

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Ann Sica  
Telephone: 703-960-3772  
E-mail: [annsica@aol.com](mailto:annsica@aol.com)  
Web site: [www.virginiachamberorchestra.org](http://www.virginiachamberorchestra.org)

**WHAT:** Virginia Chamber Orchestra and Music Director David Grandis present “Music in the Life of President Lincoln” with the Alexandria Choral Society, soprano Meghan McCall, The Grand Contraband Jubilee Singers, and narrator

**WHEN:** Sunday, April 12th, 2015 at 4:00 P.M.

**WHERE:** Ernst Community Cultural Center  
Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale Campus  
8333 Little River Turnpike  
Annandale, VA 22003

**FEATURE:** Operatic selections, folk songs, patriotic melodies, and spirituals; also, “Gettysburg,” a contemporary work by David Kneupper, commissioned by the Lincoln Presidential Museum

**TICKETS:** Available at door: adults, \$40; seniors, \$30; and groups (10 or more), \$25  
Advance discounted purchase online via credit card or PayPal at [www.virginiachamberorchestra.org](http://www.virginiachamberorchestra.org)  
All students admitted free.

Parking is free. Complimentary reception will follow.

Additional information is available at [www.virginiachamberorchestra.org](http://www.virginiachamberorchestra.org)

---

**VCO Presents Sesquicentennial Program: “Music in the Life of President Lincoln”**

Also Featuring Alexandria Choral Society, Four Vocal Soloists, Narrator

“Music in the Life of President Lincoln” will explore Lincoln’s musical preferences, from opera and folk songs to patriotic melodies and spirituals, in a Sesquicentennial program created by the Virginia Chamber Orchestra. The orchestra, led by David Grandis, will be joined by the Alexandria Choral Society, soprano Meghan McCall, and The Grand Contraband Jubilee Singers.

Designed to add a new dimension to the appreciation of Lincoln, the concert is scheduled for Sunday, April 12, at 4 p.m., and is timed to coincide with the 150th Anniversary of the end of the Civil War. The venue will be the Ernst Community Cultural Center on the Annandale Campus of Northern Virginia Community College at 8333 Little River Turnpike. Discounted advance purchase tickets are available at [www.virginiachamberorchestra.org](http://www.virginiachamberorchestra.org). Tickets include

a complimentary reception. Noted Lincoln interpreter Daniel Storck will appear in costume and mingle with the guests.

"We hope to illuminate the important role music played in the life of President Lincoln," explained Maestro Grandis, "and to convey the emotional and ideological currents of his presidential years." A narrator will provide context, direct quotations, and colorful anecdotes selected to deepen understanding of Lincoln the man and the dramatic era in which he served.

Musical highlights will include two arias from *A Masked Ball* by Verdi, performed by soprano Meghan McCall; the Alexandria Chorale Society (ACS) in songs by Stephen Foster; the ACS mens chorus in the "Soldiers Chorus" from Gounod's *Faust*; and The Grand Contraband Jubilee Singers performing familiar spirituals.

In addition to selections which lifted Lincoln's spirits and strengthened him for what he described as "the great task remaining before us," the chorus and orchestra will also perform a contemporary work, "Gettysburg," by the award-winning composer David Kneupper. This moving work was commissioned by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Kneupper has poignantly combined the two iconic songs of the North and South, "Dixie's Land" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic," to express the tragedy of Gettysburg.

The VCO has carefully researched this rarely explored area of Lincoln's interests. The program is filled with interesting historical background, such as the time he was traveling to his first inauguration and stopped off in New York City to attend a premiere of *A Masked Ball* by Verdi. Lincoln's presence there caused such excitement that he literally stopped the show.

It is not widely known that while in Washington, Lincoln attended thirty opera performances. He also made frequent trips to area encampments where he joined in singing spirituals with escaping slaves and was visibly moved. Immediately after the war, he expressed the hope that "Dixie"—which had been adopted as an anthem of the Confederacy—would become a symbol of reconciliation as a national song. He wanted it to belong to the entire country again, and announced he had confirmed with his Attorney General that this was a legitimate goal.

This will be the third in the VCO's "Music of the Presidents" concerts. A video of the performance will be broadcast on cable television combined with a separate in-studio discussion featuring prominent authors in a dialogue with students. The video production will also establish an ongoing resource on the website for educators, students and the general public across the country.

Parking is free. Additional information is available at [www.virginiachamberorchestra.org](http://www.virginiachamberorchestra.org). The Lincoln project exemplifies the Virginia Chamber Orchestra's mission: to perform fine music with the highest artistic integrity for the broadest possible audience.

###