

YULETIDE RADIANCE

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT



DEC 6 | 7:30 PM
HOCHSTEIN PERFORMANCE HALL

DEC 7 | 3:00 PM
DOWNTOWN UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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Letter from the Board Chair

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we gather in this season of joy and reflection, my heart overflows with gratitude for each of you who has chosen to share this magical time with the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.

For 43 remarkable years, the RGMC has been more than a chorus—we've been a beacon of hope, a celebration of authenticity, and living proof of music's transformative power. From that first rehearsal in Kent Peterson's living room on November 18, 1982, when five courageous friends dared to dream, to today's performance on this magnificent stage, we have created sacred spaces where voices unite not just in harmony but in solidarity, pride, and love.

Our founders—David Knoll, Bob Olsowski, Kent Peterson, Ken Setera, and Nicholas Williams—envisioned using music to create acceptance of social diversity and to let the harmony of voice create a harmony of the spirit. Today, we honor their legacy while building upon their foundation, standing proudly on the shoulders of these pioneers and the eighteen brave men who performed our first concert on May 7, 1983.

As we look toward tomorrow, our vision shines brightly: to build bridges through music, foster understanding through performance, and nurture a more inclusive community where everyone can sing their truth. The year ahead promises to be extraordinary:

Hawaiian Luau fundraiser: Saturday, February 28, at ROAR

Harmonic Echoes: A Journey of Renewal Through Time: Saturday, March 28, at Hochstein

Rainbowland Rhapsody: Songs of Dolly Parton: Saturday, July 11 (part of Rochester's Pride Festival), at Hochstein

Each performance represents our continued dedication to musical excellence that touches hearts, changes minds, and transforms communities.

This weekend's performances would not be possible without the extraordinary generosity of Bruce and Sheron Marché. Their years of unwavering support and continued sponsorship have helped our chorus not just survive but thrive and soar. Bruce and Sheron, your belief in our mission exemplifies the very spirit of community that makes Rochester—and the RGMC—so special. From every member of our chorus family, thank you for helping our voices reach new heights.

To our beloved audience—whether this is your first RGMC concert or you've been with us since those early days at Calvary Street St. Andrews Church—thank you for being part of our continuing journey. Your presence tonight affirms that music truly has the power to unite us all, regardless of who we love or how we identify. You are the reason we sing.

May this holiday season fill your hearts with the same joy, hope, and radiance that you bring to ours. Together, we move from darkness to light, carrying forward the dream that began 43 years ago, using the power of song to create a world where everyone belongs.

With deepest warmth and gratitude,

Michael Rosario-McCabe

Board Chair, RGMC Board of Directors



Michael Rosario-McCabe

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

Letter from the Artistic Director

On behalf of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, welcome to Yuletide Radiance: From Darkness to Light! This year, we celebrate the holidays through the celestial event of the winter solstice and the journey of light through the darkest time of the year in our hemisphere. The ancient midwinter festival of Yule, celebrating the return of the sun's light after the shortest day of the year, is reflected in our program through music of light as it crosses variegated winter scenes and intersects with our treasured holidays, traditions, and emotions. As we meditate on the concept of Yule, we feel ourselves enveloped in the primal forces of nature, gravity, and the tides—and stand in awe of the scale of these universal forces and time itself. Yet as small as our hearts are in comparison to these forces, we burn with a life and light so beautiful and so wonderful, it cannot be matched by the darkness.

We couldn't be more delighted to share our celestial journey with you today—our friends, supporters, and allies. We are also delighted to be joined by some special guests including the Flower City Pride Band, our favorite wizard of percussion, Ryan Russell (and his sidekick Spirit), and of course our very own groups the Teddy Bears, VersiTone, and the Rochettes, as well as so many talented soloists and instrumentalists within the RGMC. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for joining and celebrating with us, and we hope you love the show!

In our first set, we open with two carols on the theme of Yule and winter: "Winter Processional," a modern composition in an ancient style, and "Welcome Yule," an ancient carol in a modern style that contains ancient modalities, scales, and text. We then traverse a serene winter scene of dazzling light reflecting off of snow, auroras in the sky, and the sound of sparrows greeting the new season in "Glow," before rejoicing with a gospel tune about Christmas, "Here Comes the Light," which also contains the traditional spiritual "My Lord, What a Morning." We then reflect on the significance of light and the burning of Chanukah candles in "Eight Days of Lights." Finally, we close our first set with the regal and atmospheric Christmas song "Do You Hear What I Hear?"

Our second set continues our journey of light by opening with the joyous "Ding! Dong! Merrily on High," which contains a rousing four-hand piano accompaniment and trailing choral melismas. We then switch gears to sing some classic jazz in the 1950s Christmas tune "Cool Yule," made famous by Louis Armstrong, followed by "Cold Moon," which paints the dark and the cold as omnipresent forces and the light as the life which burns within us in the face of harsh realities. This is followed by a song of parting, "Omnia Sol" ("the sun warms everything"), which we dedicate to two treasured and recently dearly departed members of our RGMC family, Ron Herman and Daniel Reeder. Finally, we sing "Merry Everything" to celebrate the plurality of holidays surrounding the solstice and the transcendence of human connection and love over specific traditions, before we are gone in a "Ray of Light."

With the brightest holiday wishes,

Alex Kuczynski
RGMC Artistic Director



Alex Kuczynski



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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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**“Wherever you are on life’s journey, you are
welcome here!”**

The People That Make It All Come Together

RGMC BOARD:

Michael Rosario-McCabe, *Board Chair*
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Paul Scheib, *Treasurer*
Dan Flaherty, *Secretary*

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Michael Lill, *Member at Large*
Dennis Rosenbaum, *Member at Large*
Raul Torres, *Member at Large*
Alan Van Camp, *Member at Large*

Bob Caruso, *Choral Rep*
Larry Mancine, *Choral Rep*

ARTISTIC STAFF:

Alex Kuczynski, *The John Williams and Chuck
Lundeen Artistic Directorship*
Bob Dietch, *Principal Pianist*
Ryan Russell, *Principal Percussionist*
Nicholas Williams, *Artistic Director Emeritus*

OPERATIONS STAFF:

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Shane Allen, *Graphic Design*

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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
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ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

First Tenor

Robert Caruso
Joshua Knapp
Marc McCabe
Terry Quataert
Dennis Rosenbaum
Tyler Roth
Jay Stokes
Tim Stuff
Alan Van Camp

Second Tenor

Matt Bereza
Patrick Casey Jr
Evan Dorscheid
Sam Fortunato
David Knoll
Dino Kilios
Larry Mancine
Fr. Michael Nicosia
David M. Skinner
Brian White

Baritone

Sam L. Beach
David Clinton
Michael Hannen
Peter House
Wolcott Humphrey
Mark Kanelba
Matthew Klock
Sean Scott
Jesse Sutterlin
Yu Yin Tsang
Patrick Utaro
John Villani

Bass

Kennan Beckstrand
Paul Berezney
Christopher Craft
Dan Flaherty
Kevin Frisch
Tony Jagla
Rob Keefe
William Kelly
Matt Knauf
Mike Veress
Charles Weber
Jorge Yacila

The Rochettes

Evan Dorscheid
Dan Flaherty
Alex Kuczynski
Bob Parsons
Steven Price
Terry Quataert
Tyler Roth
Jay Stokes
Riley Sullivan
Jorge Yacila

Choreographer:
Jamie Lee Porteus

The Teddy Bears

Sam Beach
Josh Knapp
Alex Kuczynski
Larry Mancine
Dennis Rosenbaum
Jesse Sutterlin
Alan VanCamp
Brian White

VersiTone

Dakota A.
Tony Jagla
Josh Knapp
Tyler Roth
Preston Terry
Sean Scott

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YULETIDE RADIANCE

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

"Winter Processional"by David Maddux

Dennis Rosenbaum, Oboe

Tenor quartet: Alan Van Camp, Michael Nicosia,
Jay Stokes, Josh Knapp

Baritone quartet: Charles Weber, Peter House,
Michael Hannen, Sean Scott

"Welcome Yule"by Libby Larsen

"Glow"by Eric Whitacre

Arr. Emily Crocker and Lisa Edwards

"Here Comes the Light"by Joseph Graham

Arr. John Yane

"Eight Days of Lights"by Judith Clurman

"Do You Hear What I Hear"by N. Regney and G. Shayne

Arr. R. Sterling

TEDDY BEARS

"A Holiday Road of Carols"Arr. Greg Gilpin

Josh Knapp, Ukulele

"A Yuletide Sea Shanty"by Steve Parsons

Robert Caruso, The Elf

ROCHETTES

Hang Your Lightsby Jamie Cullum

[INTERMISSION]



FLOWER CITY PRIDE BAND

- "A Christmas Festival"* by Leroy Anderson
- "A Charlie Brown Christmas"* by Vince Guaraldi
Arr. Paul Murtha
- "We Are the World"* by Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson
Arr. John Higgins

VERSITONE

- "Text Me Merry Christmas"* by D. Javerbaum and A. Schlesinger
Arr. A. Billingsley
- "Silent Night"* by Franz Gruber
Arr. Mack Wilberg
Josh Knapp, solo

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

- "Ding Dong Merrily On High"* by T. Arbeau
Arr. H. Helvey
- "Cool Yule"* by Steve Allen
Arr. Steve Milloy
- "Cold Moon"* by Nicholas Ryan Kelly
- "Omnia Sol"* by Z. Randall Stroope
- "Merry Everything"* by Ernie Lijoi
Patrick Casey, solo 1
Constantinos Kolios, solo 2
- "Ray of Light"* by C. Leach, C. Muldoon,
D. Curtis, Madonna, and W. Orbit
Arr. S. Milloy

We Care About Your Feedback

We're so grateful you joined us for the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus holiday concert, Yuletide Radiance – From Darkness to Light. Your presence helped make this season shine brighter!

As we plan for future performances, we'd love to hear from you. Please complete our short concert survey by scanning the QR code below or typing the link: bit.ly/yulerad

As a thank-you, you will be entered into a drawing for two tickets to our March concert, **Harmonic Echoes**.



The **MESSIAH** **HAS COME!**

*Choruses with Orchestra from Handel's Messiah
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Julie Smith, Director

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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.



Duane Jones

**Co-Artistic Director
Flower City Pride Band**

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 Lakeshoremens (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 his husband for his love and support.



Flute:

Kathi Grace, Nora LeMay, QJ Wang, Leah Warth

Clarinet:

Judy Ames, Emma Hollenlopp, Elizabeth Kirchner, Bec Knipp, Marcia Najjar, Marnie Valdivia

Bass Clarinet:

Aidan Alexander-Deis

Trumpet:

Laura Bektas, Sara Catlin, Mike Doolin, Lee Klein, Allan Shafer, Danielle Smith

Alto Sax:

Karla Bradley, Terri Cvetan, Allyssa Johnson, Cindy Lau, Taylor Pittard, Erin Ormsby

Tenor Sax:

Rob Lemley, Nissa Padden, Drea Williams

Horn:

Erica Neuburger, Shannon Rosato

Baritone:

Chris Auer, Liz McKowan, Mik Spillet

Bassoon:

Sarah Limberger

Trombone:

Meral Kanik, Axel Laubscher, Nancy Laurie, Nyree MacPherson, Sam Regan, Ben Storer, Faye Vodicka, Laura Whitbeck

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ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS



ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

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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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ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

HARMONIC

MAR 28
7:30 PM

HOCHSTEIN
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ECHOES

THE RGM.C.ORG



Rochester Friends Meeting (Quakers)



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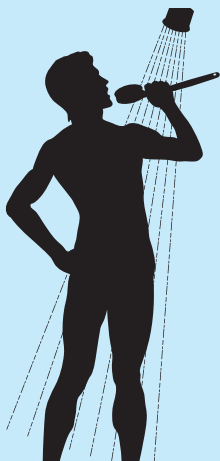
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Join Us in Seeking Inner Peace and World Peace

Do YOU LIKE TO SING?



The RGMCM is looking for new singers and volunteers. If you would like to join us, we would love to talk to you!

Rehearsals for our March concert, ***“Harmonic Echoes: A Journey of Renewal Through Time”*** start on Thursday, January 8, at 7 pm. A New Member Meet and Greet is scheduled for Tuesday January 6 at 7 PM to meet with our artistic director for voice placement. The meet & greet and weekly 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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Your financial support is an investment in the RGMC and our mission of creating social change through excellence in the choral arts. Please consider making a gift to support our mission.

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