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The Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus (ABCC)

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THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF ARLINGTON COMPRISSES THREE PERFORMING GROUPS:

The Arlington-Belmont Chorale

The Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus

The Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra
HISTORY OF THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY OF ARLINGTON

Today's Philharmonic Society of Arlington had its beginnings in 1933-35 with a series of concerts involving The Community Symphony, The Arlington Community Chorus, and the Arlington High School Chorus. Members of the Arlington Women's Club provided organizational and financial support to get the group started. They chose the first conductor, Leonard D. Wood, whose 17 years as conductor continue to be recognized in the scholarship for entrants 18 years and under in the Young Artist Competition. Concerts in the early years included several performances of Handel's Messiah, as well as other strictly orchestral works. The first Pops! concert took place in 1936 and included the Arlington Friends of the Drama Chorus.

Following a concert which involved the Community Symphony Orchestra, the Community Chorus, and the Friends of the Drama Chorus in March 1940, the group adopted a new name, passed by-laws, and became officially incorporated as the Philharmonic Society of Arlington (PSA) in 1941. Membership was established on a non-audition basis. A group of conductors, including Leo Litwin, Kalman Novak, and Paul Baugus led the PSA in regular concerts from 1951 to 1968. At that time John Bavicchi, who was also conductor of the Belmont Community Chorus, became conductor of the PSA as well. Due to his efforts the two community choruses combined in 1974 to become the Arlington-Belmont Chorale. That same year Maestro Bavicchi formed the Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus, an auditioned group drawn from the Chorale.

In 1980 the PSA hired Walter Pavasaris to conduct the Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra (APO), allowing John Bavicchi to focus on the Arlington-Belmont Chorale and Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus. Barry Singer joined the PSA in 1994 as conductor of the Chamber Chorus. After Maestro Bavicchi’s retirement in 2003, Barry Singer became conductor of the Chorale, and he continues as Music Director and Conductor of both choral groups today.

When Walter Pavasaris retired from the Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra, the PSA hired Joan Landry as conductor of the group. Her successor, and the current Music Director and Conductor of the APO, is Orlando Cela, who joined the PSA in 2016.
THE ARLINGTON-BELMONT CHAMBER CHORUS

Since 1975, the Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus, composed of about twenty members auditioned from within the Chorale, has dedicated itself to performing smaller scale choral works than those performed by the Chorale. While continuing full participation in the Chorale, Chamber Chorus singers rehearse regularly in the homes of members and present two concerts annually, as well as part of a joint concert with the Chorale.

A special tradition of the Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus is its annual commissioning and premiere performance of a new choral work by a local, national, or international composer. This practice was initiated by John Bavicchi, the Chamber Chorus’s founder, first Conductor, and until his death in 2012, Music Director Emeritus of the Philharmonic Society of Arlington, and continues under the Chamber Chorus’s second Conductor, Barry Singer. In 1998, the Philharmonic Society of Arlington established the John Bavicchi Fund to support this extremely valuable enterprise.

NEW MUSIC COMMISSIONED AND PREMIERED BY THE ARLINGTON-BELMONT CHAMBER CHORUS

1976 Richard St. Clair: Ascension
1977 Peter Hazzard: Te Deum
1981 Ross Lee Finney: Spherical Madrigals
1981 Matthew Marvuglio: Songs of Night
1982 Jeffrey Bishop: Summer Nights
1983 Frank Warren: Missa Brevis
1984 Dennis Leclaire: Songs of Diana
1985 Pasquale Tassone: Alleluia
1986 David Owens: The Shores of Peace
1987 David Cleary: Four Clark Coolidge Poems
1988 Alain Caron: A Slice of Cathedral
1989 Tsuneuyuki Ohshaki:
   A Fragment of Anything You Like
1990 Jeffrey Bishop: More Time For Snoozing
1991 Christophe Chagnard:
   Le Mystere engendrant
1992 Barry Singer: Three Times We Parted
1993 John Bavicchi: Talk To Me, Op. 103
1994 Louis Stewart: Three Landscapes
1995 Brian Packham: Insfet
1997 Frank Warren: Missa Brevis No. 2
1998 James Russell Smith: Day Dreamers
1999 Brian Packham: Universe Mirror I
2000 Christos Koulendros: Insula Felix
2001 Dwight Mikkelsen: De Profundis
2002 Ariel Blumenthal: Peace Poems
2003 Rosey Mei-Kuei Lee:
   Prayer For The Universe
2004 Felipe Lara: Requiem
2005 Jeffrey Brody: Planetarium
2006 Barry Singer: For I Know Well The Spring
2007 Pasquale Tassone: Choric Sketches
2008 Michael Veloso: Executive Orders
2009 Christopher Haynes: Singing in Tongues
2010 Kenneth Seitz:
   Three Poems of L. M. Montgomery
2011 John Kramer: Three Thoughts on Love
2012 John Murphree: In The Animals’ Court
2013 Malcolm Hawkins: Martha and Lazarus
2014 James Russell Smith: Fireflies
2015 Christopher Charig: A June Night
2016-17 Pamela Marshall:
   Songs from a Quaker Heart
2018 Adria Stolk: Voyage
2019 Barry Singer: Missa brevis naturalis
2020 Morgan Jackson: Spacetime Synthesis

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The Philharmonic Society of Arlington has sponsored its Young Artist Competition for more than 50 years. The half-century-and-still-counting mission of this remarkable competition is to identify and encourage promising young musicians. It is our honor to be able to continue to give these superb young instrumentalists and vocalists the opportunity to audition in front of an adjudication panel and to provide the winners with further public exposure and experience. Any musician aged 29 or under may apply. Up to 30 applicants each year compete for six awards and many past winners have gone on to win national and international acclaim.

Participants aged 19-29 are eligible for the Tannenwald Performance Awards, which are funded through the generosity of the estate of Peter Tannenwald, a long-time member of the Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra and one of the greatest and most dedicated supporters of our Young Artist Competition. The $1,000 First Place Peter Tannenwald Performance Award includes a solo performance with the PSA. The judges also award Second and Third Place prizes of $650 and $350.

The family of Leonard D. Wood, the first conductor of the Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra, provides three additional awards of $500, $350, and $150 given to the top three performers aged 18 or younger. These awards recognize excellence in our younger contestants and encourage them to continue to compete. The first place winner in this category may also be given the opportunity to perform at a concert. At their discretion, the judges may grant Honorable Mention Awards of $100 from a fund established in honor of Penelope Davis Hart, a long time Orchestra member.

The 2020 Young Artist Competition was to be on Saturday, May 2, however the recent pandemic made it necessary to change the format for this year’s Competition. The format for the Tannenwald Division, as initiated last year, required potential contestants to submit videos of themselves that were pre-judged to pare down the auditioners to the best of the best who would then go on to actual face-to-face auditions. This year we required the final contestants of both the Tannenwald and Wood Divisions to submit new videos that the panels would then adjudicate.

The 2019 Peter Tannenwald First Place Award went to violinist Jacqueline Tso who was the soloist in the APO’s performance of Camille Saint-Saëns’ Violin Concerto. A native of Cincinnati, OH, Jackie is currently studying with Li Lin at The Juilliard School and has been a soloist with orchestras around the world such as the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Santa Fe Concert Association Orchestra, and the Beijing Broadcasting Orchestra. Tso started playing the violin when she was four and was part of Cincinnati’s Starling String Program as well as the Music Institute of Chicago’s Academy program. She also served as concertmaster of the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra for three years. When she was fifteen, Jackie had the pleasure of collaborating with acclaimed pianist Christopher O’Riley on National Public Radio’s From the Top.

Second Place went to pianist Hongzhen Wang and Third Place to pianist Anthony Cardella. The judges awarded an Honorable Mention to violinist Mitsuru Yonezaki.

First Place in the 2019 Wood Division went to 14 year old violinist Ella Kim, Second Place went to cellist Isaac Laing, 15, and Third Place was awarded to cellist Nicholas Bass, 15. Honorable Mentions went to pianist Katherine Liu, 14, and cellist Hayden Ren, 10.
THE PSA’S ORCHESTRAL AND CHORAL LIBRARIES

Of all the amateur musical organizations in the Boston area, the Philharmonic Society of Arlington is the only one that maintains both Orchestral and Choral libraries. The PSA owns, uses, stores, and lends full sets of more than 900 choral works and the full instrumental parts for over 400 orchestral works. Though maintaining a library is not unusual for orchestras, it is very uncommon for choral groups, which generally require their members to purchase their own music. Having our own libraries helps keep membership costs relatively low for our singers and players, a commitment that, as a community arts organization we work to honor. Our libraries are also a means of community outreach (and a small source of revenue), as the PSA lends music for a small stipend to organizations such as local church choirs, the Masterworks Chorale, the Paul Madore Chorale, and the Powers Music School for summer sings, open readings, etc.

Road Warrior Moving and Storage in Arlington houses both our Orchestral and Choral libraries. The Orchestra and Chorale Librarians are grateful to the owners of Road Warrior for providing a safe and convenient place to preserve our collections for future use.
MEMBERSHIP

The Philharmonic Society of Arlington is a distinctive community organization providing an Orchestra, Chorale, and Chamber Chorus to Arlington and its surrounding towns. Membership in the Chorale is open to all singers without an audition. Auditions for membership in the Chamber Chorus are open to members of the Chorale. Membership in the Orchestra is open to all instrumentalists without an audition. Placement is subject to the requirements of the music and the determination of the conductor. Come sing and play with us!

• Chorale rehearsals are held Monday evenings at 7:45 pm at Park Avenue Congregational Church, 50 Paul Revere Road, corner of Park Avenue, Arlington.

• Orchestra rehearsals are held Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm at the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, 630 Massachusetts Ave, in Arlington Center.

Participation in the PSA is open to people from any community. Members of the PSA come from over 30 neighboring cities and towns to rehearse and perform in Arlington and Belmont! Here are those we know about as we go to press this season.

Arlington   Brighton   Hyde Park   Natick   Waltham
Auburndale  Brookline  Lexington  Newton   Watertown
Ayer        Burlington Lincoln Providence, RI Westford
Bedford      Cambridge  Malden     Rochester Weston
Belmont      Chelmsford Maynard  Somerville Winchester
Boston      Chestnut Hill Medford Stoneham Woburn
Bourne       Concord    Melrose   Waban
In addition to providing our community with at least nine wonderful concerts per season, several times a year the PSA also sells juicy, flavorful oranges and grapefruit shipped immediately after being picked. Every late fall and winter we take orders from friends, neighbors, family members, and co-workers, and then a huge refrigerated truck arrives at a suburban garage with fruit that was on the tree just a few days earlier. PSA volunteers unload the boxes of fruit and turn the chore into a party, complete with breakfast or lunch — notice the smiles in the photo! Then we each take the remarkably fresh and delicious fruit we’ve ordered and deliver it to our friends at a price that is less than what it costs for inferior supermarket fruit that has been in cold storage or on the shelves for weeks or even months.

So every winter, when you need vitamin C and the bursting flavor of health and sunshine, ask anyone in the Orchestra or Chorale about this great treat and bargain! (And if you include all of your friends, too, they will thank you!) The Citrus Fundraising Project was the brainchild of Ginny Hutchinson and Dr. David Singer. It remains the legacy of Dr. Singer, a longtime bass in the Chorale, who initiated the project more than 10 years ago, and a group of PSA volunteers carries on the tradition. It is not only a highly successful fundraiser, but also a wonderful and nutritious way to drive away the winter blues! Try it — you’ll like it!
The Philharmonic Society of Arlington now presents nine concerts each season. Unfortunately, the recent pandemic forced us to cancel two of our last concerts and the final concert of our 2019-2020 Season, our Strawberry Festival and POPS Concert. With the expectation that life will gradually return to normal, we have scheduled the following concerts, hoping that our upcoming season can begin as usual.

The Philharmonic Society of Arlington’s Complete 2020–2021 Concert Season

Sunday, November 1, 2020, 3:00 pm
The Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra’s FALL CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Saturday, December 5, 2020, 8:00 pm
The Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus’s NOT-QUIETE-WINTER CONCERT
Payson Park Congregational Church, Belmont

Sunday, December 13, 2020, 3:00 pm
The Philharmonic Society’s WINTER CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Saturday, February 20 2021, 8:00 pm
The Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra’s MID-WINTER CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Sunday, March 7, 2021, 3:00 pm
The Arlington-Belmont Chorale & Chamber Chorus’s ALMOST SPRING CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Sunday, March 14, 2021, 3:00 pm
The Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra’s FAMILY CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Sunday, April 25, 2021, 3:00 pm
The Philharmonic Society’s SPONSOR’S CONCERT
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Friday, May 14, 2021, 8:00 pm
The Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus’s MUSIC FOR A SPRING EVENING
First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church, Arlington

Saturday, June 12, 7:00 pm
The Philharmonic Society’s STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL AND POPS! CONCERT
Arlington Town Hall, Arlington
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR OF
THE ARLINGTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Orlando Cela joined the Arlington Philharmonic Orchestra as conductor and music director in 2016. His experience includes launching the orchestral department at Ningbo University in China and conducting the inaugural concert of the Ningbo City Symphony Orchestra. In the US, his conducting positions include work with orchestras and choruses at Randolph College (VA) and UMass Dartmouth (MA). Guest conducting credits include the London Classical Soloists, (London, UK), Marquette Symphony Orchestra (MI), the Northern Michigan State University Orchestra (MI), the Manchester Symphony Orchestra (CT), and the Brandeis New Music Ensemble (MA).

Besides being the music director of the Arlington Philharmonic, he is also the music director of the Lowell Chamber Orchestra, and the former music director of the North Carolina Governor’s School, with which he received two prizes from The American Prize in 2017 - one for Programming and for Conducting - and second place in the Ernst Bacon Memorial Award, for excellence in the performance of American music, for his renditions of music by Charles Ives, Libby Larsen, and John Luther Adams, among others. In January 2017 he won second place in the London Classical Soloists Conducting Competition for his performances of Beethoven’s Symphonies 7 and 8, as a guest conductor with this orchestra.

A dedicated music educator, Mr. Cela is known for his dynamic workshops and lecture demonstrations. Popular and effective as a guest lecturer and clinician, he has presented sessions on contemporary music topics at New England Conservatory, Tulane University, Berklee College of Music, and Brandeis University, as well as at the Central Conservatory of Music in China, the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Stuttgart (Germany), and the Charlotte New Music Festival (NC). Mr. Cela has also lectured on general performance practice issues at flute festivals in Ithaca and Syracuse and at Dulwich College (Beijing) and Shanghai Normal University.

As a flute player, Mr. Cela has performed at venues such as the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian (Washington, DC), the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Boston), and the Center for New Music and Technologies at UC Berkeley. His credits abroad include concerts at the Zentrum Danziger (Berlin), the Espace des Femmes (Paris), and at the Central Conservatory of Music (China). As a collaborative artist, Mr. Cela has concertized with flutist Paula Robison, tabla player Samir Chatterjee, harpsichordist John Gibbons, and shen (mouth organ) virtuoso Hu Jianbing. He is currently the flute player of Ensemble Parallax.

Mr. Cela received his undergraduate degree from DePauw University and holds two master's degrees (flute and conducting) from New England Conservatory. Currently, he is faculty at Middlesex Community College, Berklee College of Music, and UMass Lowell.
Barry Singer, Choral Music Director for the Philharmonic Society of Arlington, has directed the Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus since 1994, and the Arlington-Belmont Chorale since 2004. In addition to his work with the Philharmonic Society of Arlington, Barry was Chorus Master for Concord’s Opera 51 (2013 - 2017) and as choral conductor for the Appalachian Mountain Club Mountains and Music program. He has served as choral director of the First Parish Church in Needham, Congregation Shalom in Chelmsford, and the Winchester Unitarian Society, and has been a guest conductor for the Carlisle Chamber Orchestra, Paul Madore Chorale Summer Sing Series, and the M.I.T Gilbert and Sullivan Players. Musical theatre is of particular interest to Barry, and he has been active in this area for many years. In the 1980s he was music director for The Music Man with the Savoyard Light Opera Company in Carlisle, MA, and in Spring 2020 directed The Who’s Tommy at Arlington High School. Other past music directorships include the Arlington Friends of the Drama, the Sudbury Savoyards, and Oktoberfest Music Theatre. In addition, he was a founder, arranger, singer, and co-leader of Serious Fun, an award-winning contemporary a cappella group.

A multi-instrumentalist and vocalist since childhood, Barry maintains a very active musical performing career aside from his conducting duties. On the instrumental side, Barry received flute and piano lessons from an early age, and added saxophone, clarinet, and electric bass while in his teens. Currently, Barry is an active piano accompanist, on staff at the Concord-Carlisle and Arlington Public School systems, and for many years has been the summer musician at St. Peter’s Church in Weston. Other current performing activities include frequent work as a keyboard and woodwind player on recordings for local songwriters and in the orchestra pit of several area theatre groups, as a freelance jazz pianist, and as a piccoloist and sax player with the Boston Windjammers, a professional marching band. For many years he played and sang with the popular Boston-area dance band Firefly, and these days often sits in on saxophone with local favorites Beckey and the Swinging Bards.

Barry first began singing in high school, and studied voice while at Berklee College of Music. From 1983-1998 he sang with the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Tanglewood Festival Chorus in numerous performances and recordings with the BSO and Boston Pops Orchestra. Barry served as baritone soloist with the Congregation Shirat Hayam of the North Shore from 2002-2010, and for many years was baritone soloist and section leader at St. Peter’s Church in Weston.

Barry received his degree in Music Composition from Berklee College, where he studied composition with John Bavicchi and Jeronimas Kačinskas, and conducting with George Monseur. The PSA has premiered four of his choral compositions: Three Times We Parted (1992), For I Know Well The Spring (2006), and Missa brevis naturalis (2019), written for the Chamber Chorus, and Lux Aeterna (2002) for the Chorale and Orchestra. He has arranged and orchestrated popular music for a number of performers, and composed original music for the off-Broadway play, Looking for Billy Haines, which ran in New York in 2010.

Barry recently retired from the Music Maker School in Acton where he taught piano and flute from 2002-2019, but continues a private studio in Arlington where he teaches piano and music theory and provides audition coaching. He and his family have lived in Arlington, MA since 1989. He and his family have lived in Arlington, MA since 1989.

Kennedy McAlister is a conductor and soprano. She is in the final year of New England Conservatory’s Masters of Music in Choral Conducting program, where she serves as one of the graduate conductors for the NEC choirs under the tutelage of Mrs. Erica J. Washburn. Originally from Oklahoma, she received her Bachelor degree in Vocal Performance from Oklahoma Christian University, where she graduated as an Honors Fellow.

Kennedy is currently serving in her second season as assistant conductor for the Arlington-Belmont Chorale. Concurrently, she is a graduate conductor with the NEC Chamber Singers and Concert Choir, Interim Conductor for the NEC Prep Children’s choirs, a music director for local middle schools and youth theaters, and has her own voice and piano studio. She strives to foster communal and personal development and encourage others in all their musical endeavors, and is grateful for the community she has with the A-B Chorale!

Michael Becker has been the Accompanist of the Arlington-Belmont Chorale of the Philharmonic Society of Arlington since January 2007. He is on the piano faculty of the All Newton Music School and is a staff pianist at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee. Michael is also on the education faculty of the Handel and Haydn Society, where he accompanies the Chorus of Sopranos and Altos, as well as the Chamber Choir.

Michael has performed and toured throughout the United States and Europe. He has worked as a pianist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Boston University, Handel and Haydn Society, New England Conservatory, North End Music and...
Performing Arts Center, Riverside Theatre Works, Suffolk University, and Wellesley College. Michael has performed and adjudicated at numerous auditions, festivals and competitions, including the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), Bay State Piano Competition, Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association (MICCA), Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA), National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), and the National Convention of Piano Pedagogy. Select local collaborations include the Back Bay Chorale, Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus, Heritage Chorale, the Eureka Ensemble Women’s Chorus, Metropolitan Chorale, Mother Caroline Academy, and numerous concerts with “Urban Voices: A Choral Music Initiative,” an educational outreach program of the Metropolitan Opera Guild of New York.

Michael is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, where he earned a Master of Music degree in Collaborative Piano. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Music in Piano Performance from Towson University, with additional studies at the Eastman School of Music and the Longy School of Music Piano Pedagogy Institute.

ACCOMPANIST OF THE ARLINGTON-BELMONT CHAMBER CHORUS

Pianist Amy Lee is a multi-faceted musician, passionate about collaboration, chamber music, and education. Her repertoire ranges from Johann Sebastian Bach to Donald Martino; she enjoys performing unique programs, exploring new works and working with composers. She has performed throughout the Northeast and abroad, with recent solo appearances at the Gardner Museum, New England Conservatory, the Roscliff Mansion, Brevard Music Center, and recitals in New York, the UK, and Hong Kong. She has appeared in concert with the MerWinds Symphony, members of the Johnson String Quartet, A Far Cry, and was a recent guest artist for the Boston New Music Initiative.

Amy is a graduate of the Longy School of Music, where she studied with Randall Hodgkinson. Amy was previously on the faculty at the Indian Hill Music School, where she served as the co-chair of the Piano Department and founded the Chamber Music Intensive program.

Aside from being a musician, she also enjoys photography, baking, Third-wave coffee, learning the cello, and playing with her dog.

COMMUNITY ARTS SUPPORT FOR THE PSA

- The Arlington Cultural Council, a local council of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, awarded the Arlington-Belmont Chorale a grant of $1350 in partial support of the Chorale’s Almost Spring concert, held on March 8, 2020.
- The Belmont Cultural Council, also a local council of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, awarded the Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus a grant of $400 to support its Not-Quite-Winter concert, scheduled to be held in Belmont on December 6, 2020.
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City/State/Zip: __________________________
Phone: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________

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