



SATURDAY 7.12.25 AT 7:30 PM
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Letter from the Board Chair

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, I am thrilled to welcome you to "It's a Jungle Out There," the final concert of our 2024-25 season. We're so glad you've joined us for an evening of music, joy, and community. It's a special night made even more meaningful by the presence of our friends from the Rochester Women's Community Chorus and the Flower City Pride Band. Together, we're kicking off Pride Week in Rochester with a powerful celebration of unity, artistry, and of course, pride!

Tonight, we invite you on a vibrant and playful journey through nature's exotic wonders. This concert is bursting with color, character, and a bit of wild fun. Our talented singers and artistic team have embraced the theme with enthusiasm and heart, and we know you'll enjoy every moment of this musical safari.

But the "jungle" in our title carries a deeper meaning, too. At the RGMC, our mission is to "create social change through excellence in the choral arts," and we recognize that the world around us can be just as unpredictable and untamed as the animal kingdom. In today's challenging political and cultural landscape, it's easy to feel lost or threatened. That's why songs like "Chosen Family" and "Stand in the Light" are such essential parts of tonight's program, reminding us all of the power of authenticity, belonging, and solidarity.

Music has long been a voice for hope, resilience, and transformation. As you listen tonight, we hope you'll reflect on the ways each of us can make a difference — in our communities, in our relationships, and in ourselves. Whether we roar like lions or glide like swans, we each have a part to play. Our shared voices can light the way forward. We hope you're inspired to embrace your authenticity and build a more compassionate, inclusive world — starting right here, with each other.

Thank you for being here tonight, thank you for your support, and thank you for standing with us. Enjoy the concert — and welcome to the jungle!



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.*

Letter from the Artistic Director

Good evening, one and all, and welcome to the jungle! On behalf of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, thank you for joining us and helping us kick off Pride Week 2025 in Rochester. As always, it is so important that we are out in our community, living our best lives and just being us — and I can't think of a better way to do so than through the joy of music!

The theme of tonight's concert, "It's a Jungle Out There," carries multiple meanings, as reflected in the repertoire we are singing. On one hand, every song is inspired by an animal in one way or another, and in some cases by a larger theme of a jungle. In this way, we get to have all kinds of fun living various animal fantasies — as the child within us always wants to do, no matter how many years continue to pass! On the other hand, we also use the phrase "it's a jungle out there" to refer to how chaotic, dangerous, and wild the world around us can be, despite how far we continue to evolve as a human civilization.

Strung together, the meaning behind these songs forms a narrative of empowerment, resilience, hope, and love as we navigate through our jungle of a world. It seems that no matter how much we evolve and how advanced we become intellectually, technologically, and culturally, our basic animal instincts and traits are always on the verge of emerging and taking over. And in some cases, they do take over and manifest themselves in surprising ways, whether it be in the context of war, the internet and social media, politics, or anything else.

As a community, LGBTQIA+ people everywhere know this perhaps better than anyone, as so many in our society try to push us to the fringes and question our rights and existence on a seemingly never-ending basis. Yet we continue to stand strong and hold each other close, as we see in the last two songs of the concert: we are all a family, and we will continue to stand in the light and be seen as we are, no matter what challenges come our way!

Nothing gives me greater pleasure than welcoming back to our stage our special guests whom we consider to be our extended family, the Rochester Women's Community Chorus and Flower City Pride Band. We are delighted that both groups can return and share their fabulous music and all the love and pride they bring to the stage and the community around us! We are also thrilled to welcome back percussion wizard Ryan Russell (and his beloved pup, and our honorary RGMC fur-member, Spirit), as well as RGMC's very own Matt Bereza on bass, Sam Fortunato on percussion, and Josh Knapp on ukulele, and of course our small ensembles: VersiTone, the Teddy Bears, and the Rochettes.

Finally, I cannot express enough gratitude for you, our fabulous audience and supporters, without whom none of this would be possible!

Let's take a musical safari and see what surprises are in store!



All my love,
Alex Kuczynski
RGMC Artistic Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Kuczynski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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or call (585) 423-0650.

RGMC Artistic Staff



Dr. Alex Kuczynski, Artistic Director

Dr. Alex Kuczynski 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, Artistic 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!



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The People That Make It All Come Together

RGMC BOARD:

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Cory Cummings, *Member at Large*
Michael Lill, *Member at Large*
Dennis Rosenbaum, *Member at Large*
Raul Torres, *Member at Large*

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, *Artistic 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
Ron Herman
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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First Tenor

Robert Caruso
Cory Cummings
Josh Knapp
CJ Lagapa
Marc McCabe
Terry Quataert
Daniel Reeder
Dennis Rosenbaum
Tyler Roth
Alan Van Camp*

Second Tenor

Matt Bereza
Patrick Casey
Evan Dorscheid
Sam Fortunato
David C. Knoll
Dawn Lepard
Dick Madden
Larry Mancine
Paul Scheib
David M. Skinner*

Baritone

Sam Beach
David Clinton
Jeffrey Elsenheimer, Jr.
Kevin Frisch
Michael Hannen
Peter House*
Matt Smith
Jesse Sutterlin
Yu Yin Tsang
John Villani

Bass

Kennan Beckstrand
Paul Berezney
Christopher Craft
Dan Flaherty
Tony Jagla
Rob Keefe
Bill Kelly
Charles Weber*
Jorge Yacila

**Section Leader*

***Membership
Concerns Chair*

The Rochettes

Sam Beach
Evan Dorscheid
Dan Flaherty
Alex Kuczynski
CJ Lagapa
Lillian Porteus
Terry Quataert
Jorge Yacila
Choreographer:
Jamie Lee Porteus

The Teddy Bears

Sam Beach
Evan Dorscheid
Josh Knapp
CJ Lagapa
Bill Miller
Daniel Reeder
Dennis Rosenbaum
Alan Van Camp
Director/Accompanist:
Alex Kuczynski

VersiTone

Dakota Altewalder
Tony Jagla
Josh Knapp
Sean Scott
Sean Terry

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IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

"The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by S. Linda, P. Campbell, H. Peretti, L. Creatore, G. Weiss and A. Stanton

Arr. R. Emerson

Soloists: Terry Quataert, Dennis Rosenbaum,
Josh Knapp, Evan Dorscheid

"Eye of the Tiger" by Frank Sullivan and Jim Peterik
Arr. Rob Lane

"I'm Like a Bird" by Nelly Furtado
Arr. Ash

"Fireflies" by Adam Young
Arr. Mark Brymer

"Bat Out of Hell" by Jim Steinman
Arr. Graham Redwood

TEDDY BEARS

"Blackbird" by John Lennon and Paul McCartney
Arr. Kevin Robison
Josh Knapp, ukulele

"Octopus's Garden" by Richard Starkey, John Lennon
and Paul McCartney
Arr. Matthew Swope
Josh Knapp, ukulele

ROCHESTER WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CHORUS

"There Comes a Time" by Connie Kaldor
Arr. Tara O'Neil
Ginny Munson, Cajon

"I Am What I Am" by Jerry Herman
Arr. Ash

INTERMISSION

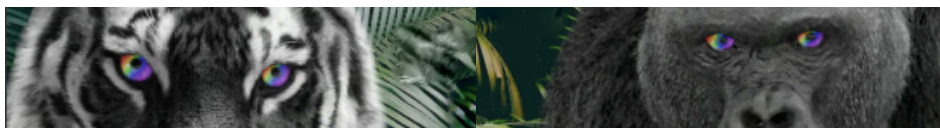
We Care About Your Feedback

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!



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FLOWER CITY PRIDE BAND

"Lady Gaga in Concert" Arr. Sean O'Loughlin
Contains songs: The Edge of Glory, Million Reasons,
Applause, Born this Way

"Under Pressure" Words and music by Freddie Mercury,
John Deacon, Brian May, Roger Taylor, and David Bowie
Arr. Matt Conaway
Jack Holt, percussion

"This is Me" Words and music by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul
Arr. Jay Bocook

"How Far I'll Go" by Lin-Manuel Miranda
Arr. Matt Conaway
Jack Holt, percussion

"Phantom of the Opera" by Andrew Lloyd Webber
Lyrics by Charles Hart
Arr. by Paul Murtha

ROCHETTES

"Karma Chameleon" by Culture Club

VERSITONE

"Can You Feel the Love Tonight" by Elton John and Tim Rice
Arr. Mac Huff

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

"Crocodile Rock" by Elton John and Bernie Taupin
Arr. Tim Sarsany

"Le Cygne" from "The Carnival of the Animals" ...by Camille Saint-Saëns
Arr. Simon Arnott

"The Lark Ascending" by Linda Steen Spevacek

"Bare Necessities" by Terry Gilkyson
Arr. Tom Gentry

"Chosen Family" by Rina Sawayama, Danny L. Harle
and Jonny Latimer
Arr. Chris Pethers

RGMC/RWCC

"Stand in the Light" by Stephan Moccio and Lauren Christy
Arr. Roger Emerson



The Rochester Women's Community Chorus provides a creative and safe environment for singers of various levels of musical expertise to sing together. The chorus embraces members with a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, life experiences, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

The RWCC is dedicated to using music as the vehicle for messages of peace, hope, understanding, and cooperation within the global community. We welcome anyone who sings in the treble range

(soprano/alto) to sing with the RWCC. We also welcome those who would like to join the RWCC family in volunteer, non-singing roles.

Alto 1

Kat Alberti
Hannah Bartolotto
Carol Baumeister
Val Demler
Marina Jagodzinski
Hannah McClow Kubiniec
Katie Valentin
Helen Welch
Adrienne White
Theresa Zanghi

Alto 2

Carly Cressman
Jennifer Feldman
Kelly Kamish
Shauna O'Toole
Melanie Piazza
Amy Prenatt-Michaux
Ellie Sylvan
Karen Wedge Landry

Soprano 1

Maegan Fish
Laura Held
Claire Houston
Holly Lawrence-Kelsey
Bonnie MacLeod
Layla Maurer
Laurie Moats

Soprano 2

Jackie Alasimi
Dominique Corbie-Walker
Robbin DeHollander
Kathleen Foley
Marianne Gocker
Genevieve Johnson Stuber
Melanie Johnston
Nora Kelly
Sandi Krajcski
Laura Leeper
Sara Moore
Mandy Piazza
Susan Powell
Judy Scott
Jennifer Vallerand
Ashley Walker
Laura Waterstripe
Beth Wood

Kristy Houston, Music Director

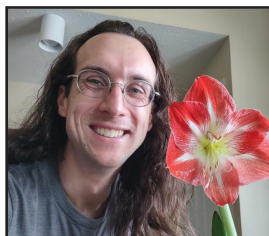
Originally from the Flint, Michigan area, she began singing with the RWCC when she first moved to Rochester in 2006. She took on the role of conductor and music director in 2011. Kristy has a B.Mus.Ed. from the University of Michigan-Flint and a M.Mus.Ed. from Indiana University. Her conducting influences and mentors include Mary Alice Stollak, Stephen Pratt, Dr. Mary Goetze, and Dr. Joe Miller. She has been teaching band, choir, and general music for twenty five years, and has been the band director at The Harley School since 2010.





The Flower City Pride Band has been marching with pride in Rochester NY since 1994. We are an all-volunteer community band open to adult LGBTQ+ musicians and allies. Flower City Pride performs at community events throughout western New York. Join us to march this summer! All LGBTQ+ friendly musicians are welcome to join, on any traditional band instrument or color guard. There are no auditions, and we work with all skill levels.

We perform popular music from the 1950's to today's hits to bring fun and enjoyment to all ages at community events throughout the greater Rochester area.



Benjamin Storer

Conductor / Assistant Artistic Director

Ben is the Assistant Artistic Director for the Flower City Pride Band. In addition to being a trombone player and part-time conductor, Ben is a research associate at the University of Rochester, studying ocean energy dynamics. In his free time, Ben enjoys cycling, walking, playing board games, and tending his growing plant collection. He is also a Trekkie; live long and prosper.



Flute:

Hunter Schultz, Cindy Ames, Nax Gillett, QJ Wang, Leah Warth, Kathi Grace

Clarinet:

Emma Hossenlopp, Liz Kirchner, Taylor Kranbuhl, Marcia Najjar, Marnie Valdivia

Bass Clarinet:

Aidan Alexander-Deis

Trumpet:

Laura Bektas, Sara Catlin, Audrey Hoyt, Lee Klein, Amy Rafoth, Allan Shafer, Danielle Smith

Alto Sax:

Judy Ames, Karla Bradley, Terri Cvetan, Allyssa Johnson, Taylor Pittard, Karan Thompson

Tenor Sax:

Nissa Padden, Dan Umansky, Drea Williams

Baritone Sax:

Sarah Limberger, Cindy Lau

French Horn:

Duane Jones, Felicia McClaren, Shannon Rosato

Trombone:

Meral Kanik, Axel Laubscher, Nancy Laurie, Nyree MacPherson, Laura Whitbeck

Baritone:

Chris Auer, Mik Spillet

Tuba:

Richard Hellinger, Trey Pachucki, Keith Reitz

Percussion:

Stefan Baer, Michelle D'Amico, Festival Davis, Tom Erb, Sanaa Finley, Adelaide Gardener, Kristina Kristina, Steve Lau

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



For 40 years the RGMC has exemplified excellence
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as well as all of Western New York.

For over 200 years, Asbury First United Methodist Church
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RGMC  ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

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).

Maestro (\$2500 & Over)

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— In Memory of Michael
Aman

Sally & Jamie Whitbeck —
In Memory of John Owen

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Richard McGowan
Steven Jarose &
Marvin Ritzenthaler

Crooner (\$500 - \$749)

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& Richard McGowan
Chris Brown
& Suzanne Bell
Frank Hanzel
& David Champlin
Steven Jarose
& Marvin Ritzenthaler
William Kelly & Brad Forth
Trina & John Reeder
Sally & Jamie Whitbeck
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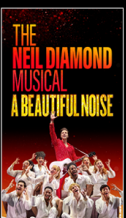
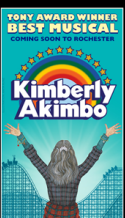
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Fred Weiss

Mike Tiss — In Memory of
Michael Fincham

David Gratzner — In Memory
of Chris Manos

RBTL RAFFLE

THE 2025-2026 M&T BANK BROADWAY SEASON AT WEST HERR AUDITORIUM THEATRE



PRESENTED BY THE ROCHESTER BROADWAY THEATRE LEAGUE & ALBERT NOCCIOLINO

The RGMC invites you to take center stage in our annual raffle! You could win a pair of season tickets to the Rochester Broadway Theatre League's 2025-26 season—your pass to a full season of unforgettable Broadway performances at the historic Auditorium Theatre.

Just \$10 gives you a 1-in-500 chance for you and a friend to enjoy seven spectacular shows. All tickets are for Saturday evening performances. Section ORCHC, Row DD, Seats 101 & 102. This prize has a retail value of \$1,200!

Come see us in the lobby to purchase raffle tickets. In doing so, you're not only entering to win an incredible prize—you're also supporting the RGMC's mission to inspire, uplift, and unite through music and community outreach. Thank you!

The drawing will be held TONIGHT during "It's a Jungle Out There!"
Don't miss your chance to win big and support a great cause!



All are welcome for unprogrammed Worship

Every Sunday at 11:00 AM

121 N. Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, NY 14614

rochesterquakers.org

Join Us in Seeking Inner Peace and World Peace

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!

Rehearsals for our December concert, ***“Yuletide Radiance: From Darkness to Light,”*** start on Thursday, September 4, 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 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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