

HANDEL CHOIR
OF BALTIMORE

ARIAN KHAEFI
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
& CONDUCTOR

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**TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR HANDEL CHOIR OF BALTIMORE'S
SECOND AND THIRD CONCERTS OF THE 2016–2017 SEASON**

Handel Choir to highlight “sustainably sourced” music, 20th- and 21st-century composers, present world premiere of *Benedicite, omnia opera* by noted Baltimore composer Douglas Buchanan

(Baltimore, MD) Tickets are now available for *Farm to Table* and *Soul Seeds*, Handel Choir of Baltimore’s second and third concerts of its 82nd subscription concert season. *Farm to Table* (7:30 p.m. Saturday March 4 at Second Presbyterian Church, 4200 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218) will feature “fresh, sustainably sourced” choral music—written by living composers, many with Baltimore or Maryland connections—while *Soul Seeds* (8 p.m. Saturday April 29, also at Second Presbyterian Church) offers four major *a cappella* works on non-traditional texts by American masters. “Each rehearsal is a new adventure when you’re working on music like this,” said Artistic Director and Conductor Arian Khaefi.

Handel Choir will also join forces with the Choir of St. David’s at St. David’s Episcopal Church at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 3 for the world premiere of *Benedicite, omnia opera*, a new work written expressly for Handel Choir by noted Baltimore composer and St. David’s organist and choirmaster, Douglas Buchanan. The combined choirs will perform separately and together on the program, which is part of St. David’s First Fridays concert series (St. David’s Episcopal Church, 4700 Roland Ave, Baltimore, Maryland 21210).

Tickets for *Farm to Table* and *Soul Seeds* are \$37 for premium seating, \$27 for standard seating, and \$10 for students. Concert details and tickets are available online at handelchoir.org or by calling 667.206.4120. Tickets for the First Fridays concert series are \$20 and \$6 for full-time students with I.D. Concert details and tickets are available online at handelchoir.org or by calling 667.206.4120.

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Handel Choir of Baltimore 2016–2017 SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS Jan–May 2017

Farm to Table

7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 4, 2017

Second Presbyterian Church (Guilford), 4200 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Handel Choir of Baltimore

Thomas Hetrick and Sonya Schumann *piano*

Edna Huang *bass clarinet*

Arian Khaefi *conductor*

William Averitt *Afro-American Fragments*

Douglas Buchanan *Benedicite, omnia opera*

Paul Crabtree *Five Romantic Miniatures (from The Simpsons)*

Shawn Crouch *Sleepless*

Darren Schmidt *Old Poets*

Dale Trumbore *I Am Music*

Eric Whitacre *Alleluia*

TICKETS: \$37 premium (forward/center seating), \$27 standard, \$10 student with ID

Soul Seeds

8 p.m. Saturday, April 29, 2017

Second Presbyterian Church (Guilford), 4200 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Handel Choir of Baltimore

Sonya Schumann *piano*

Arian Khaefi *conductor*

Samuel Barber *Reincarnations*

Judd Greenstein *Lamenting*

Shawn Kirchner *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*

Jake Runestad *Come to the Woods*

TICKETS: \$37 premium (forward/center seating), \$27 standard, \$10 student with ID.

For information about music programs at St. David's Episcopal Church, including the First Fridays Series, go to <http://stdavidsrolandpark.com/music/the-st-davids-music-series/2016-2017.html>

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CRITIC'S PRAISE FOR ARIAN KHAEFI AND HANDEL CHOIR OF BALTIMORE

“[S]ince Khaefi's arrival in 2013, the repertoire has expanded steadily and imaginatively, and so [have] the group's abilities,” said Tim Smith of *The Baltimore Sun* in his March 8, 2016 review of Handel Choir's performance of *Path of Miracles*, Joby Talbot's 2005 work about the Camino de Santiago. Smith continued: “Khaefi had the singers burrowing into the notes, from the out-of-the-depths rumblings in the first movement on through exquisitely harmonized passages in the third. ... Another striking moment came in the final movement, when women's voices wove hypnotic flurries atop slow-moving, chorale-like intoning by the men. Throughout, Khaefi paid attention to minute dynamic contrasts and the myriad harmonic subtleties of the score, all the while maintaining a firm pulse.”

Remarking on Handel Choir's 81st annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* in December of 2015, Smith wrote “The rewards began with the very able Handel Period Instrument Orchestra, providing a subtly colorful, expressive foundation. Tempos set by conductor Arian Khaefi provided momentum, but breathing room, too. There was a gracefulness to his phrase-sculpting. The choir maintained admirable clarity of diction, sensitivity to dynamics and, ..., cohesiveness of tone.”

“[Arian Khaefi's] sensitive approach drew well-balanced, expressively nuanced singing from the chorus (and soloists within it),” said Smith in his April 2015 review of Handel Choir's performance of Arvo Pärt's *Berliner Messe* during the Choir's *Distant Bells* concert. “[T]he sweetness of the sound and the legato phrasing ... cast quite a spell.”

BACKGROUND

Handel Choir of Baltimore is one of the Mid-Atlantic region's top choral ensembles. Led by Artistic Director and Conductor Arian Khaefi, the ensemble brings together excellent singers (currently about 40) and players from across the Mid-Atlantic to perform repertoire ranging from early music to newly commissioned works by some of the field's best current practitioners.

Handel Choir also actively promotes the artistic health and growth of the community through its collaborative work with other organizations, recently including Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* with

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Camerata of University of Maryland Baltimore County, and performances with Children's Chorus of Maryland, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Baroque Band, Harmonious Blacksmith, Baltimore Chamber Orchestra and Peabody Early Music.

Arian Khaefi was named Artistic Director and Conductor of Handel Choir of Baltimore in 2013. He serves as Director of Choral Activities at Towson University, where he conducts the University Chorale and Men's and Women's Choruses, teaches applied lessons in conducting, and administers a choral program of six choirs.

Before coming to Baltimore, Khaefi served as Conductor of the Windsor Classic Chorale in Windsor, Ontario, and as Assistant Conductor of the University Choral Society at the University of Michigan. He has prepared choruses for leading conductors including Peter Grunberg, Martin Katz, Christopher Warren-Green, Leonard Slatkin, and James Conlon. Khaefi's guest conducting has taken him across the Mid-Atlantic, and he has presented lectures and master classes both nationally and internationally. His ensembles at Towson University have been invited to perform at prestigious concert halls across the East Coast, most recently including Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., and Carnegie Hall in New York City.

His primary conducting teachers include Jerry Blackstone, Donald Neuen, Paul Salamunovich, and Paul Rardin. He has received additional mentoring from Peter Phillips, Ragnar Bohlin, David Hayes, Jacques Lacombe, and Neal Stulberg. He holds degrees from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and the University of California, Los Angeles.

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