



Alexandria Symphony Orchestra

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Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Opens 2008-2009 Season With “O’ Inner Voice” Featuring Bowen McCauley Dance

Who: Alexandria Symphony Orchestra & Maestro Kim Allen Kluge
in collaboration with Bowen McCauley Dance and pianist Jeffery Watson

What: **Massenet** *Meditation from Thaïs*
Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on Greensleeves*
Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*
Brahms *Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn*
Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 1 (Mvt. 1), with Jeffery Watson, piano*

When: Saturday, October 4, 2008 at 8:00pm
Sunday, October 5, 2008 at 3:00pm

Where: Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center
NOVA Community College, Alexandria Campus
3001 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, VA 22311

Price: \$20-\$80. Sunday matinee youth tickets (ages 8-18) only \$5
Call **703-548-0885** or visit www.alexsym.org for tickets

Alexandria, VA, September 8, 2008 – On Saturday, October 4 at 8:00pm and Sunday, October 5 at 3:00pm, the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra opens its 2008-2009 subscription season with “O’ Inner Voice” featuring Bowen McCauley Dance at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center (NOVA Community College, Alexandria). The first program in a season inspired by the voice, “O’ Inner Voice” includes Massenet’s *Meditation from Thaïs*, Vaughan Williams’ *Fantasia on Greensleeves* and *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and Brahms’ *Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn* and *Piano Concerto No. 1 (Mvt. 1)* with Jeffery Watson, piano. Ticket prices are \$20-\$80 with special youth tickets (ages 8-18) offered on Sunday for only \$5. Tickets can be purchased online at www.alexsym.org or via telephone at 703-548-0885.

Having previously shared the stage with Bowen McCauley Dance in March 2008, the ASO is delighted to again collaborate with The Company for its season opener. Lucy Bowen McCauley’s imaginative contemporary choreography provides an illuminating visual counterpart to the ASO’s dynamic

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instrumentation. Two of Bowen McCauley's most striking works will be performed to full orchestral accompaniment of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and Johannes Brahms' *Piano Concerto No. 1 (Mvt. 1)*. Also joining the ASO for Brahms' *Concerto* is pianist Jeffery Watson. Currently on the faculty of the Washington Conservatory of Music, Watson has been a soloist with the Honduran National Symphony, Pan American Symphony, Rosario (Argentina) Chamber Orchestra, and the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra with the Kirov Ballet.

In addition to the pieces listed above, the two composers will be explored further in Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Greensleeves* and Brahms' *Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn*. The former is a reimagining of the traditional English folk song by Vaughan Williams which appeared in his 1928 opera, *Sir John in Love*. Audiences will hear a familiar melody made new, spare simplicity made rich and complex. Like Vaughan Williams, Brahms also takes inspiration from the past with new and exciting results. "Without ever straying from the confines that the Theme presents," ASO concert lecturer Colleen Fay explains, "Brahms nevertheless imbues each of the eight variations with stately contours leading up to a resoundingly satisfying Finale."

Rounding out the program is a *Meditation* from Jules Massenet's 1894 opera, *Thaïs*. Based on a novel by Anatole France and paired with a libretto by Louis Gallet, the opera tells the story of love, lust, and religious struggle as Athanaël the monk attempts to persuade Thaïs, an Egyptian courtesan, to abandon her worship of Venus for a Christian life. The *Meditation* itself is a "perfect" fit for the program according to Fay as the "instrumental interlude in the opera represents the inner conversion of the courtesan, Thaïs...epitomizing what it meant by the inner voice."

The 08-09 Season of "O' Passionate Voice" continues with "O' Thankful Voice" on November 15, 2008 featuring selections by Mozart, Dvořák, and Wilder with soloists Yuliya Gorenman, piano and Amy Horn, French Horn. In December, the ASO puts a twist on its annual Children's Holiday Concert with Duke Ellington's *Nutcracker Suite*.

Founded in 1954, the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra is Northern Virginia's premiere fully professional orchestra. Its mission is to provide quality, affordable and accessible music in the greater Metropolitan area of Northern Virginia through its highly respected, innovative, professional performances and programming. To foster a life-long appreciation of symphonic music, the ASO is dedicated to strengthening arts education in schools.

Members of the press, please contact Tara Conte – alex@alexsym.org – for press tickets, photos.

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