



of this land

RICHMOND
SYMPHONY

Valentina
Peleggi

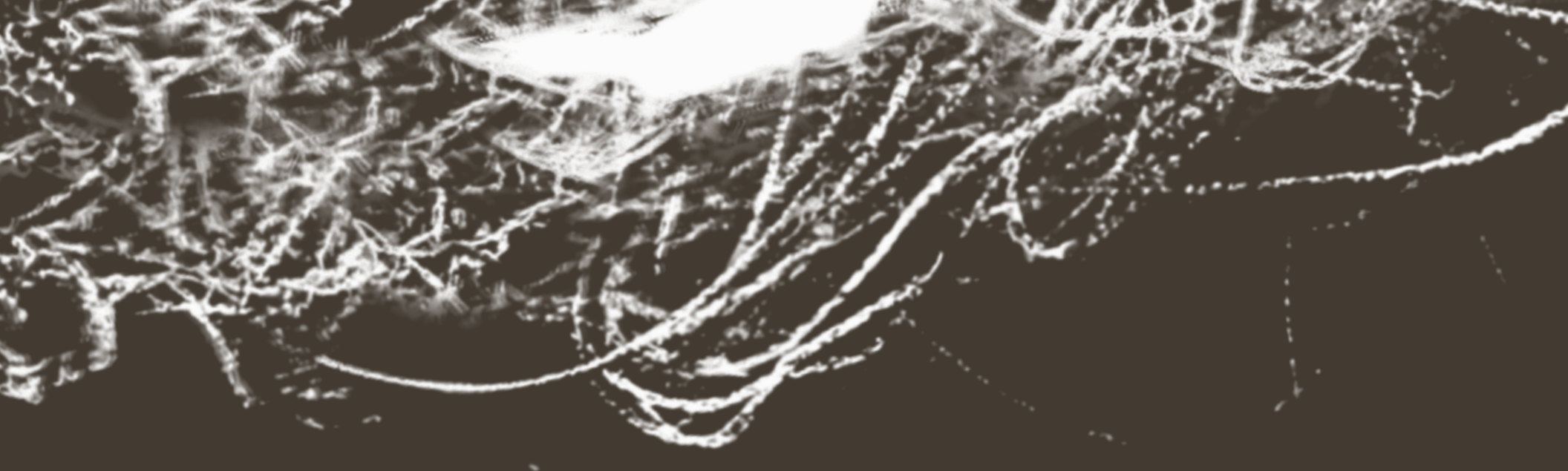
of this land

Richmond Symphony
conducted by Valentina Peleggi

- 1 Letter to the City** **10:57**
by Zachary Wadsworth, poetry by Joanna Lee
Richmond Symphony Chorus, Richard W. Robbins, Director
- 2 Suite from Loving v. Virginia** **21:40**
by Damien Geter
- 3 Born in the Iron Grip** **13:40**
by Joe Jaxson
- 4 Bound Away** **5:34**
by Mason Bates, Daisuke Yamamoto, violin

Produced by Blanton Alsbaugh
Recorded Live at Carpenter Theatre, Dominion Energy Center, Richmond, Virginia,
October 9, March 22 & 23, 2025; and February 28 & March 1, 2026
Engineered by Ed Thompson, Mastered by Mark Donahue
Recording made possible through funding from the Philip Loubser Foundation





“The longing for home lies at the heart of the story.” – Damien Geter

Of this land is a collaborative recording from the Richmond Symphony and Richmond Symphony Chorus under the direction of Music Director Valentina Peleggi, created in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States.

Symphonic repertoire, at its heart, tells stories. As we seek to commission works that reflect our community, and that tell our collective stories, this album seeks to celebrate that artistry and the voices that brought forth this music as a statement of who we are, where we have been, and the stories that must be heard as we shape what comes next.

Virginia is known as the birthplace of Presidents. Much of our known and unknown US history has a home in Virginia. Each of these composers has roots in Virginia, and each story has a connection to the Commonwealth. We invite you to meet the story where you are, and find within it your own piece of home.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Richmond Symphony

Founded in 1957, the Richmond Symphony is the largest performing arts organization in Central Virginia. The organization includes an orchestra of 69 professional musicians, the 150-voice Richmond Symphony Chorus and more than 200 students in the Richmond Symphony Youth Orchestra programs. Each season, more than 200,000 members of the community enjoy concerts, radio broadcasts, and educational outreach programs. The Richmond Symphony holds a strong commitment to commissioning, and championing the orchestra as a living art form.

Valentina Peleggi, Music Director

Renowned for her dynamic artistry, Valentina Peleggi has been Music Director of the Richmond Symphony since 2020. A passionate advocate for new music, Peleggi launched commissioning projects and composer-in-residence programs, dedicating her artistry to championing the voices of our time.

She has guested with orchestras worldwide such as the Chicago Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Pacific Symphony, London Philharmonic, Gulbenkian Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, New Zealand Symphony, Orchestra dell'Arena di Verona and Teatro Colon.

Deeply rooted in the vocal tradition, Peleggi has led productions at Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera, Opéra National de Lyon and English National Opera among others. She previously served as Resident Conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra and Principal Conductor of its Chorus. Peleggi is the first Italian woman to enter London's Royal Academy of Music and the first Italian woman to be named Music Director in North America.



Open letter to the city in spring time
by Joanna Lee

ZACHARY WADSWORTH (b. 1983)
Letter to the City

Notes as a musical “valentine” to Richmond, Letter to the City, was the first commission in the Richmond Symphony’s commissioning journey of stories from, of and about Richmond, Virginia. In search of a text for the new commission, Wadsworth collaborated with the Richmond-based poet Joanna Suzanne Lee, a founder of the River City Poets community whose work focuses on “the intersection of healing and creativity.” They both agreed that the James River would be a central presence in the piece.

In the resulting poem, “Open letter to the city in spring time,” Lee “charts the path of water through the bustling city, past its people, buildings, scenery, history, and monuments, and down to the churning river below,” writes Wadsworth. His Letter to the City in turn “charts this same path in sound, beginning with a soft, meandering trickle in the strings and horn, and ending with the orchestra’s full forces roaring down the rapids.”

Your daffodils unfold in the median
just beyond the magnolia's shadow,
yellow suns against a cobblestone
slick with pink petals that follow the rain
from a sky that promises promise
despite its tears
from (the) rooftops holding their windows open
like the hungry mouths of young herons
from the umbrellaed heads of early morning
downtown workers & students on their way
past the groan of traffic over old bridges
and the mud of new growth,
past the footprint of construction, scaffolding
a skeleton to cradle the generations who come
past the shop-lined sidewalks
and the sweat-stains of innovation,
past the coming-together
above cold stone
where your ghosts dance
in the gaps of cloudbreak,
where art calls out
from your walls and your overpasses,
calls out from your history
and your thousand beating hearts
cries out like the young heron
ready to take flight
down to the river,
where all rains run together
and another spring begins.

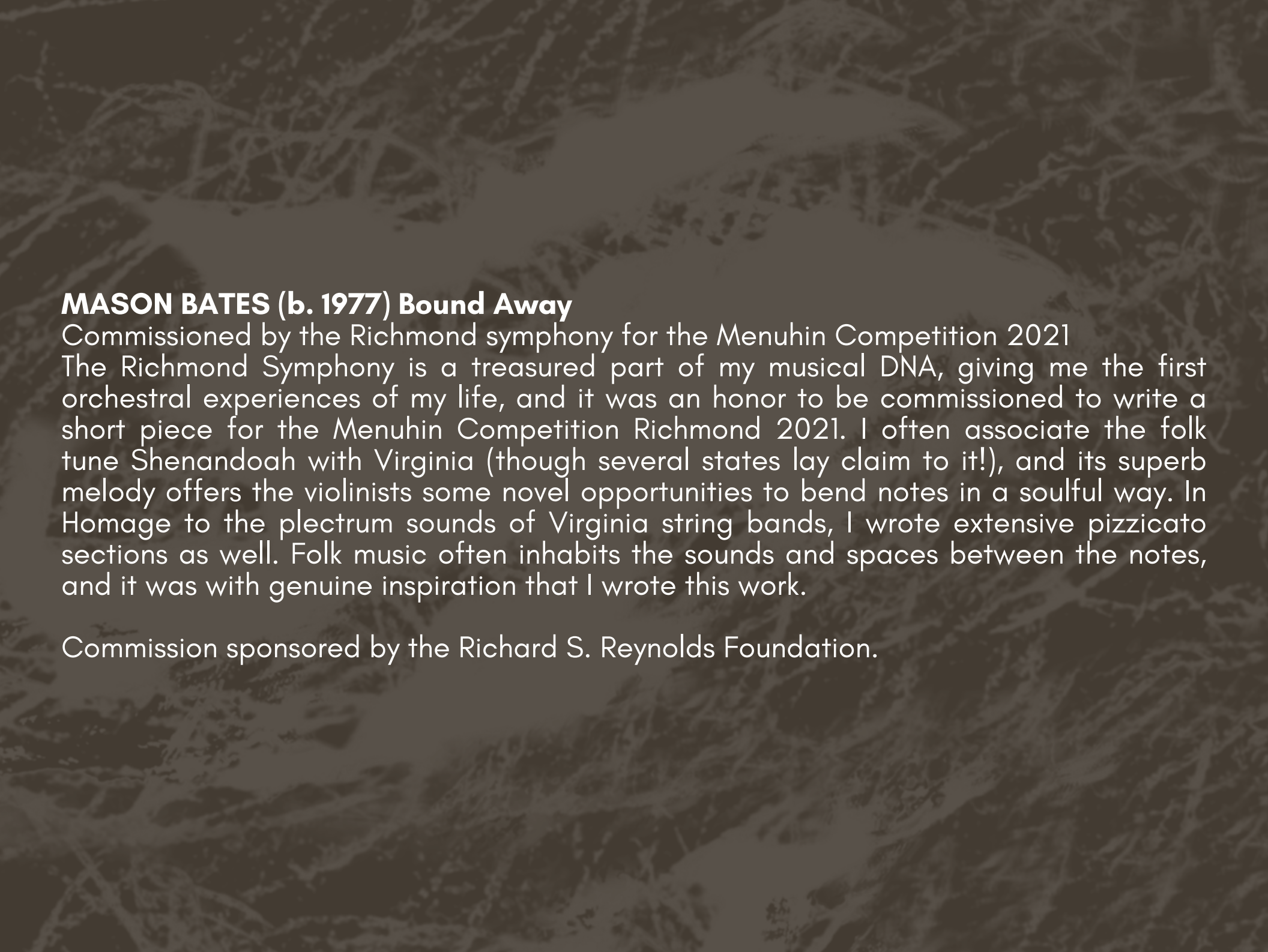
JOE JAXSON (b. 2000) Born In the Iron Grip

"Born In the Iron Grip" celebrates Arthur Ashe in the 50th anniversary of his Wimbledon Championship win in the Men's Singles in 1975." This 13-minute work transports the listener to the courts of the Wimbledon Championship after an introductory section bringing Arthur into view. The title comes from a quote from his autobiography Days of Grace. The quote goes, "I am an African American, one born in the iron grip of legal segregation...my inner most stirrings inevitably have to do [with] trying to overcome racism and other forms of social justice, with the search for dignity and power for blacks in a world so often hostile to us." This composition utilizes the hymn "Lift Every Voice and Sing" depicting how Ashe's talent in the tennis profession became a "voice" for the African Americans of his generation and community.

DAMIEN GETER (b. 1980) Suite from Loving v. Virginia

The opera Loving v. Virginia, commissioned by Virginia Opera and The Richmond Symphony, tells the harrowing story of Richard and Mildred Loving, an interracial couple who married in 1958. Although they wed in Washington, D.C., their marriage was considered illegal in their home state of Virginia at the time. Their case ultimately reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967, which ruled that laws banning interracial marriage were unconstitutional. The Suite from Loving v. Virginia preserves the opera's central musical themes and dramatic arc. These include the home theme; the music of the law—encompassing the Supreme Court, the Sheriff/Judge, and the monotonous "law chorus"; as well as the love theme and the dream theme.

To me, the longing for home lies at the heart of the story. The suite opens with the home theme and follows many winding paths and challenges until Richard and Mildred finally return home in the end.



MASON BATES (b. 1977) Bound Away

Commissioned by the Richmond symphony for the Menuhin Competition 2021

The Richmond Symphony is a treasured part of my musical DNA, giving me the first orchestral experiences of my life, and it was an honor to be commissioned to write a short piece for the Menuhin Competition Richmond 2021. I often associate the folk tune Shenandoah with Virginia (though several states lay claim to it!), and its superb melody offers the violinists some novel opportunities to bend notes in a soulful way. In Homage to the plectrum sounds of Virginia string bands, I wrote extensive pizzicato sections as well. Folk music often inhabits the sounds and spaces between the notes, and it was with genuine inspiration that I wrote this work.

Commission sponsored by the Richard S. Reynolds Foundation.

RICHMOND SYMPHONY

Valentina Peleggi, Music Director

Hae Lee, Associate Conductor

Violin

Daisuke Yamamoto, Concertmaster
Adrian Pintea, Associate Concertmaster
Ellen Cockerham Riccio, Principal Second Violin
Jeannette Jang, Associate Principal Second Violin

Anna Bishop
Alana Carithers
Catherine Cary
Alyssa Evans
Jill Foster
Treesa Gold
Audrey Gray
Alison Hall
Delaney Hunt
Hanbing Jia
Timothy Judd
Susanna Klein
Anna Kong
Tong Li
Stacy Matthews
Maria Gabriela Mendez Martinez
Gabrielle Monachino
Emily Monroe
Sarah Park
Matt Richardson
Anna Rogers
Jocelyn Vorenberg
Susy Yim

Viola

Rebecca Benjamin, Principal
Hyo Joo Uh, Associate Principal

Candace Amato
Johanna Beaver
Zsuzsanna Emödi
Daniel McCarthy Howard
Liz O'Hara
Stephen Schmidt
Derek Smith
Jocelyn Smith

Cello

Neal Cary, Principal
Jason McComb, Associate Principal

Beideth Briceno
Barbara Gaden
Adrienne Gifford-Yang
Peter Greydanus
Ryan Lannan
Dana McComb
Charlotte Roberts
Schuyler Slack

Bass

Lee Philip, Principal
Rumano Solano, Associate Principal

Kelly Ali
Ben Crofut
Morgan Daly
Matt Gold
Patrick Raynard
Peter Spaar
Riley Zimmermann

Flute

Mary Boodell, Principal
Jennifer Debiec Lawson, Associate Principal
Catherine Broyles
Shannon Vandzura

Oboe

Victoria Chung, Principal
Kara Poling, Associate Principal
Lucian Avalon
Hoon Chang

Clarinet

David Lemelin, Principal
Eddie Sundra, Associate Principal
Sara Reese
Daniel Frazelle

Bassoon

Thomas Schneider, Principal
Matthew Lano
Eddie Sanders

Horn

Dominic Rotella, Principal
Devin Gossett
Erin Lano, Associate Principal
Roger Novak
Stephen Slater

Trumpet

Samuel Huss, Principal
Brian Strawley, Associate Principal
Micah Reinharz
Daniel Egan
Andrew Moreschi
Kevin Paul

Trombone

Han Yun (Jonathan) Liang, Principal
Skye Dearborn
Scott Winger
Scott Cochran

Tuba

Conrad Shaw, Principal
Ian Maser

Timpani

James Jacobson, Principal
Charles Kiger

Harp

Lynette Wardle, Principal
Anastasia Jellison

Percussion

Clifton Hardison, Principal
Robert Jenkins
Curt Duer
Davi Martinelli de Lira

RICHMOND SYMPHONY CHORUS

The Richmond Symphony Chorus is an award-winning ensemble of 150 members from the Richmond region. The chorus performs regularly with the Richmond Symphony, Richmond Ballet, and in stand-alone performances around the community. Its members are a diverse group of Richmond community members united by a shared passion for choral singing.

Richard W. Robbins
Chorus Director

Kevin L. Barger
Assistant Chorus Director

Daniel Stipe
Rehearsal Accompanist

Janice Guzman
Chorus Manager

Barbara C. Batson
Carl J. Eng
Lisa C. Fusco
Rehearsal Assistants

Soprano

Ann Whitfield Carter,
Music Section Leader

Faith A. Alejandro
Melanie Barron Ficke
Gabrielle Francesca Bergeret
Brittany Brooks
Shannon Browning
Leigh Anne Clary
Lauren Lexa Crapanzano
Erin DeMay
Courtnei A. Fleming
Claire Foley
Lisa C. Fusco
Catrina J. Garland
Sarah George
Carrie Gregory
Olivia Hansen
Denise R. Harding
Anna Hess
Cynthia Hickman
Mary Stuart Holman
Luci Hughes
Young-hae Jeon
Cammy Koch
Nina Lankin
Ashley Larson
Ashley M. Love
Leslie Maloney
Holly Maples
Kirstin McIntosh
Morgan Merkel
Jamie Miller
Eve Minter
Lucy Wagner Mitzner
Terry Moffett

Katherine Nelson-Tracey
Ansley Pfeiffer
Mallory Porter
Stephanie Poxon
Melissa Reynold
Samantha P. Sawyer
Allison Elliott Schutzer
Johanna Scogin
Margaret Storti
Julia Szymanski
Ann Voss
Mary Ellen Wadsworth
Madeleine Wagner
Darlene Walker
Emily Anderson Walls
Michele Wittig
Sara Zoeller

Alto

Kristen Melzer
Music Section Leader

Andrea J. Almoite
Jan Altman
Barbara Baker
Caroline Bass
Barbara C. Batson
Kerry Blum
Kadia Bradford-Rudd
Elaina F. Brennan
Sarah Capehart
Ellen L. Carleton
Linda Castle
Charlene Nash Christie
Erin Clapp
Pamela Cross
Kamryn Davis

Meredith Duncan
Mary Butler Eggleston
Aimee Ellington
Kathryn Rawley Erhardt
Maria J. K. Everett
Jasmyn Ferguson
Lindsay Michelle Fielding
Elizabeth Goodwin
Elizabeth Harper
Abigail Hauschild
Shannon Hooker
Tara Ingersoll
Elaine Johnson
Cynthia G. Lee
Elizabeth C. Manning
Julia Martin
Judy Mawyer
Sarah McGrath
Melisse Menchel
Elizabeth S. Miller
Rhonda Morales
Kyndal A. Owens
Kenna R. Payne
Lynne H. Read
Patricia Reddington
Aya Reed
Jane Riddle
Charlotte Rowe
Meaghan Rymer
Faith D. Sartoris
Katherine Shenk
Amanda Simon
Jayne Sneed
Mary Lou P. Sommardahl
Maureen Stinger
Wyna Taggart
Jane Koenig Terry

Janet Tice
Alexandria Vandervall
Casey Vandervall

Tenor

David Carter
Music Section Leader

Benjamin T. Almoite
Rick Axtell
Kevin L. Barger
Dennis Clark
Dane De Silva
Joshua Ellis
Carl J. Eng
Ed Galloway
Dan Gardner
Max Goldsmith
Jody Gordon
Zachary James
David Lynch
William N. Marshall
Jonathan Miller
Chris Nixon
Ethan Obenrader
Collins Pace
Jim Rakes
Henry P. Robb
Craig E. Ross
Matthew Smith
McKinley Sprinkle
Adam Tecken
Aaron J. Todd
Steve Travers
Roger Wooldridge

Bass

Martin McFadden
Music Section Leader

Pablo Bedoya
Matt Benko
Jarrett Cohen
David C. Cooley
Don Creach
Devyn Curley
Frankie Davis Daniels
Andrew J. Dolson
Martin Erb
Jacob Giancaterino
Tom Heaton
David Hoover
Daniel Kobb
Michael Koellner
David Loy
John Luther
James Matens
Robert J. McKenna
Douglass Moyers
W. Hunter Old
Preston Powers
Val Puster
Stephen G. Read
William Bradley Roberts
Richard Szucs
Jon A. Teates
Paul C. Tuttle
Bennett Umhau
Stephen Wright

