

CHORUS NOTES

WINTER CONCERT AND FUNDRAISING AUCTION

The chorus is so fortunate to have a loyal audience that supports us at each of our performances. This year we are moving the Winter Concert and Silent Auction to Fountain Street Church, where we will have more space to spread out and enjoy the evening. This is a free, donation-at-the-door, 45-minute concert with no intermission, followed by a reception and Silent Auction in the Social Hall.

At this year's Winter Concert, we will be featuring the World Premier performance of "Memorial 1" with lyrics by poet Audre Lourde and music by Ysaye Barnwell. The piece is very rhythmic, as well as lyrical, and promises to be a favorite for future women's ensembles everywhere. Come and be the first audience to hear this piece brought to life! "Memorial 1" was made possible with the support of the Amos Fund by an award from the Emmanuel Fund of the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation based on the recommendation of Sara Homeyer. Other music that we will be performing this winter includes: a Chinese Mountain Song entitled "Ga Da Mei Lin" by contemporary Chinese composer Chen Li, a Serbian Gypsy song "Niska Banja", a very different and fun arrangement of "La Cucaracha", a beautiful Russian folk song "La Luchina", as well as some more classic pieces such as Debussy's "Beau Soir". And of course we'll surprise you with something.

The auction features original artwork, items for holiday gifts, gift certificates for restaurants and services, and memberships to local health clubs! This year's organizing committee includes Chairperson and tenor Pam Carlson, alto Brenda Canales, sopranos Cathy Howe, Nancy Court and Martha VanderEyck, basses Janet Thering, Elaine Dalcher and Linda Troyer. Non-singing, volunteer members are Cathy Huston and Darla Worley (Thank you, Thank you both!)

The committee is collecting donated items and organizing the event. So yes, the auction will be bigger (more stuff!); the food will be more plentiful (more desserts!); and the company will be great, as usual (more of you, we hope!). The proceeds from the Auction help us purchase music for our 40-some members and help us pay the musicians who accompany us during our performances. The auction committee welcomes any donations for this year's event. ***Anything you donate is tax-deductible (nice for December!). We'll make sure you get a receipt.***

Are you willing to donate an item for the auction? Simply send an e-mail note to info@grwc.org asking that one of us contact you. Or talk to anyone in the Chorus...we'll make arrangements to pick up items.

Please join us on December 4. Doors open at 7, concert is at 7:30, followed by the silent auction and dessert reception.

CLIP & SAVE

GRWC Winter Concert and Auction
Saturday, December 4, 2004 7:00 p.m.
Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI

SPRING CONCERT

"I Hear Her Voice" was the title and theme of the GRWC's eighth annual Spring Concert. Moments of brash fun blended with quiet reverence in our usual whirlwind of languages to pay tribute to many women composers, arrangers, and topics. The first set was mellow and comfortable, giving way to a rockin' second set that drew on vocal favorites like "Respect" and "Bohemian Rhapsody." We were supported by a number of fine guest musicians: Marla Kalmbach on flute, Kayla Kalmbach on saxophone, Paris Tennenhouse on electric guitar, Brenda Schilde on drums, and Sue Struit on string bass. We also had Samantha Fox and friends perform a dance accompaniment to "Ahambongo." These guests truly helped us to experience a richer, more dynamic musical event! Following the concert was our annual goody-filled reception, which gave us a chance to meet our audience members, answer questions, and thank them for coming. This is a perfect way for us to cap off every season with the friends and family, both new and old, in our audience. Last Spring's Concert was no exception!

4TH ANNUAL RETREAT

Saturday, September 25, and Sunday, September 26, marked the dates for the 4th Annual Retreat at Khardomah lodge in Grand Haven. And what a great weekend it was! Over 24 hours packed with sectionals, rehearsals, food, fun, and wonderful weather! Outside, it was a great weekend to be on the beach with sunny skies and a brisk breeze. Inside, the lodge was abuzz with activity. We worked hard on the pronunciations for our foreign language pieces, pounded out rhythms, and heard the right notes for each part on all of our songs for this half of the season at least twice! We had a lot of fun reliving GRWC memories, as well as at our 3rd Annual No Talent, Talent Show, which highlighted everything from a vaudeville act to poetry readings to a few things we can't mention out loud without fear of repercussion. We also got a little business done at our Annual Meeting, where we recruited committee members, voted on new board members, and approved our annual budget. We were very happy to welcome new member Janet Thering, and to have Gabrielle Calkins renew her term. If you wish you could be a part of the action but do not wish to join us as a singing member, contact Gabrielle at 452-3466 for information on how to be a non-singing member of the Grand Rapids Women's chorus!

\$\$\$MONEY\$\$\$

Ah yes, there's always the article about money. Asking for it. Pleading for it. Begging for it. Thanking you for it. This newsletter is no different. So why disguise it with platitudes, a run down of our expenses, and an accounting of all of our activities?? As everyone knows, there is no free lunch, and there's no free concert either. Having said that....

What goes into our expenses? Well there's the cost of renting concert space, buying music, paying for commissioned music, paying professional musicians and our sign language interpreter, advertising our concerts with our mailings and print ads, providing delicious food at our after concert receptions, printing tickets and programs, providing funding for the annual fall retreat for singers at Khardomah Lodge, insurance, producing our own CDs, and all those other little (or maybe not so little) expenses we incur along the way.

So, dear supporters and patrons, we continue to need you. We are grateful to everyone who has donated to the chorus – either with your time or your financial donations. (Notice how I'm getting very formal now – financial donations, instead of MONEY). You get the picture. So now the asking, pleading, and begging begins.

Won't you please consider donating, again, to the chorus? We could not and would not exist if it weren't for you. Think of how much you have enjoyed our concerts while listening to songs of hope, of triumph, of sadness, of life --- the songs that often times have matched our own experiences in life.

There are many ways you can donate. You can always give us cash or checks, of course. You can donate items or services to our silent auction held every year at our Winter Concert in December. You can buy advertising space in our Spring Concert program book. You can request that your donation be used for a specific expense, or you might want it to go toward whatever the current needs might be. Remember, your donations are tax deductible because we are 501(c) 3 organization. However you choose to donate, please know that any amount you can give is deeply appreciated. Thank you in advance for your donations to GRWC for the 2004-2005 season.

DECRESCENDO PARTY

There's nothing we like better than performing...except for maybe saying "thank you" to everyone who makes the GRWC what it is! We got together at Fountain Street Church on May 22, 2004, to do just that at our annual Decrescendo Party. True to form, our members, volunteers, and friends stepped up to make this a very "memorable" evening! With a cow theme inspired by *Kde Su Kravy Moje? (Where Are My Cows?)*, a slide show made up of pictures from our Spring Concert (thanks, Bill Thompson!), sound system set up by Sam Moore, a scrumptious dinner catered by Julie Fisher, and many other special touches, we were able to show our gratitude in style!

The Recognition Committee made a few changes this year based on member input. Recipients this year included all of our chorus members for both singing and other contributions and all of our amazing volunteers. Special awards were given to our accompanist Jean Gardner, Small Ensemble Director Martha Vander Eyk, Assistant Director Luann Cayedito, and Director Lori Tennenhouse.

While we always enjoy getting together at the end of each year to give formal recognitions, we want to say thanks every chance we get. So, thank you to everyone who helps GRWC keep moving in a great direction!

TEN-YEAR COMMISSIONS

The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus is incredibly fortunate to have been awarded two amazing gifts for our ten-year anniversary. **Emmanuel Fund of the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation based on the recommendation of Sara Homeyer** has donated \$5000 towards the commissioning of a Libby Larsen piece, with lyrics from a Mary Oliver poem, which will be premiered in 2006. We are especially pleased to have received permission from the estate of the poet, as they rarely grant permission to set her text to music.

Libby Larsen is one of America's most prolific and most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 200 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral and choral scores. Her music has been praised for its dynamic, deeply inspired, and vigorous contemporary American spirit. Constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles and orchestras around the world, Libby Larsen has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertoire. Many thanks to our supporters, Charles and Sara Homeyer, and the **Emmanuel Fund of the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation** for making this commission possible.

In addition, the chorus would like to thank Ben Boerkel and Dan Kantorowski for their \$1500 donation to commission a work composed by Diane Benjamin, also to be premiered in 2006. Benjamin is well known to the Grand Rapids community as the composer of "Where I Live: a Breast Cancer Oratorio", that was a successful fundraiser and wonderful musical event. The chorus published a CD that is still available and continues to benefit our local charities.

Consistent with our mission and promoting the women's choral movement, the chorus has identified the importance of commissioning new choral works by women composers. Commissioning works not only supports women composers, but also expands the repertoire available for women's chorus, and was identified in the 5 yr. plan as something the chorus will do every 2 years.

In 2000, the chorus commissioned and premiered "Rainsong" by a Lansing composer, Marjan Helms. In the Fall of 2002, the chorus commissioned Janika Vandervelde, a composer from Minnesota to use text by a GRWC chorus member, Leslie Kohn, for a piece written for SSAA chorus, 2 drums, and narrator. "Earthbeat" was premiered at the Spring concert in April, with the composer attending and participating in an after-concert "meet the composer" event. A frame drum ensemble joined the chorus for the work.

We are excited to be involved in such important community work, and think that music is a valuable way to bring communities together. Libby Larsen says it well in the following:

"Music exists in an infinity of sound. I think of all music as existing in the substance of the air itself. It is the composer's task to order and make sense of sound, in time and space, to communicate something about being alive through music."

THE GRAND RAPIDS WOMEN'S CHORUS

- Artistic Director
Lori Tennenhouse
- Small Ensemble Director
Martha VanderEyck
- Pianist
Jean Gardner
- Percussionist
Sue Brown
- ASL Interpreter
Lois Van Broekhoven

- Sopranos
Nancy Court
Liz DeBraber
Cathy Howe
Theresa Huyge
Dara Jaworowicz
Wendy Kuenzel Kapolka
Carol Kountz
Jeanne Welch
Martha VanderEyck
- Altos
Gabrielle Calkins
Brenda Canales
Alicia Case
Donna Clark
Rose Conlin
Erin Dreyer
Ann Erhart
Megan Grimm
Chris Sales
Pam Sandberg
Jenna Weston
- Tenors
Cheryl Beatty
Sue Brown
Pam Carlson
Sheryl Mase
Nadine Miller
Karie Poole
Janice Scalza
- Basses
Kris Badra
Elaine Dalcher
Cathajane Galante
Leslie Kohn
Deb Rhinard
Jennifer Robinson
Janet Thering
Linda Troyer
Connie Winter-Troutwine

Top 10 reasons for going to the Winter Concert and Silent Auction.

10. Many of the auction items will fit very nicely in a Christmas stocking (hopefully yours!)
9. Our auction MC is easy on the eyes and a perfect 10!
8. Your entire family can enjoy a night of great music for less than the price of a tank of gas!
7. It's one stop shopping for all 8 of your Hanukkah gifts!
6. Two words: Free cookies!
5. You'll be doing your part to make Grand Rapids a "cool" city.
4. You'll hear Chinese, Russian, and Serbian all sung with an English accent.
3. The GRWC will not be singing "Little Drummer Boy"!
2. The Director will come out and mingle after the show just like Oprah!
1. The GRWC performs without nets, special effects, or songbooks!



buy the
Compact
Disc

the
Grand Rapids
WOMEN'S
CHORUS

Diane Benjamin's
"Where I Live"
a Breast Cancer Oratorio

The "Where I Live" breast cancer oratorio CD features String Players from the GR Symphony and Narrations by Community Cancer Survivors. It is a beautiful testament for anyone whose life has been touched by cancer.

AVAILABLE FROM:

The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus 459-2655
Spirit Dreams 1430 Lake SE 456-9889
Goldenrod Music 517- 484-1712 www.goldenrod.com
****ON LINE direct to Goldenrod from www.grwc.org****

OVATIONS BY JANET THERING

Martha VanderEyk remembers, as a child, the turned heads and glances as her young voice glorified church hymns with vibrato. Singing in church was but one way Martha exercised her love for music at an early age. At eight, she enjoyed after school piano lessons and by junior high, was singing with friends in a popular girl's trio. Both Martha and her father were members of the Kalamazoo Oratorical Society, performing the Messiah when Martha was a high school freshman. After four years, she was the Society's paid soloist.

Boosted by a vocal scholarship, Martha attended Calvin College and majored in music. After an interval for marriage and the birth of her son, she completed a major in music performance at Grand Valley State University and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1988.

Martha is a charter member of the Grand Rapids Woman's Chorus and founding treasurer. She is the director of the Chorus Small ensemble, a singer in the soprano section as well as being active on the music and auction committees and serving on the board of directors. Martha works as an accountant at Community Counseling and teaches voice lessons part time in her home studio.

Singing is a deeply spiritual and fun experience for Martha. She is in awe of the physical vibration and resonating energy that manifests and intensifies when performing choral music. She enjoys attending the Symphony and the Opera and listening to classical and jazz music when at work or at play. Vivaldi, Bach, Poldowski, Fanny Mendelsohn, and Tiri Tekanawa are among Martha's favorite composers and performers.

There are goals and dreams in music that Martha still hopes to pursue. At 62, she would like to eventually retire from her accounting position and teach voice full time. Studying music literature written by women and performing in a recital of their work is another aspiration. But beyond the practical yet certainly within reach, is Martha's yearning to someday travel to all of the great opera houses of the world!

Martha resides in Grand Rapids with her partner, Leslie Kohn, also a member of the GRWC.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We would like to thank all the volunteers who gave a lot of their time and energy to the chorus. Cathy Huston our coordinator looks forward to volunteering with all of you again this year. A big HUG and THANKS to: Ruth Allerton, Darla Wortley, Jan Elliott, Sue Stauffer, Mary Start, Shirley Arrigo, Connie Bellows, Darlene Zwart, Nancy McCrohan, Amy Miller, Cathy Amedeo, and Beth Blackbird.

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Like you, Goldenrod Music believes in our music and our mission and wants to help us succeed, so they have helped us set up this link. In addition to music, you can also purchase books, calendars, videos, DVDs, song-books and all kinds of music-related items that will help us with each purchase.

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www.grwc.org

CHORUS NOTES AUTUMN 2004

Grand Rapids Women's Chorus
PO Box 68486
Grand Rapids, MI 49516

News from the Grand Rapids Women's Chorus

Visit our website at:
www.grwc.org



-Mission Statement-

The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus is dedicated to singing culturally diverse music that promotes appreciation of women composers and arrangers.

Established for the education, enjoyment and enrichment of its members and its audience, the organization seeks to create and inspire meaningful experience through musical expression.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, compliments, questions, letters and tax deductible donations.
Please feel free to contact us.

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