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### The Proud & The Passionate

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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# BGMC

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

the buffalo gay men's chorus  
presents

## & Proud the Passionate

Friday, January 25, 2008  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo  
695 Elmwood Avenue  
(at the corner of West Ferry Street)  
doors open at 7 • concert at 8

\* Saturday, January 26, 2008  
Temple Beth Zion, 805 Delaware Avenue  
(between Summer & North Streets)  
\* Interpreted for the hearing impaired  
adults \$18 • students, seniors & disabled \$16

Special Appearance by:



BGMC office:  
695 elmwood avenue  
buffalo, ny 14222  
716-883-1277



[www.buffalogaymenschorus.org](http://www.buffalogaymenschorus.org)

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# The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus



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**BGM**C

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

**Office:**

695 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14222

716.883.1277

[www.buffalogaymenschorus.org](http://www.buffalogaymenschorus.org)

A NEW YORK NOT-FOR PROFIT CORPORATION

***Our Mission***

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is dedicated to producing vocal music of high quality in the rich tradition of men's choral singing.

We seek through song not only to entertain, but also to enlighten.

We sing to create harmony as we celebrate pride in our communities and in ourselves.



## CITY OF BUFFALO

BYRON W. BROWN  
MAYOR



January 2008

Dear Members and Supporters of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus:

I extend warm greetings to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus on the occasion of your 7<sup>th</sup> season of song!

I send best wishes on behalf of the City of Buffalo as you present "The Proud and the Passionate" at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo on January 25<sup>th</sup> and at Temple Beth Zion on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

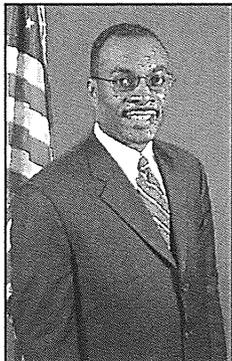
Also, congratulations on receiving the 2008 Arts Organization Award from the Arts Council in Buffalo & Erie County. Your continued success under the direction of Maestra Barbara Wagner represents all that is best about the arts in our region: beauty, harmony and excellence.

I know that your "vocal music of high quality in the rich tradition of men's choral singing," is the result of hard work and many rehearsal hours. Your audiences also look forward to the special appearance by Vocalis Chamber Choir at your concerts.

These winter concerts mark the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your first public event in February 2002. Congratulations on the ever-growing positive impact you have on our community and continued best wishes as you enlighten and entertain in our city of "Good Neighbors!"

Sincerely,

Byron W. Brown  
Mayor



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## SPECIAL THANKS

Our Friday Hosts

Rev. Joel Miller and the Unitarian  
Universalist Church of Buffalo

Our Saturday Hosts

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CHAMBER CHOIR

The Chorus would like to extend a special thank you to all of the advertisers you see in tonight's program. They have generously supported the Chorus. Please support them with your patronage.

Please feel free to notify the Chorus of any changes or corrections for future programs at [www.buffalogaymenschorus.org](http://www.buffalogaymenschorus.org) or by letter to the Chorus at 695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo 14222.

BGMC has "gone green". Please recycle your concert program if you do not wish to keep it as a souvenir. You will find collection boxes at the rear of the concert hall. Thank you!

## *The Proud & the Passionate*

G. Michael Liska, President



With the holiday rush over, we are now looking forward to the new season with great excitement. The year 2008 promises to be one of the best and busiest ever. We are pleased to present this evening's production to you.

After concert week is over, we move on to Spring with our first fundraising event on March 1, 2008. This benefit evening will be a Cabaret night at the Unitarian Church. We guarantee that you will not want to miss this fun filled evening. Be sure to check for Cabaret 2008 and all other BGMC events on our website, [www.buffalogaymenschorus.org](http://www.buffalogaymenschorus.org).

The BGMC will be honored on March 14, 2008 by the Buffalo Arts Council. The award for Outstanding Arts Organization is a testament to the years of time, talent, personal and professional resources you have invested in supporting, promoting and advancing art and culture in our region. Sharing in this honor is, of course, Barbara Wagner, Charter Artistic Director for the BGMC's short six years of existence. Without Barb's leadership, we might very well not have received this tremendous recognition as quickly as we have. We are delighted and privileged to have Barb on the podium for BGMC.

One of our favorite gigs is Gusto at the Gallery. We are pleased to be asked back again and again to perform for audiences that might not normally have the opportunity to hear BGMC in performance. BGMC will appear at the Gallery on April 4 at 8 PM.

June 20th and 21st bring us to two more major concerts. "Connections," of all kinds, is the theme for this Spring program. Much of the music, including a newly commissioned piece by Adolphus Hailstork set to poetry by the Harlem Renaissance poet, Countee Cullen, will be performed in what promises to be a very special concert.

On July 12th through the 19th we will be attending the 25th anniversary of the GALA International Chorus Festival in Miami, Florida. We will join thousands of other Gay and Lesbian men and women in performing, as well as listening to, the amazing sounds and words inspired by our common bonds, struggles with gay life and, above all else, our love and appreciation for great music.

We greatly appreciate the generous and continued support of our WNY audiences. Without this support we could not continue the programs that have inspired young and old and gay and straight members of our community.

We are a constant force, working to achieve understanding and acceptance for equal rights and opportunities for people in same sex relationships as well as tolerance and understanding for anyone who dares to challenge the norm! It is with great pride that I say that I am a member of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus.

Best wishes, Michael Liska

## *The Proud & the Passionate*

Barbara Wagner, Artistic Director



"Music is wonder, an alchemy of art,  
love's pure enchantment, communion for the heart."  
Reverend Mark Belletini

Proud - lofty; a reasonable delight in one's position,  
achievements, possessions, etc. Exalting, highly pleased.

Passionate - easily moved; ardent; excited; agitated; the  
sufferings of a martyr.

Definitions from *Noah Webster's New International Dictionary*  
Second Edition 1943

At our November BGMC Board Meeting, I asked everyone to think and write about what made them most proud and what made them most passionate in their lives. Here are a few of the responses from our leaders. We have chosen well!

- Proud:** Of my sons, my "boys," being myself and not ashamed of being gay. Helping others who struggle with the same issues. My family, my friends and my relationships within the BGMC. Pride is the essence of life. Proud of being a gay man. My family for breaking through the cultural biases. Of being accepted.
- Passionate:** About furthering BGMC in the goal to be better than what WNY expects of us. Equality and justice for all. Life and singing. My music. My career. Life - our lives need more passion. My nieces and nephews for the chance to have the children I can't have in the traditional fashion. Continuing to push boundaries, while learning more about myself. Peace. My own faith. Equality and justice.

I must admit that my responses are tucked in those lists somewhere too. I found it provocative and even healing to meditate on what those two words mean to me. Every single song that you'll hear tonight is a reflection of one or both of those two words. When you read the translations of the Brahms "Rhapsody" and "Amor de mi Alma", you'll see where and why it fits. You'll know when you hear "Find the Cost of Freedom", Oseh Shalom and Peace. You may feel the exultation as you listen to "Ev'rytime I Feel the Spirit" and the pride when you feel the beat and hear the words of "I Know Where I've Been". Perhaps you'll find pride and passion in your own faith as you open your hearts to the beauty of the "Ave Maria". You may do a bit of your own meditating tonight as you listen to this extraordinary music of pride and passion. We welcome you warmly to this very special concert.

With love and gratitude for your presence here tonight.

Barbara Wagner

## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

### Tenor I

Robert Black  
 Peter Bruschi  
 Pee Lee Clark  
 Robert C. Donner  
 Shaun Doyle, Jr. \*\*  
 Norm Duttweiler, Jr.  
 Thomas E. Gleed  
 Ron Houk  
 G. Michael Liska  
 Randy McWharf  
 Matthew Mooney  
 Cliff Moore III  
 B. Aidan Ngin  
 John Rex  
 Hanford Searl, Jr.  
 Robert Szustak  
 Kevin L. Thompson

### Bass I

Christopher Babbitt\*  
 Dave Batt\*  
 Paul Berglund  
 Dan Folwell  
 William H. Gardner\*  
 Andrew Giarrizzo  
 Michael Heaney  
 Michael M. Hunter  
 Darrin Kahn  
 Vincent Kuntz  
 Ramón A. Meléndez  
 Raymond Neil  
 Andy Newbert \*\*  
 Benjamin Phillips  
 Andrew C. Pollard  
 Joe Puma  
 Robert Rose  
 Sherwood 'Woody' Sipprell  
 Dennis C. Stuart  
 Vernon West

### Tenor II

Donald Behr  
 Paul Brundage  
 Edward F. Ciszek, Jr.  
 William C. Hardy  
 Gerald Klein  
 Delwyn Milander  
 Nelson A. Neels  
 Roger Parris  
 Mark J. Peszko  
 Nathan E. Phillips  
 Michael Rogers  
 Cedric 'Flip' Taporco \*\*  
 Jason A. Ward  
 James N. Wieland

### Bass II

Paul T. Gannon  
 Jaime Stephan Goldfuss  
 Lorne Edward Gretsinger\*  
 Jason Higbee\*  
 Jim Jagow  
 Paul LaDuca  
 Russell C. Link  
 Timothy H. Mahiques  
 Mark Marquardsen  
 David K. Mathewson \*\*  
 Ryan J. McKane\*  
 L. Martin Palcic  
 Brian Rotach  
 Lawrence Van Heusen  
 Edward K. Wadin  
 Joseph A. Zimmerman

\*\* Section Leader

\*Board of Directors

## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus (continued)

### Non-Singing Members

Chuck Alaimo  
 Paul Cassavaugh  
 David Gannon  
 Edward N. Giannino  
 Michael Gillis  
 John Jubulis  
 Mike Longo  
 Mark Meyer  
 Steve Niemiec  
 Jimmy Rigo  
 Todd B. Ruth  
 Michael Shanahan  
 Andy Steck  
 Michael Styn  
 Phil Trifletti  
 Cliff Whitman  
 Danny Winter  
 Jimmy Rigo  
 Peter Smith  
 Gregory Wolfe

### Board of Directors

G. Michael Liska, President  
 Christopher Babbitt, Vice President  
 Jason Higbee, Secretary  
 William H. Gardner, Treasurer  
 David Batt  
 Norman Duttweiler, Jr.  
 Lorne Edward Gretsinger  
 Ryan McKane  
 Linda Reznick

### Artistic Director

Barbara Wagner

### Accompanist

Debi Overton

### News & Information Director

Kathleen Bryce Niles

### Archivist

Chuck Alaimo

### 'Our Voices Win Freedom...

...is the motto of **GALA Choruses.**

*The Gay And Lesbian Association of Choruses, Inc. (GALA Choruses)* is the world's only association committed to serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered choral movement. BGMC is a proud five-year member of this now over 100 member association encompassing 10,000 plus singers. Formed in 1982, *GALA Choruses* provides support and helps foster the artistic and organizational development of member choruses through a wide variety of programs and services. *GALA Choruses* produces choral festivals, educational conferences and publications and facilitates networking among members. BGMC traveled to Montreal, Canada, in the summer of 2004 and performed in GALA Festival VII and is currently making plans to attend and perform at GALA Festival VIII in Miami, Florida in July 2008.

## *The Proud & the Passionate*

- Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit** African American Spiritual  
Arranged by Moses Hogan  
Adapted by James Rodde  
Darrin Kahn, Brian Rotach, Paul LaDuca and the Chorus
- Non Turbetur Cor Vestrum** Lodovico Viadana (1560-1627)  
"Let Not Thy Heart Be Troubled"  
Edited by Jameem Marvin
- Ave Maria** (Angelus Domini) Franz Biebl  
Norman Duttweiler, Rob Black, Cliff Moore, Rob Szustak,  
Flip Taporco, Donald Behr, Mike Rogers, David Mathewson,  
Ryan McKane, Jaime Goldfuss and the Chorus
- Peace** Martin Wimmer  
Text: A Chinese Proverb  
Jason Ward, Lorne Gretsinger, Paul Berglund and the Chorus
- Rhapsody** Johannes Brahms  
from *Harzreise im Winter*  
Poetry by Goethe  
Robert Szustak, Countertenor with the Chorus
- So ben mi ch'a bon tempo** Orazio Vecchi (1550-1605)  
**Fa una Canzona** Orazio Vecchi  
**A Boy and a Girl** Eric Whitacre  
**Contrapunto bestiale alla mente** Adriano Banchieri (1568-1634)  
VOCÁLIS CHAMBER CHOIR James Burritt, Conductor
- Roses I Send to You** Stephen Chatman  
Text by George Winkler  
Arranged by Jaime Goldfuss
- Amor de mi Alma** Z. Randall Stroope  
Poetry by Garcilaso de la Vega  
(1503-1536)

## — Intermission —

- We Kiss in a Shadow** Music by Richard Rodgers  
from *The King and I*  
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II  
Arranged by Edward Connell
- Barcarolle** Jacques Offenbach  
from *The Tales of Hoffmann*  
Arranged by Sherwood Dudley
- Good Old A Cappella** Words and Music by L. Carter  
and O. Nevada  
Arranged by Deke Sharon and  
Anne Rangle
- Alley Cat Love Song** Music by Paul Carey  
Words by Dana Gioia
- The Longest Time** Words and Music by Billy Joel  
Arranged by Roger Emerson
- Cost of Freedom** Words and Music by Stephen Stills  
Edited by Nick Page
- Meditation - Oseh Shalom** Ben Steinberg  
from *Kol Shalom*
- I Know Where I've Been** Music by Mark Shaiman  
from *Hairspray*  
Lyrics by Marc Shaiman  
and Scott Wittman  
Ray Neil, Pianist  
Arranged by Edward Connell



Christopher Hart, Percussionist  
Elizabeth Reeds, Flutist



*Please join us for a Reception  
immediately following the Performance*

## The Program **Music Notes**

Barbara Wagner and Jason Ward

### **Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit**

A rousing African American Spiritual, one of the many arranged by the superb Moses Hogan. Mr. Hogan died of a stroke while he was still in his forties, a great loss to the music world and choral conductors everywhere. We'll be using this as a processional, so be sure to look around you. You never know where a singer might appear.

### **Non Turbatur Cor Vestrum**

A festive motet for three-part men's chorus, Viadana sets each brief textual phrase with contrasting points of imitation. The wonderful polyphony (many sounds) and concluding joyous Alleluia are enjoyable to sing and delightful to hear.

See "Translations" Immediately Following.

### **Ave Maria**

Franz Biebl, one of the most respected and prolific figures in German choral music, was first introduced to American musicians through American choral conductors who had met him when performing on Bavarian Radio. Biebl was the founding director of the Department of Choral Music at the Bavarian State Radio Broadcasting Company. Biebl is known best in this country through the wonderful "Ave Maria you'll be hearing tonight. It became hugely popular through a 1994 Chanticleer recording. It highlights Biebl's characteristic tenderness, clarity and simplicity of form.

### **Peace**

This is a composition by Buffalo's own Martin Wimmer. It won sixth place in the 29th annual choral composition contest, a renowned event sponsored by the prestigious Ithaca College and Theodore Presser Music Publishing Company. Thousands of composers from all over the world regularly compete in this contest.

### **Rhapsody**

"Marie and I were sitting in the dining room when the bell rang, and we heard Brahms go to our mother's room. Soon afterwards, deeply stirring and solemn music reached our ears. We listened. Brahms went away, and our mother came to us in a state of great emotion. Brahms had played her his Rhapsody for alto and male chorus for the first time." -- Eugenie Schumann, daughter of Clara Schumann. Clara and Robert Schumann (both of them pianists and composers) were Brahms' closest friends. The

words to this stunning composition are taken from Goethe's *Harzreise im Winter*. They are possibly the words of the artist struggling to arise from a morass of grief and pain. In this performance, you will hear the stunning voice of Robert Szustak, countertenor, rather than that of an alto. The vocal ranges are the same, but you will find that the sound is much different. We are fortunate to have Rob in our midst to open our souls and hearts to the moving sound of the countertenor voice.

See "Translations" Immediately Following.

### **Roses I Send to You**

This song by the prolific and highly honored Stephen Chatman is the fourth of five movements in a collection entitled *Songs of a Prospector*. The text is by George E. Winkler, an early British Columbia pioneer and miner. "Roses" is a tender song of love and devotion expressed in turn by two lovers, separately and together as a couple.

### **Amor de mi Alma**

Garcilaso de la Vega (1503-1536) wrote the poem "Amor de mi Alma", a paean of love and passion, expressed to his beloved ... "for you" (*por vos*). He was a vivid example of a Renaissance man, skilled in music, arms, letters and the battles of love! He died at the age of 33 in 16th century mortal combat. Z. Randall Stroepe set this great love poem to some of the most passionate music we've ever sung. This is also possibly the most difficult music BGMC has ever sung and it has been a privilege to learn this exquisite music.

See "Translations" Immediately Following.

### **We Kiss in a Shadow**

From the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, *The King and I*, this song is sung by Tuptim and Lun Tha, pawns in the game of the giant rulers of the Far East. Tuptim was given to the King of Siam as a gift of the King of Burma. She is secretly in love with Lun Tha (who escorted her from Burma), but, as a slave to the King, she knows that it will always have to remain a secret. This song resonates with many gay people who want to share their love with their life partners publicly, but are afraid of reprisal from their communities (be it at home, work or otherwise).

### **Barcarolle**

Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) gained lasting fame for his operatic masterpiece, *The Tales of Hoffmann*. The Barcarolle you'll hear tonight opens the act set in Venice, the city of canals. A barcarolle is a song of the Venetian gondoliers. The gentle rhythms are meant to evoke the motion

of a boat rocking in the waves. The translation tells us that this is a song expressing great love and passion, actually sung while in a gondola.

See "Translations" Immediately Following

### **Good Old A Cappella**

Arranged by Deke Sharon and Anne Raugh, this song harkens back to the doo wop music of the 50's and 60's.

### **Alley Cat Love Song**

The title of this Paul Carey arrangement says everything that needs to be said about the context of this fun song. "Alley Cat Love Song" is the musical setting of the poem of the same name by Dana Gioia from his book, *Interrogations at Noon*.

### **The Longest Time**

Billy Joel's homage to doo wop was released on his 1983 album, *An Innocent Man*, which he compiled as a tribute to the rock and roll music of the 50's and 60's. This song required fourteen background vocal tracks, each of which was performed by Joel and all of them then pieced together in production.

### **Find the Cost of Freedom**

Steven Stills wrote this Crosby, Stills & Nash song after visiting a Civil War battle site. Jay Leno requested this to be the first song sung on "The Tonight Show" after 9/11 as a way of honoring those who died in the attacks.

### **Meditation - Oseh Shalom**

Ben Steinberg, the Toronto based composer of Jewish music, is Director of Music and Composer-in-Residence at Toronto's Temple Sinai. "Oseh Shalom" is excerpted from his 1990 *Voice of Peace (Kol Shalom)*, a Sabbath Eve service for Cantor, Choir and Organ. The text includes the last words of the mourners' Kaddish, the prayer of praise that expresses a yearning for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.

### **I Know Where I've Been**

From the Tony award winning musical, *Hairspray*. Set in 1962 Baltimore, the musical follows a teen named Tracy Turnblad as she simultaneously pursues stardom on a local TV show and rallies against racial segregation. The song is sung during a march to protest the "Miss Teenage Hairspray" pageant for excluding black teenagers as well as the cancellation of "Negro Day" from the "Corny Collins Show."

## **Translations**

### **Presentations by the Chorus**

### **Non Turbetur Cor Vestrum, *Viadana***

Let not Thy heart be troubled.  
I go to the Father,  
and when I have been received  
by Thee, alleluia.  
I will send the spirit of truth  
and the heart shall rejoice.

Alleluia.

### **Rhapsody, *Brahms***

But who steals there away?  
In the thicket his pathway is lost,  
where he passes  
close fall the bushes together.  
The grass rises again,  
The grass rises again, the wilderness hides him.  
Ah, who lightens his anguish, his,  
whose balm turned to poison?  
his, when hate of men,  
from the fullness of love he drank.  
Hate of men, hate of men, from the fullness,  
from the fullness of love, he drank.  
He, once scorned, now a scorner,  
secretly consumes all his own true worth  
in self love unappeasing.  
Ah, who lightens his anguish, his,  
whose balm turned to poison?  
his, when hate of men, hate of men,  
from the fullness, from the fullness  
of love he drank.  
Is there on thy psaltery, Father of pity,  
one note that his ear can awaken,  
do thou quicken his heart,  
do thou quicken his heart!  
Open thou his blinded eyes unto the thousand  
well springs hard by the thirsting one in  
the desert.

Is there on thy psaltery, Father of pity,  
one note that his ear can awaken,  
do thou quicken his heart, ah do thou  
quicken, do thou quicken his heart,  
ah, quicken his heart ....

*Erquicke, erquicke, erquicke ... sein Herz!*

**Amor de mi Alma, de la Vega**  
*You Are the Love of My Soul.*

I was born to love only you;  
My soul has formed you to its measure;  
I want you as a garment for my soul.

Your very image is written on my soul;  
Such indescribable intimacy  
I hide even from you.

All that I have, I owe to you;  
For you I was born, for you I live,  
For you I must die, and for you  
I give my last breath.

**Barcarolle, Offenbach**

Beautiful night, O night of love,  
Smile upon our ecstasy!  
Night softer than the day,  
O beautiful night of love!

Time flees and without return  
Carries off our tender affections;  
Far from this happy sojourn  
Time flees without return.

O breeze with love emblazed,  
Give us your kiss ... your fond embrace!  
Bathe us with your caresses.

Radiant night, O night of love,  
O night of passion. Ah!!!



**Presentations by VOCÁLIS CHAMBER CHOIR**

**So ben mi ch'a bon tempo, Vecchi**

So well I know who's happy,  
But I'll not have it so,

So well I know who's favored,  
Alas! I cannot tell.

Oh, if only I could now say,  
Who goes, who stays, who comes.

You leave, or laugh, or cry  
And you'll find no pity.

**Fa una Canzona, Vecchi**

Write a song with no black notes,  
If you ever want my favour.

*Write it so that it will bring me to sleep,  
Make it end sweetly, sweetly ....*

Don't put any harshness into it,  
Because my ears are not used to that.

*Write it so that ....*

Don't write numbers, or counterpoint.,  
This is my main design.

*Write it so that ....*

Using this style lucky Orpheus --  
Managed to pacify Perserpina, down under

*Write it so that ....*

This is the style that sweetly appeased  
Saul's fierce spirit!

*Write it so that ....*

**A Boy and a Girl, Whitacre**

Stretched out, stretched out on the grass,  
A boy and a girl  
Savoring oranges, giving their kisses,  
Like waves exchanging foam.

Stretched out, stretched out on the beach,  
A boy and a girl  
Savoring limes, giving their kisses,  
Like clouds exchanging foam.

Stretched out, stretched out underground,  
A boy and a girl,  
Saying nothing, never kissing  
Giving silence, for silence

- Octavio Paz

**Contrapunto bestiale alla mente, Banchieri**

*This poem is written in "macaronic italian", which is an artificial mixture of latin and italian words with latin endings. The content is as nonsensical as the language in which it is written. The translation is something like this:*

Fa la la!  
Don't trust hunchback,  
Nor a hobbler,  
If a squinter is good, he's good,  
Write this down in the annals!  
Fa la la!



VOCÁLIS CHAMBER CHOIR

**About the Artists**



Incorporated in 2000, the **Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus** ("BGMC") performs a rich catalog of classical, contemporary, Broadway, pop and multi-cultural music. The repertoire is as diverse as the 67 men who are singing with pride as members of the BGMC.

The BGMC has been honored by the Empire State Pride Agenda with a Community Service Award. This award was given in recognition of BGMC's efforts to raise awareness and to enlighten our region through song. To that end, the BGMC has performed in a variety of venues throughout Western New York and in Pennsylvania and Ontario for many community events. Additionally, the BGMC has traveled to Montreal to participate in the seventh annual GALA Festival, an international gathering of gay and lesbian choruses. Recently the BGMC won the *Artvoice* Best of Buffalo 2006 Award for 'Best Vocalist.'

While maintaining a strong presence within the gay community, the BGMC also has been privileged to perform with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra at Kleinhans Music Hall on two occasions. It has also done benefits for the Amherst Unitarian Universalist Church music program, Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic Church's restoration, the annual World AIDS Day Memorial Service and the AIDS Community Services fundraiser, *Cause for Celebration*. Additionally, BGMC performed for the arrival of The Amistad, participated in "Gusto at the Gallery" at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, sang at the Ars Nova Musicians "Viva Vivaldi" Concert, sang at Fredonia College for its diversity and multicultural groups and also performed at the Nichols School as part of its Diversity Week activities. Of course, our four major concerts annually bring our work to thousands of listeners in the Western New York area.

The BGMC is a New York not-for-profit corporation of member singers and supporters, dedicated to producing high quality vocal music in the rich tradition of men's choral singing. Through its music, the Chorus endeavors to entertain and enlighten, create harmony and celebrate personal and community pride.



**Barbara Wagner** (Artistic Director) has served as Minister of Music at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo for 44 years. She was the director of choral 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 was in charge of vocal activities at the Buffalo Seminary for several years and conducts the Unitarian Universalist Church Choir as well as the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus. In addition to its Sunday morning responsibilities, the UU Church Choir 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. In the Fall of 2006, the choir did a short concert tour of the Northern Adirondacks. The UU Church Choir, under the direction of Ms. Wagner, has recorded for American Public Radio, and has performed locally with members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, with the Amherst Saxophone Quartet and the with Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Wagner was the conductor for the Peace Odyssey Tour of Hungary and the former Soviet Union. Choral singers from all over the USA participated in this tour. She was a member of the prestigious seven member Hymnbook Resources Commission that was responsible for the denominational hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*, published in 1993. She was the chair of the New Hymns Task Force, which produced *Singing the Journey*, another denominational songbook, published in June, 2005.

She ran a choral program at Nichols High School that involved over 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. She has done graduate work at Westminster Choir College. She did advanced Organ study with Karl Richter at Munich Conservatory and has done advanced conducting study with Raymond Harvey, the former Assistant Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and presently the Music Director of the Kalamazoo Symphony. Ms. Wagner regularly attends choral workshops led by many of the most prestigious choral conductors in this country. Rodney Eichenberger, the late Robert Shaw, Paul Salomonovich, Robert Page, Vance George and Dale Warland are just a few of the greats with whom she has worked.

She is a member of The American Choral Director's Association, Erie County Music Educators Association, MENC, Unitarian Universalist Musician's Network (founding member, former vice president and board member), NYSSMA, American Guild of Organists (former program chair and sub dean 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. Ms. Wagner has been included in editions of both *Who's Who in American Women* and *Who's Who in America*. She is the proud charter Artistic Director of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus.



A native of North Carolina, **Debi Overton** (Accompanist/Conductor), 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. For many years, she was active at the Summer Music Festival in Aspen, Colorado. As the coach/accompanist for the choral department in Aspen, 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. Additionally, she has coached with coach/accompanists David Garvey, John Wustman, Brooks Smith and Dalton Baldwin, as well as the local master, Livingston Gearhart.

Ms. Overton has accompanied Master Classes for Luciano Pavarotti, Phyllis Curtin, Jessye Norman, Leontyne Price and Sylvia McNair. She has accompanied the regional Metropolitan Opera auditions in Greensboro, NC, Philadelphia, PA, Atlanta, GA and New York City. Considered by her peers to be "one of the finest sight readers in the country", she offers nuances and subtle interpretations of music that have been enjoyed and applauded by thousands of listeners throughout the United States. Recently reviewed, Ms. Overton was touted as "a musician's musician" in the Buffalo News. Considered a prodigy, and trained as a concert pianist, she took lessons at the University of North Carolina from a very early age ... traveling two hours from her home in Roanoke Rapids to Greensboro for weekly lessons lasting six hours ... and returning home again. Ms. Overton has toured in Europe but prefers the roots, both spiritual and local, offered by a career as a church musician.

In addition to her duties as Organist and Choir Master at Calvary Episcopal Church in Williamsville, NY, Ms. Overton is a past chair of the Music Commission of the WNY Episcopal Diocese, has been a member of the Board of Directors for the American Guild of Organists and is active in Western New York teaching, guest conducting, accompanying and performing with singers and instrumentalists. In 2007, she conducted the WNY premiere of Leonard Bernstein's "Mass" for Opera Sacra.



A native of Buffalo, New York, Tenor **James Burritt** is an active member of the musical community of Buffalo as performer, conductor and teacher. As a soloist he has performed roles with the Chautauqua, Portland, Memphis, Indianapolis and Glimmerglass operas. He has also appeared with the Indianapolis and Oregon symphonies and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mr. Burritt has made frequent appearances as a soloist throughout Western New York. He has sung several roles with Opera Sacra including Menotti's *The Egg*, Stephen Paulus' *The Three Hermits*, and in Britten's canticle *Abraham and Isaac*. He has also soloed with the Buffalo Choral Arts Society, New York State Baroque and the choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral. He has performed regularly with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, including the role of Smiley in Lukas Foss' *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, which was broadcast internationally by National Public Radio, as soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, and as *Remendado* in their Artpark production of *Carmen*. Mr. Burritt's most recent performances include Britten's cantata *St. Nicolas*, Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Bach's *Cantata #80 Ein'feste Burg*, with the choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral, Buffalo, and Bach's *Cantata #61* and Schubert's *Mass in G* at the University of Virginia.

In 2002, Mr. Burritt founded the Vocális Chamber Choir, a sixteen member ensemble specializing in great a cappella choral music. Vocális has quickly established itself as one of the finest choirs in Western New York. *New Day*, its debut CD, has been praised by the Buffalo News and is regularly featured on WNED-FM, Buffalo. The choir's 2007-2008 season includes performances throughout Western New York with music celebrating faith, love, folk and popular song and the prose of William Shakespeare. The choir will travel in April for a concert at First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA. In addition to his performing and conducting, Mr. Burritt is a Lay Clerk in the St. Paul's Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys and teaches at Immaculata Academy in Hamburg, NY.

## Reflections From Within the Chorus

Over seven years, already! What were we thinking about? When we hired Barbara? Held auditions? Had our first rehearsal on 9/11? Would we even get it off the ground? Or make it last? Turns out we could ... and did, with the devotion of our Men, the skill and heart of Barb and Debi -- *and the support of all of You!*

There have been so many new experiences, rich memories. Our attendance at the week-long Montreal GALA, with thousands of other gay singers. Our performances and encounters with friends and strangers, excited by our presence and participation. True, a few seemingly opposed to our very existence, but the vast majority clearly responding to the magic of it all. Dozens of openly gay (and two gay-friendly) men singing together with full hearts and great pride.

I look about me, enthralled at how far we've come. At the cheerful, friendly buzz at our rehearsals -- at our men reaching out and working with newcomers to bring them fully "IN", to make them welcome and part of "US". At our enthusiasm in being together, ... for social events, for work on the music, for doing the many tasks on which our success depends (prepping the suppers and after-concert receptions, selling the tickets, doing the publicity, attending to committee work -- all the back stage "Stuff" needed to make "It" happen) -- even working through the occasional misunderstandings and disagreements that will inevitably occur in any large group of people.

It is Magic! We are Family! Join us. Be with us. Thank You All for making this possible!

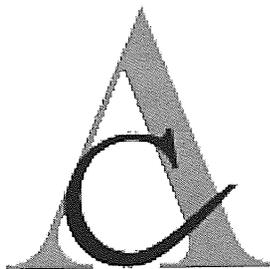
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Friday, April 4, 2008  
Gusto At The Gallery • 8:00 Pm  
Albright-Knox Art Gallery  
1285 Elmwood Avenue, Across From Buffalo State College • Buffalo, NY

Friday, June 20, 2008  
Concert - "Connections" • 8:00 Pm  
Unitarian Universalist Church, 695 Elmwood Avenue  
Corner of West Ferry • Buffalo, NY

Saturday, June 21, 2008  
Concert- "Connections" • 8:00 Pm • First Presbyterian Church,  
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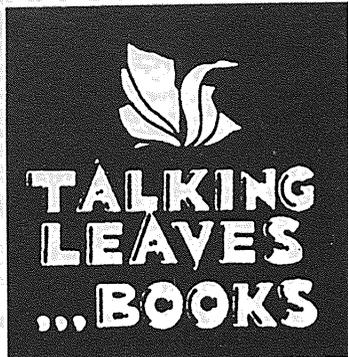
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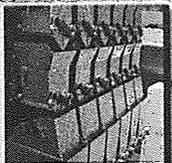
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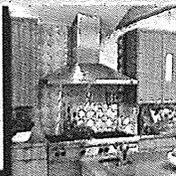
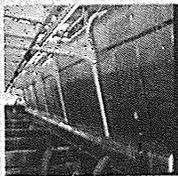


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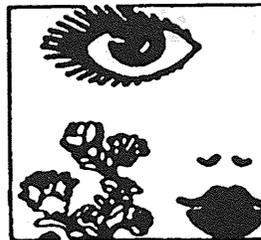
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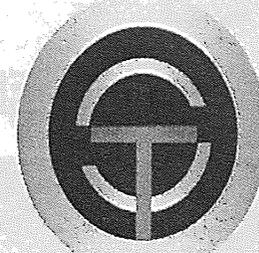
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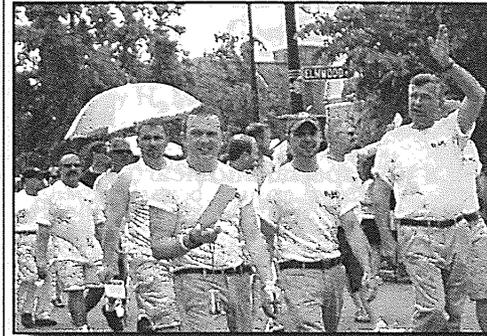
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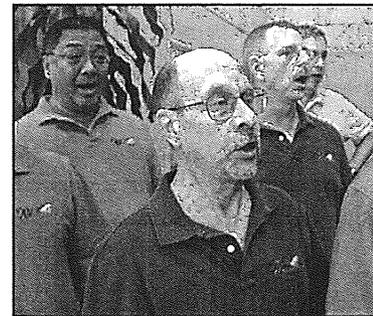
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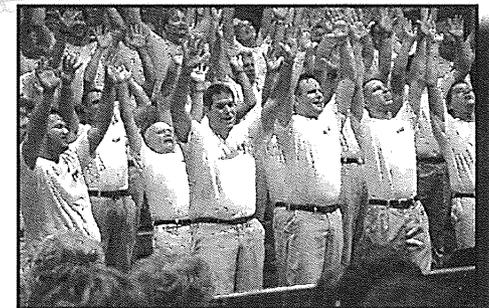
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*The Friends of the BGMC listed in this program are those who have contributed between June 4, 2007 and January 10, 2008.*

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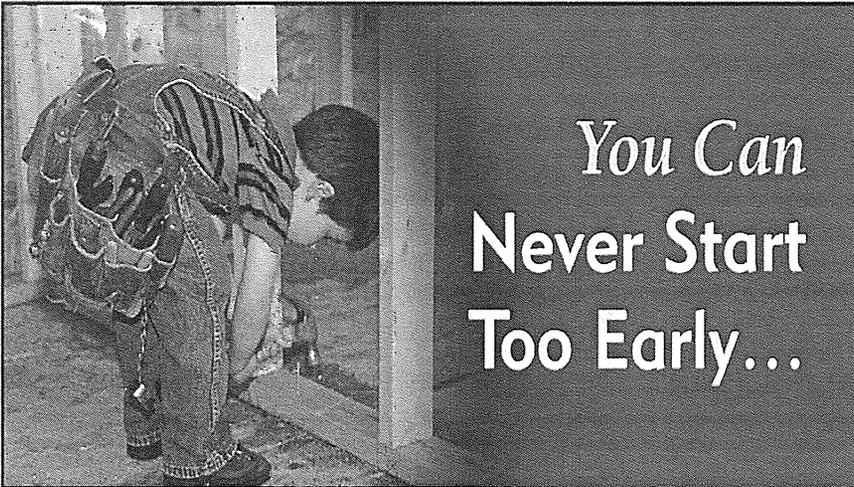
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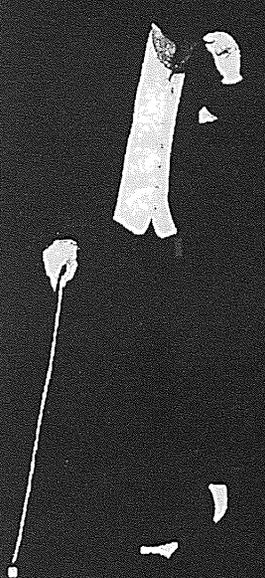
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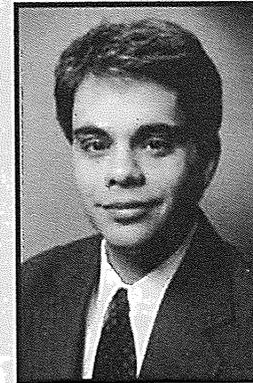


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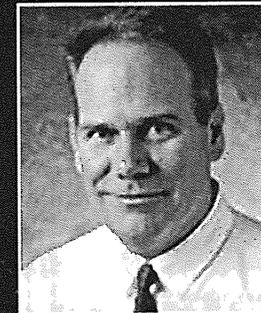
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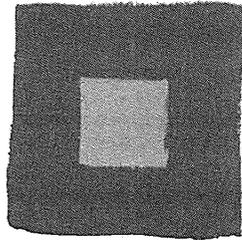


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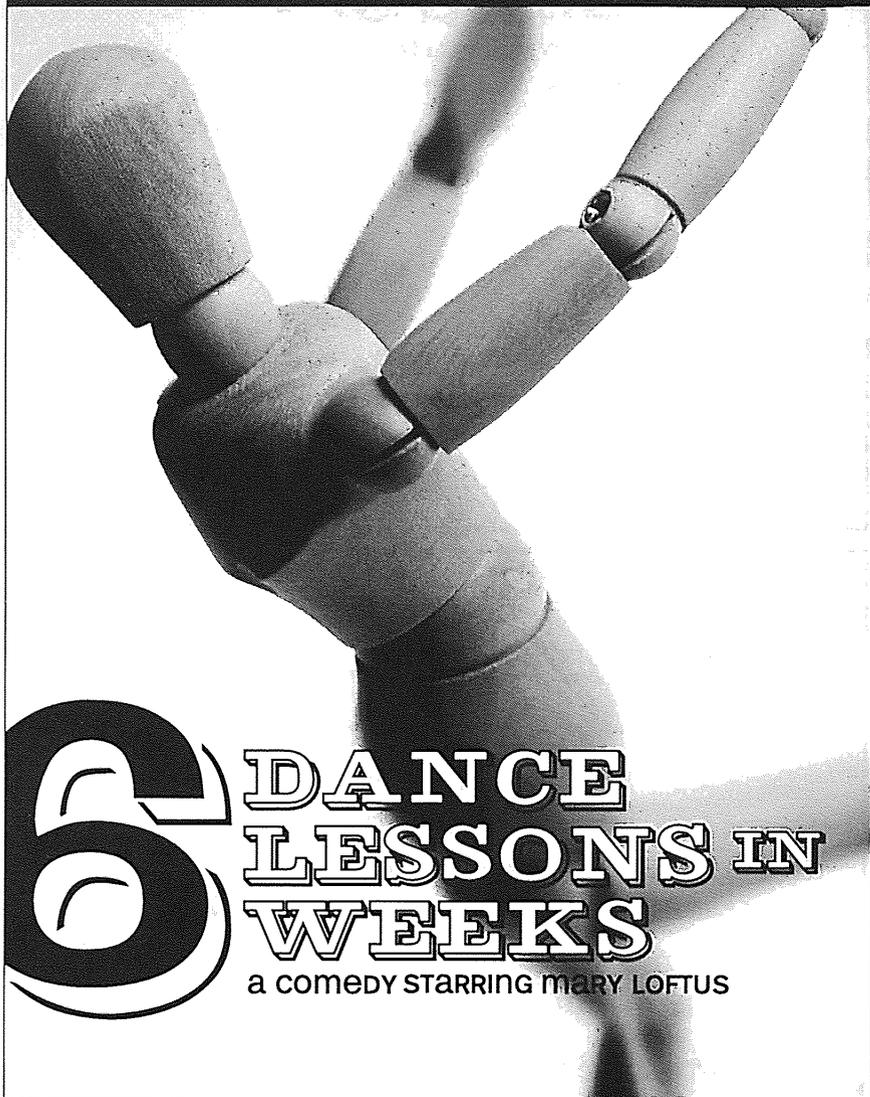
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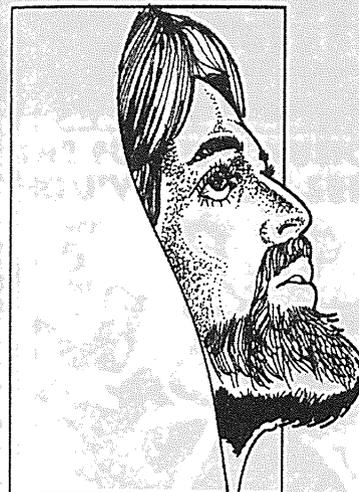
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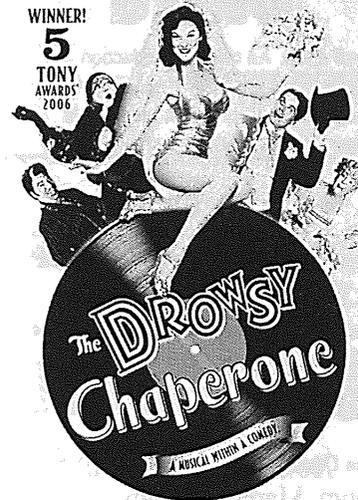
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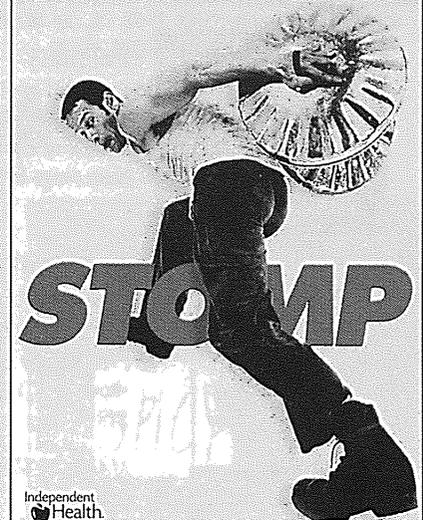
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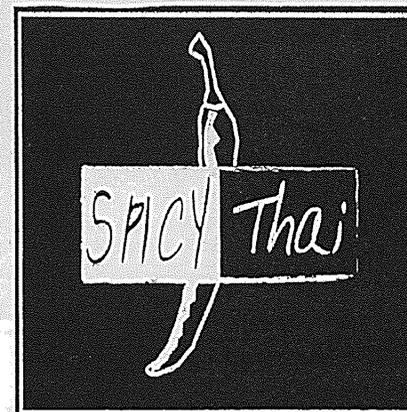
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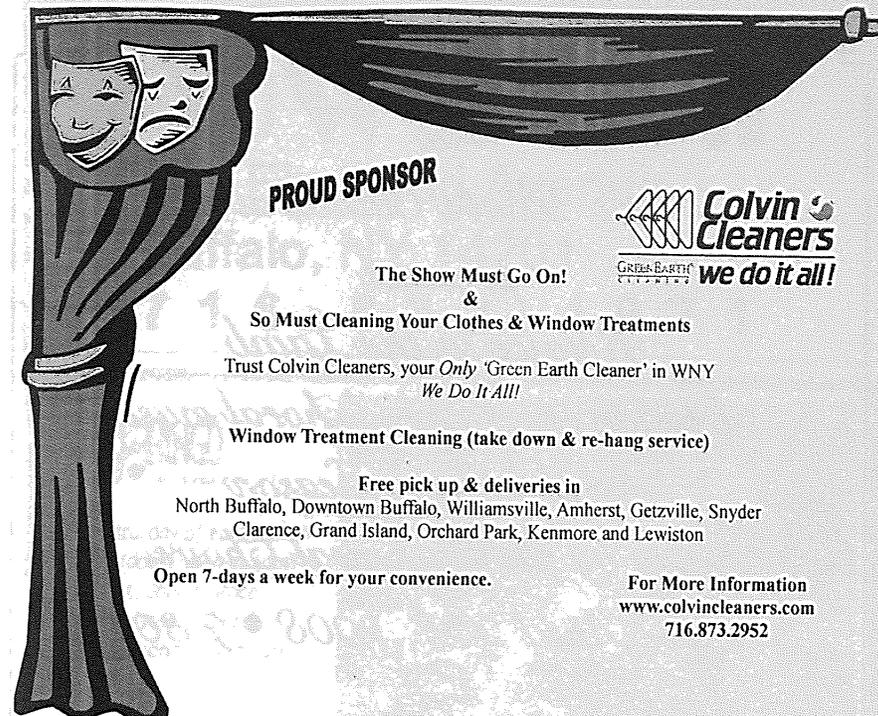
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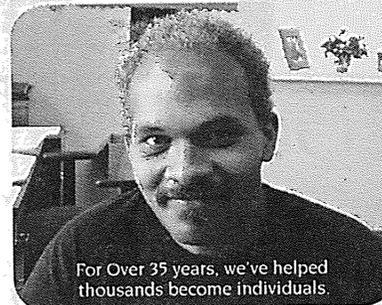
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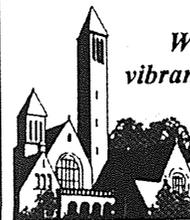
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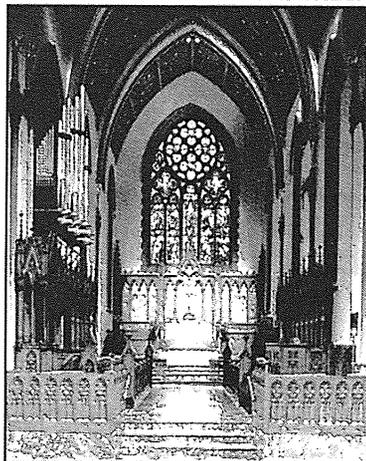


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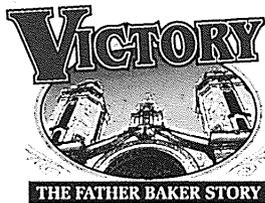
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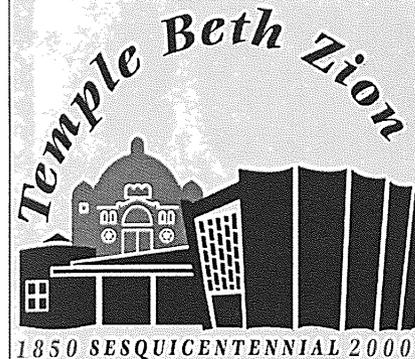
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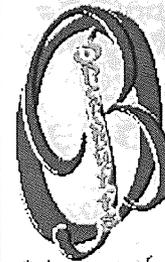


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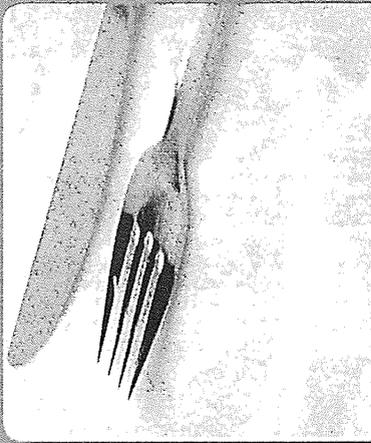


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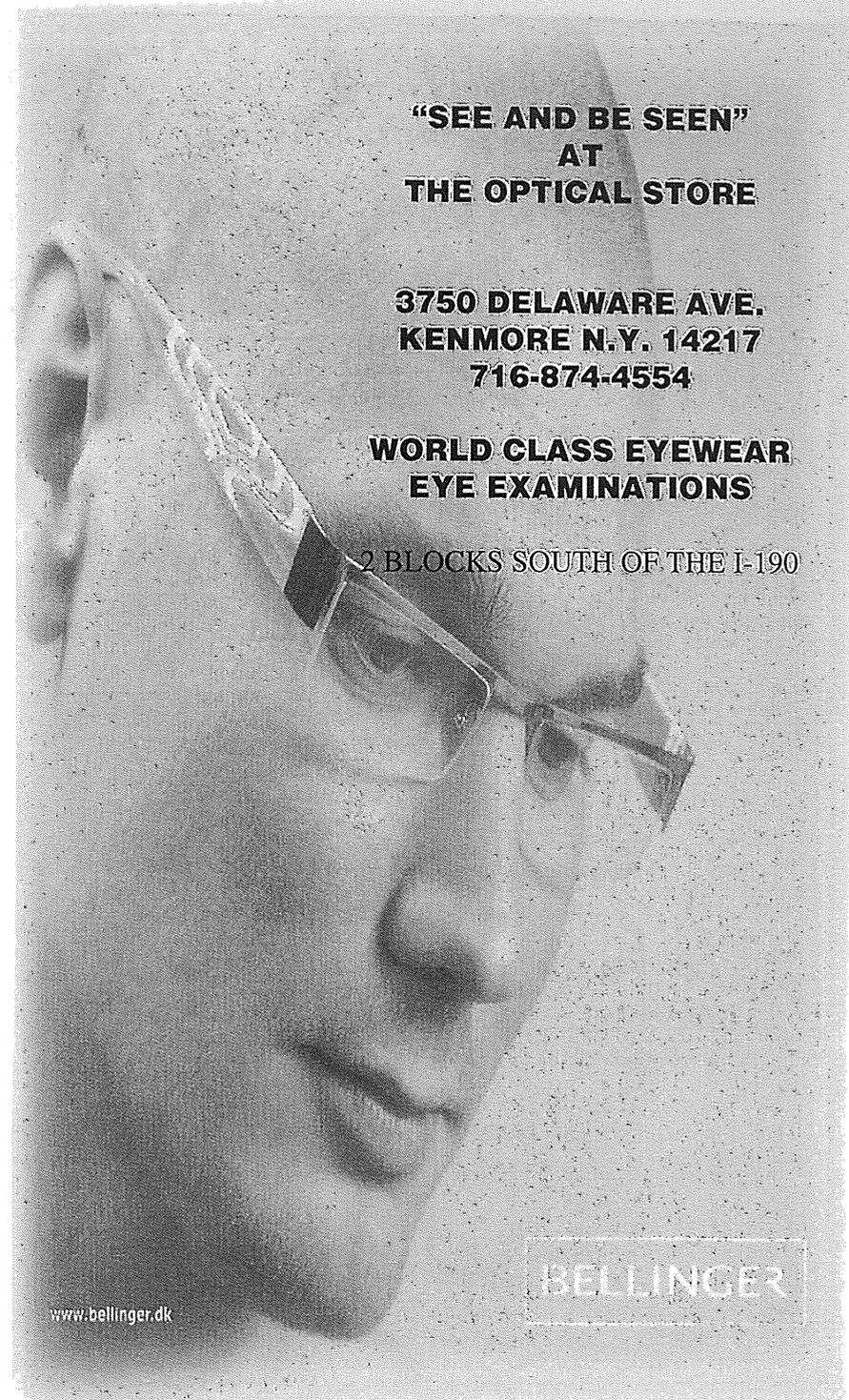
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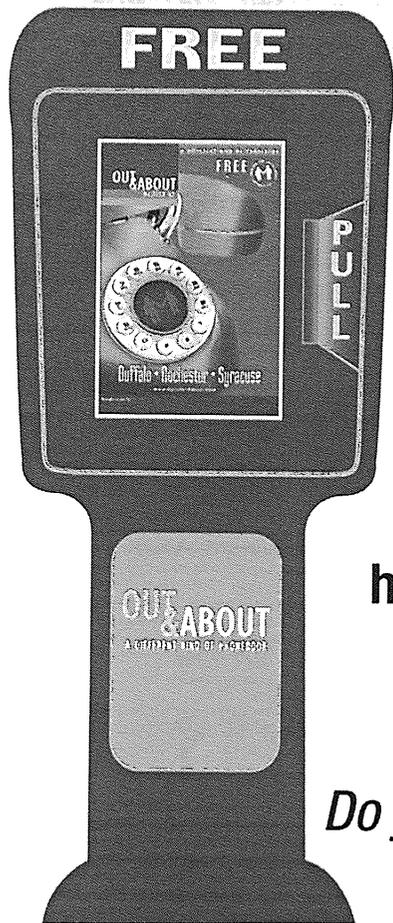
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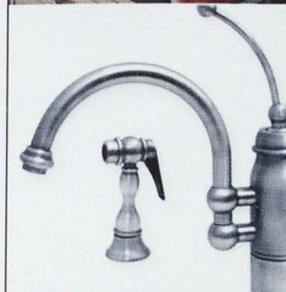
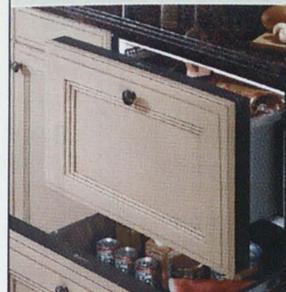
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