

National First Ladies Library Hosts World Premiere of "East Wing Songs"

Free Performance of East Wing Songs II Completes Two-Part Cycle at Christ Presbyterian Church in Canton

CANTON, OHIO, USA, September 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National First Ladies' Library and Museum will host the world premiere of a new set of musical compositions inspired by the

First Ladies of the United States on Sunday, October 15, at 2:00 p.m. with its partners at the Christ Presbyterian Church, 530 Tuscarawas Street in Canton, Ohio.

“

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*Ann Marie Daehn, Professor,
Missouri State University*

The performance, titled East Wing Songs Volume II, features a lecture-recital format and will be performed by mezzo soprano Ann Marie Daehn, Professor at Missouri State University, alongside her long-time collaborator Dr. Elizabeth Avery. Musical compositions are the work of composer Linda Lister. The first installment of East Wing Songs debuted in Canton in fall 2022 and toured around the country.

The commission and world premiere is made possible through a Missouri State University faculty research grant and supported by the National First Ladies Library and Huntington Bank. For the second volume of East Wing Songs, composer Linda Lister selected women that span time, age, political party, and approach to their role within the White House. The work seeks to humanize the First Ladies of the United States through song, sharing their stories and memorializing their achievements and challenges.

Linda Lister is Professor of Music and Director of Opera at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She sings her own compositions on the Albany Records release *Pleas to Famous Fairies*. Her three one-act operas (*State of Grace*, *Body of Art*, and *How Clear She Shines!*) delve into subjects such as breast cancer survivorship, body image, and the Brontë sisters. "Exploring the writings of our First Ladies has been illuminating and inspiring," Lister said. "I hope my musical settings are able to enhance and spotlight their insights, intelligence, and empathy."

Texts were adapted from primary sources when possible, including letters, speeches, biographies, interviews, and diaries. Volume II will include songs memorializing First Ladies

Louisa Adams, Ellen Wilson and Edith Wilson, Lady Bird Johnson, Michelle Obama, and Hillary Clinton. This installment of the lecture recital will also include Civil Words by Jennifer Higdon, compositions inspired by Civil War era poetry.

“Researching and getting to know these first ladies has been a joy,” said Ann Marie Daehn. “To know them beyond their husbands and the politics is important to me. Music, and song in particular, is the perfect way to bring a bit of them to life for us all.”

Patty Dowd Schmitz, President and CEO of the National First Ladies Library and Museum, said, “We are honored and delighted to be partnering with Ms. Daehn and Ms. Avery to continue to promote the history of the First Ladies of the United States in this unique lecture-performance format. We hope that this event will attract new audiences and admirers to the stories of these remarkable women.”



East Wing Songs II

The free concert will take place at Christ Presbyterian Church 530 Tuscarawas St W, Canton, OH 44702. The church has on-site parking and is handicap accessible. Tickets are free and available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/east-wing-songs-ii-a-musical-tribute-to-our-first-ladies-tickets-715392256497?aff=oddtcreator>. For a small additional charge, participants can tour the “Beyond Camelot” Jackie Kennedy exhibit at National First Ladies Library and Museum following the performance, with a wine and cheese reception to follow.

Founded in 1821, Christ Presbyterian Church has served the community of Canton for over two hundred years. The church and the National First Ladies’ Library and Museum are frequent collaborators as Ida and William McKinley were married at the site.

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