



A

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TALENT.

**Virginia Chamber Orchestra
with Pro Coro Alexandria**

**“LEANING INTO
THE HOLIDAYS”**

Sunday, Dec. 18, 4 p.m.

Virginia Chamber Orchestra

David Grandis, Music Director
with Pro Coro Alexandria

Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022 | 4 p.m.



PROGRAM

“Christmas Oratorio”

Camille Saint-Saëns

Jacquelynne Fontaine-Isaac, soprano
Kristen Dubenion-Smith, mezzo-soprano
Katelyn Jackman, alto
Jerry Kavinski, tenor
Christopher Mooney, baritone
Pro Coro Singers
Virginia Chamber Orchestra
David Grandis, Music Director

1. Prélude (in the style of Bach) organ and strings
2. Recitative: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Baritone, organ and strings
3. Chorus: mixed chorus, organ and strings
4. Air: Mezzo-soprano, organ and strings
5. Air and chorus: Tenor, women's chorus, organ and strings
6. Duet: Soprano and Baritone, organ and harp
7. Chorus: mixed chorus, organ and strings
8. Trio: Soprano, Tenor, and Baritone, organ and harp
9. Quartet: for Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Alto, and Baritone, organ and strings
10. Quintet and chorus: all five soloists, chorus, organ, strings, and harp
11. Chorus: mixed chorus, organ and strings

-INTERMISSION-

“The Winter Moon” for Harp and Strings

Arr. by Daniel Burton
Anastasia Pike, Harp
Virginia Chamber Orchestra

“Fantasia on Christmas Carols”

Ralph Vaughan Williams
Christopher Mooney, Baritone soloist
Pro Coro Alexandria
Virginia Chamber Orchestra

Sing-Along—Holiday Favorites with Pro Coro Alexandria

About Virginia Chamber Orchestra

“A focus—above all a standard of performance—that make it one of the most interesting orchestras in the metropolitan area.”

-“The Washington Post”

The quality and vitality of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra’s performances attract enthusiastic concert attendees from all Virginia suburbs, Maryland and the District of Columbia. Listeners appreciate the transparent, intimate sound of a chamber ensemble as well as its power, richness, and remarkable dynamic range. In the words of a “Washington Post” critic, the maestro evokes “energetic excitement” from his players. The repertoire spans the centuries, ranging from Bach to Bartók and beyond.

The VCO is unique among Northern Virginia-based orchestras in having engaged only fully professional players since it was founded, paying every player full union scale and benefits for each rehearsal and concert. Outreach initiatives include television broadcasts and streaming videos on the Internet, serving all area schools and very large numbers of schools nationwide. Video screening programs for the general public are presented in central libraries and area museums, now including the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The award-winning special audience outreach combines free orchestra concert tickets and free post-concert dinners for underserved persons, Wounded Warriors and their families.

History of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra

The Virginia Chamber Orchestra (VCO) was founded in 1971 as a professional touring orchestra, traveling by bus to present performances in areas of Virginia where live orchestral concerts were not offered. In the early 1980s, the VCO was encouraged to establish its base in Northern Virginia, delighting critics and new audiences. Celebrating the fortieth anniversary season in 2010-2011, the orchestra expanded the reach of its live concerts into Washington, D.C. In addition, the VCO occupies a unique niche among all arts organizations by serving a national audience of millions with educational television broadcasts since 1998 and most recently with free streaming videos on its website for students of all ages. The award-winning special audience outreach has benefited the community since the 1980s.

Emil de Cou, Wolf Trap Festival Conductor, served as VCO Music Director for four seasons. De Cou highly recommended [David Grandis](#), a rising star in the musical world, to succeed him as Music Director. Maestro Grandis follows a distinguished line of VCO conductors. Their ability to attract highly gifted guest artists and skillfully lead the VCO’s forty outstanding professional musicians has captivated audiences with engaging performances. Laudatory reviews from “Washington Post” critics repeatedly affirm the orchestra’s consistently high musical standards: “A focus—above all a standard of performance—that makes it one of the most interesting orchestras in the metropolitan area.”

Serving residents across the national capital area’s entire socioeconomic spectrum is a major priority for the VCO. Concerts are made accessible to low and middle-income families through remarkably affordable ticket prices and free admission for all area school and college students. The Virginia Chamber Orchestra’s popular and intimate “Musicale” chamber music performances are held in the elegant homes of distinguished VCO supporters. For years, the prestigious VCO Annual Gala and dinner/dance have attracted leaders from government, business and the arts.

The Virginia Chamber Orchestra looks forward to many more years of memorable concerts. We hope you’ll be joining us for concerts and special events throughout this exciting season.

Please visit www.vco.events to learn more or to make a donation.

Musicians of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra

David Grandis, Music Director

Violin I

Teri Lazar, concertmaster
Paula Akbar
Eleonel Molina
Lisa Cridge

Violin II

William Tortolano, principal
Carolyn Kessler
Ann Sica
Mary Ann Tortolano

Viola

Osman Kivrak, principal
George Ohlson
Marta Howard

Cello

Adam Gonzalez, principal
Kang Xia
Aron Rider

Bass

Mark Stephenson, principal

Organ

Frank Conlon, principal

Harp

Anastasia Pike, principal

Alexandria Choral Society

Artistic Director: Brian Fontaine-Isaac

Pro Coro Alexandria roster

Soprano

Cienna Breen
Jenna Dawkins
Rasneek Gujral
Catherine Harsono
Karen Minatelli

Alto

Bridget Baker-White
Anne Buckborough
Monique Doussard
Jacquelynne Fontaine-Isaac
Claudia Kessel

Tenor

Johnny Beasley
Jeffrey Nickeson
Kevin Simpson

Bass

Zach Byers
Clifford Gay
Sigfried Hache
David Pritzker
Richard Simpson

PROGRAM NOTES

“Oratorio de Noel” (Christmas Oratorio)

Camille Saint-Saëns

In 1858, Saint-Saëns began a twenty-year period serving in the prestigious position of organist at La Madeleine, the official church of the French Empire. He composed his nine movement “Oratorio de Noel” (Christmas Oratorio) in only ten days before it was premiered on Christmas of that year.

The text includes the Christmas story from St. Luke and many selections from the Catholic Christmas liturgy. The work features five soloists (soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor and baritone) with mixed chorus, organ, harp and string orchestra. It opens with a prelude for organ and strings and includes solos, a variety of vocal ensembles from duet to quintet, and movements for both women’s chorus and mixed chorus.

“The Winter Moon”

Daniel Burton

Twentieth century composer and arranger Daniel Burton arranged Canada’s oldest Christmas song, originally entitled “T’was in the Moon of Wintertime,” for harp and strings. In 1642, Jean de Brébeuf, a French Jesuit missionary in what is now Ontario, had introduced the carol to the Huron people in the area. The melody was based on a traditional French folksong, “Une Jeune Pucelle” (“A Young Maid”). However, Jean de Brébeuf wrote the words in the language spoken by the Huron people.

Following the English translation in 1926, the carol has continued to be sung in many Canadian Christian churches, and it also appears in hymnals of several major denominations in the United States.

“Fantasia on Christmas Carols”

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Vaughan Williams dedicated the “Fantasia on Christmas Carols” to his friend and colleague Cecil Sharp, one of the leading collectors and preservers of English folk songs. It was based on three English folk carols, selected from the many that Vaughan Williams and Sharp had collected in southern England several years earlier: “The Truth Sent from Above,” “Come All Ye Worthy Gentlemen” and the “Sussex Carol.”

The composer conducted the premier, scored for baritone solo, mixed chorus, and orchestra, at the Hereford Cathedral in 1912. The edition of the Fantasia in today’s performance is for baritone solo, mixed chorus, strings and organ.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



David Grandis, Music Director Virginia Chamber Orchestra

Maestro David Grandis was recently one of only three prize winners in the twenty-eighth International Conductors Workshop and Competition (ICWC) held in Atlanta, Georgia. In the U.S. he is Music Director of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra and Director of Orchestras at the College of William and Mary. Prior to the pandemic he regularly served as Assistant Conductor of the historic Lyon National Opera.

Grandis' guest conducting appearances include the Bordeaux National Symphony and Nice Philharmonic in France, the Minsk Philharmonic

Orchestra (Belarus), and the New Symphony Orchestra of Sofia (Bulgaria). He has also worked with the Baltimore Symphony, Baltimore Opera, and National Philharmonic Orchestra.

David Grandis first appeared as guest conductor with the Virginia Chamber Orchestra in 2011 at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. He follows a distinguished line of VCO conductors with the unique ability to lead and inspire an ensemble of outstanding professional musicians, as well as to bring classical music to new audiences. In the words of Marco Guidarni, Director of the Nice Philharmonic, David Grandis is “a refined musician of profound artistic sensitivity and a rare intellectual and musical integrity.”

VCO President Douglas Lovejoy echoes this sentiment: “We are grateful to Emil de Cou for introducing us to David. He is an exciting young talent who immediately delighted our audiences and our musicians.” Grandis responded: “I am thrilled at the opportunity to lead the gifted musicians of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra, so that we may bring joy and inspiration to Northern Virginia and D.C. audiences. My past collaborations with this talented group of artists have brought me tremendous musical satisfaction, and I look forward to the upcoming season.”

In addition to assuming two new orchestral positions David Grandis has written “The Voice of France: The Golden Age of the R.T.L.N.” (Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux), recently published in both French and English by MJW Féditoin, Paris. This penetrating analysis of the scarcity of true French style in current vocal performance practices evolved from his doctoral thesis in conducting at the University of Wisconsin Madison.

A native of France, with dual citizenship in France and the United States, Grandis has an equal interest in both symphonic and lyric literature and has performed roles in a variety of operas.



Brian J. Fontaine-Isaac, Artistic Director Alexandria Choral Society

Brian J. Fontaine-Isaac is honored to serve as the Artistic Director of the Alexandria Choral Society (Alexandria, Va). He is also the Artistic Director of Encore Creativity for Older Adults (Annapolis, Md), the nation's largest nonprofit choral arts organization for older adults, and the Founder / Artistic Director of Church Circle Singers (Annapolis, Md).

Brian was most recently the Managing Director for Arts Laureate, a recording team which delivered over 1,500 virtual performances across the country during the pandemic. Previous appointments include: Artistic Director of the Williamsburg Choral Guild (Williamsburg, Va), music faculty at Encore University, Interim Director of Choral Music at Thomas Nelson Community College (Hampton, Va), adjunct music faculty at Tidewater Community College (Portsmouth, Va) and Old Dominion University (Norfolk, Va), Assistant Conductor with the Washington Master Chorale (Washington, D.C.), and Director of Choirs at Damascus High School (Damascus, Md).

Brian's professional and community ensembles have commissioned and premiered new works by composers such as Tawnie Olson, Lori Laitman, Christopher Hoh, Jonathan Kolm, and Ola Gjeilo. Reviews include: "perfectly brilliant" (composer Dr. William Averitt, Shenandoah Conservatory), and having "fine balance" and "delivering sounds that ranged from sensitively soft to knock your socks off soaring" ("Virginia Gazette").

Brian holds a Master of Music in Music Education from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Music Education from Old Dominion University. A former Marine, Brian also holds a Bachelor of Science in English from the United States Naval Academy.



JACQUELYNNE FONTAINE-ISAAC

Jacquelynne Fontaine-Isaac, soprano, has performed nationally and abroad in both Opera and Musical Theater. Most notably she was the Italian opera diva Carlotta in "The Phantom of the Opera" National Tour for over 1,000 performances throughout the U.S. and Canada. Favorite roles include Donna Anna and Pamina (Viterbo, Italy), Violetta and Susanna (Rogue and Tacoma Opera), and most recently, Musetta in Los Angeles. As a concert soprano, she has performed live on KUSC Classical radio, at the Chautauqua Institution, with the South Coast Symphony, Marina Del Rey Orchestra, Orchestra del' Lazio in Italy and at the Redlands Bowl, among others.

A conductor, voice teacher and beginning coder, Jacquelynne received a Master of Music from the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California, completing two years of doctoral study. She is a member of the Actor's Equity union and SAG/AFTRA. Additional information is at www.jfontainestudio.com



KRESTIN DUBENION-SMITH

Recognized for her “velvety legato and embracing warmth of sound” (“Washington Classical Review”) and “lyric-mezzo of uncommon beauty” (“The Washington Post”) mezzo-soprano Kristen Dubenion-Smith specializes in oratorio and sacred vocal chamber music of the medieval, renaissance and baroque eras.

Her 2022-2023 season solo highlights are BWV 170 with Chatham Baroque, Cupid in Blow’s “Venus and Adonis” with the

Bach Collegium in San Diego, the Monteverdi “Vespers” with both Apollo’s Fire and the Washington National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra, Bach’s “Christmas Oratorio” with the Washington Bach Consort, Handel’s “Messiah” with Ensemble Altera, BWV 3 with Bach in Baltimore, and an international tour of Handel’s “Solomon” with The Clarion Choir and The English Concert.

Commercial recordings include The Folger Consort, Apollo’s Fire, Cathedra and Via Veritae, and she was an ensemble singer on the Grammy-winning album “The Prison” by Ethel Smyth with The Experiential Orchestra.



KATELYN JACKSON

Called “winningly wily and dauntless” by “Boston Classical Review,” Kate Jackman is a multifaceted musician and actress. She performed the lead role in Oliver Knussen’s “Higglety Pigglety Pop!” at the Tanglewood Festival. Her other roles include Amneris in Verdi’s “Aida,” the title role in “Carmen” and Elizabeth Proctor in “The Crucible.”

Kate made her Kennedy Center recital debut in 2012. She has been featured at Carnegie Hall in Marilyn Horne’s “The Song

Continues” series and has performed solos from Handel’s “Messiah” at the Kennedy Center, with Helena Symphony, and over internationally televised programming with The National Shrine in Washington, D.C.

This season, Kate is making her debut with The Bach Choir of Bethlehem. She will also join the cast of Helena Symphony’s “Sweeney Todd.”



JERRY KAVINSKI

Lyric tenor Jerry Kavinski has appeared regularly in the Washington, D.C. area for over twenty years. Solo engagements include: The National Symphony Orchestra, Washington Bach Consort, Washington Chorus, New Dominion Chorale, Maryland Choral Society and Reston Chorale. Since 2009 he has served as the Choir Director/Director of Music at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Great Falls, Va. Other professional vocal engagements include performances with Washington Concert Opera, Opera Lafayette, Cathedra,

National Gallery of Art Vocal Arts Ensemble, Folger Consort, The Washington Chorus, The National Cathedral Choir of Men and Cathedral Choral Society. Career highlights include singing for Papal Vespers with Pope Benedict XVI, the State Funerals of George H.W. Bush and Gerald Ford, and the 2009 and 2013 Inaugural Prayer Services for Barack Obama.



CHRISTOPHER MOONEY

Christopher Mooney has appeared nationally with New York City Opera, Santa Fe Opera, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Aspen Opera Theatre, Opera Northeast, Connecticut Grand Opera, State Repertory Opera of New Jersey and the Caramoor Festival. He has shared the stage with such notables as Sherrill Milnes, Jerry Hadley, Jerome Hines, Renée Fleming and Marcello Giordani. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in Opera Orchestra of New York's production of "Lucrezia Borgia." Locally, he regularly sings with the Virginia Opera and the Virginia Symphony. Mr. Mooney serves on faculty with Opera Festival di Roma, and he joined the voice faculty at The College of William and Mary in 2021.

Virginia Chamber Orchestra is supported in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.



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Virginia Chamber Orchestra is supported in part by ArtsFairfax.



CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

Translations

1. Prélude (in the style of Bach)

2 and 3. Recitative and Chorus

In the countryside close by, there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today, in the town of David, a savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favor.'



4. Air

Patiently I waited for the Lord, and he turned his look towards me.

5. Air and Chorus

Lord, I believe thou art the Christ, the living Son of God who has come into this world.

6. Duet

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The Lord is God; his light God, mine to thank thee, thou art my God, mine to thank thee, thou art my God, mine to extol thee.

7. Chorus

What means this turmoil among the nations? Why do the peoples cherish vain dreams? Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

8. Trio

From birth, princely state shall be thine, princely state shall be thine in the splendor of the Saints.

9. Quartet

Ring out, heaven, with praise; let earth keep holiday, and its mountains echo that praise again; the Lord brings consolation to his people, takes pity on their need.

10. Quintet and Chorus

Rise up, daughter Sion, alleluia, give praise in the night, in the beginning of the night watch. The Just of Sion is revealed like the dawn, her savior shines out like a flame. Alleluia.

11. Chorus

Bring sacrifice, worship the Lord in holy array. Rejoice, heaven, and let earth be glad to greet its Lord's coming. Alleluia.

Lyrics to sing-along music will be distributed separately.



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