Older Adults, where she is currently the Interim Artistic Director and conducts multiple ensembles across the Washington metropolitan area.

Kathryn is honored to serve as the Artistic Director of Pro Coro Alexandria and the Alexandria Choral Society for its 55th season.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

THE ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR

The Rock Ridge Chamber Choir was established in the fall of 2015 under the direction of Jordan Markwood as the top performing choral ensemble at Rock Ridge High School in Ashburn, VA. In its inaugural year, the Chamber Choir was invited to perform for the US Department of Education's FSASSY Awards, where they received a standing ovation. The Chamber Choir has consistently received Superior Ratings at the District Choral Assessment. In the spring of 2017 the Rock Ridge Chamber Choir was selected as one of only two choral ensembles in the MD/VA/DC area to perform on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center as a part of a Music in Our Schools Month Celebration. In 2018 and 2024 the Chamber Choir also performed at the Virginia Music Educators Association annual conference. Members of the Chamber Choir have been selected for numerous honors, including All County Chorus, All-District Chorus, All-Virginia Honor Choirs, VMEA Senior Honor Choirs, Virginia Governor's School for the Visual and Performing Arts, National and Regional ACDA Honor Choirs, National YoungArts Foundation Winners, and many more.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS



JORDAN MARKWOOD, DIRECTOR, ROCK RIDGE CHAMBER CHOIR

Jordan Markwood is a passionate musician excited about bringing people together to communicate meaningful messages through singing. He is in his eleventh year as the Choral Director and Fine Arts Department Chair at Rock Ridge High School and also

serves as the Music Director at Galilee UMC. Mr. Markwood was named the 2023 VA Region 4 Teacher of the Year and both the 2022 Loudoun County and Washington Post Teacher of the Year. Previously, he taught at Stone Hill M.S. for seven years and was the VA-ACDA MS R&R Chair from 2013-2015. Mr. Markwood is the current VCDA Secretary and previous leadership roles include Chair of the VMEA Honors Choir Auditions, and VCDA District XIV Representative. Mr. Markwood holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from Houghton College and a Master of Music in Vocal Pedagogy and Performance from Westminster Choir College of Rider University.



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



JUSTIN STRELETZ, COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

Justin Streletz is excited to be returning to Alexandria Choral Society for the 2024-2025 Season! He is a local collaborative pianist who has worked with many school divisions in Northern Virginia for concerts and festivals. Justin is also a music director, including a pit conductor and vocal director. During the day he is an elementary music teacher, entering his 10th year of teaching. Justin studied piano at West Chester University with Dr. Patricia Powell. In his free time, he enjoys reading, traveling, working out at OrangeTheory, and all things LEGO.



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



JIHEA CHOI, CELLIST

Jihea Choi holds a Master of Music degree from University of Maryland, College Park, as well as a Performer's Certificate from Northern Illinois University and a Bachelor of Music degree from The Catholic University of America. She studied with some of the most renowned cellists, including Robert Newkirk, David Teie and Marc Johnson.

Trained in the Suzuki Method, Ms. Choi is passionate about helping students reach their full potential, adjusting the curriculum to suit individual students. She was on the faculty at the Peabody Preparatory of Johns Hopkins University. She also taught at Cellospeak, whose goal is to build the technique and ensemble skills of adult amateur students, and performs as a member of the Cellospeak faculty ensemble, 16 Cellos.

A chamber musician as well as an accomplished orchestral cellist, Ms. Choi plays with the Washington Concert Opera Orchestra, Maryland Symphony in addition to National Philharmonic Orchestra. Ms. Choi currently serves as an associate principal cellist with the Alexandria Symphony.



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



JENNIFER QUIÑONES, ACCOMPANIST

Jennifer Quiñones, the Founder and Conductor of Inspiro, has been the Director of Music at Community Lutheran Church in Sterling, Virginia since 2016. She has conducted several large works such as Rachmaninoff Vespers, Faure Requiem, and other large choral works while at Community. Jennifer has been a church music director and organist since 1998 in

various churches throughout the country. She is also the creative director of *Gabelli Lullabies*, a lullaby creative company that she started in 2019.

For many years, Jennifer was a working musician in New York City, accompanying and conducting for many musical performances with opera, vocalists, ensembles, and teachers. She was also an accompanist for the Juilliard School for several vocal classes. She previously held the position youth music director at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Rochester NY where she conducted Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors. While in Rochester, she was the Assistant Conductor for the Eastman Bach Children's Chorus and the Mozart Children's Chorus at the Eastman School of Music. Many of her responsibilities as assistant conductor included preparing and conducting formal concerts annually with the Rochester Chamber Orchestra's performance of The Messiah, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's performance of The Nutcracker Ballet.

In addition to conducting professionally, Jennifer is an active performer, premiering several new works for either solo piano or piano with instrumentalist in the United States Italy, and the Czech Republic. Jennifer has been sought after as a performer of new music and has performed with such artists as David Craighead, Hugh Smith, Stephen Kennedy, and the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Washington DC. Jennifer also appeared in Lincoln Center's Reel to Reel series production, "What's Opera, Doc?" as the "Maestro" during the 2003 - 2005 seasons which was produced by Alina Bloomgarden.

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The Jen Walker Team proudly supports the Alexandria Choral Society.



The Jen Walker Team knows how important our community is. With over 35 years of calling this place home, Jen, Sue, Micki, Adrianna, and Nancy demonstrate their devotion to Alexandria and beyond through their involvement with over 30 charitable community organizations and leadership roles.

For them, it's about giving back and advocating for their community.

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