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### ***World Renowned Ensemble Giving Concert at Chestnut Hill Church May 13***

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**PHILADELPHIA** - Four-time Grammy winner Eugene Friesen is bringing four internationally renowned Near Eastern musicians to Chestnut Hill's Episcopal Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields (St. Martin's) for a one-night concert on Saturday, May 13 at 7 p.m. The concert will feature the new composition of Palestinian cellist, Naseem Alatrash "Bright Colors on a Dark Canvas," and all proceeds will go to the Refugee Resettlement Ministry at the church.

The collaboration between Friesen and Alatrash includes Jordanian-Iraqi violinist Layth Sidiq, Syrian oudist Kinan Idnawi, Palestinian kanunist Tony Barhoum, and award-winning jazz pianist Joel A. Martin. The Chestnut Hill church has partnered with nearby St. Paul's Episcopal and New Covenant Church in its support of a Syrian refugee family.

"We are thrilled that these highly-acclaimed musicians are volunteering to bring the Philadelphia community together to provide financial support for refugees, and spiritual inspiration for us all," said Rick Josiassen, the church member who has assembled the ensemble for this event. "This is a crucial time for us all to acknowledge our deep connections around the world."

This Chestnut Hill concert features the world premiers of "Bright Colors on a Dark Canvas" by Alatrash. A soloist, recording musician, chamber musician, and teacher, he has been featured at France's Nancy Jazz Festival, Lebanon's Beiteddine Festival, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., London's Royal Albert Hall, and at

Amsterdam's Concertgebouw. He is known for his performances with Ron Carter, Leo Blanco, Javier Limón, Jorge Drexler, and Alejandro Sanz. Twice named "string player of the year" at the Palestinian National Music Competition, he continues to be a voice for Palestinian culture and an advocate of its music.

Sidiq studied at the National Music Conservatory in Amman, Jordan, the Chetham's School of Music in Manchester England, and more recently received a Masters Degree from the Berklee School of Music. He has performed as both leader and sideman in Boston Symphony Hall, Kennedy Center, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London's Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall, the Abu Dhabi Festival, the Dominican Republic Jazz Festival, and has premiered his original compositions at the Montreal Jazz Festival with his sextet.

Leading the ensemble on May 13, Eugene Friesen is not only hailed for his four Grammys, but perhaps even more for his unique original repertoire and improvisational style with the Paul Winter Consort. He is an artist-in-residence at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, and Professor of Music at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he founded and directs the genre-busting string orchestra, Berklee World Strings.

"The St. Martin's based refugee resettlement effort began in response to the world-wide refugee crises," said The Rev. Jarrett Kerbel, Rector of St. Martin's, and "there are now over 40 volunteers" from the church itself and other community members as they provide translation, clothing, housing, transportation, and schooling partnership with the Syrian family. More information about volunteering can be found at the church website, [www.StMartinEC.org](http://www.StMartinEC.org).

Renowned Syrian oudist Kinan Idnawi graduated from the High Music Institute in Damascus where he studied with Azerbaijani master Askar Ali Akbar. In 2016 Idnawi received a Master of Arts Degree in Contemporary Music at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Since then, he has performed as a soloist with the Lebanese Philharmonic, Qatar Philharmonic, with world music icon John Zorn, with Philadelphia's Albustan Takht Ensemble

Kanunist Karhoum is the winner of The Marcel Khalife National Music Competition, The Palestine National Music Competition in Ramallah, and the Nazareth Music Competition. Pianist Martin has performed in Paris, London, Finland, Germany,

Switzerland, Japan, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan and as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Delaware Symphony, Springfield Symphony, and Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

Bright Colors on a Dark Canvas will take place on **Saturday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. at Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 8000 St. Martin's Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19118.** All proceeds will support St. Martin's Refugee Resettlement Ministry. Tickets are \$40 for adults, and \$20 for students and seniors. For more information or to purchase tickets please visit [StMartinEC.org](http://StMartinEC.org) or call 215.247.7466.

St. Martin's Refugee Resettlement Ministry joins with leaders of faith communities, secular organizations, and citizens in the Philadelphia area to resettle refugees in a safe, secure, and welcoming environment. We resettle refugees as guided by the Bible, "The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." – Leviticus 19:34.

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