

Bergren Forum will celebrate Women's History Month with presentation full of music

2/27/15

On Thursday, March 5, Alfred University (AU) Professor of Voice Luanne Crosby, along with several of her students, will present "Unsung Women Composers from Hildegard to Adele" as part of the University's ongoing Bergren Forum series. The presentation will take place at 12:10 p.m. in Nevins Theater, Powell Campus Center and is open to the public free of charge.

In honor of Women's History Month, selected students from the "Women in Music" class and the women's chorus "Women's Song/Women's Voices," both offered last semester, will focus their presentation on the role of women as composers from the 12th to 19th centuries.

Student presenters include: Abby Schmeichel of Lancaster, PA; Aliza Schweitzer, Wynnewood, PA; Hannah Downs, De Ruyter; Niki Kimball of Farmington; and Summer Markajani of Irondequoit. The vocal ensemble, comprised of current students, faculty, and community members, will perform selected pieces by each of the composers.

"Women composers make their way onto only a few pages in current Music History texts and were almost completely ignored prior to 20-30 years ago," says Crosby. "This Bergren will present only a small portion of the incredible wealth of music composed by women. The presentation will hopefully give the audience some idea of the struggles faced by women in the field of composition and will certainly delight the ears with the sound of some incredibly beautiful choral music written for women, by women."

Crosby holds bachelor of music and master of music degrees in music education from the State University of New York at Fredonia and a doctor of musical arts degree in vocal performance from Cleveland Institute of Music at Case Western Reserve University. She has extensive experience teaching and performing and has sung professionally with the Cleveland Opera, Aspen Opera Theater, the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes and the Fredonia Chamber Players.

She has also been featured as a soloist on the CD "With Heart and Voice: Anthems Across America" with Rochester-based chamber choir, Madrigalia.

The Bergren Forum is sponsored by the Division of Human Studies, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Provost's Office. Guests are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch; coffee and tea will be provided.

The series known as the Bergren Forum was begun by Rick Bergren, who taught at the University in the &70s, when he was inspired by learning of the gatherings that AU students in the 19th century were known to conduct in Alumni Hall to discuss community issues. After Bergren's death in 1974, the University decided to continue the tradition in his name. Various faculty members have taken on the coordinator duties since that time. William S. Dibrell, professor of philosophy, is the current coordinator.