



## A NARROW BRIDGE

A *Narrow Bridge*, in its own way, is a concert about being a light in the darkness — a call to be a beacon of hope for those who feel hopeless. The concert includes familiar songs from both points of view, including “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” “The Sound of Silence,” “Creep,” and “Light” from *Next to Normal*.

The concert will also feature the song cycle *Tyler’s Suite*, commissioned by multiple GALA Chorus members, including the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus, New York City Gay Men’s Chorus, and the Turtle Creek Chorale. The cycle, which includes songs by nine composers, including Stephen Schwartz, Ann Hampton Callaway, and Jake Heggie, is a reflection on the life and death of Tyler Clementi, an 18-year-old gay man who took his own life after being cyber-bullied by his college roommate, as well as the

response of his family.

*Tyler’s Suite* will feature violinist Perrin Yang, baritone Daniel Ihasz, mezzo-soprano Chandra Downs, tenor Alex Kosmowski, and Rochester native Tyler Hecht in the title role.

Our performance is made possible in part by a grant from the LGBT Giving Circle of the Rochester Community Foundation. We are so grateful to the Giving Circle for their great generosity to the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus, and for the impact they have on the Greater Rochester LGBTQ community.

We at the RGMC have pledged to be #Upstanders, as defined by the Tyler Clementi Foundation as people who will not tolerate bullying of any kind, and to reach out and be the bridge for those who may feel like their options are limited or non-existent.

See more on the following page.

### THE LGBT GIVING CIRCLE Adapted from [WWW.RACF.ORG](http://WWW.RACF.ORG)

The LGBT Fund for Greater Rochester was created at the Community Foundation in 2011 by a group of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and allies. Through grants from this fund, the LGBT Giving Circle hopes to bridge diversity and cultivate community.

#### THE MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS OF THE GIVING CIRCLE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

**MISSION:** We unite donors to support organizations that serve, are inclusive of, or are allied with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community to enhance and strengthen our region.

**VISION:** Through our sustained support, we will become the region’s largest private funder of organizations that improve the lives of LGBT individuals and cultivate a better community.

*The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus is thrilled to be the recipient of a grant from the LGBT Giving Circle in support of our performance of Tyler’s Suite for our March 2017 concert.*

Tickets are \$20 general, \$17 for seniors and students, and \$8 for children. All adult tickets (including seniors and students) will be \$25 at the door — so purchase in advance for the best deal!

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org), by phone at (585) 423-0650, or in person at Parkleigh, Equal=Grounds, or from RGMC members.

*Please note that some language during this show may be inappropriate for children.*

**Please note: concerts begin at 7:30**

## THE TYLER CLEMENTI FOUNDATION

The Tyler Clementi Foundation is an organization created by the Clementi family which seeks to prevent bullying through inclusion, assertion of dignity, and acceptance as a way to honor the memory of Tyler Clementi: a son, a brother, and a friend.

In 2010, Tyler's death became a global news story, highlighting the impact and consequences of bullying while sparking dialogue amongst parents, teachers, and students across the country. The story also linked to broader issues impacting youth and families such as LGBT inequality, safety in schools, youth in crisis, higher education support systems, and cyberbullying.

Not only does the foundation continue to carry the important message about the suicide risk facing many LGBT youth, which can be three to seven times more at risk for suicide than other youth, but The Tyler Clementi Foundation recognizes that our message of standing up to bullying speaks universally across all cultures and identities.

### The Tyler Clementi Foundation encourages us all to become #Upstanders by taking the following pledge:

- I will stand up to bullying whether I'm at school, at home, at work, in my house of worship, or out with friends, family, colleagues, or teammates.
- I will work to make others feel safe and included by treating them with respect and compassion.
- I will not use insulting or demeaning language, slurs, gestures, facial expressions, or jokes about anyone's sexuality, size, gender, race, any kind of disability, religion, class, politics, or other differences, in person or while using technology.

### If I see or hear behavior that perpetuates prejudice:

- **I will speak up!** I will let others know that bullying, cruelty, and prejudice are abusive and not acceptable.
- I will reach out to someone I know who has been the target of abusive actions or words and let this person know that this is not okay with me and ask how I can help.
- I will remain vigilant and not be a passive audience or "bystander" to abusive actions or words.

### If I learn in person or online that someone is feeling seriously depressed or potentially suicidal:

- I will reach out and tell this person, "Your life has value and is important, no matter how you feel at the moment and no matter what others say or think."
- I will strongly encourage this person to get professional help.

**Please join with us to be #Upstanders**

Adapted from <http://tylerclementi.org/about>



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## RGM OUT ON THE TOWN



The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus is thrilled to continue to realize its mission statement out in the community by participating in varied and important events throughout the Greater Rochester Area.

### PRISM CONCERT

On February 19, we participated in the Greater Rochester Choral Consortium's free, biennial concert, *A Taste of Song*, at Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre. The "prism" style of the concert allowed 19 groups to perform within 90 minutes, each singing for 5 minutes and followed immediately by another, staged throughout the theater. In total, nearly 600 singers performed, from children to seniors.

### ROCHESTER REGIONAL HEALTH GALA

On November 12, we performed at the Rochester Regional Health Gala, a popular, high-class event featuring entertainment along with dinner and dancing. We greeted the guests as they arrived at the Convention Center. We sang "Silent Movie," "I Close My Eyes," "Wedding Bell Blues," "Heatwave," and "A-Tisket, A-Tasket."

### TOY DRIVE FOR RAIHN

Thank you to all who donated toys at our holiday concerts for the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN). This was the sixth year in a row that we have coordinated this toy drive for RAIHN, a nonprofit, interfaith organization that assists homeless families to achieve sustainable independence, supporting them with tailored services, including shelter, food, personalized case management services, and a diverse network of caring volunteers.



**A warm welcome to our new members!**

**Back row, left to right: Jim Rood, Tim Carl, Evan Church**

**Front row: Tyler Buchiero, Alex Corbett**

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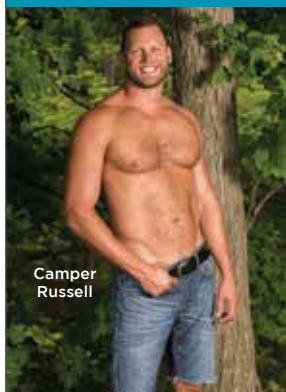
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*KEYNOTES* is the official newsletter of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus and is published three times a year. The RGMC is solely responsible for its editorial content.

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## THE ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

Annual Fundraiser

# MORE THAN US 4

Join us at the Historic German House for More Than Us 4, an exciting evening of entertainment not only from the RGMC, but from our friends across the Greater Rochester Area. We are thrilled to have Matt Molloy of 13WHAM News hosting the event.

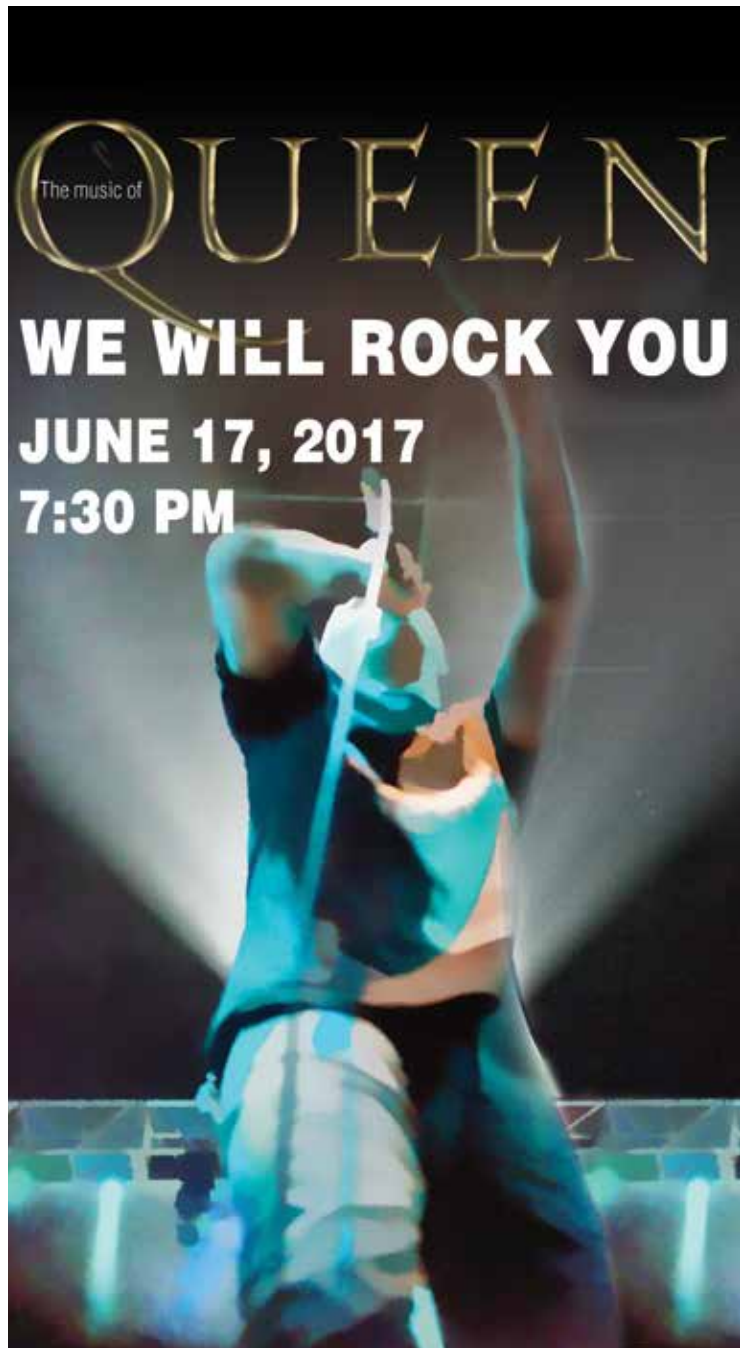
Cash bar opens at 5 pm, with a buffet dinner at 6 pm and the show beginning at 7:30. Throughout the evening, there will be raffle prizes, silent auctions, and plenty of opportunities to mingle with friends, old and new.

The German House is located at 315 Gregory Street, in Rochester's South Wedge.

Tickets for this special event are \$55 each or \$100 for two, available at [www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org) or by calling (585) 423-0650.

Various levels of event sponsorship are available, with perks including tickets to our June concert and promotional opportunities for your business. See details on our website. If you would like to donate items for the silent auction or raffle, please contact our donation coordinators, Ted Smith at (585) 307-6466 or [board@thergmc.org](mailto:board@thergmc.org) or Mark Brewer at (585) 278-7773 or [mbrewer19@hotmail.com](mailto:mbrewer19@hotmail.com).

We thank you for your support, and we look forward to sharing a fantastic evening with you!



## We Will Rock You June 17, 2017

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

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ROBERT BURCH-LAU



In many ways, joining the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus was a natural step for Robert Burch-Lau. He's been a singer since the fourth grade, and he has fond memories of attending RGMC concerts with his parents when he was young. In spring 2015, he browsed a list of choral groups in Rochester in search of one to join, and the RGMC stood out.

"Best decision I could have made," he says.

In one seemingly key regard, however, his choice to join may be surprising to some: he's straight.

"I have felt very welcomed," he says. "I was worried about that at first, but it is such a wonderful group of people that I cherish the thought now."

Robert's experience is a great demonstration of the inclusivity on which the RGMC prides itself, welcoming anyone to join who shares in its vision of seeking "a better world for ourselves, our community, and our nation by sowing the seeds of harmony through the universal language of music." The RGMC's very foundation rests on embracing and fostering social diversity.

Robert says the RGMC is the most fun he's had with a singing group since high school. "It has really been a blast!" he says.

The chorus has positively impacted his life in more ways than just the fun it provides: "Rather than being adrift in society, I really feel like part of a community," says Robert.

A self-proclaimed "huge nerd," his hobbies also include playing board and card games and going to musicals and plays around the city. Robert works in technical support with Unisys, a global IT company.

Having studied some computer science and psychology in the past, he enjoys working with computers so much that he decided to go back to school for programming. He is currently attending MCC and hopes to transfer to RIT next year.

Asked how he would sum up his time with the RGMC thus far, Robert has no qualms about it: "The experience has been fantastic."

## GAYRAGE SALE!



### DONATIONS NEEDED FOR SPRING FUNDRAISER

Just in time for spring cleaning, the chorus is seeking donations of your unwanted stuff to help stock our upcoming Gayrage Sale fundraiser. We'll gratefully accept just about anything, but please, no clothing, food, or X-rated items. To arrange a pickup of your items, email [gayragesale@thergmc.org](mailto:gayragesale@thergmc.org) or call (585) 423-0650.

Be sure to stop by the sale: Friday, May 5, and Saturday, May 6, 9 am to 4 pm each day, at 3 Elmcroft Road (on the corner of Elmcroft and Winton). This is the same weekend as the Browncroft neighborhood garage sales, so come on out for a day of bargain shopping!

All proceeds from our sale will benefit the mission activities of the chorus. We appreciate your support!

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THE ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

# A NARROW BRIDGE

MARCH 18, 2017  
 7:30 PM  
 HOCHSTEIN PERFORMANCE HALL

INCLUDING THE ROCHESTER PREMIERE OF TYLER'S SUITE

**FEATURING:**  
 Tyler Hecht as Tyler Clementi  
 Chandra Downs, mezzo-soprano  
 Daniel Ihasz, baritone  
 Alexander Kosmowski, tenor  
 Perrin Yang, RPO violinist

FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION VISIT [www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org)  
Some lyrics not suitable for children

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 Portions of this concert have been underwritten by a Grant from the LGBT Giving Circle

