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Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, it is my honor and delight to welcome you to our HoliGAY Spectacular concert! Tonight, we celebrate the holiday season with a festive mix of the traditional and the unexpected—bringing you music that will warm the heart, inspire joy, and maybe even tickle your funny bone.

From timeless classics like "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm" and "Walking in the Air" to the playful and delightfully unexpected "I Want a Lumbersexual for Christmas," our program is filled with songs that reflect the magic and humor of the holiday season. Whether you're here for nostalgia, laughter, or simply the joy of music, there's truly something for everyone tonight.

Thank you for sharing your time with us today and for your continued support of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus. As you enjoy this evening of music, keep in mind our mission, "to create social change through excellence in the choral arts." Every note we sing is a celebration of diversity, a call for inclusion, and a reminder of the power of unity. Thank you for supporting our mission and the LGBTQ+ community.

May this performance fill your hearts with the spirit of the season and remind us all of the power of love, joy, and togetherness. We invite you to join the chorus in fellowship at our annual holiday cookie reception immediately following today's performance.

Happy Holidays!

Jeffy & fr

Jeffrey Elsenheimer, Jr Board Chair, RGMC Board of Directors

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Congratulations to the RGMC on its continued contributions to music & entertainment for the community.





On behalf of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, welcome, everyone, to Holigay Spectacular! This year, we thought we would deck the halls with all the glitter, glamor, and glitz of the gayest holiday celebration in all of upstate New York. And we couldn't be more delighted to share our holiday gaiety with you today — our friends, families, supporters, and allies. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for joining and celebrating with us, and we hope you love the show!

How does a gay holiday — a "Holigay" — differ from the usual holiday season, you ask? After all, even a usual holiday season can be full of lights, colors, mirth, bells, bows, gifts, trees, family, friends, ribbons, ruffles, and sparkles galore. I guess there is a reason we have the phrase "Make the Yuletide gay..." But what the RGMC is doing to make this holiday extra holi-GAY is offering a collection of the most fabulous, and mostly nontraditional, takes on holiday tunes: holiday songs with over-the-top gay themes, traditional holiday songs written by iconic gay artists, and songs based on colorful fantasies that can only be described as "gay" in all the most wonderful ways. We are also delighted to be joined by some special guests, including the Flower City Pride Band, drummer extraordinaire Ryan Russell, and two outstanding soloist seniors from Greece Arcadia High School — in addition to our very own Teddy Bears, Rochettes, and gifted instrumentalists in the RGMC.

The first set of songs by the RGMC is sure to get everyone on their feet and dancing! Featuring holiday songs in popular music styles, we begin with the disco hit "Dear Santa" by The Weather Girls, before segueing into "Last Christmas" by Wham! Incidentally, if you had hoped to win "Whamageddon" this year, we implore you to leave the auditorium during this song, as hearing it will disqualify you from this year's contest. (Just kidding — please don't do that.) We then will sing a more recent holiday pride tune by mama RuPaul, "Merry Christmas, Mary," followed by "Bells, Bows, Gifts, Trees" by the effervescent and sassy artist and choreographer Todrick Hall. We end our first set with "I Want a Lumbersexual for Christmas" — a gay take on another familiar Christmas tune.

The second set of songs by the RGMC is centered around more traditional and classic holiday tunes, either done in nontraditional ways, written by a gay composer, or containing what we consider a "holigay" sort of theme. We begin with a funky arrangement of "Joy to the World" that is unlike anything you have probably heard, followed by a classic tune by Irving Berlin, "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." Then, we go flying in the air with a fleet of snowmen in the song "Walking in the Air" from the iconic book and '80s movie *The Snowman*,

before singing the traditional Hebrew hymn "Rock of Ages," arranged by our very own Dennis Rosenbaum. Finally, we end with all the glitter and glamor of a "Pink Christmas." May all our holidays be merry and bright!

With a heart full of gratitude to all of you — let's make the Yuletide gay!

Warmest wishes, Alex Kuczynski RGMC Artistic Director



alles A. Kriegymli





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Own a business? Consider advertising with the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus. Getting your business advertised in future concert programs, our online newsletter, or on-screen at our performances has never been easier!

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RGMC Artistic Staff



Dr. Alex Kuczynski, Artistic Director

Dr. Alex Kuczyński holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music (MA and PhD, piano studies in the studio of Rebecca Penneys) and Vassar College (BA in music and cognitive science). A collaborative pianist since the age of twelve, Alex had an early career accompanying in school choirs, music festivals and the church. Under real-time pressure at a young age, he quickly sharpened a diverse set of musical skills including sight reading, sight singing, playing an open score, improvisation, music theory, and the coordination of timing and interpretation while playing with other musicians. In high school, Alex competed in state-wide choral festivals as accompanist and won awards at district, regional and all-state levels in Pennsylvania. He was then employed as staff accompanist at Vassar and Nazareth Colleges

over the course of college and graduate school.

Currently, Alex serves as pianist, organist and music director at Trinity Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Rochester, artistic director of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, staff accompanist for the Geneseo Central School District, and pianist for opera singers, voice studios, and collegiate instrumental soloists. In addition to concert and church accompanying, Alex also serves as pianist and music director for theater groups such as the Off Monroe Players, Rochester Association of Performing Arts, The Lyric Theatre, the Geneseo Community Players and more. Additionally, Alex continues to enjoy performing solo piano music in a range of styles from the 17th - 21st centuries. An expert teacher in both music theory and piano, Alex has served as Visiting Instructor of music theory at Nazareth College and previously as Graduate Instructor at the Eastman School of Music during the length of his graduate studies, where he taught the whole undergraduate music theory and aural musicianship curriculum. Currently, in addition to performing and music directing, Alex teaches about 30 piano students of all ages, providing a solid music education for individual pianists as they reach and exceed their goals and dreams.



Bob Dietch, Principal Pianist

A local career musician, many will remember Bob behind the piano at Tara, where he entertained regularly for the majority of its 30-year run in downtown Rochester.

He is an alumnus of SUNY Fredonia School of Music, where he was degreed cum laude in their highly selective Sound Recording Technology program, and inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society.

Over the years, Bob has enjoyed music-directing and performing for a variety of private and community events, schools, and theatre groups including Blackfriars, Geva, RAPA, OFC Creations, Greater Rochester Repertory Company, Downstairs Cabaret, Rochester Children's

Theatre, East Rochester and Fairport High Schools. He was honored by the Theatre Association of New York State with an Excellence in Vocal Direction award for his work on ETC's Falsettos.

Bob is the longtime collaborative pianist for West Irondequoit Central School District's Choral Music program, the Traveling Cabaret and Temple Emanu-El.



Catherine J. Hardesty, CT Sign Language Interpreter

Catherine "Cat" J. Hardesty is a Nationally Certified Interpreter for the Deaf who joined RGMC as the Artistic Interpreter in 1999. She is a freelance Community Interpreter, but her favorite venue is music, especially with RGMC. She lives in Greece with her Life Partner, Robert Slater. Her son Christian and his wife Amber live in Columbus, Ohio where they are both practicing attorneys, and are the proud parents of their daughter Elana Paige!



Celebration begins with last Holiday Hymn Sing Sunday, Dec 22 at 5pm Historic Two Saints Church 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 14617 Cookie reception follows! JOIN US!





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Matt Bereza, *Choral Representative* Daniel Reeder, *Choral Representative*

ARTISTIC STAFF:

Alex Kuczynski, The John Williams and Chuck Lundeen Artistic Directorship Bob Dietch, Principal Pianist Ryan Russell, Principal Percussionist Sam Fortunato, Percussionist Matt Bereza, Bass Guitar Nicholas Williams, Artistic Director Emeritus

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Alex Kuczynski, *Music Director/Conductor* Elier Ruiz, *Production Stage Manager* Cat Hardesty, *CT Sign Language Interpreter* Tom Henderson, *Sound Engineer*

Mission Statement:

The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus creates social change through excellence in the choral arts.

Vision Statement:

• We, the members of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, unite proudly to seek a better world for ourselves, our community, and for our nation by sowing the seeds of harmony through the universal language of music. • We sing for ourselves to make glorious music with friends who experience the world as we do and who share our joy in standing together. • We sing for our sisters and brothers in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community to embody pride, family, and a sense of home. • We sing for our friends and supporters who join with us to rebuke ignorance and prejudice. • We sing for those unknown and unseen, awakening to who they are, in closets of oppression, or in search of community, that they may see our faces and hear our joy and know that the night is not forever and that there are friends and brothers to light their way and to welcome them home.

In Memoriam:

Ariel David Ammering Jacqueline Archer Gary Bauer Stephen Berds Tom Carr Steven Chabot Bill Coleman Bob DeGrandchamp John DiPrima Jeffrey Freeland Tom Glasow Bob Griffith Paul Kelly Charlie Kruppenbacher Chuck Lundeen Edward "Ted" Lyons Stanley Malinowski Chuck Mathewson

Peter Nickles John Owen Paul Pape David Pellow Bob See Jim Siciliano William A Smith Bob Titus Del Titus

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Let's Get Ready To Raffle!

Watch for chorus members coming around the auditorium with what could be your winning ticket for any number of fantastic prizes!

Tickets are 5 for \$1, 25 for \$5, 125 for \$20.

We Care About Your Feedback

Help us help you. We want to make your RGMC concert experience fun and enjoyable. Please take a few minutes to tell us your thoughts about today's concert.

As a thank-you, you will be entered into a drawing for 2 season tickets for our 2025-2026 concert series!



VISIT TINYURL.COM/RGMC2025 OR SCAN THE QR CODE



First Tenor

Robert Caruso Josh Knapp Marc McCabe Terry Quataert Daniel Reeder Dennis Rosenbaum Alan Van Camp*

Second Tenor

Matt Bereza Patrick Casey Sam Fortunato David C. Knoll Dawn Lepard Dick Madden Paul Scheib David M. Skinner* David Snyder

Baritone

Sam Beach** Lon Beery Evan Dorscheid Michael Hannen Peter House* Jesse Sutterlin Yu Yin Tsang John Villani Brian White

Bass

Christopher Craft Dan Flaherty Rob Keefe William Kelly Bill Miller John Scharf Jim Tavolaro Charles Weber* Jorge Yacila

*Section Leader **Membership Concerns Chair

The Rochettes

Evan Dorscheid Dan Flaherty Alex Kuczynski Bob Parsons Steven Price Terry Quataert John Scharf Jorge Yacila *Choreographer:* Jamie Lee Porteus

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Sam Beach Josh Knapp Daniel Reeder Dennis Rosezbaum Alan Van Camp Brian White *Director/Accompanist:* Alex Kucyznski

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ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

"Dear Santa" by Paul Jabara and Paul Shaffer Arr. Adam Gustafson		
<i>"Last Christmas"by</i> George Michael Arr. C. Wray		
<i>"Merry Christmas, Mary"</i> by Rupaul Andre Charles and Ellis Miah Arr. Absalon Figueroa Soloist: John Scharf		
TEDDY BEARS <i>"Step Into Christmas"</i> by Elton John and Bernie Taupin Arr. Austin Ralphson		
ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS "Bells, Bows, Gifts, Trees"by C. McGrier, T. Hall, J. G. Ducornet, and K. Owusu Arr. David Maddux		
<i>"I Want a Lumbersexual for Christmas"by</i> John Rox Arr. Dustin S. Cates		
TATYANA MONTALVO <i>"Santa Tell Me"</i> by Savan Kotecha, Ilya, and Ariana Grande		
TESSA MEYERS		

"Grown-Up Christmas List".....by David Foster and Linda Thompson-Jenner

TATYANA MONTALVO AND TESSA MEYERS

"Underneath The Tree"..... by Kelly Clarkson and Greg Kurstin

---INTERMISSION----

FLOWER CITY PRIDE BAND

"Sleigh Ride"	arranged by Leroy Anderson
"A Celebration of Hanukkah"	arranged by Howard Rowe
"Bell Carol A La Big Band"	arranged by Rob Romeyn
"Christmas Declaration"	arranged by Robert W. Smith

ROCHETTES

"We Need A Little Christmas" by Jerry Herman

TEDDY BEARS

"We Three (Swingin') Kings".....by John H. Hopkins Arr. Larry Shackley

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

"Joy to the World" by G.F. Handel. Arr. James Morehead

"I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm". by Irving Berlin. Arr. Steve Milloy

"Walking in the Air"by Howard Blake. Arr. Charles Beale Soloists: Michael Hannen and Peter Haus

"Rock of Ages"...... traditional Hebrew hymn, arr. Dennis Rosenbaum

"Pink Christmas".....arr. Chad Weirick Words by Gerard Alessandrini

DECK THE HALLS - SING-A-LONG LYRICS

Deck the halls with boughs of holly Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

'Tis the season to be jolly Fala-la-la, la-la, la, la

Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la, la, la

Troll the ancient Yule-tide carol Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

Strike the harp and join the chorus Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

Follow me in merry measure Fala-la-la, la-la, la, la

While I tell of Yuletide treasure Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

Don we now our gay apparel Fast away the old year passes Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

> Hail the new, ye lads and lasses Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

See the blazing Yule before us Sing we joyous all together Fala-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

> Heedless of the wind and weather Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

> > Fa-la-la-la, la-la, la, la

A Christmas Concert presented by Grace Choir Lon Beery, Director

2 PERFORMANCES:

FRIDAY Dec. 13, 2024 7:30 pm

> AT Webster Methodist Church 169 E. Main Street Webster, NY 14580

SUNDAY Dec. 15, 2024 4:00 pm

AT Crossroads Church 1574 Rochester Street Lima, NY 14485

Both are free & open to the public!



GENESEE VALLEY

Council on the Arts

This project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Regrant, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the office of the governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts.



These performances were made possible by funds received from the LGBT+ Giving Circle at the Community Foundation. Through grants from its LGBT+ Fund for Greater Rochester, the Giving Circle hopes to bridge diversity and cultivate community.

Special thank-you to Bruce and Sheron Marché for their continued generosity in support of our annual holiday concert, in memory of Michael Aman.



The Flower City Pride Band was started in 1994 to provide a safe environment for the members of the LGBTQIA+ community, friends and allies in music. For 30 years, the organization has been celebrating diversity and pride through music at Pride and other community events. We are thrilled to finish a major anniversary year of performances with the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus and this year's holiday celebration.

Learn more about our performances, how to be a member and support for our 31st season at

FlowerCityPride.com. Thank you very much, and happy holidays!

Duane Jones



Duane has been an active member of the Flower City Pride Band since 2007. A trumpet, french horn and mellophone player from the beginning, he assumed the role of Co-Artistic Director in 2019. Since 1988, he has been a performing member of the Rochester Crusaders and Lakeshoremen (Troy, MI) Drum and Bugle Corps, and a designer and instructor for several marching bands and color guards in the

states of New York and Michigan. He has been employed as an engineer during this time in New York and Michigan. Being in front of the talented Flower City Pride Band is a highlight of his musical career and is excited to see what the future brings during the 30th Anniversary for FCPB and beyond. He would like to thank OTHER CITY PRION his husband for his love and support.



Flute:

Cindy Ames, Kathi Grace, Paula Sousa, QJ Wang, Leah Warth

Clarinet:

Emma Hossenlopp, Liz Kirchner, Bec Knipp, Taylor Kranbuhl, Lisa Micciche, Marcia Najjar, Marnie Valdivia

Bass Clarinet: Aidan Alexander-Deis

Bassoon: Sarah Limberger

Alto Sax:

Judy Ames, Karla Bradley, Terri Cvetan, Cindy Lau, Taylor Pittard

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Tenor Sax:

Nissa Padden, JJ Payne, Dan Umansky

French Horn: Erica Neuberger, Shannon Rosato

Trumpet:

Mary Belcher, Mike Doolin, Eric Perry, Allan Shafer, Danielle Smith, Wynn Thompson

Trombone:

Axel Laubscher, Max Kurzdorfer, Nvree MacPherson, Rebecca Silliman, Ben Storer, Faye Vodicka, Laura Whitbeck

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Asbury First is proud to support the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus!



For 40 years the RGMC has exemplified excellence in choral arts by serving the Greater Rochester Community as well as all of Western New York.

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A HEARTFELT THANK-YOU TO OUR DONORS

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and Members of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus we would like to recognize and thank our donors listed below. Over the past year we have relied on your continued support more than ever to keep the chorus running. Thank you for your generosity. A special thank-you to Jim Moran on establishing the James R Moran Endowment for the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus through the Rochester Area Community Foundation (RACF.org).

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Joanne & David Poland – In Memory of Chuck Lundeen Mike Tiss – In Memory of Michael Fincham

David Gratzer – In Memory of Chris Manos



Special Guests Greece Arcadia Students



Tessa Meyers is a senior at Greece Arcadia High School where she is an active member of the choral, voice, and theater departments. Her theater endeavors have led to her acknowledgment as Best Actress from the RBTL Stars of Tomorrow program in 2023 and 2024. In addition, Tessa earned Top Ten placement in the prestigious RBTL Broadway Bound competition in both 2023 and 2024. Tessa's future aspirations are to keep music and performing an integral part of her life.



Tatyana Montalvo is a senior at Greece Arcadia High School and has enjoyed a plethora of musicals throughout her middle and high school career. She also enjoys participating in choral and vocal studies. Through her participation in the RBTL Stars of Tomorrow program, she has been acknowledged as Best Actress for two years, and with the RBTL Broadway Bound competition Tatyana placed in the Top 20 in 2023 and the Top Ten in 2024. Tatyana's interest and passion for the arts are leading her to pursue a career in fashion and theater studies.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13 | 7:30 PM Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre



DO YOU LIKE TO SING?



The RGMC is looking for new singers and volunteers. If you would like to join us, we would love to talk to you. For information on our next new member Meet & Greet, email **newmember@thergmc.org**.

Rehearsals for our spring concert, *Divas of Empowerment*, start on Thursday, January 9, at 7 pm. New members are asked to show up at 6:30 to meet with our artistic director for voice placement. Rehearsals are held at Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N Fitzhugh Street, in Downtown Rochester.

For more information, visit www.thergmc.org/ join-us or email newmember@thergmc.org.

The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus is proud to be a member of the following organizations:

GALA Choruses

The mission of GALA Choruses is inspiring and strengthening member choruses to change their worlds through song. Founded in 1982 by fourteen choruses, GALA Choruses is the world's leading international choral association for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied choruses. For more information about GALA Choruses and its programs, visit www.galachoruses.org.

Chorus America

Chorus America empowers singing ensembles to create vibrant communities and effect meaningful change by offering services that promote artistic achievement, organizational strength, and advocacy. Founded as the Association of Professional Vocal Ensembles in 1977 to gain recognition for professional choruses, today Chorus America represents hundreds of choruses of every kind throughout North America and beyond. For more information, visit www.chorusamerica.org.

The Greater Rochester Choral Consortium

The Greater Rochester Choral Consortium was organized in 1996 in order to anticipate and avoid scheduling conflicts among choral groups in the Greater Rochester area. It has since grown to 28 member groups varying in size and makeup, embracing some 800 singers of all ages. Their mission is to enrich the Rochester community's cultural environment by fostering the choral arts. For more information about GRCC, visit www.choral-rochester.org.



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