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**SKYLARK OPENS ITS 2018-19 SEASON WITH SPOTLIGHT PERFORMANCE FEATURING
SOPRANO FIONA GILLESPIE JACKSON**

Bold Outlaw, August 25-26, 2018

Tickets: \$20 general admission / \$10 students and music educators at
<http://www.skylarkensemble.org/spotlight-series.html>

Skylark Vocal Ensemble: www.skylarkensemble.org

Boston, MA – **Skylark Vocal Ensemble**, opens its 2018-19 season with a **Skylark Spotlight** recital by soprano **Fiona Gillespie Jackson**. The Skylark *Spotlight* series was conceived by Skylark soprano **Jessica Petrus** – these recitals feature individual Skylark artists in a more intimate chamber setting, whether through small ensemble performances, or individual cameo appearances in a variety of genres.

Matthew Guard, Artistic Director of Skylark, notes, “Skylark *Spotlight* allows our talented artists the freedom to perform their personal choice of repertoire – past recitals have included fiery Italian art songs, early music by Henry Purcell, and traditional music (including bagpipes) from the Scottish Isles. I’m excited that Skylark’s 2018-19 season features two *Spotlight* recitals as a central part of the programming. One of the aspects of Skylark our audiences so appreciate is the versatility of our programming, and this first performance of 2018-19 will be no exception!”

Gillespie Jackson’s recital, ***Bold Outlaw***, is a musical exploration of the legend and history surrounding Robin Hood, featuring folk, Medieval, and Renaissance music from France and the British Isles.

“As kids, and into adulthood, my sister Genevieve and I have nursed an abiding love for Disney’s quirky Robin Hood movie,” notes Gillespie Jackson. “This past year we began discussing the wealth of art he has inspired over the ages, so we decided to construct a concert of music that honors his legacy. Our program features songs directly from original Robin Hood texts and sources, and music that highlights historical events which affected his story, or which his story in turn affected. We built a pastiche of his life events, according to legend, from birth to death, that examines how this hero is imminently tied to the history and folklore of Great Britain.”

Gillespie Jackson brings with her the talents of three additional musicians – her sister, **Genevieve Gillespie**, a Celtic fiddler and vocalist, who has toured internationally with several bands in the Irish arts scene; **Paul Morton**, a versatile musician with extensive experience in classical guitar, theorbo, and lute; and tenor **Bradley King**, whose experience ranges from performances with the Boston Early Music Society, to stage performances of *Sweeney Todd*.

Bold Outlaw will be presented on Saturday, August 25 at 7 pm at **Church of the Messiah** in Woods Hole, and on Sunday, August 26 at 3 pm **St. Christopher's Episcopal Church** in Chatham.

This concert is the first concert in Skylark's 2018-19 Greater Boston area subscription series.

ABOUT SKYLARK:

Skylark Vocal Ensemble, "the cream of the American crop" (*BBC Radio 3*), is a premier vocal ensemble of leading American vocal soloists, chamber musicians, and music educators. Skylark's dramatic performances have been described as "gripping" (*The Times of London*), "exquisite...thrilling" (*Gramophone Magazine*), and "awe-inspiring" (*Boston Music Intelligencer*). With "some of Boston's best singers" (*Boston Globe*), the voices of Skylark "can sway you softly into calm and then all but throw you across the room with sheer harmonic force" (*Thought Catalog*).

Skylark strives to set the standard for innovative and engaging programs that re-define the choral experience for audiences and singers alike. Artistic Director Matthew Guard's well-researched and creative programs have been described as "engrossing" (*WOXR New York*) and "original, stimulating, and beautiful" (*BBC Radio 3*). Skylark's most recent three recordings all reached the top 10 of *Billboard's* Traditional Classical Chart, earning praise for "imaginative" programming (*Limelight Australia*) and "singing of the highest standard for any area or any repertoire" (*Classics Today*).

Since its founding in 2011 in Atlanta and Boston, Skylark has branched out to perform its dynamic programs in museums, concert halls, and churches across the United States. Skylark made its international debut in March 2018 at St. John's Smith Square, London, as part of the UK choir *Tenebrae's Holy Week Festival*. *The Times of London* declared that Skylark was "the highlight" of the festival that included some of the UK's leading choirs, including The Tallis Scholars, Polyphony, Tenebrae, and the Gabrieli Consort.

A not-for-profit entity with a passion for music education, Skylark performs educational outreach programs with high school and college students across the United States during its concert tours.

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