

MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

PRO CORO ALEXANDRIA



APRIL 5, 2025 | 7:00PM
LYCEUM RECITAL HALL

PROGRAM

MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

PRO CORO ALEXANDRIA
ALEXANDRIA CHORAL SOCIETY

KATHRYN HARSHA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JUSTIN STRELETZ
COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

THE SEED

O Lux Beatissima	Howard Helvey (1968-)
Hope is the Thing With Feathers	Christopher Tin (1976-)
Grow	Sarah Quartel (1982-)

SPRING!

Frühlingsjubiläum	Joachim Raff (1822-1882), ed. Jeremy Wiggins
Ecco la Primavera	Francesco Landini (1335-1397)
Storm is Passing Over	Charles Albert Tindley (1851- 1933), arr. Barbara Baker (1948-)

BY ANY OTHER NAME

Les Chansons des roses	Morten Lauridsen (1943-)
En une seule fleur	
Dirait-on	
Red is the Rose	(traditional) (arr. The High Kings)
<i>Soloists: Rocky Ebener, Jeff Nickeson, Jonathan Hung</i>	

LOVE IN THE GARDEN

Flower of Beauty	John Clements (1868-1946)
Down by the Salley Garden	arr. Ben Bram (1987-)
If Music Be the Food of Love	David Dickau (1953-)

A SUMMER DAY

Sous le Dome Epais	Frederick Delius (1862-1934)
Wild Mountain Thyme	Jacob Narverud (1986-)
Make our Garden Grow	Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)
from <i>Candide</i>	

Soloists: Kevin Simpson & Erika May

THANKS

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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

O Lux Beatissima - Howard Helvey (b. 1968) composed O Lux Beatissima in 2003, commissioned by the St. John's Choir of Houston. The piece sets a Latin text from the Hymnus Vesperae, celebrating Christ as the "most blessed light." Written in his home of Chattanooga, Tennessee, the work features lush harmonies and chant-like simplicity, creating a serene and contemplative atmosphere for choir and audience alike. Helvey's thoughtful composition blends traditional choral techniques with modern sensibilities.

O Lux Beatissima

O lux beatissima,
Reple cordis intima
Tuorum fidelium.

Sine tuo numine,
Nihil est in homine,
Nihil est innoxium.

O light most blessed,
Fill the inmost heart
Of all thy faithful.

Without your grace,
There is nothing in us,
Nothing that is not harmful.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Hope is the Thing With Feathers - Christopher Tin (b. 1976) composed *Hope is the Thing with Feathers* in 2020, setting Emily Dickinson's famous poem to music. Commissioned by the Virginia Arts Festival, the piece blends classical and world music influences. Tin is renowned for his Grammy-winning *Calling All Dawns* and his work with video game music, including composing for *Civilization IV*. His orchestral expertise extends to opera, such as his recent work rewriting the ending of *Turandot* for the San Francisco Opera and the Kennedy Center. The piece's rich choral texture and sweeping orchestration beautifully capture Dickinson's theme of hope's enduring power.

"Hope" is the Thing with Feathers

Poem by Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

PROGRAM NOTES

Grow - **Sarah Quartel** (b. 1982) composed *Grow* in 2017, blending folk, classical, and contemporary styles to convey themes of hope and resilience. Known for her fresh and accessible choral music, Quartel often explores nature and human connection, as seen in works like *Snow Angel* and *Sing, My Child*. Based in Canada, she is Oxford University Press's youngest Major Composer, earning global recognition for her lyrical storytelling and ability to unite performers and audiences through emotionally resonant compositions.

Grow

Text by Carrie Newcomer

When birds begin to sing and winds are calm,
When spring is here again then you will know,
You will know, when the earth begins to warm,
you can grow.

You can grow, grow, grow.

Blossom and grow, grow, grow.

Like a tree with branches budding,

Like a flower in spring,

When I think of what we've seen and all we know,

When I look at where we've been and where we'll go,

I know that spring will come again and we will know,

We will know, when the earth begins to warm,
you can grow.

Like a bird with wings unfolding,

Like a child with dreams beginning,

Like a tree with branches budding,

Like a flow'r in spring,

You can grow, grow, grow.

PROGRAM NOTES

Frühlingsjubil (Spring Jubilation) was composed by German composer **Joachim Raff** (1822–1882) in 1871, in his hometown of Frankfurt. The piece is an exuberant, light-hearted celebration of spring, showcasing Raff's skill in creating vivid, expressive works. Known for his orchestral music, Raff was highly regarded during his time but has since been somewhat overshadowed.

Frühlingsjubil was arranged for piano by **Percy Wiggins**, a British musician and arranger, who helped bring Raff's music to a wider audience. This work, brimming with lively rhythms and melodic charm, epitomizes Raff's signature style.

Frühlingsjubil

Frühling ist da,	Spring is here,
Tralalala!	Tralalala!
Tanzen und Springen	Dancing and jumping
Will noch gelingen,	Will happen again
Winter, ade,	Goodbye winter,
Schnee nun und Weh!	(goodbye) snow and woe!

Süß in dem Baum	A sweet (smell) in the tree
Rauscht es wie Traum,	How (the wind) rushes like a dream,
Vöglein und Winde	Bird and winds
Kommen geschwinde,	Come quickly
Winter, ade,	Goodbye winter,
Thränen und Weh!	(goodbye) tears and woe!

Nahe und fern	Near and far
Leuchtet der Stern;	The star is shining;
Mädchen und Buben	Girls and boys
Schnell aus den Stuben:	(leave) fast from their rooms
Tralalala!	Tralalala,
Frühling ist da!	Spring has arrived!

PROGRAM NOTES

Ecco la Primavera (Here Comes Spring) was composed by Italian composer **Francesco Landini** (1325–1397), a central figure in the development of 14th-century Italian music. Written in the late 1300s, this joyous ballata captures the essence of spring through its lively rhythms and beautiful melodies. Landini, known for his skill in polyphony and his innovations in musical structure, was one of the most famous composers of his time. He would be 700 years old in 2025, continuing to inspire audiences with his timeless contributions to early music.

Ecco la primavera

Ecco la primavera,	Spring has come apace
Che'l cor fa rallegrare,	To waken hearts to gladness;
Temp'è d'annamorare	Time for lovers' madness
E star con lieta cera.	And to wear a happy face.

Noi vegiam l'aria e'l tempo	The elements together
Che pur chiam' allegria	Are beckoning to mirth;
In questo vago tempo	In this delightful weather,
Ogni cosa vagheça.	Delight pervades the earth.

L'erbe con gran frescheça	The grass in fresh rebirth
E fior' coprono i prati,	Helps meadows come a-flower,
E gli albori adornati	And every branch and bower,
Sono in simil manera.	Is decked with kindred grace.

Ecco la primavera	Spring has come apace
Che'l cor fa rallegrare	To waken hearts to gladness;
Temp'è d'annamorare	Time for lovers' madness
E star con lieta cera.	And to wear a happy face!

PROGRAM NOTES

Storm is Passing Over - Charles Albert Tindley (1851–1933), known as the "Grandfather of Gospel Music," was a Methodist minister and composer who pioneered the gospel hymn style. Born to enslaved parents, he overcame many hardships on his way to founding a thriving congregation in Philadelphia. His hymn "I'll Overcome Someday" inspired the Civil Rights anthem "We Shall Overcome." **Dr. Barbara Baker's** arrangement of Tindley's "The Storm is Passing Over" celebrates resilience with rich harmonies and jubilant "Hallelujahs," blending spiritual depth with uplifting musical energy. Dr. Baker lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, and has conducted internationally, published scholarly articles, and received numerous awards, including Maryland Distinguished Woman in the Arts (1998).

Storm is Passing Over

Have courage my soul
And let us journey on.
Though the night is
dark,
And I am far from
home.

Thanks be to God,
the morning light
appears.
The storm is passing
over,
Halleluia, halleluia,
halleluia!

PROGRAM NOTES

En une seule fleur and **Dirait-on** - Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943), renowned for his emotive choral compositions, wrote *En Une Seule Fleur* (1991) and *Dirait-on* (1993) in Los Angeles as part of his cycle **Les Chansons des Roses**, inspired by Rainer Maria Rilke's poetry collection *Les Roses*. Lauridsen admired Rilke's evocative imagery of roses, symbolizing love, beauty, and transience. *En Une Seule Fleur* conveys emotional tension through dissonant harmonies and intricate textures, reflecting Pierre de Ronsard's French text. *Dirait-on*, with its flowing melody and serene mood, evokes the myth of Narcissus, celebrating self-recognition and beauty. These works exemplify Lauridsen's ability to blend accessibility with profound emotional depth, solidifying his reputation as a beloved American composer.

En une seule fleur

Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke

C'est pourtant nous qui
t'avons proposé
De remplir ton calice.
Enchanté de cet artifice,
Ton abondance l'avait osé

Tu étais assez riche,
pour devenir cent
Fois toi-même
en une seule fleur;
C'est l'état de celui qui aime...
Mais tu n'as pas pensé ailleurs

Dirait-on

Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke

Abandon
entouré d'abandon,
tendresse
touchant aux tendresses...
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse
se caresse, dirait-on;

se caresse en soi-même,
par son propre reflet éclairé.
Ainsi tu inventes le thème
Du Narcisse exhaucé.

In a Single Flower

It is we, perhaps,
who proposed
That you replenish your bloom.
Enchanted by this charade,
Your abundance dared.

You were rich enough
to become yourself
a hundred times over
in a single flower;
Such is the state of one who loves...
But you never did think otherwise.

One Might Say

Abandonment
surrounded by abandonment,
tenderness
touching tenderness...
It's your interior that ceaselessly
caresses itself, one might say;

caresses itself within itself,
by its own enlightened reflection.
Thus you invent the theme
Of Narcissus - healed.

PROGRAM NOTES

Red is the Rose (traditional) (arr. The High Kings). "Red is the Rose" is a traditional Irish folk song, often associated with the emigration of Irish people. Its melody is similar to the Scottish tune "Loch Lomond," and it has been passed down through generations. While its exact origins are unclear, it gained popularity in the 19th century, often sung by Irish immigrants in the U.S. The King's Singers' arrangement, renowned for its vocal precision, brings new life to this classic tune. The song remains a beloved part of Irish musical heritage, with its evocative beauty transcending generations.

Red is the Rose

Come over the hills, my bonnie Irish lass
Come over the hills to your darling
You choose the road, love, and I'll make the vow
And I'll be your true love forever

Chorus:

Red is the rose that in yonder garden grows
Fair is the lily of the valley
Clear is the water that flows from the Boyne
But my love is fairer than any

'Twas down by Killarney's green woods that we
strayed
When the moon and the stars they were shining
The moon shone its rays on her locks of golden hair
And she swore she'd be my love forever

It's not for the parting that my sister pains
It's not for the grief of my mother
It's all for the loss of my bonny Irish lass
That my heart is breaking forever

PROGRAM NOTES

The Flower of Beauty by **John Clements** (1936–2020) is a choral work composed in 1971 in the United States. The piece is set to a text by Sydney Bell and was commissioned by the Concord Choral Society. Clements, a notable American composer, was known for his choral and vocal music, and was a faculty member at the University of Southern California. The Flower of Beauty reflects his style and use of accessible harmonies. It was first performed by the Concord Choral Society shortly after its composition.

Flower of Beauty

Text by Sydney Bell

She is my slender small love,
my flow'r of beauty fair
From the whiteness of her little feet
to the shining of her hair;
More fair she is than April rain
on daffodil or tree:
She is my slender small love,
my flow'r of beauty, she.
I know she walks in the evening
down by the riverside,
And the grasses lean to kiss her robes
who soon will be my bride:
More dear to me her little head
than earth or sky or sea!
She is my slender small love,
my flow'r of beauty, she.

PROGRAM NOTES

Down by the Salley Gardens. Poem by William Butler Yeats. **Ben Bram's** arrangement of the traditional Irish melody Down by the Salley Gardens was created for the Westminster Men's Chorus, directed by Justin Miller, and premiered at the American Choral Director's Association Western Division Conference. The melody, based on a poem written by William Butler Yeats in 1889, features alternate spellings like "Sally" or "Sulley," reflecting its oral tradition. Bram, born in 1987, is a renowned arranger for groups like Pentatonix. The piece retains its Irish roots while showcasing Bram's creative style.

Down by the Salley Gardens

Poem by William Butler Yeats

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.

She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

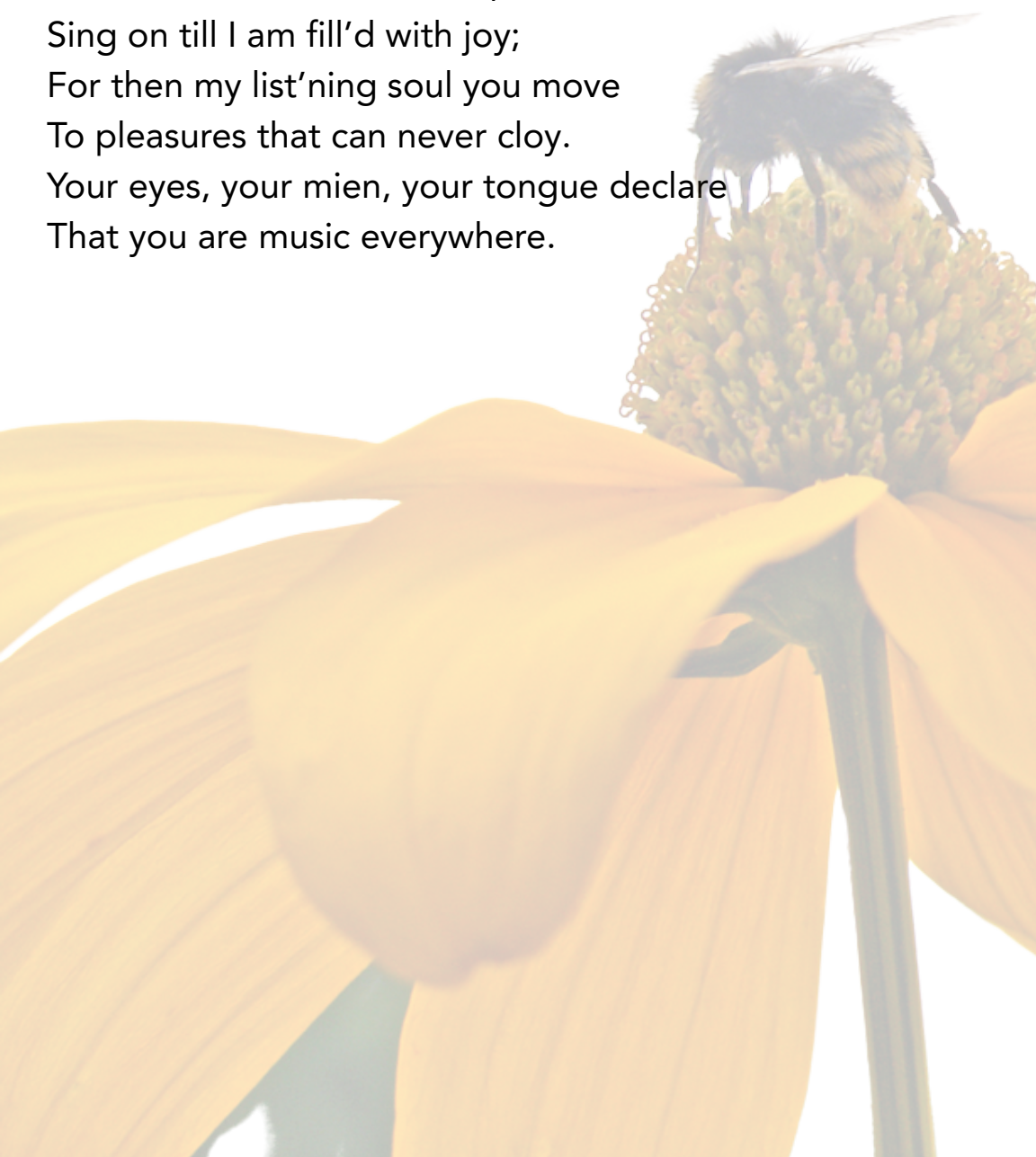
PROGRAM NOTES

If Music Be the Food of Love - David Dickau (b. 1953) composed *If Music Be the Food of Love* in 2001, setting a poem by Henry Heveningham (1651–1700) inspired by Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. The piece was written near the Twin Cities, where Dickau resides. Known for his choral works, Dickau's setting features rich vocal interplay and piano accompaniment. The work was not tied to a specific commission but has become widely performed. Heveningham's text had also been famously set by earlier composers like Henry Purcell in the late 17th century.

If Music Be the Food of Love

Poem by Henry Heveningham

If music be the food of love,
Sing on till I am fill'd with joy;
For then my list'ning soul you move
To pleasures that can never cloy.
Your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare
That you are music everywhere.



PROGRAM NOTES

Sous le Dome Epais - Léo Delibes (1836–1891)

composed the opera *Lakmé* between 1881 and 1882, premiering it on April 14, 1883, at the Opéra-Comique in Paris. The famous duet “*Sous le dôme épais*,” often referred to as the “*Flower Duet*” occurs in Act I, as Lakmé, the daughter of a Brahmin priest, and her servant Mallika gather flowers by the river before bathing. This serene moment contrasts with the intrusion of British colonialists nearby, setting the stage for Lakmé’s tragic love story. The opera reflects 19th-century French fascination with exoticism and colonial India.

Sous le Dôme Epais

Sous le dôme épais	Under the thick dome
Où le blanc jasmin	where the white jasmine
À la rose s’assemble	With the roses entwined together
Sur la rive en fleurs,	On the river bank covered with flowers
Riant au matin	laughing in the morning
Viens, descendons ensemble.	Let us descend together!
Doucement glissons	Gently floating
de son flot charmant	on its charming risings,
Suivons le courant fuyant	On the river’s current
Dans l’onde frémissante	On the shining waves,
D’une main nonchalante	One hand reaches,
Viens, gagnons le bord,	Reaches for the bank,
Où la source dort et	Where the spring sleeps,
L’oiseau, l’oiseau chante.	And the bird, the bird sings.
Sous le dôme épais	Under the thick dome
Où le blanc jasmin,	where the white jasmine
Ah! descendons	Ah! calling us
Ensemble!	Together!

PROGRAM NOTES

Wild Mountain Thyme - Jacob Narverud (b. 1986)
arranged Wild Mountain Thyme in 2022, based on the traditional Scottish/Irish folk song adapted by Francis McPeake in the 1950s. The song's origins trace back to Robert Tannahill's early 19th-century poem The Braes of Balquhither, later set to music by Robert Archibald Smith. Tannahill (1774–1810) wrote the original poem and song about the hills near Balquhidder, Scotland, which was first published in the Scottish Minstrel (1821–24). Narverud's version features choral harmonies and piano accompaniment, bringing new life to this enduring ballad about love and nature.

Wild Mountain Thyme

Oh, the summer time is coming,
And the trees are sweetly blooming,
And the wild mountain thyme
Grows around the blooming heather.
Will you go, lassie, will you go?
And we'll all go together
To pull wild mountain thyme
All around the blooming heather,
Will you go, lassie, go?
I will build my love a tower
Near yon cool crystal fountain,
And on it I will pile
All the colors of the mountain.
If my true love, they were gone,
Would I ever find another?
To pluck wild mountain thyme
'round the blooming heather.

PROGRAM NOTES

Make our Garden Grow (from *Candide*) - Leonard

Bernstein (1918-1990) composed *Candide* in 1956, based on Voltaire's satirical novel from 1759. The operetta follows *Candide's* journey through hardships, questioning the philosophy of optimism taught by Dr. Pangloss. The finale, *Make Our Garden Grow*, reflects *Candide's* realization that happiness comes from practical work and personal growth, not idealistic dreams. Bernstein, renowned for works like *West Side Story* and his tenure as music director of the New York Philharmonic, composed this piece in New York City, blending humor and depth with Voltaire's themes of resilience and reality.

Make Our Garden Grow

You've been a fool
And so have I,
But come and be my wife.
And let us try,
Before we die,
To make some sense of life.
We're neither pure, nor wise,
nor good
We'll do the best we know.
We'll build our house
and chop our wood
And make our garden grow.

Let dreamers dream
What worlds they please
Those Edens can't be found.
The sweetest flowers,
The fairest trees
Are grown in solid ground.
We're neither pure, nor wise,
nor good
We'll do the best we know.
We'll build our house
and chop our wood
And make our garden grow!

I thought the world
Was sugar cake
For so our master said.
But, now I'll teach
My hands to bake
Our loaf of daily bread.

We're neither pure, nor wise,
nor good
We'll do the best we know.
We'll build our house and chop our wood
And make our garden grow.

- Kathryn Harsha

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PRO CORO ALEXANDRIA

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Megan Yingst

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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



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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