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Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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### Music from the Heart

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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*Presents*



*Cantus Abs Cor  
Music Du Coeur  
Musik Vom Innern  
Musica Dal Cuore*

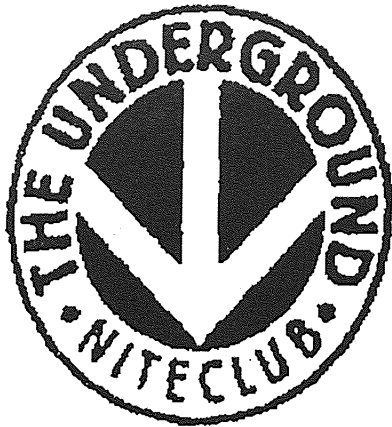
*Music From The Heart*

*Music From the Heart  
Directed by Barbara Wagner*

*February 9th at 8:00 PM  
(Doors open at 7:300 PM)*

*Universalist-Unitarian Church  
695 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, N.Y.*

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P R E M I E R E   C O N C E R T

BUFFALO  
GAY MEN'S  
CHORUS

BARBARA WAGNER, *MUSIC DIRECTOR &*  
*CONDUCTOR*

*presents*

MUSIC FROM  
THE HEART

Saturday, February 9, 2002

8 o'clock

Unitarian Universalist Church  
of Buffalo



CITY OF BUFFALO  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ANTHONY M. MASIELLO  
MAYOR

Congratulations to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus!

It is with great pleasure and pride that I extend my personal best wishes to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus on the occasion of your inaugural concert: Music from the Heart, on February 9, 2002!

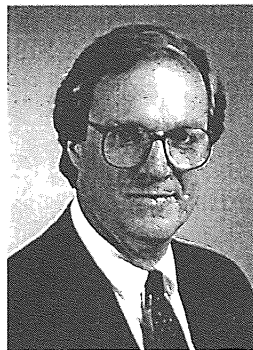
On behalf of my fellow citizens, I commend the enthusiasm and positive spirit you have created by coming together to sing. Your dedication to the art of group singing has brought recognition to the gay community and at the same time strengthened the social and cultural fibers of our diverse and creative city.

Thank you for allowing me to express my sincere appreciation for all you do to enhance our quality of life in Buffalo. I'm sure the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus will do much to make our city the kind of place that welcomes beauty in all its many forms.

With sincere best wishes for continuing success,

*Anthony M. Masiello*

Anthony M. Masiello  
Mayor



## The Program

(Translations follow the Notes on the Program)

### ☞ Music of the Heart ☞

You'll Never Walk Alone ..... Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein II  
from *Carousel*

Steven Young, *baritone*

How Can I Keep From Singing..... Quaker song, arr. Ginger Littleton

Der Herr segne euch ..... Johann Sebastian Bach  
from the *Wedding Cantata*

The Chorus and Glenn Einschlag, *bassoon*

La Vergine degli angeli ..... Giuseppe Verdi  
from *La Forza del Destino*

The Chorus and Jennifer Mernitz, *soprano*

Tollite hostias..... Camille Saint-Saëns

Allegretto moderato..... Saint-Saëns  
from *Sonata for Bassoon and Piano*

Glenn Einschlag, *bassoon* and Barbara Wagner, *piano*

Sure On This Shining Night..... Samuel Barber

Ms. Mernitz

I Sat Down Under His Shadow ..... Barry Oliver  
text from *Song of Solomon*, ii.3,4

The Chorus and William Fay, *baritone*

Sweet Coral Lips ..... Eric Helmuth  
poem by Richard Barnfield (1574-1627)

Go Down, Moses ..... Traditional spiritual, arr. Moses Hogan  
The Chorus with David Granville, *tenor* and Ross Hewitt, *baritone*

## Intermission

☞ With Love ☜

Standing on the Corner ..... Frank Loesser  
from *The Most Happy Fella*

The Chorus with Bobby Cook, *tenor* and Paul LaDuca, *bass*

Do Wah Diddy ..... Music & lyrics by Jeff Barry & Ellie Greenwich

Sixteen Tons ..... Music & lyrics by Merle Travis  
The Chorus with Jamie Goldfuss and Paul LaDuca, *basses*

Wonder Why ..... Richard Weeks & Ade Olayenda  
Jeff Wilson, *tenor*; Roger Parris, *tenor*; Jim Estep, *baritone*;  
Paul LaDuca, *bass* and leader

You've Got To Be Carefully Taught ..... Rodgers & Hammerstein  
from *South Pacific*  
Jeff Wilson, *tenor*

To What You Said ..... Leonard Bernstein  
poem by Walt Whitman  
The Chorus with William Fay, *baritone*, and Jamie Goldfuss, *bass*

Simple Song ..... Bernstein  
from *MASS*  
Ms. Mernitz

Dirait-on ..... Morten Lauridsen  
from *Les Chansons des Roses*

All Through The Night ..... Traditional folk song, arr. Keith Christopher  
The Chorus with Peter Smith, *harp*

You Walk With Me ..... Music & lyrics by David Yazbeck  
from *The Full Monty*  
Bobby Cook, *tenor* and Ross Hewett, *baritone*

Everything Possible ..... Music & lyrics by Fred Small  
The Chorus with Michael Bardo, *tenor*

Can You Feel The Love Tonight ..... Elton John & Tim Rice  
from *The Lion King*

☞ ☜

## Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

Barbara Wagner, *Music Director and Conductor*

Debi Overton, *Accompanist*

Tenor I	Tenor II	Bass I	Bass II
R.J. Cooke	Donald Behr	Michael Bardo	Grant Adamczyk
Robert C. Donner	Timothy Fox	David Batt	Doug Bald
Tom Gleed	Dave Gannon	Bill Fay	Jamie De More
Ron Groth	David Granville	Bill Gardner	Glenn Einschlag
Matthew C. Higgins	Dan Hetherly	Ross Hewett	Jim Estep
Bill Hoffman	Delwyn Milander	John Keesler	Jamie Goldfuss
Ron Houk	David E. O'Donnell	Craig Klose	Paul LaDuca
John Marohn	Roger Parris	Ramon A. Melendez	Timothy J. Mahiques
Peter A.T. Miller	Dan Seiders	Andy Newbert	Dennis Pielechowski
Max Phillips	Rob Serpa, Jr.	Martin Palcic	Martin W. Seneca
Damian Tremblay	Mike Styn	Robert Rose	Michael Westhoff
Jeff Wilson		Woody Sipprell	
		Peter C. Smith	
		Dennis Stuart	
		Steven Young	

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# Good Times. Great Friends.



<http://buffalobears.buffnet.net/>



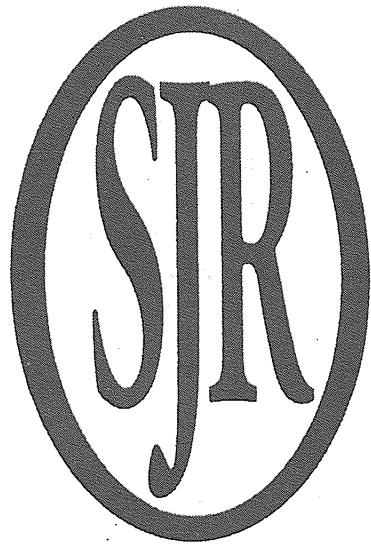
## You Can Love Whomever You Will

Throughout U.S. history, gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals, and transgendered persons have seldom, if ever, had a “voice,” in the fullest sense of that word — a comprehensive, recognized presence, complete participation in American culture, or the total absence of discrimination. The military still requires that we “don’t tell;” many American religious institutions, if not the majority, struggle with allowing us full inclusion; some of our employers discriminate against us by denying us promotions or family health benefits for our partners; there are many American communities which continue to threaten us with imprisonment for committing the “sin that dare not speak its name” or denying us the right to be parents; some of our own families are frozen at the “tolerance” level while refusing to recognize our significant others; and we are still the victims of violence by a segment of society that demands our complete invisibility, if not annihilation.

Tonight, however, we have chosen to be proudly visible, to have our “voice” heard as a group and as individuals. The Buffalo Gay Men’s Chorus (BGMC) presents to you, our supportive audience, music from many eras and traditions. The music we have chosen reflects two themes of our on-going gay and gay sympathetic narratives — the spiritual, nurturing, soulful (the sacred) and the playful, sensual, and erotic (the profane), two motifs that have been, in the past, the privileged domains of the non-gay communities.

If we claim the “sacred” and the “profane” as our own tonight, it is not out of any hostility to those who have always had a more privileged presence in American society. However, in a very real sense, it is because of our obligation and need to be truly authentic, to look at the arts, to absorb beauty as spiritual, erotic, and playful human beings.

For those who believe in a divine power that “shapes our ends,” as Hamlet says, we hope there will be comfort in knowing that a “God” will “smile on you” (Bach’s *Der Herr Segne Euch*) or, like Leonora from *La Forza del Destino*, that the “angels will protect you.” Regardless of our particular creeds or beliefs, however, most of us have learned, by hard lessons or gentle affirmations, to cling to that “rock” which “no storm can shake.” It may be the rock of our own self-worth that relentlessly graces us with “inward calm,” a peace that passes all understanding, one of the many messages in the Quaker hymn, *How Can I Keep From Singing*. It may also be the result of a shamanistic “rescuer,” our own Moses (a priest, a minister, a counselor, a friend, a lover), who saves us from oppression or even our own momentary self-loathing. We



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know, too, if we continue to have our own unique faith, that "peace" will "attend us all through" the nights of our griefs, our defeats, our losses. And for that reason alone, we have learned to be grateful for being alive, to "Sing praises" (*Tollite Hostias*) to the very rock, that inner strength, or, if some prefer, that personal "God" of our own understanding, that "Shadow" under which we have all sat for some kind of solace and comfort so compellingly expressed in Barry Oliver's *I Sat Under His Shadow* based on one of the Psalms from the Old Testament.

But we also loooooooooooooove to play! We may complain of being deeper in debt in spite of being owned by the "company store" in the song, *Sixteen Tons*. But after work, we're perfectly capable of "standin'" on our corners "watchin' all the guys go by" or reducing ourselves to babbling love-struck fools singing "Do Wah diddy, down diddy-do."

We want to "...Feel Love Tonight" as Elton John says, or to come to the conclusion in our own lives that "Everything is Possible," especially becoming the new "I am" who "kisses his comrade lightly on the lips" in the Walt Whitman poem put to music by Leonard Bernstein. In our sometimes endless relationships, we may try to find the ultimate "Sweet coral lips," the grand passion of our lives, the Mr. Right who seems to embody all of "Love's heart burning arrow" from the Eric Helmuth song, *Sweet Coral Lips*.

And if none of these are options, we can become another fantasy, another Narcissus, the moment before he succumbs to his own vanity by drowning himself. It is that ecstatic humanistic moment of passionate self-worth that Rilke catches in the French song, *Dirait-on* ("So they say") by Morten Lauridson. The German poet washes his readers over with waves of self-caressing images, "Abandon surrounding abandon/tenderness touching tenderness." It may be necessary, as the poet says, to "invent the theme of Narcissus," but it will be a creation of a "Narcissus fulfilled (*Narcisse exaucé*)" allowing us, in the end, to "Love whomever we will."

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## Notes on the Program

by  
Timothy J. Fox

"You'll Never Walk Alone" from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel* and the great Quaker hymn "How Can I Keep From Singing" represent our response to the nightmarish events that occurred in our nation on September 11<sup>th</sup>. It was a significant date for the chorus, as it was the first rehearsal; rather than cancel after two years of planning and struggling, it was decided to go on and remember those who had perished in the terrorist attacks on that day. The Quakers, or Friends, are a nonviolent, peace loving, pacifist religious group and this is their greatest hymn.

J.S. Bach (1685-1750) wrote over 200 cantatas in his lifetime. Bach spent most of his career in the employ of the church, but he did have a period of secular employment at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cochten. Most of Bach's cantatas have religious themes, but he was also known to write music for ceremonial occasions such as birthdays, name days, visits by heads of state and music for secular holidays. Two of Bach's secular cantatas are the *Wedding Cantata* and the *Coffee Cantata*. A cantata consisted of a number of movements with narrative recitatives, meditative arias and well known chorales. The *Wedding Cantata* may have been first performed in April of 1742 at an actual wedding, although the autographed score suggests 1741 and parts of it may have been written as early as 1727.

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) wrote his opera *La forza del destino* in response to a commission from a leading Russian tenor employed at the Imperial Opera House in St. Petersburg. After completing the opera, Verdi traveled to Russia with an entourage that would guarantee his stay in Russia would be comfortable, but the opera had to be postponed until the following season due to the illness of the leading soprano. It was finally premiered in 1862. The Czar attended the fourth performance and bestowed upon Verdi the Cross of the Royal and Imperial Order of St. Stanislas. In 1869 Verdi decided to revise the opera as, he said, "to get rid of all the dead bodies on stage." It is this revised version that is most often performed, while the new overture that Verdi wrote for it has become a concert staple.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was prodigiously talented. Great things were expected of him. Alas, it did not quite turn out that way. Some inherent conservative bent in his musical makeup seemed to prevent Saint-Saëns from making that bold leap. He wrote over a dozen operas, yet the only one ever

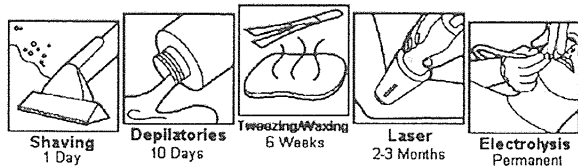


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performed is *Samson and Delilah*. There are three symphonies — only the third, the *Organ Symphony*, pops up with any regularity. French pianists have kept three out of the five piano concerti alive, there is the *Violin Concerto* and the supremely beautiful *Cello Concerto*. Saint-Saëns would be appalled to know that his most performed pieces are the lightweight *Carnival of the Animals* and *Danse Macabre*. The *Christmas Oratorio* is a little known piece of music, rarely performed, and the chorus “Tollite Hostias” is perhaps the best known excerpt from it.

Barry Miller, Music Director of the New York City Gay Men's Chorus, set the text “I sat Down Under His Shadow” for the Denver Gay Men's Chorus. The text is from the *Song of Solomon*. One of the most beautiful and poetic books of the Old Testament, this erotic love poem is a tribute to human love. Church officials would have us believe that this highly sensual poem describes the love that exists between Christ and the Church. Passages from the *Song of Solomon* are often used for feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary and have inspired composers as diverse as William Billings and Healy Willan.

Eric Helmuth was born in 1965 and graduated from Cedarville College in 1987 with a degree in piano and organ performance and an MA in psychology. He currently resides in Boston and is pursuing a dual career in music and web based health advocacy. “Sweet Coral Lips” comes from his *Three Gay Sonnets* with words by Richard Barnsfield (1574-1627). The language is highly homoerotic. Helmuth was inspired by the sonnet's harmonic language to produce a work that is akin to the English pastoral school of Vaughn Williams and Holst. Recent commissions include pieces for the Boston Gay Men's Chorus, the Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus, Desert Voices and the Church of Our Savior in Akron, Ohio.

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943) has become, along with Sir John Tavener, one of the most performed choral composers in the world. His setting of the “O Magnum Mysterium” has the distinction of being one of the most frequently performed and recorded works in the contemporary choral repertoire. “Dirait-on” is the final piece in his cycle *Les Chansons Des Roses* based on the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke. The entire cycle was first performed on April 23, 1993. Of these pieces Lauridsen has written: “These exquisite poems are primarily light, joyous and playful, and the musical settings are designed to enhance these characteristics and capture their delicate beauty and seriousness...the final piece, ‘Dirait-on,’ is composed as a tuneful *chanson populaire* or folksong...”

In the early 1970s Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) received a commission from the Philadelphia Orchestra to write a piece for the Bicentennial celebration in 1976. Bernstein at the time was collaborating with

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Alan Jay Lerner of *My Fair Lady* fame on a new Broadway musical and had to abandon the commission. Well, the musical, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, was a stupendous disaster. Bernstein was shattered by its failure and quickly moved on to composing a new concert piece titled *Songfest*, a piece for six singers and orchestra based on three centuries of American poetry and meant to “draw a composite picture of the United States’ artistic past as seen in 1976 through the eyes of a contemporary artist. The composer has envisioned this picture through the words of 13 poets covering 300 years of the nation’s history. The subject matter of their poetry is the American artist’s experience as it relates to his or her creativity, loves, marriages or minority problems (blacks, women, homosexuals, expatriates) within a fundamentally Puritan society.”

The third song in *Songfest* is based on an unpublished poem by Walt Whitman, “To What You Said” and suggests something of Bernstein’s struggle with his own homosexuality. The musical idea for this poem, though, came from the prelude to *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, which consisted of the actors sitting on stage and providing a humming accompaniment to the orchestra over a continuous ostinato. The opening fanfare and melody are exactly the same; Bernstein simply added the words of the poem. *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* has now been refashioned into a concert piece under the title of *A White House Cantata*.

“Carefully Taught” is from Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *South Pacific*. This song, calling for racial tolerance, was the bane for many southern states when the musical went on tour in the 1950s. “Can You Feel The Love Tonight” from *The Lion King* won Elton John and Tim Rice an Academy Award and can be heard every night in the Broadway version. “Standing On The Corner” is from Frank Loesser’s operetta *The Most Happy Fella*. “Do Wah Diddy” was a one-time hit for the band Manfred Mann. And “You Walk With Me” is the moving gay love song from the Broadway hit *The Full Monty*.

The Welsh may never have produced a great national composer, but they have enriched the world with many priceless hymns and carols, among them “All Through The Night,” “Deck The Halls,” “Immortal, Invisible” and “Suo Gan.”

Finally, “Go Down, Moses” is one of many spirituals slaves in the South sang expressing their longing for freedom and a right to decide their own destiny, the song of an oppressed people shackled by the restraints of society. These spirituals speak of the need for freedom for all people and thus have a resonance that speaks to us a gay, bisexual and transgendered people, that someday we will not be discriminated against and share in all the rights and privileges that are the right of any American citizen

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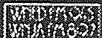
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## Translations

### Der Herr segne euch

Der Herr segne euch,  
Je mehr und mehr,  
Euch, euch, und eure Kinder.

### La Vergine degli angeli

La Vergine degli angeli  
Vi copra del suo manto,  
E voi protegga vigile  
Di Dio l'Angelo santo.  
E me protegga l'Angiol di Dio.

### Tollite Hostias

Tollite hostias et adorete Dominum in atrio  
sancto ejus.  
Laetentur coeli, et exultet terra.  
A facie Domini, quoniam venit, Alleluia.

### Dirait-on

Abandon entouré d'abandon,  
Tendresse touchant aux tendresses...  
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse  
Se caresse, dirait-on;

Se caresse en soi-même,  
Par son propre reflet éclairé.  
Ainsi tu inventes le thème  
Du Narcisse exaucé.

### May God Smile On You

May God smile on you,  
E're more and more,  
You and your children.

### The Virgin of Heaven

The Virgin of the Heaven's host  
Will shield her child so lowly,  
And God will send to watch above his  
guardian angels most holy.  
God will protect you, God and his angels.

### Praise Ye The Lord

Praise the Lord of Hosts, and adore Him in  
his holy shrine,  
Sing, oh heaven, and be joyful on earth.  
Sing praises to the Lord, for He comes.  
Alleluia.

### So They Say

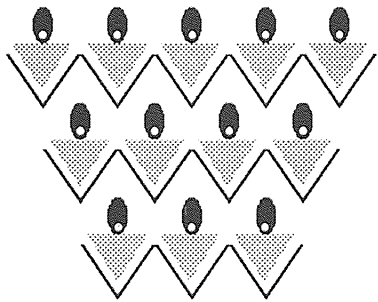
Abandon surrounding abandon,  
Tenderness touching tenderness...  
Your oneness endlessly caresses itself, so  
they say;

Self-caressing.  
Through its own clear reflection.  
Thus you invent the theme  
Of Narcissus fulfilled.

— Rainer Maria Rilke, from *Les Roses*

— Translation by Barbara & Erica Muhl

*Sing  
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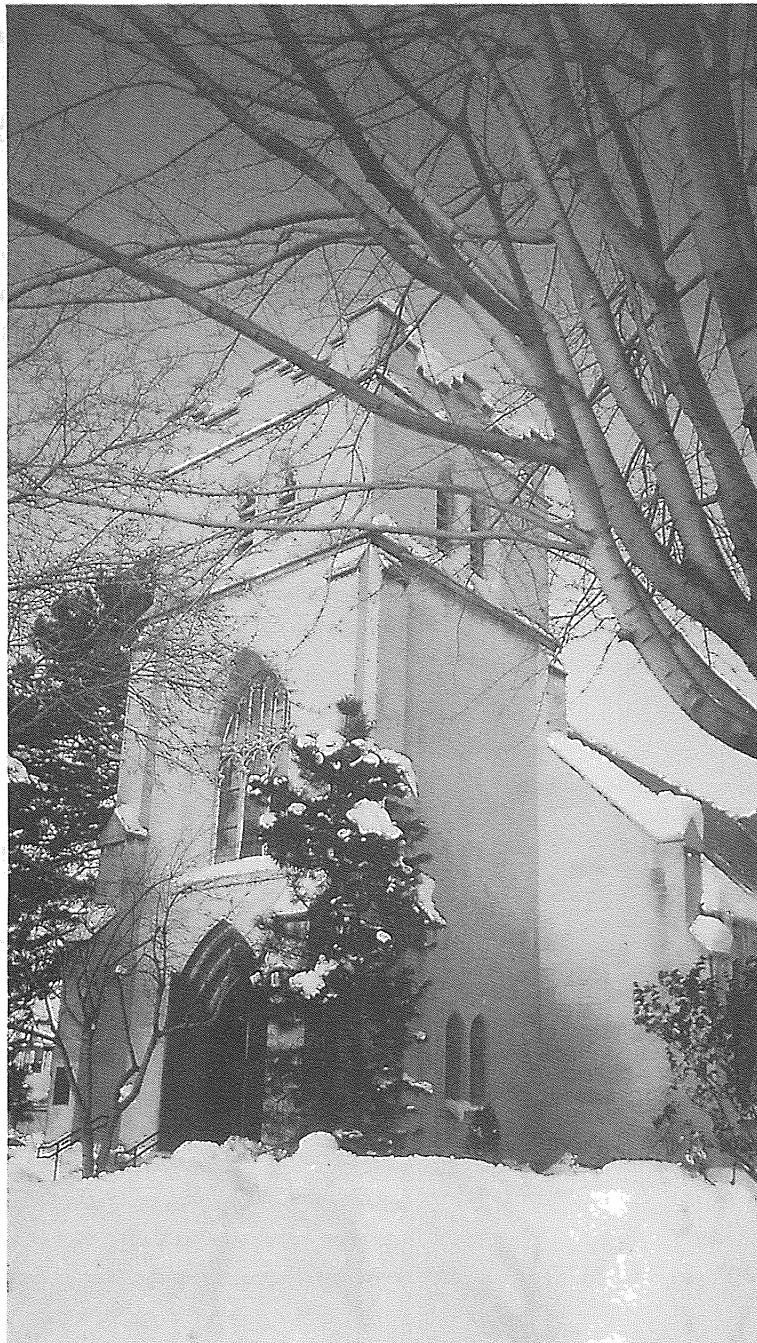
Music may be written out, but where does the inspiration come from? Why, it comes from the Heart, where else but from the Heart? The Heart has a language of its own and one of its dialects is music. Music, especially singing, is archaic, primordial, the first born of all language, and, for all our cunning, it can not be confined to words.

We are moved by music, all of us. We use music to rouse our passions, to go to war, to bury our dead, to celebrate life, to glorify and to open the space to experience Divinity. Music vibrates the air with sounds that touch something deep inside all of us, something primary, radical, fundamental. It's toe-tapping, folks, hand clapping, makes us want to sing out, dance with our neighbor, makes us want to cry, shed tears of sadness or of anti-penultimate joy, makes us want to shake our patooties or to just be silent and listen.

When we sing, some essence of soul stirs in the space between performer and listener that draws them together, there is a deepening of understanding, a sharing of something indefinable that moves in the space between. Music moves us out of ourselves and into another realm of being. So the Buffalo Gay Mens' Chorus sings to draw your imagination, your souls into the space of Music from the Heart. We sing, and sing of dreams and sing and sing on and on...to make music that will melt the stars. — *Jim Estep*

CS 80

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is proud to be a 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 fosters the artistic and organizational development of member choruses through a wide variety of programs and services: production of choral festivals; educational conferences; advocacy; grants for commissioning of new choral works; serving as 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 [www.galachoruses.org](http://www.galachoruses.org).



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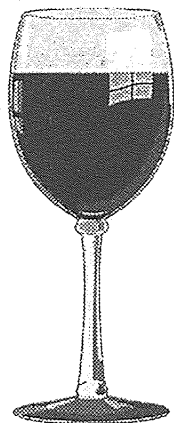
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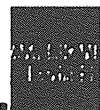
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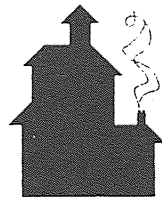
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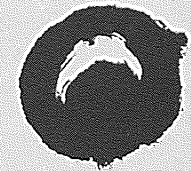
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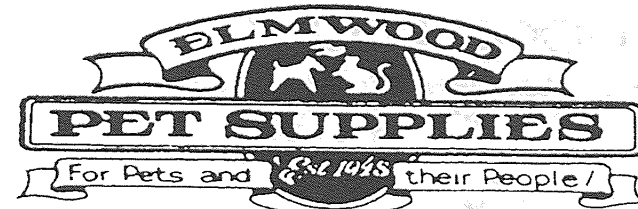
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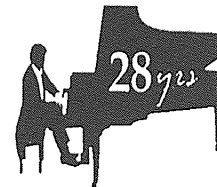
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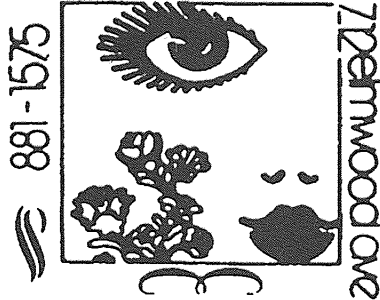
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