

Raising their voices: New all-women choir ready to present debut concert program

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Alfred University's (AU) new all-women choir will present its debut concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 22, in the sanctuary of the Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church. The choir is under the direction of Luanne Crosby, professor of music in the Division of Performing Arts, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at AU.

The choir, which includes students, faculty and community members will perform works composed by women specifically for female voices. The study of music by women composers has been a long-standing interest of Crosby's. So, this semester, she decided to create a course focusing on the history of women in music for general students and a new choir that would perform works by women. A natural collaboration has grown out of these two groups. For the concert, students enrolled in the academic class will provide information(program notes) about the composers and the music that the choir will perform.

"For women in music, the past has been untended, uncared for, and certainly absent from mainstream music history books and concerts," says Crosby. "This has been a semester of discovering those unsung female musical heroines."

Through its performance, the women's choir will "raise awareness of the contributions women have made in the field of composition and will provide the pure pleasure of listening to treble voices in harmony," she says.

The concert will include works from the medieval to the modern periods. Featured will be compositions by Hildegard van Bingen (12th century), Lucretia Vizzano (17th century), Clara Schumann and Amy Beach (19th century), contemporary composer Gwyneth Walker and popular singer-songwriter Adele.

Crosby says the new choir is a complement to the AU all-men's choir, the Saxon Singers.