

MEET THE ARTISTS

DR. EUGENE ROGERS

Artistic Director of The Washington Chorus

A two-time Michigan Emmy Award winner, a 2017 Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient, and a 2015 Grammy Award nominee, The Washington Chorus Artistic Director **Dr. Eugene Rogers** is recognized as a leading conductor and pedagogue throughout the United States and abroad. In addition to being the founding director of EXIGENCE, Dr. Rogers is the director of choirs and an associate professor of conducting at the University of Michigan.

At the University, Dr. Rogers leads the graduate choral conducting program, conducts the chamber choir, and administers the program of over eight choral ensembles. His choirs have toured throughout China, South Africa, and the United States, and they have appeared at national and regional conferences. In December 2017, *Musical America* named Dr. Rogers one of the top 30 “Movers and Shapers” professionals in North America. His past appointments include being the director of the University of Michigan Men’s Glee Club, Macalester College (St. Paul, Minnesota), the Boys Choir of Harlem, Waubonsie Valley High School (Aurora, Illinois), and Anima Young Singers of Greater Chicago (formerly the Glen Ellyn Children’s Choir). In 2016, Dr. Rogers’ passion for issues of social justice and music was featured in the award-winning documentary *Love, Life and Loss* which highlights Joel Thompson’s powerful *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*.

SANTINO FONTANA

Santino Fontana is one of Broadway’s brightest stars and most versatile leading men. Highly regarded for his work onstage, he’s received Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Lortel, Obie, and Clarence Derwent Awards for his work in both plays and musicals. Broadway highlights include his Tony Award-winning performance as Michael Dorsey/Dorothy Michaels in *Tootsie*, portrayal of Prince Topher in *Cinderella*, and roles in *Hello, Dolly!*, *Act One*, and many more.

Beyond the stage, Fontana is widely known for lending his voice to the villainous Prince Hans in Disney’s *Frozen*. He was also seen in Universal Studio’s *Sisters*, opposite Tina Fey and Amy Poehler. On television, Fontana was seen on *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and starred on CW’s comedy *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* and NBC’s drama series *Shades of Blue*.

As an interpreter of the American Songbook, Fontana won the renowned Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival when he was 18 and has sung with orchestras across the country. Additionally, he is a critically acclaimed narrator of audiobooks. He was the original voice of Joe in Caroline Kepnes’ cult hit *You* and all its sequels. He received the Audie award for Stephen King’s *The Institute* and was chosen to read Suzanne Collin’s *Hunger Games* prequel, *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*.

ALEXANDRIA A CAPPELLA COLLECTIVE

Joe Cerutti, Jr., Artistic Director

The [Alexandria A Cappella Collective](#) (AACC) exists to harness the transformative power of vocal harmony by providing unique singing opportunities within the community. AACC is proud of its progress toward that goal with its first two ensembles, The Harmonizers and Metro Voices. Looking ahead, they are excited to announce the upcoming launch of two new ensembles: Capital Force, a seasonal youth

chorus starting this fall, and Vintage Blend, a daytime seniors chorus slated for next year. These additions underscore our dedication to creating spaces where every voice can find a home, from the youngest to the most seasoned.

AACC (formerly Alexandria Harmonizers, Inc.) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that delivers uplifting music to city residents and visitors annually and encourages singing together as an enduring community value. The group has performed at concert venues, city parks, Market Square, on Veterans Day, at senior centers, and in Old Town Alexandria in December. In June 2023, the city council commended the Harmonizers on their 75th anniversary “for their unique contribution to the cultural life of the city.” We are proud of our long-standing role in the city’s performing arts scene.

The music leadership of the AACC is Joe Cerutti, Artistic Director, Alexandria A Cappella Collective; Anthony Colisimo, Associate Director, the Harmonizers; Samantha Tramack, Director, Metro Voices; Maggie McAlexander, Assistant Director, Metro Voices; Tessa Walker, Director, Capital Force; and Terry Reynolds, Assistant Director, Alexandria A Cappella Collective.

JAPANESE CHORAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

Kimiko Shimada, Artistic Director

Since 2001, under the directorship of Ms. Kimiko Shimada and accompanist/composer Dr. Maiko Chiba, the [Japanese Choral Society of Washington](#) (JCSW) has made frequent appearances that introduce Japanese choral music to audiences at various cultural venues mostly in the nation’s capital. These include performances at the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Japanese New Year Celebration Festival in Washington DC, the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, the National Theatre Helen Hayes Gallery, the Carnegie Hall in New York, and Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts in Virginia.

The group’s most recent showcases include performances of the American National Anthem at Washington Wizards games for Japanese Heritage Night at the Capital One Arena, a concert at Carnegie Hall as part of the New York Chorus Festival Benefit Concert for Victims of the Japanese Earthquake and Tsunami, and a collaboration with the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington Chorus during Wolf Trap’s Joe Hisaishi Symphonic Concert featuring music from the Studio Ghibli Films of Hayao Miyazaki.

NATIONAL CHILDREN’S CHORUS, DC CHAPTER

Dr. Allan Laiño, Conductor

The Grammy Award-winning [National Children’s Chorus](#) (NCC), under the leadership of Artistic Director Luke McEndarfer and Associate Artistic Director Dr. Pamela Blackstone, has quickly become one of the world’s leading children’s choirs. Among the most exciting and fastest-growing music institutions for youth in the nation, the chorus provides its unparalleled training to more than 1,000 students, comprising 32 choirs based in the chapter cities of Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Austin, Dallas, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, DC. The NCC’s groundbreaking 2023-2024 season, entitled Thrive, focuses on the impact of the chorus’ artistry, featuring an array of stunning repertoire that demonstrates the organization’s firm commitment to new music, world culture, and extraordinary collaborations.

Performing locally and abroad, the National Children's Chorus is one of the few youth arts organizations in America to have its concert series presented at professional music halls, working with some of the finest conductors, composers, and orchestras.

Recent venues include Royce Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, and the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles; the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC; as well as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York. The group has shared the stage and studio with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, American Youth Symphony, VOCES8, and New York City Master Chorale, among others.

THE WASHINGTON CHORUS

Dr. Eugene Rogers, Artistic Director

[The Washington Chorus](#) (TWC) is one of the foremost symphonic choruses in the nation. Noted for the superb artistry of its performances and recordings of the entire range of the choral repertoire, TWC is widely recognized as a cultural leader in the nation's capital.

A three-time nominated and two-time Grammy Award winner, the 160-voice Washington Chorus presents an annual series at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, regularly performs at the invitation of the National Symphony Orchestra, and appears annually at the Music Center at Strathmore in Maryland.

TWC has appeared at the invitation of leading orchestras including the National Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. TWC is proud to have sung with the NSO in more than 300 performances, under the direction of many of the world's greatest conductors, including Gianandrea Noseda, Christoph Eschenbach, Leonard Slatkin, Mstislav Rostropovich, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Neville Marriner, Kent Nagano, Marin Alsop, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Andrew Davis, and many others.

TWC has sung for numerous prestigious events throughout its history— inaugurations, papal visits, with the Rolling Stones during their 50th anniversary tour, and at the White House in 2013 and 2014 for the President and First Lady.

TRINITY CHOIR OF THE ALFRED STREET BAPTIST

Theodore Thorpe & Dr. Joyce Garrett, Directors

The [Trinity Choir of The Alfred Street Baptist Church](#) serves in one of the oldest African American congregations in the US, founded in 1803. The melodious strains of this talented Choir have been heard in anthems, hymns, spirituals, and gospel songs within the church and throughout the East Coast. In addition to its regular church schedule, the Choir's outreach has led to recent performances at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, the Washington Hebrew Congregation, and at the Washington DC Mormon Temple Visitors Center. In 2012 and 2014, the group went on acclaimed performance tours to Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium. Directed by Dr. Joyce Garrett since 2000, the choir serves the 12,000-member congregation at worship services and community activities.