

# KEYNOTES

ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS

March 2016, Volume 5 Issue 5

## I'M THE GREATEST STAR: THE FABULOUS FEMALE SINGERS

### THE RGMC PAYS TRIBUTE TO POWERHOUSE WOMEN

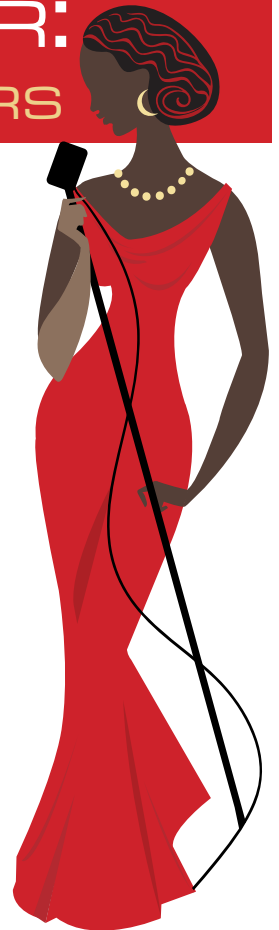
Join us on Saturday, March 19, at 8 pm at the Hochstein Performance Hall for *I'm the Greatest Star: The Fabulous Female Singers*. We will celebrate songs made famous by incredible women of the 1920s through the 1950s. We are thrilled that Michael Lasser (of WXXI's *Fascinatin' Rhythm*) will be on hand to host.

From Blues to Jazz to Big Band, Broadway, and Hollywood movie musicals, our songs will represent and celebrate women who had the drive to break free and succeed in a society which discriminated against them. These women — including Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Fanny Brice, Ethel Merman, Mamie Smith, Barbra Streisand, Judy Garland, and the Andrews Sisters — not only blazed their own trails, but became icons for the LGBTQ community through their stories of adversity, perseverance, and triumph, as

well as with the incredible performances they gave these songs.

Songs include such classics as "Get Happy/Happy Days are Here Again," "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," "Tangerine," "Bei mir bist du schön," "My Man," "The Party's Over," and "Can't Help Lovin' That Man," among many others. *I'm the Greatest Star* will also feature the incredibly popular Rochettes.

Tickets are available at [www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org) or by calling (585) 423-0650. Tickets can also be purchased in person at Parkleigh, Outlandish, Equal=Grounds, Vittorio Menswear and Tuxedo, or from RGMC members. Ticket prices are \$6 for children under 12; \$14 for students and seniors in advance (\$17 at the door); and \$17 for adults in advance (\$20 at the door). Hochstein Performance Hall is located at 50 North Plymouth Ave.



### WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME TWO DISTINGUISHED GUESTS TO OUR CONCERT STAFF!



#### MICHAEL LASSER, HOST

Michael is a lecturer, writer, broadcaster, critic, and teacher. He is the author of *America's Songs II: From the 1890s to the Post-War Years* (2013), a companion volume to his and Philip Furia's *America's Songs: The Stories Behind the Songs of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley* (2006). This November, he will complete 35 years as host of the nationally syndicated public radio show, *Fascinatin' Rhythm*, winner of a 1994 Peabody Award. A graduate of Dartmouth College, he is the former theater critic for the *Democrat & Chronicle* and speaks often at museums and universities around the country. In 2010, he was named a Thomas P. Johnson Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Rollins College. He is currently nearing completion of a third book, *City Songs: The American Popular Song, 1900-1950*.

(continued on next page)

## GUEST CONCERT STAFF, CONTINUED

### JASON ALEXANDER HOLMES, ASSISTANT CONCERT DIRECTOR

Jason teaches vocal music, piano, and general music at the School of the Arts in the Rochester City School District and directs the Eastman Young Children's Chorus. An award-winning conductor, he has also directed the University of Rochester Gospel Choir and is frequently called upon to be a guest conductor for honor choirs. Mr. Holmes has also served as conductor, music director, and keyboardist for numerous school, amateur, and professional productions, most recently having conducted the Rochester Festival Chorus in concert with soprano Kathleen Battle. Favorites include: *Benjamin Britten's War Requiem* (children's chorus conductor, Eastman School of Music), *The Addams Family* (conductor, Rochester School of the Arts), *Chicago* (music director and pianist, Nazareth College), and the *Calamari Sisters* (music director, studio pianist). As a bass-baritone, Mr. Holmes has performed in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* (soloist), Handel's *Messiah* (soloist), Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (Porgy), and Jason Robert Brown's *Parade* (Newt/Riley/Jim).



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Want to sing with the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus? Voice placements for our June concert will be held Thursday, March 31, at 6 pm, followed by a full group rehearsal at 7 pm, at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church. Learn more at [www.thergmc.org/joinus](http://www.thergmc.org/joinus).

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## RGM OUT ON THE TOWN



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

On Friday, December 11, eight members of the chorus sang Christmas carols live on WROC Channel 8 as part of the station's Food for Families broadcast. This annual collaboration with Tops Friendly Markets and Foodlink raises awareness, money, and food donations for Foodlink. We were honored to take part!

As a result of the generosity of our Underneath the Tree audience members this December, we proudly donated boxes full of toys to families in need in the Rochester community. Thank you to all those who helped make our fifth annual toy drive such a success!

# GAYRAGE SALE!



## DONATIONS NEEDED FOR 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 in good condition, 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.

The funds raised from this sale will support the chorus's trip to the GALA Festival in Denver this July. We appreciate your support in making this exciting trip a reality!

Be sure to stop by the Gayrage Sale to find some great bargains: May 6-8 at 3 Elmcroft Road (on the corner of Elmcroft and Winton). Times will be set closer to the event; watch our website and Facebook page for more details!

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# GALA 2016

## Here We Come!

We're excited to announce that we will be singing at Festival 2016 in Denver, Colorado, an event sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA Choruses). We are hearing that this event will be GALA Choruses' biggest ever — proven by the fact that the discounted rooms that had been set aside were reserved in record time, with some hotels having their blocked-out rooms booked within an hour!

In this, the eleventh hour of our preparations, we find that there are still some members who would like to attend but cannot without financial assistance. You can make a difference by sponsoring a member's participation in the Festival. A donation in any amount would be tax-deductible and will go toward the cost of a singer's registration, hotel, and flight.

Contact us at (585) 423-0650 to learn more or to make your donation today!

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# THE ROCHESTER GAY MEN'S CHORUS



## More Than Us 3:

### Our Annual *Fabulous* Dinner Show

*Join us for an evening of music, food, libations, and fun for our spring fundraiser!*

*On Saturday, April 23, at ButaPub in the Historic German House, we will share the stage with entertainer friends from the greater Rochester area. Throughout the evening, there will be raffle prizes, silent auctions, and plenty of opportunities to mingle with friends, old and new.*

- *Cash bar opens at 5 pm, with a buffet dinner at 6 pm and the show at 7:30.*
- *Tickets are \$55 each, or \$100 for two.*
- *Space is limited! Be sure to secure your seat by March 23. Visit [www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org).*

*We thank you for your support!*



Rachel Barnhart,  
*Mistress of Ceremonies*

Rachel Barnhart anchors News 8 First at Four. She is a Rochester native. She grew up in the Maplewood neighborhood and graduated from John Marshall High School and Cornell University.

Rachel's television career started at WENY-TV in Elmira. From there, she reported and produced for Time

Warner Cable's Rochester newsroom. She went on to become the weekend anchor at News 8 and, later, 13WHAM. Rachel was

thrilled to return to News 8 in April 2013.

Rachel enjoys covering politics, education, and downtown development. In 2011, she cofounded the Rochester Media Association. She's also been a leader on social media, keeping Rochesterians up to date through her Twitter and Facebook pages. Rachel's Twitter account won *City Newspaper's* "Best of Rochester" readers' poll in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015.

"I was thrilled to be asked to participate in this event," Rachel says of *More Than Us 3*. "I am a big fan of the RGMC. I'm also a huge believer in equality and acceptance. What better way to demonstrate a community's contribution to Rochester than through the arts?"

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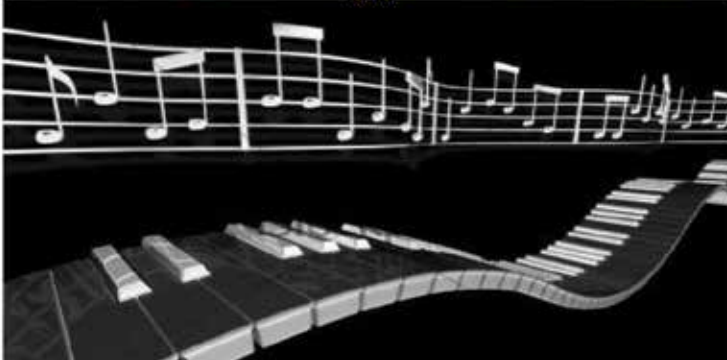


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The RGMC is offering the opportunity for you to sponsor a song during any performance.

For a tax-deductible donation of \$250, sponsorship will allow you to select a song from our upcoming show and include a personalized message to be featured next to the song in the program.

To sponsor a song, contact us at [song@thergmc.org](mailto:song@thergmc.org) or (585) 423-0650.



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# KEYNOTES MEMBER OF THE MONTH



**Stefan Baer** is thrilled to be a part of the chorus, this group of men who love to make music together, and has been ever since he first joined in 1999. He has many cherished memories of making music and friends with other RGMC members, and he is thrilled whenever he has the chance to stand in mixed formation, hearing those wonderful harmonies around him. He is reminded in those moments "how good we are

and how the chorus kicks 'that body part.'"

Stefan is active in the LGBTQ community, not only singing with the chorus, but volunteering for the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley during special events such as the Red Ball and Pride, and

also with the ImageOut film festival where he serves on the Theater Operations Committee.

Stefan recently premiered his one-man storytelling show, "Tales of the North Street Cafegymnasium," at the Rochester Fringe Festival in September 2015. The show was well received, and he hopes to do more of this in the future. He also hopes to bring in other people to tell their stories as well, as he continues to develop his up-and-coming theatrical organization, The Risotto Patate Café Theatre Company.

When he is not working, singing, or acting, Stefan enjoys skiing (both downhill and Nordic/cross country) in the winter, bike riding during the other three seasons, going to see shows in Rochester and movies at the Little Theatre, coming up with more crazy ideas for his stories and songs, and spending time with family and friends.



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A warm welcome to the newest members of the chorus!  
 Back row, left to right: Matt Gridley, Evan Church  
 Front row, left to right: Neka Zimmerman, Oliver Puente,  
 Josh Pickering (visiting)



For the final concert of our 2015-2016 season, we'll present a collection of songs and arrangements written especially for the chorus through the years, including several new compositions. In large part, this concert will serve as an exciting preview of what we'll be singing and sharing at the GALA Choruses Festival 2016 in Denver, Colorado.