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### Singing with Pride

Buffalo Gay Mens Chorus

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# BQMC

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

# SINGING

*with*

# PRIDE

## June 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> 2004







We welcome  
all with pride!

We celebrate the success of the  
**Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus!**

**Unitarian-Universalist  
Church of Buffalo**

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**Founded in 1831**

Rev. Joel Miller, Minister • Barbara Wagner, Minister of Music

**BGM**  
The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

695 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
(716) 883-1277

Barbara Wagner, Music Director & Conductor  
presents

**SINGING**  
*with*  
**PRIDE**

8 pm

Friday, June 18, 2004  
Unitarian Universalist Church  
of Buffalo

Saturday, June 19, 2004  
First Presbyterian Church  
Buffalo

[www.BuffaloGayMensChorus.com](http://www.BuffaloGayMensChorus.com)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been more than 1,000 days since Barbara Wagner first raised a baton and brought the men you will hear tonight into one voice. They have been days filled with hard work, laughter, an occasional tear and even a bit of dissension, all of which can be found in any family. But as with any family with a common goal, we have consistently returned to our objective of making music that entertains and, we hope, enlightens as well.

That our 80 members are able to blend together in one voice speaks highly not only of the dedication of our music director and individual singers, but of our families and friends as well. What underlies our success is the generosity of you, our friends and families. Your continued support, both financially and emotionally, makes our task of singing in harmony so much easier. I don't think there is one chorus member who would deny that music shared is music enriched one hundred fold.

In July, the highest goal that we have set for ourselves will come to fruition. When we sing at the GALA Festival of Choruses in Montreal our success as goodwill ambassadors for Western New York will speak volumes about our community, its members and our supporters. You have all been instrumental in our accomplishments.

"Singing with Pride" tonight, each individual chorus member can lay claim to making our voices as one. That one voice sings tonight, grateful for your kindness, your love and your support.

Dave Gannon  
*President, Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus*

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Rev. Joel Miller and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo  
Rev. Geri Lyons and the First Presbyterian Church  
Friday Evening's Reception: Michael Shanahan and Quaker Bonnet  
Saturday Evening's Reception: Kevin Thompson and Cookie Confections  
Tops Market, McKinley Parkway, for their kind donation  
Ushers from Buffalo Frontrunners/Frontwalkers  
Poster and Cover Design: Peter Bisuito  
Program Layout: Robin Johnson and Russell Link  
The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus wishes to thank all who have contributed their time, energy and resources to make this concert a success.



This program is made possible in part by the Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program.

## PROGRAM

Empty Chairs and Empty Tables ..... Alain Boublil,  
Claude-Michel Schönberg and Herbert Kretzmer  
from *Les Misérables*  
Steven Young, *Baritone*

Niggun ..... A Devotional Chant  
Arranged by Joshua Jacobson

Song of Galilee ..... Julius Chajes  
Arranged for TTBB by Michael Chikinda  
God will build Galilee. Blessed be the one who builds Galilee.  
Kirsten Anderson, *Percussion*

Nigra Sum ..... Pablo Casals  
Transcribed by Kenneth Sterne  
Text from *Songs of Solomon*, 1:5; 2:10-12

I am black but comely, ye daughters of Jerusalem.  
The King has rejoiced in me and brought me into his chamber.  
He said to me, "Rise up my fair one and come away.  
Lo the Winter is past and gone, lo the rain is past and gone.  
The flowers appear on the earth and the time of renewal is come."  
Alleluia.

The Stars Are with the Voyager ..... Eleanor Daley  
Poem by Thomas Hood

L'Invitation au Voyage ..... Emmanuel Chabrier  
Poem by Charles Baudelaire

My child, my sister,  
Think how sweet it would be  
To go down there, to live together,  
To love free from care,  
To love and to die  
In the land that resembles you!  
The moist suns  
Of these misty skies  
To my mind, have the charm,  
So mysterious,  
Of your treacherous eyes,  
Sparkling through their tears.  
There everything is order and beauty,  
Luxury, calm and pleasure!



See on these canals  
 The sleeping boats  
 That capriciously like to roam;  
 'Tis to satisfy  
 Your slightest wish  
 They have come from the ends of the world.  
 The setting suns  
 Again clothe the fields,  
 The canals, the whole town,  
 With hyacinth and gold;  
 The world falls asleep  
 In a warm light!  
 There everything is order and beauty,  
 Luxury, calm and pleasure!

Sebnem Mekinulov, *Soprano*  
 Glenn Einschlag, *Bassoon*

Think On Me ..... Mary, Queen of Scots  
 Arranged by Victor C. Johnson

Prelude and Fugue in B ..... Marcel Dupré  
 David Bond, *Organist and Choir Director*, First Presbyterian Church  
 Saturday Only  
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PREMIERE

Adamic Songs ..... Roland E. Martin  
 Six Songs on Poems of Walt Whitman  
 Commissioned by the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus  
 (see pages 17 & 18 for text)

- I. As Adam Early in the Morning
  - II. I Am He That Aches with Love
  - III. A Glimpse
  - IV. Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals
  - V. What Think You I Take My Pen in Hand?
  - VI. Not Heat Flames up and Consumes
- Anthony Chase, *Reader*  
 Roland Martin, *Piano*  
 Glenn Einschlag, *Bassoon*  
 Peter Smith, *Clarinet*  
 The Chorus

INTERMISSION

?????????? Surprise !!!!!!!!!!!

One More Walk Around the Garden ..... Burton Lane and Alan Jay Lerner  
 from *Carmelina*

Drew Cantrill and Brad Williams, *Tenors*  
 Jim Carrubba and John Marohn, *Baritones*  
 Peter Ghiloni, Jaime S. Goldfuss and Paul LaDuca, *Basses*

Waitin' for the Light to Shine ..... Roger Miller  
 Arranged by Linda Spevacek

from *Big River*  
 James Estep, *Bass*, Jimmy Rigo, *Baritone*, and the Chorus

Make Them Hear You ..... Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens  
 Arranged by Jaime Goldfuss, BGMC

from *Ragtime*

Vissi d'Arte ..... Giacomo Puccini  
 from *Tosca*

I lived for art, I lived for love,  
 I have never harmed a living soul!  
 Secretly I have helped the poor and unfortunate.  
 Ever with fervent faith my prayers ascended to the saints.  
 Ever with fervent faith I brought flowers to the altar.  
 In my hour of misery why, why, O God why do you repay me thus?  
 I gave jewels for the mantle of the Madonna,  
 and I offered my song to the stars, to the heavens, for their greater radiance.  
 In my hour of misery why, why, O God, ah, why do you repay me thus?  
 Ms. Mekinulov

No One Is Alone ..... Stephen Sondheim  
 Arranged by Peter Ghiloni, BGMC

from *Into the Woods*

Conversation ..... Joni Mitchell

Shaun Doyle, *Tenor*  
 Michael Sulzbac, *Guitar*

Standing on the Side of Love ..... Jason Shelton  
 Arranged for the BGMC by Mr. Shelton

Matthew Mooney, *Tenor*  
 with Paul LaDuca, Nicholas Mawer, William J. Roof, Todd B. Ruth  
 and Ms. Mekinulov  
 Kirsten Anderson and Laura Weinberger, *Percussion*  
 and the Chorus

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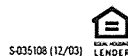
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## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

Barbara Wagner, *Music Director and Conductor*  
Debi Overton, *Accompanist*

### Tenor I

Rob Black, Drew Cantrill, Robert C. Donner,  
Norm Duttweiler, Tom Gleed, Bill Hoffman,  
Ron Houk, Peter A.T. Miller, Matthew Mooney,  
Mark Patterson, Righteous Jeffrey Proctor, Hanford Searl, Jr.,  
Kevin Thompson, Guy Tomassi, Brad Williams, Jeff Wilson

### Tenor II

Donald Behr, Edward F. Ciszek, Shaun Doyle, Jr.,  
Tim Fox, Dave Gannon, William Hardy, Gerald Klein,  
Delwyn Milander, Michael Mrocza, Nelson Neels,  
Roger Parris, Mark Peszko, Mike Styn, Jason Ward

### Bass I

David Batt, Jim Carrubba, Dan Folwell, Bill Gardner,  
Andy Giarrizzo, Vince Kuntz, John Marohn, Nicholas Mawer,  
Ramon A. Melendez, Raymond Neil, Andy Newbert,  
Benjamin Phillips, Joe Puma, Jim Rigo, William J. Roof,  
Robert Rose, Lee Sheldon, Sherwood B. Sipprell,  
Peter C. Smith, Dennis Stuart, Bobby Suwala,  
Larry Van Heusen, Steven Young

### Bass II

Ryan J. Boyle, Glenn Einschlag,  
James Estep, Peter Ghiloni, Jaime S. Goldfuss, Ross Hewitt,  
Paul LaDuca, Russell Link, Timothy H. Mahiques,  
Ryan McKane, Mark Meyer, Martin Palcic,  
Lorne Gretsinger, Todd B. Ruth, Andy Steck

### Not Performing in This Concert

Jack Ashwood, William Fay, Ron Groth, Michael Shanahan

### Non-Singing Members

Ron Groth, Michael Longo, Dr. Steve Niemiec, Danny Winter



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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Barbara Wagner (Music Director) has served as Minister of Music at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo for 40 years, was Director of Vocal Activities at The Nichols School for more than 24 years, and served the congregation of Temple Beth Am as its Music Director for 12 years. She is presently in charge of Vocal Activities at the Buffalo Seminary and the conductor of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus. The Choir at the UU Church, in addition to its Sunday morning responsibilities, has made two highly acclaimed European tours, the first to Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic and the second to Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland. The Choir, under Ms. Wagner's direction, has recorded for American Public Radio, performed locally with the Buffalo Philharmonic, Amherst Saxophone Quartet and the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Wagner was the conductor for the Peace Odyssey Concert Tour of Hungary and the former Soviet Union. Choral singers from all over the US participated in this tour. She was also a member of the prestigious seven-member Hymnbook Resources Commission, which was responsible for the new denominational hymnbook. She ran a choral program at the Nichols High School that involved more than 100 young singers, including a Concert Chorus, Women's Ensemble, Men's Ensemble, and a Mixed Chamber Group. She was also guest conductor for the City of Good Neighbors Chorale.

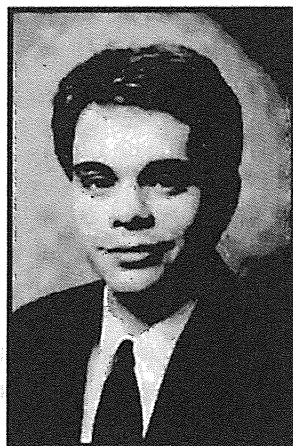
Ms. Wagner earned a BFA degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo, where she studied organ with Squire Haskin, and has done graduate work at Westminster Choir College. She did advanced organ study with Karl Richter at the Munich Conservatory and has done advanced conducting study with Raymond Harvey, formerly Assistant Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and presently Music Director of the Kalamazoo Symphony. She is a member of the American Choral Directors Association, Erie County Music Educators Association, MENC, Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (founding member, former vice president and board member), NYSSMA, American Guild of Organists (member of the board of the Buffalo Chapter) and Chromatic Club. She was presented with the Erie County Music Educator/Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Award for excellence in Choral Education in May of 2002. She was recently appointed Chair of the New Hymns Resource Task Force of the Unitarian Universalist Association. She will be included in the next edition of *Who's Who in American Women*.

A native of North Carolina, Debi Overton (Accompanist) is the Organist and Choirmaster at Calvary Episcopal Church in Williamsville. Miss Overton has held positions as coach/accompanist at the University of Texas at Austin and served as director of the Chamber Music Program at The New School of Music in Philadelphia. From 1979 to 1986, she was active at the Summer Music Festival in Aspen, Colorado, as the coach/accompanist for the choral department. In this capacity, she served as assistant to noted conductor Fiora Contino. She has assisted in preparing choruses and soloists for such conductors as Tamara Brooks, John Nelson, Robert Shaw and Sergei Commissiona and has herself coached with coach/accompanists David Garvey, John Wustman, Brooks Smith and Dalton Baldwin. In addition to her duties at Calvary Church, Miss Overton serves as chair of the Music Commission of the WNY Episcopal Diocese and is active in this area teaching, accompanying and performing with singers and instrumentalists.



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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS (CONTINUED)

Roland E. Martin is a member of the Music Faculty of State University of New York at Buffalo where he is Professor of Organ and Harpsichord, coordinator of the Voice Area, and a vocal coach and accompanist. He is Organist and Director of Music for St. Joseph University Heights Church in Buffalo, Conductor/Music Director for Opera Sacra, Music Director of the Freudig Singers of Western New York, Director of the Chautauqua Chamber Singers and founder and director of Speculum Musicae, an ensemble for early music. Mr. Martin has performed as an accompanist throughout the Eastern US, Canada and Bermuda, and has served as accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera National Competition. He has played organ recitals in the US, Canada, Spain, Germany, Austria and England. In September, 2000, he gave a critically acclaimed performance of Bach's Art of the Fugue at UB's Slee Hall. In October, 2000, he debuted as soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic in the Rheinberger Organ Concerto No.2. Mr. Martin has composed more than 40 works, primarily choral and solo vocal pieces. He is the recipient of two Pennsylvania State Council of the Arts Grants, two "Meet the Composer" grants and two ALCOA Arts Endowment awards for commissioned compositions. A number of major works have been commissioned, mostly by colleges, universities and choral societies. Mr. Martin received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from Fredonia State University, where he studied organ with Dr. John Hofmann.

We are delighted that Mr. Martin is with us tonight, at the piano, as we sing his ecstatic *Adamic Songs* for the very first time. Thank you for touching our hearts so deeply with your music, Ron.

Jason Shelton is a Unitarian Universalist minister and currently serves as the Director of Music at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville, Tennessee. Active as a composer, arranger, conductor and preacher, Jason also spends a good bit of his ministry in building interfaith connections around Nashville.

Anthony Chase is a drama critic and theater historian and a graduate of Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, where he was the President's Fellow in Theater Arts and winner of the F.A. Brown Prize for Oral Interpretation. For 10 years he wrote for *Theater Week* magazine in New York, and for the past 14 years he has been the Theater Editor for *Artvoice*, for which he has produced all 14 editions of the annual Artie Theater Awards / AIDS Benefit, raising \$100,000 for various local HIV/AIDS service organizations. His articles and theater reviews have appeared in *American Theatre*, *Stages*, *Theatre Crafts & Lighting Dimensions*, and *Playbill Online*, as well as in program notes for a number of theaters across the country. His article on the history of Buffalo Theatre appears in the new edition of the *New York State Encyclopedia* (2004) and was recently featured in *New York State Archives* magazine. By day, Mr. Chase is assistant to Buffalo State College President Muriel A. Howard. An autograph collector, he has accumulated one of the world's largest collections of Katharine Cornell artifacts. He lives in Buffalo with his partner of 23 years, Javier Bustillos.



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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS (CONTINUED)

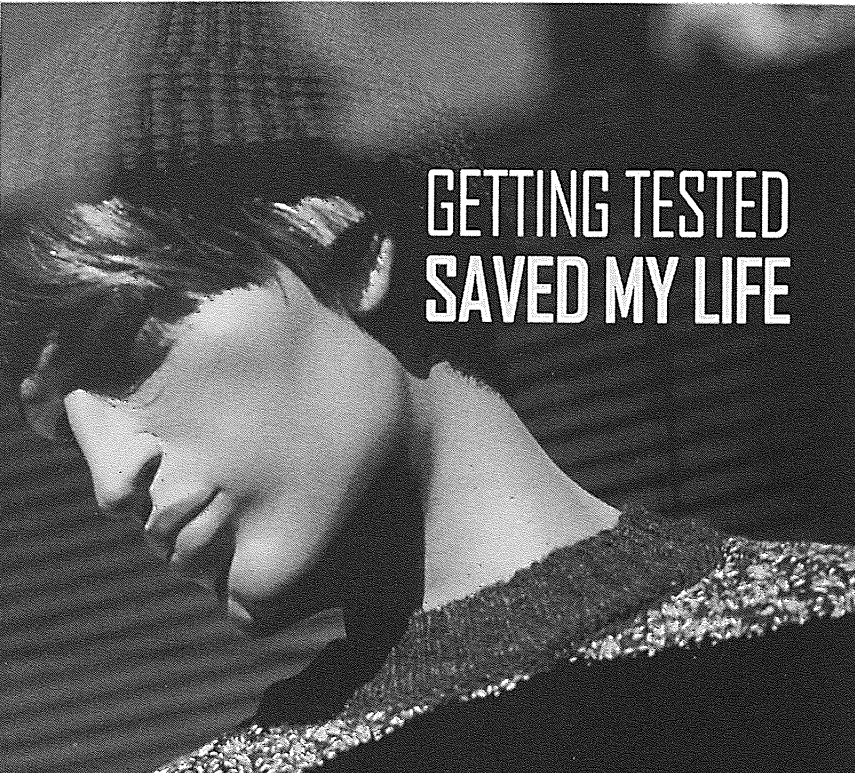
David Bond, a native of Montana, is in his 18th year as organist-choirmaster of First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo. In addition to his duties at First Church, he is past Dean of the Buffalo Chapter American Guild of Organists and currently serves as Western New York district convener for Region 11 of the AGO. He is active as a recitalist, vocal coach, and accompanist in the US and Canada. Dr. Bond received a Bachelor of Music (Cum Laude) from St. Olaf College and went on to attend the University of Michigan, earning a Master of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts in organ and choral conducting. He has been honored in several regional and international competitions. As an active recitalist, his performances have been characterized as "mesmerizing ... an astonishing talent" (Altoona, Pennsylvania). He is "an organist to be reckoned with." (Buffalo, New York). His appearances are arranged through the courtesy of Widman-Roe Associates.

Sebnem Mekinulov began studying voice and opera at the Istanbul Conservatory. She graduated in 1988 and within three years was a leading soprano at Istanbul State Opera. After arriving in the United States in 1991, Ms. Mekinulov enrolled in the master degree program at Louisiana State University under full scholarship as a student of Martina Arroyo and Stephen Austin. In 1992, she entered the prestigious Juilliard School in New York City as a scholarship recipient of Professor Daniel Ferro. Ms. Mekinulov has been seen in many leading roles with the Istanbul Opera, the Juilliard Opera Center and the Westchester Hudson Opera Company. She was a top winner in the Maria Callas International Voice Competition - South America, as well as grand prize winner of the Aldo Baldin International Competition. Ms. Mekinulov is married to BPO Principal Cellist Roman Mekinulov and they have two children.

Peter C. Smith has several musical talents and has succeeded in bringing these diverse capabilities to play in his life as an active musician. Mr. Smith's most recent interest is the harp, which he has studied the past six years. His professional training has included harp courses at the Eastman School of Music while performing there extensively with the Harp Ensemble. Peter has studied privately with Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra principal harpist Suzanne Thomas as well as with internationally renowned State University College at Fredonia professor and harpist, Mario Falcao. Other major musical accomplishments stem from his earlier career as a clarinetist. He studied this instrument at State University of New York at Buffalo and advanced to perform and teach both locally and abroad. Peter serves as organist for two churches in his hometown of Niagara Falls. This is his fifth performance with the BGMC, his first as a clarinetist.

Laura Weinberger has been playing the drumset since the age of 11. Now a sophomore at Leonardo daVinci High School in Buffalo, she recently won the best soloist, Drumset Award, at Darien Lake's Music in the Park Competition. Laura moved to Buffalo from Binghamton, NY, in 2001 and has played with Latin, jazz, swing, world music, and symphonic ensembles.





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## The Gay Romantic Sensibility

John T. Marohn, BGMC Member

The contemporary American television industry may give the mistaken impression of having invented the gay sensibility with *Queer as Folk* and *Six Feet Under*. It might come as a surprise to a contemporary-driven media that American and European film narratives about gays before the nineties do have a history and include such classics as *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Cruising*, *Death in Venice*, *Prick Up Your Ears*, *Taxi zum Klo*, and many others. And gay art films from other cultures have far outpaced the American mainstream's need not to be shocked by nontraditional sexual behavior with the more recent portrayals of a sometimes raw contemporary gay sensibility in the South American films, *Our Lady of the Assassins*, *Burnt Money*, and the box-office hit, *Y Tu Mamá También*. Many of the less contemporary films and those from South America seem to portray gay life as highly closeted, predatory, self-destructive, and street-driven; they are also more apt to move into the more dramatic side of art, which has generally meant the more tragic, naturalistic, or Darwinian. In spite of portraying intense bouts of realism, these films don't seem to have suffered from the restraint of censorship or heterosexual peer pressure. However, it would seem that the romantic gay sensibility still has to compete with the classic school of gay Continental naturalism to gain some reputable solidity and acceptance by a wider group of gays who may have never felt the right to appropriate a more idealized, romantic gay sensibility with any degree of permanent confidence.

The romantic school has several variations in its many narratives and images. One of the first homoerotic love stories in Greek mythology is the Zeus-Ganymede myth. Zeus was so taken by the beauty of the young boy that he carried him off to Olympus to become the eternal cup bearer of the gods; it was Ganymede's youthful beauty that was to encapsulate the timelessness of youthful, idyllic, romantic homosexual affection. Some pottery of ancient Greece contains images of younger boys and older men in affective and sexual relationships, a not uncommon social practice for young Greek boys in the throes of one among many rites of passage. The *comitatus* relationship, a strong male bonding of affection between soldiers, was first alluded to in the *Iliad* between Achilles and Patroclus. It was the kind of bonding that became actualized by Philip of Macedon and his son, Alexander the Great, who both had male lovers, according to John Keegan in his book, *The Mask of Command*.

During the English Renaissance many of Shakespeare's love sonnets were addressed to a man, and, in the words of Louis B. Wright, a noted Shakespearean scholar, "are frequently expressed in terms of romantic love." In Italy, Michaelangelo idealized the sensuality of the perfectly proportioned male body in *David*, an idealization that reflected his own strong homosexual affections and his aesthetic ties to the ancient Greek *kouros*, the standing naked male in marble. An early twentieth century writer, E.M. Forster, wrote one of the first explicitly gay romantic novels, *Maurice*, which centered on a gay platonic relationship between two aristocrats and the breaking of Edwardian social class taboos as Maurice develops a relationship with someone from the working class.



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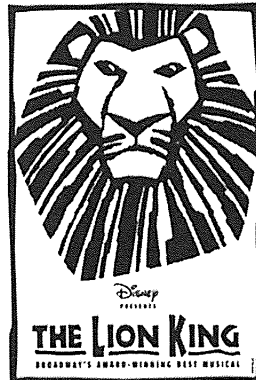
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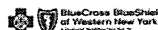
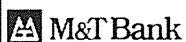


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## The Gay Romantic Sensibility (continued)

The text of Whitman's poems that you'll be hearing tonight have been placed within a musical setting by Roland Martin; they are potent examples of Whitman's romanticism and ardent rebellion against the sexual inhibitions of American Puritanism. It is in these poems that America's poet laureate reveals his homoerotic and natural worlds of primal physicality without the Christian guilt. Whitman's male lovers are steeped in a kind of American innocence, for they are American sailors waiting on a pier or "passionately" kissing each other before leaving for war; they are the full embodiment of the Edenic hero, Adam, who "aches" with love; they are "workmen and drivers" or a "young" lover quietly sitting in a barroom in the midst of the drunken babble; or they are the poet as lover creating from his creative "loins" the poems driven by his need to generate his own romantic fantasies of the sturdy American male ideal; they are the passion that transcends nature's "flames of heat," its "delicious" air of "ripe summer"; and, in the end, they are all about America's innocent promise and full flowering of sexual energy echoing across its cities and its prairies.

Although sexually explicit by 19th century American standards, the poems remain a testament to the high-level quality of Whitman's romantic sensibility devoid of any of the harsh, more fatalistic and nihilistic tones of modernism. They ultimately speak to the enduring notion that "love" truly does "conquer all."

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus was incorporated in 2001. Its mission is to produce high quality vocal music in the distinctive and rich tradition of men's choral singing. We seek to entertain a wide audience, and by doing so, to enlighten by creating harmony and celebrating pride in ourselves and our community. The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus gave its first major concerts in February and June of 2002. Chorus membership is open to all men who pass a placement audition, pay semi-annual dues, and regularly attend rehearsals. New singers will be auditioned in late August. For more information contact our Music Director, Barbara Wagner, at (716) 668-1124, or visit our website, [www.BuffaloGayMensChorus.com](http://www.BuffaloGayMensChorus.com).

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is a proud member of the Gay & Lesbian Association of Choruses, the world's only association committed to serving the lesbian and gay choral movement. Founded in 1982, GALA Choruses represents 180 choruses and 10,000 singers located throughout North America, Europe and Australia. GALA Choruses foster the artistic and organizational development of member choruses through a wide variety of programs and services: production of choral festivals and educational conferences; grants for commissioning of new choral works; and a resource center for choruses and individual members. GALA Choruses can be reached at P.O. Box 6504, Washington, D.C. 20035 or online at [galachoruses.org](http://galachoruses.org).

## Adamic Songs

Six Songs on Poems of Walt Whitman

By Roland E. Martin

- I. AS ADAM EARLY IN THE MORNING  
As Adam early in the morning,  
Walking forth from the bower refresh'd with sleep,  
Behold me where I pass, hear my voice, approach,  
Touch me, touch the palm of your hand to my body as I pass,  
Be not afraid of my body.
- II. I AM HE THAT ACHES WITH LOVE  
I am he that aches with amorous love;  
Does the earth gravitate? does not all matter, aching, attract all matter?  
So the body of me to all I meet or know.
- III. A GLIMPSE  
A glimpse through an interstice caught,  
Of a crowd of workmen and drivers in a bar-room around the stove  
late of a winter night, and I unremark'd seated in a corner,  
Of a youth who loves me and whom I love, silently approaching and  
seating himself near, that he hold me by the hand,  
A long while amid the noises of coming and going, of drinking and  
oath and smutty jest,  
There we two, content, happy in being together, speaking little,  
perhaps not a word.
- IV. AGES AND AGES RETURNING AT INTERVALS  
Ages and ages returning at intervals,  
Undestroy'd, wandering immortal,  
Lusty, phallic, with the potent original loins, perfectly sweet,  
I, chanter of Adamic songs,  
Through the new garden the West, the great cities calling,  
Deliriate, thus prelude what is generated, offering these, offering myself,  
Bathing myself, bathing my songs in Sex,  
Offspring of my loins.
- V. WHAT THINK YOU I TAKE MY PEN IN HAND?  
What think you I take my pen in hand to record?  
The battle-ship, perfect model'd, majestic, that I saw pass the offing  
to-day under full sail?  
The splendors of the past day? or the splendor of the night that  
envelops me?  
Or the vaunted glory and growth of the great city spread around me?  
— no;  
But merely of two simple men I saw to-day on the pier in the midst  
of the crowd, parting the parting of dear friends,  
The one to remain hung on the other's neck and passionately kiss'd him,  
While the one to depart tightly prest the one to remain in his arms.

- VI. NOT HEAT FLAMES UP AND CONSUMES  
Not heat flames up and consumes,  
Not sea-waves hurry in and out,  
Not the air delicious and dry, the air of ripe summer, bears lightly  
along white down-balls of myriads of seeds,  
Wafted, sailing gracefully, to drop where they may;  
Not these, O none of these more than the flames of me, consuming,  
burning for his love whom I love,  
O none more than I hurrying in and out;  
Does the tide hurry, seeking something and never give up? O I the same,  
O nor down-balls nor perfumes, nor the high rain-remitting clouds,  
are borne through the open air,  
Any more than my soul is borne through the open air,  
Wafted in all directions O love, for friendship, for you.

### A Composer's Note

When Barbara Wagner and I first discussed this commission, she asked me who should choose the text to be set. I said the choice could be hers or mine, as she wished. However, I suggested that the poetry of Walt Whitman would be very appropriate for three reasons: first, Whitman is, perhaps, America's greatest poet (reason enough); second, his poetical works are in the public domain, and therefore present no problems in copying or publishing; third, Whitman was gay.

Many composers have set Whitman's poetry. His poems on the sea, *Sea-Drift*, as well as his *Memories of President Lincoln* have been especially popular with composers. His "love poetry", perhaps because of its abundance of masculine pronouns, has only seldom been set to music. This is probably the first musical setting of most of these poems. The title of the song-cycle comes from the fourth song, *Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals*, itself from Whitman's cycle *Children of Adam*. Songs I, II, and IV come from this collection; III, V, and VI from *Calamus*.

The first song introduces straight away a short musical motif of five notes which runs throughout the cycle, sometimes repeated verbatim, sometimes altered. Occasionally a note goes missing, or the rhythm shifts, but this five-note figure infuses each song. Here, in *As Adam Early in the Morning*, it is sung only once, but played frequently. The voices sing mostly in canon.

*I Am He that Aches with Love* is linked to the first song by a single sustained note, and by virtue of its similar poetic theme. The accompanimental figure in the piano is the five-note motif sped up (four times as fast). Again, the vocal writing is mainly canonic.

*A Glimpse* is set as a *gymnopedie*, that musical dance form made famous by Eric Satie. In Greek, it refers to a dance of naked youths.

*Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals* is the most blatantly erotic poem of the set. I have marked it "Euphoric".

*What Think You I Take My Pen in Hand?* is, I believe, one of Whitman's loveliest, most tender poems. It affected me deeply in reading it and in setting it. It still does.

Pity the poor pianist in *Not Heat Flames Up and Consumes*. The virtuosic piano part reflects the ecstatic transport of the singers' words. It is fraught with markings like *ardente* (ardent) and *esaltato* (with exaltation, elation, rapture).

It was an overwhelming pleasure for me to set these wonderful poems. They are filled with moments of great tenderness, intimacy, longing, lust, joy, and more. I hope some of the immense fulfilment I found in setting this poetry is conveyed to singer and listener alike.

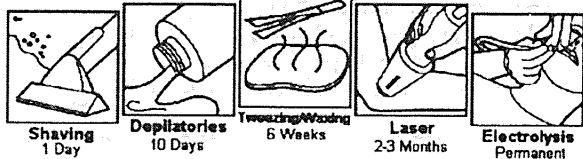
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## Notes on the Program

by Timothy J. Fox, BGMC Member

"Singing with Pride": and what a year it has been for the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus! Sold out concerts in January, a glowing review from *The Buffalo News*, making our Buffalo Philharmonic debut on a pair of Symphony Series concerts, commissioning and premiering a new choral work at tonight's concert and appearing in Montreal this summer at the GALA Choruses Festival with fellow choruses from the U.S., Canada, Great Britain and other corners of the world.

What, you may ask, is a Niggun? According to ancient Jewish tradition, a Niggun is a wordless traditional chant and can be either joyous or melancholy. Tradition suggests that they originated during the Babylonian captivity of the Jewish people and were later resurrected by Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov and were assimilated into the Hassidic tradition. The wordless melody becomes like a mantra, being encompassed by the heart, and allows the soul to leave the confines of the body and adhere more closely to God. The Niggun the chorus is singing is believed to be from the 18th century. Nigguns were learned by repetition and thus resemble early psalm singing in the early Protestant churches.

The "Song of Galilee" is also based on Hebrew chant. In this arrangement, the basses start with the melody and voice upon voice is added to make a general swelling, arriving at a grand climax.

Pablo Casals (1876-1973) was renowned as the foremost cellist of his generation and as a great humanitarian. What is not as well known is that Casals was also a composer, though his musical output was small and was mostly choral music. "Nigra Sum" takes its text from the *Song of Solomon*, surely one of the most erotic books of the Bible, and which church experts would like us to believe praises the love between Christ and His church, rather than the celebration of erotic love. The second part of the text that Casals chose is often set as an antiphon for feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"The Stars Are With The Voyager" was commissioned by the Vancouver Men's Chorus and takes as its text a poem by the 19th century poet Thomas Hood (1799-1845). The music is by Eleanor Daley (b. 1955), a Canadian composer who received her training at Queen's University, Trinity College, England and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Ms. Daley is the accompanist of the Amadeus Choir.

"The Stars" is a wonderfully evocative piece, with gentle undulations in the piano part that suggest the movement of waves in the sea, beautiful word painting (listen to when the chorus reaches the word "follow") and lulls the listener blissfully along to a state of contentment.

The tragic history of Mary, Queen of Scots is well known and need not concern these program notes. What is debatable is whether Mary wrote the poem and the music of "Think On Me". The evidence suggests that she did not. English was not



## Notes on the Program (continued)

Mary's primary language, and the only other poetry attributed to her were the French sonnets found with the infamous Casket letters produced to convict Mary of plotting to murder her second husband. Debates have raged for centuries as to whether Mary wrote any of them; most suggest that they were forgeries. Her most recent biographer also says that while Mary had a trained singing voice and could play the lute, harp and clavichord, her musicianship was "nothing out of the ordinary". However, the text of the poem was very apropos for a woman who took as her epitaph "In My End Is My Beginning" and that every monarch of Great Britain since then has been a direct descendant, Queen Elizabeth II being the 13th generation.

Roland (Ron) E. Martin is professor of music at the University of Buffalo and organist/choirmaster at St. Joseph's University Heights Church on Main Street. Recent local commissions have come from St. Paul's Cathedral and the choir of Blessed Sacrament Church, Buffalo. See Mr. Martin's notes following the Whitman Poems in another part of the program for the composer's comments.

Broadway is represented tonight by four musical numbers; three are from Tony Award winning shows and one from a two-week flop.

The bittersweet and autumnal "One More Walk Around The Garden" is from the failed 1979 Alan Jay Lerner and Burton Lane musical *Carmelina*. The story of Carmelina is familiar to current day theatergoers as it is the uncredited source for *Mamma Mia*. The Lerner-Lane incantation suffered from a weak book and a lackluster production. Yet the score is one that deserves a place of greatness in the history of the theatre. This song is sung by a trio of men who all believe themselves to be the father of Carmelina's daughter and have returned to Europe to meet their daughter and perhaps rekindle an old romance.

When producer Rocco Landesman needed a composer to write the score for *Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he instinctively turned to country singer and composer Roger Miller. As Landesman himself has said, "What I knew was that Roger Miller didn't so much have to write this music as to find it within himself. Either Roger Miller was going to give a musical expression to the greatest American novel or no one would; the efforts of any other composer, however accomplished, would have sounded false." Landesman proved to be right in his assessment; Miller won a Tony Award for his score. "Waitin' For The Light To Shine" was originally a melancholy soliloquy sung by Huck when reflecting on the changes in his life.

Stephen Sondheim won a Tony award for his score for the 1987 musical *Into the Woods* which takes a dark look at familiar characters and situations from several favorite fairy tales. Act I was a joyous celebration of the stories as each character (among them Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood and Jack from Jack and the Beanstalk) achieve their wishes and ambitions. Act II grows progressively darker as they have to band together against a giant that has appeared in their midst. One of their group is killed, Cinderella's prince goes off in search of Sleeping Beauty and a witch abandons them to their fate. The tender "No One Is Alone" is sung by Cinderella to Little Red Riding Hood to reassure her at a moment when it seems that events have reached the bleakest point.

## Notes on the Program (continued)

Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty were also rewarded with a Tony award for their monumental score for the musical *Ragtime*, based on the famed novel by E. L. Doctrow. The story is a vast, sprawling canvas that covers racial relations, the plight of immigrants, the rise of industrial giants such as Henry Ford, the Evelyn Nesbitt scandal and America's loss of innocence as it plunges into World War I. "Make Them Hear You" is a powerful song sung towards the end of Act II and has become an anthem for all underprivileged people.

"Standing on the Side of Love" was written to honor and affirm the witness Unitarian Universalists have been making all across the U.S. in support of marriage rights for all. The song was a gift to Barbara Wagner that came out of time spent in Boston in late February, where the air was charged with the excitement and possibility of real change coming to this land of the not-so-free. Mr. Shelton is honored to have the BGMC premiere this arrangement, and is grateful to his friend, Barb Wagner, for giving him the opportunity to be a part of this great celebration.

## On the Bus to Montreal

GALA Choruses will hold its Seventh International Festival of Choruses in Montreal in July 2004. BGMC will represent the Buffalo and Western New York community at the week-long Festival which is held every four years. We are honored to have the opportunity to take part in the Festival. The BGMC will sing before an audience of 2,900 and hear choruses from 11 countries perform in Montreal's magnificent Place des Arts, Wilfrid-Pelletier Concert Hall and Maisonneuve Theater. BGMC also plans to take part in other concerts to be held in the Montreal vicinity throughout the week. Thanks for your support!

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## HAVE YOU CAUGHT OUR ACT RECENTLY?

By Roger Parris, BGMC Member

If you last heard the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus at our January concerts, you should know that, in this year when gay issues are receiving unprecedented public attention, we are singing out in the community as well as entertaining our concert audiences. Under Barbara Wagner's direction, the men of the BGMC have been getting exposure in Buffalo ... in New York State ... and on the Internet!

On February 28, we gathered at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo and entertained the crowd at AIDS Community Services' annual "Cause for Celebration" fundraiser.

A few days later, the BGMC sent a team of spellers to Sphere to join in the annual Corporate Spelling Bee to benefit the Community Music School. Though they didn't quite walk away with top honors, the BGMC team of Jason Ward (captain), Jim Carrubba and Dion Johnson was the third-last team eliminated. Nice going, guys!

Perhaps our most prestigious choral appearance to date came on March 13 and 14, when the BGMC performed on a subscription concert with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. *Buffalo News* contributing reviewer Garraud MacTaggart proclaimed our performance " ... a sterling interpretation of the 'Cantique de Jean Racine', a short motet written by Faure when the composer was only 20. This particular rendition earned the first standing ovation of the night from many of the concertgoers."

The men of the BGMC returned to Ithaca on April 17 for their second annual appearance in the Festival of Voices, a public concert featuring choral ensembles from across New York State. Along with the Cornell University Glee Club, New York City's Lavender Light Gospel Choir, the Out Loud Chorus from Ithaca, the Rochester Rainbow Gospel Choir and the Rochester Women's Community Chorus, we presented some of our best material and received terrific acknowledgement for our music making. We all agreed that this was an excellent opportunity to prepare for the upcoming GALA Festival in Montreal.

On May 15, a contingent of BGMC members sang the National Anthem at Coronation 2004 of the Imperial Court of Buffalo.

Thanks to our recording guru, Tenor 2 Mike Styn, some samples of our past concerts will be "airing" on Rainbow World Radio, an Internet radio service of Live 365, available online at [live365.com/stations/stonewallsociety](http://live365.com/stations/stonewallsociety).

On June 6 the BGMC marched in Buffalo's annual Pride Parade and made its third appearance onstage at Pride Buffalo. And on June 7, early risers heard our men singing from Spot Coffee in our second appearance on WGRZ's Daybreak Show!

Thanks to all our singers, volunteers and our supporters for your interest in the work of the BGMC ... wherever we appear!



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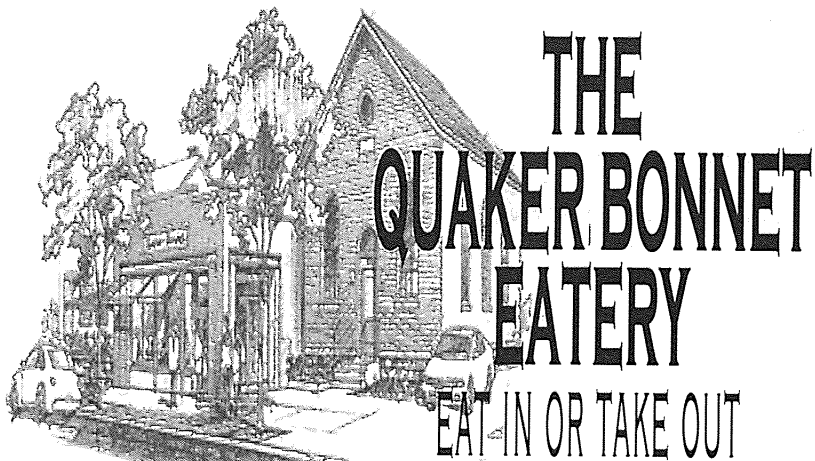
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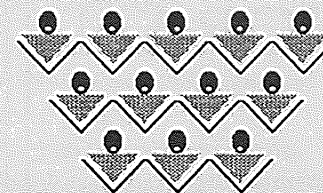
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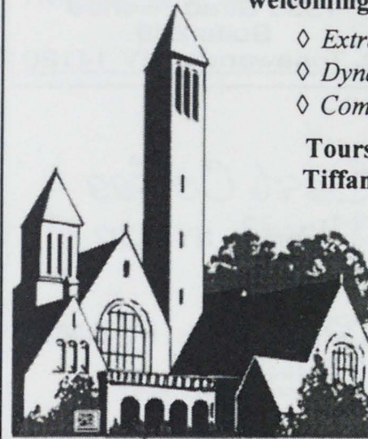
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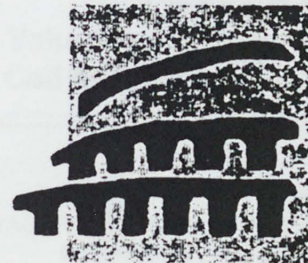
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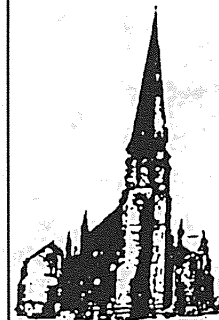
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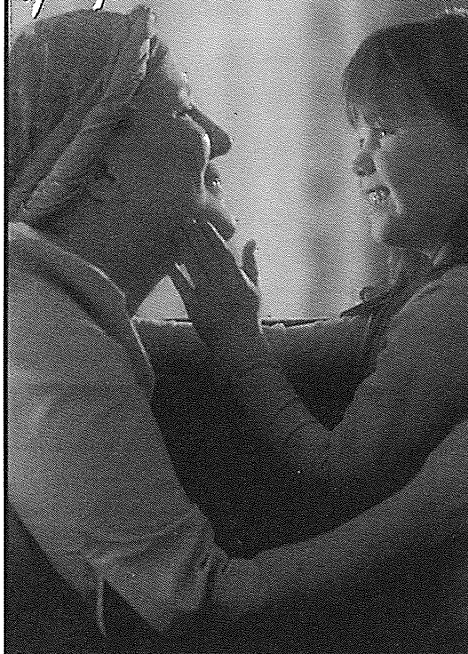


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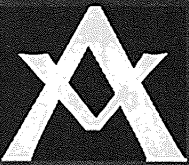
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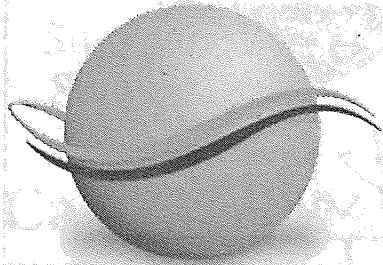
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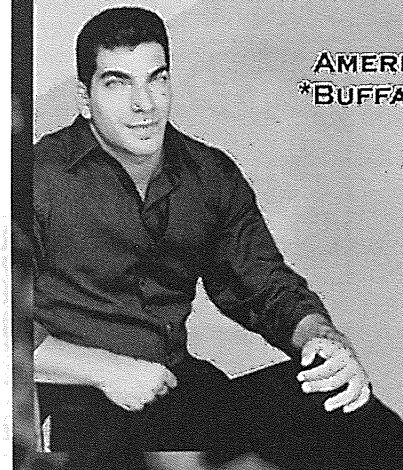


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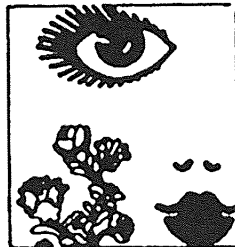
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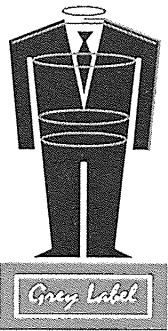
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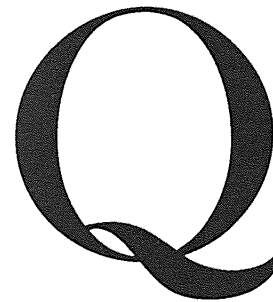
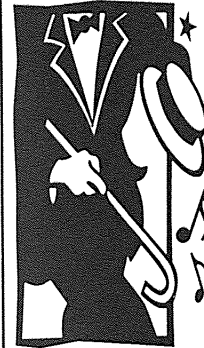
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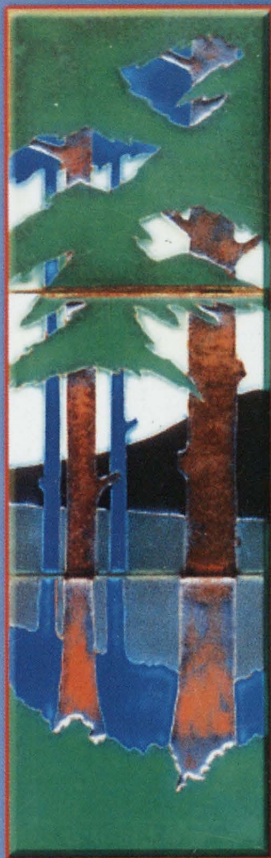
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