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### Merry and Bright

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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# MERRY *and* BRIGHT

**BGMC**



*A Holiday Gift from the BGMC*

Friday, December 5 - Sunday, December 7, 2014



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 - EXECUTIVE PROCLAMATION -

**CELEBRATING "MERRY & BRIGHT"**

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus has been singing with pride for 14 years, providing gay and bisexual men a voice in Erie County culture; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus has performed more than numerous local concerts covering every major venue in Erie County, including two performances at Kleinhans Music Hall with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus has received numerous awards and other honors for their deft musicality and vocal prowess; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus has helped raise funds for many worthy organizations by performing benefit concerts; and


WHEREAS, the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus will be holding a concert series entitled, "Merry & Bright", on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

NOW THEREFORE, I am proud to hereby congratulate the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus on this, the occasion of their "Merry & Bright" concert series.

Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the County of Erie, State of New York in the City of Buffalo this fourteenth day of November in the year two thousand fourteen.

County of Erie, State of New York



By:   
 Mark C. Poloncarz, Erie County Executive



**Office:**

51 Colonial Circle  
 Buffalo, New York 14222  
 716.883.1277  
[buffalogaymenschorus.org](http://buffalogaymenschorus.org)

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**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 to enlighten.

We sing to create harmony as we celebrate pride in the community and in ourselves.



## CITY OF BUFFALO

BYRON W. BROWN  
MAYOR



November 1, 2014

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

Greetings and salutations to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus on the occasion of your 14<sup>th</sup> season of holiday song!

We send warm wishes on behalf of the City of Buffalo as you present "Merry and Bright" at the Riviera Theater on December 5<sup>th</sup>, at Temple Beth Zion on December 6<sup>th</sup> and at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

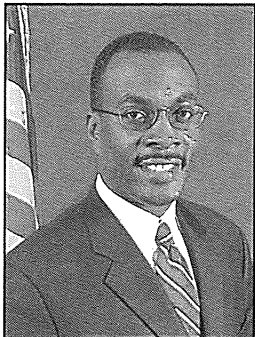
Your continued success under the direction of Artistic Director Ciaran Krueger represents all that is best about the arts in our region: beauty, harmony and excellence.

While we listen to your "vocal music of high quality in the rich tradition of men's choral singing," we know your sounds are the fruit of hard work and many rehearsal hours.

Congratulations on the positive impact you have on our community and region and continued best wishes as you enlighten and entertain in our "City of Good Neighbors!"

Sincerely,

Byron W. Brown  
Mayor



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## MERRY and BRIGHT



Good evening, and welcome to the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus annual holiday concert, "Merry & Bright." We are honored that you have chosen to spend the next couple hours with us as we entertain, enlighten, and celebrate the wonderful season that is upon us. We realize you have many options when choosing holiday entertainment and are delighted that you have chosen to spend your evening with the BGMC.

It is my pleasure not only to be an original member of this talented group of gay and gay affirming men, but also to be serving as the President of this amazing organization. I am thrilled to be onstage with my Brothers in Song to perform for you this evening. The energy and love we feel from you, our audience, is why we perform and why we know that 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 to enlighten. We sing to create harmony as we celebrate pride in the community and in ourselves.** is not only still important, but still relevant.

I am honored to have the opportunity to thank you for the support you have shown the BGMC. Thank you friends, donors and supporters for all that you do for us, our music, and our mission. Our generous and faithful supporters have enabled the BGMC to grow and prosper these past 14 years. Your continued support will help propel us forward on our continued journey.

The holiday season is a time to spend with family and friends. Surround yourself with happiness, warmth and love while you give thanks and reflect on traditions of years past. We hope you will continue to celebrate this time of year with us and make our concert part of your holiday tradition for many years to come.

Whatever your religious beliefs, or whatever you choose to celebrate during this time of year, we wish you love, peace, good health, and a joyous and prosperous New Year.

Happy Holidays!

Timothy H. Mahiques  
President



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The BGMC has been a proud member of *GALA Choruses* since our first season in 2001. Formed in 1982, *GALA Choruses* is open to all GLBT and GLBT-allied choruses and reports 150-plus member choruses and 7,500 singers. *GALA Choruses* produces choral festivals, educational conferences and publications, and facilitates networking among members. The BGMC has performed at GALA Festivals in Montreal (2004), Miami (2008) and Denver (2012), and plans to return to Denver in July 2016.

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## MERRY and BRIGHT



Dear Friends,

What is a “traditional” holiday season?

If I ask the guys in the chorus, I would probably get 70 different answers, all highlighting beautiful moments special to this time of year. My belief is that tradition has less to do with what it is, but rather with how it makes us feel. Once we look at holiday traditions in that light, I think we find that we all have a lot in common.

Our traditions make us feel a part of our community of friends and family; they give us the comfort of a safe place and a home. My favorite thing about our holiday traditions is that they have an element that is organic. We hold true to our core traditions and values, but every so often, something comes across our lives that strikes us as being a beautiful way of expressing the joy of the season.

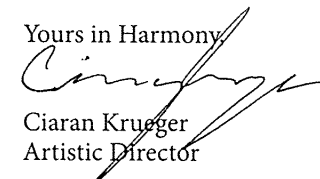
I remember as a teenager, my parents decided that we would do holiday poppers before dinner. Those funny looking tubes that were covered in wrapping paper that made a small “pop” when you pulled them apart, depositing a crown and small toy in your lap as a reward. I don’t remember any of the toys we got from those tubes, but I do remember the goofy pictures we took all together wearing our paper crowns. Moments like these stick in my mind and feel part of my tradition because of the love of family and friends surrounded it.

We welcome those who have decided for the first time to make us part of your tradition. Welcome back to those friends who are rejoining us this year to kick-off their holidays. We hope the music you experience tonight will make you feel right at home and remind you of all the things that make your holiday season “Merry and Bright”.

We are so thankful that you have decided to join us tonight to celebrate the magic and joy of this special season.

Enjoy the concert and Happy Holidays!

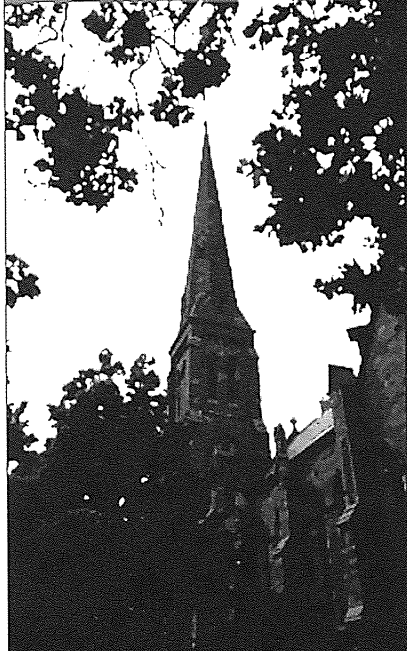
Yours in Harmony,



Ciaran Krueger  
Artistic Director

Peter and Genevieve  
Flickinger  
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*for I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,  
I was naked and you gave me clothing,  
I was sick and you took care of me,  
I was in prison and you visited me.*



*Matthew 25:35-36*

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12:05 pm

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8:00 am Spoken Mass  
in the Richmond Chapel

9:00 am Contemporary  
Music Mass  
in the Cathedral

11:15 am Traditional  
Choral Mass  
in the Cathedral



**Special Thanks**

Our Friday Hosts	The Riviera Theatre
Our Saturday Hosts	Temple Beth Zion
Our Sunday Hosts	St. Paul's Cathedral
Advertising	Timothy H. Mahiques, Robert Egan and Gerardo Gaddi
Graphic Designer	John Carocci
Chorus Photographer	Lori Joyce, <i>Lori Joyce Photography</i>
Program Coordinator	Christopher P. Reybrouck and Timothy H. Mahiques
Program Design and Layout	Robin Johnson, <i>Vilardo Printing</i>
Soprano Soloist/Cantor	Penny Suzanne Myers, <i>Temple Beth Zion</i>
Recording Producer	Mark Morrette, <i>Mark Custom Recording Service, Inc.</i>
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*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 51 Colonial Circle, Buffalo, New York 14222.*

*The 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.*





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The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus proudly presents

## "MERRY and BRIGHT"

Mr. Ciaran Krueger, *Artistic Director*

Mr. Jonathan Rizzo, *Accompanist*

Mr. Christopher Hart, *Percussion*

Mr. Timothy Mroz, *Bass*

### PROGRAM

Carry the Light Down David Maddux

White Christmas Irving Berlin  
Arranged by: Audry Snyder  
Randy Kozlowski and Zak Kineke  
with *The Chorus*

The Christmas Waltz Sammy Cahn/Jule Styne  
Arranged by: Patrick Sinozich

Ma'oz Tzur Words: Traditional Hebrew  
Music by: Eric Lane Barnes  
Penny Suzanne Myers, *cantor*  
with *The Chorus*

Ave Maria Tomas Luis de Victoria  
Edited by: Robert Sund  
TTBB Small Group Ensemble\*

Silver Bells Jay Livingston and Ray Evans  
Arranged by: Kevin Robison

Nella Fantasia Lyrics by: Chiara Ferrau  
Music by: Ennio Morricone

Betelehemu Via Olatunji  
Arranged by: Wendell Whalum  
John Macomber, *tenor*  
with *The Chorus*

### 15 MINUTE INTERMISSION

*Don't forget to buy your Big Package Holiday Raffle tickets for only \$10 per ticket for a chance to win a \$1000 American Express Gift Card! Drawing to take place at Sunday's performance. Need not be present to win.*

Drunken Sailor on Christmas Morning Eric Lanes Barnes  
Based on the Traditional Song

12 Days of Christmas Traditional Song

Santa Baby Joan Ellen Javits, Anthony Fred Springer,  
and Philip Springer  
Arranged by: Kevin Robison  
Tim Stuff, *tenor*  
with *The Chorus*

Do You Hear What I Hear Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne

Silent Night Franz Grüber  
Arranged by: Mack Wilberg  
David Campbell, Kyle Eberth, and Artie Vanderpool  
with *The Chorus*

Heavy Christmas Lyrics and Arranged by: David Maddux

*Please join us for a reception immediately following  
the Saturday and Sunday performances.*



## Program Notes

### *Carry The Light Down*

The brain child of Seattle composer David Maddux, who has composed and arranged music in a variety of applications for over three decades, *Carry the Light Down* is likely an unfamiliar song to most of you, but one you will leave tonight tapping your feet to and humming for days to come. In the spirit of our Holiday message, Merry & Bright, *Carry the Light Down* reminds all of us to keep the joy and glee of this magical season burning bright within.

### *White Christmas*

Certainly one of the two best-known songs (with God Bless America) by Irving Berlin, this Holiday standard was written in 1940, but hit the spotlight when Bing Crosby sang it in the 1942 movie, "Holiday Inn". Bing's 1942 recording with John Scott Trotter's orchestra and the Ken Darby Singers became the greatest hit of its time. Tonight, we sing it for you with the hope that all of your days be **Merry and Bright!**

### *The Christmas Waltz*

*The Christmas Waltz* is a Christmas song written by Sammy Cahn and Julie Styne for Frank Sinatra, who recorded it in 1954 as a B-side to a new recording of *White Christmas*. This is the first Christmas Waltz to be written and is referenced in the line, "and this song of mine, in three quarter time." The lyrics are full of sentimental Christmas memories and will make you want to grab a loved one and waltz.

### *Ma'oz Tzur*

*Ma'oz Tzur* (Rock of Ages) is a Jewish poem, written in Hebrew, and sung on Hanukkah, after the festival of lights. Thought to be written sometime in the late 13th century, *Ma'oz Tzur* has come to be known as the Hanukkah melody. Set to music by the typically tongue-in-cheek Eric Lane Barnes, this version of *Ma'oz Tzur* is beautifully bright and full of energy.

Hebrew Text:

Ma-oz Tzur Y'shu-a-ti  
Le-cha Na-eh L'sha-bei-ach  
Ti-kon Beit  
T'fi-la-ti V'sham  
To-da N'za-bei-ach  
Az Eg-mor B'shir Miz-mor  
Cha-nu-kat Ha-miz-bei-ach

English Translation:

My refuge, my hope, my rock of salvation  
It's good to sing your praises  
Let our house of prayer be restored  
And there, we will offer you thanks

*Continued on page 22*



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Continued from page 20

### **Ave Maria**

Tomas Luis de Victoria was the most famous composer in 16th-century Spain. He devoted his life and career exclusively to the genre of sacred music of the late Renaissance, and is the most highly regarded and accomplished composer of the Counter-Reformation. His composition of *Ave Maria* or the 'Angelic Salutation' as it is also called is based upon two passages in Luke the greeting by the Angel Gabriel (Luke 1: 28) and Elizabeth's acclamation (Luke 1: 42). It's use as a prayer dates back to the eleventh century.

Sung by a small group of our Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus, this beautiful piece of music will surely inspire you, as it has inspired thousands of others over the last 450 years.

### **Silver Bells**

Written by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans, *Silver Bells* was written in 1950 for the Paramount picture "The Lemon-Drop Kid", featuring the legendary Bob Hope. Livingston and Evans were challenged to write a Christmas song for the film, but were reluctant to write a Christmas song, citing that it was near impossible to write a hit Christmas song. Originally they wrote a song called *Tinkle Bell*, about the Santa Clauses and the Salvation Army workers who stand on New York City street corners tinkling their bells. Realizing what most Americans would think of an alternative meaning to the word "tinkle", they put aside *Tinkle Bell* and started to write a new song, using the music and melody of *Tinkle Bell*, and changing the word "tinkle" to "silver".

### **Nella Fantasia**

*Nella Fantasia*, (In My Fantasy) was originally an instrumental written by composer Ennio Morricone for the 1986 film, "The Mission". Words were added by Italian song writer, Chiara Ferrau for the 1998 Sarah Brightman Album, Eden. The song has been covered by many artists, including the all male group Il Divo, in 2004. *Nella Fantasia* is a beautiful song, where we are reminded to never stop dreaming, and to always see our world as one that is bright, friendly, full of peace and honesty.

In my mind I see a just world,  
where everyone lives in peace and in honesty.  
I dream of souls which are always free,  
Like flying clouds  
Full of love in the depths of the soul.

In my mind I see a bright world,  
where even the night is less dark.  
I dream of souls which are always free,  
Like flying clouds.

Continued on page 24

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Continued from page 22

In my mind forms a warm wind,  
which blows through the cities, like a friend.  
I dream of souls which are always free,  
Like flying clouds  
Full of love in the depths of the soul.

### **Betelehemu**

The story of *Betelehemu's* creation is almost as uplifting as the song itself. The late Babatunde Olatunji, a renowned Nigerian drummer, educator, social activist, and recording artist, was awarded the prestigious Rotary International Scholarship, and relocated to the United States for an education in music at the age of 23. Once in Atlanta, Georgia, Olatunji collaborated with his college's GLEE Club Director Dr. Wendell P. Whalum to create this motivational piece of religious praise.

Awa yi o ri Baba gbo jule	We are glad that we have a Father to trust.
Awa yi o ri Baba fehenti	We are glad to have a Father to rely upon.
Nibo labi Jesu,	Where was Jesus born?
nib lagbe bii	Where was he born?
Betelehemu ilu ara,	Bethlehem the city of wonder.
nibe labi Baba o daju	That is where the Father was born for sure.
Iyin, nifuno	Praise, Praise, Praise be to Him
Adupe fun o, jooni,	We thank Thee, We thank Thee for this day,
Baba olo reo	Gracious Father.
Iyin, fun o Baba anu,	Praise be to Thee,
Baba toda wasi	Merciful Father.

### **Drunken Sailor on Christmas Morning**

*Drunken Sailor* first enters the historical record in the nineteenth century as a chantey sung in time to tasks that were performed while hauling a rope by marching along the deck of a sailing vessel. Leave it to the creatively talented Eric Lane Barnes to sprinkle in some holiday traditions like fruitcake, eggnog, ornaments & garland to a group of nautical adventurers who are caught making merry in an attempt to brighten up the holidays.

### **The Twelve Days of Christmas**

This is your chance to get out of your seats and have a little fun with the men of the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus. For those of you who have attended our past holiday concerts, you'll know what this means, as this has become one of our favorite holiday traditions to share with all of you. This is not a piece for you to sit back and enjoy, rather, we will need you up and out of your seats, as we will be looking for your full participation!

Continued on page 32



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Charles A. Deacon  
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Carla J. Hengerer  
John F. Herbert  
John D. Hunt, *in honor of all the talented people in the BGMC*

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Friday, May 15, 2015 - 8pm  
Riviera Theatre, N. Tonawanda

Saturday, May 16, 2015 - 8pm  
Westminster Pres. Church, Buffalo

Sunday, May 17, 2015 - 3pm  
North Presbyterian Church, Williamsville

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13th SEASON



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# The Music of Ola Gjeilo

Sunday, June 7, 4pm

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Main Street, Buffalo

## Special Guest Ola Gjeilo

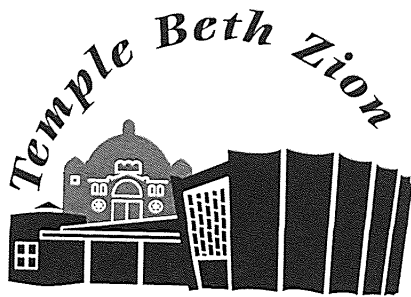
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Friday, October 24, 2014 - Orchard Park Presbyterian Church - 7:30PM  
Saturday, October 25, 2014 - Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo - 7:30PM

#### A BUFFALO MASTER CHORALE FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Saturday, December 6, 2014 - Clarence Presbyterian Church - 7:30PM  
Sunday, December 7, 2014 - St. Joseph University Church, Buffalo - 4:00PM

#### BUFFALO NIAGARA YOUTH CHORUS - WINTER CONCERT

Sunday, January 25, 2015 - Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo - 4:00PM

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Saturday, March 7, 2015 - Ciminelli Recital Hall - SUNY Buffalo State - 7:30PM

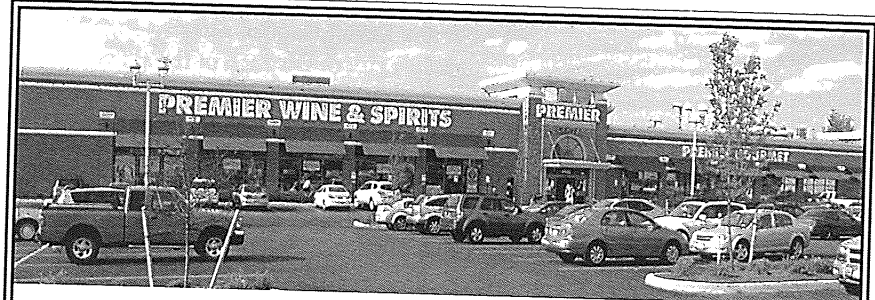
#### BUFFALO NIAGARA YOUTH CHORUS - SPRING CONCERT

Sunday, May 17, 2015 - Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo - 4:00PM

#### BUFFALO NIAGARA SYMPHONY OF CHOIRS - PEACE IS EVERY VOICE

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Continued from page 24

### **Santa Baby**

Originally recorded by Eartha Kitt in 1953, *Santa Baby* is a "tongue in cheek" look at a Christmas list from a woman to Santa Claus, hoping for extravagant gifts like a sable, a yacht or decorations from Tiffany's. As we sing our rendition of *Santa Baby*, it is perhaps even more "tongue in cheek" as we sing the song from a male perspective with all of the same requests for Santa Claus. The song has been covered by many artists including Madonna, as well as a slight re-telling from Michael Buble called *Santa Buddy*.

### **Do You Hear What I Hear**

Written by Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne in 1962, *Do You Hear What I Hear* is another song made popular by recording dynamo, Bing Crosby in 1963. Written as a plea for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis, *Do You Hear What I Hear* is a song with deep emotional complexity, with one beautifully clear message of peace, acceptance, and love.

### **Silent Night**

180 years ago the carol *Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht* was heard for the first time in a village church in Oberndorf, Austria. The congregation at that Midnight Mass in St. Nicholas Church listened as the voices of the assistant pastor, Fr. Joseph Mohr, and the choir director, Franz Xavier Gruber, rang through the church to the accompaniment of Fr. Mohr's guitar. On each of the six verses, the choir repeated the last two lines in four-part harmony. Now translated into hundreds of languages, *Silent Night* is sung by millions the world over every December. Its powerful message of heavenly peace has crossed borders and language barriers, conquering the hearts of people everywhere.

### **Heavy Christmas**

*Heavy Christmas* is a clever arrangement by David Maddux, offering new Christmas lyrics to famous classical themes, featuring works by Wagner, Verdi, Bizet and Tchaikovsky among others. We look forward to your reaction to Verdi's *The Anvil Chorus* - now a holiday carol to delight.



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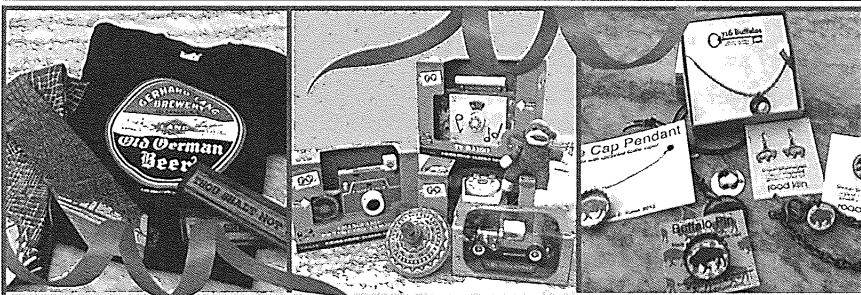
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## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

### Tenor I

Rob Black \*  
David Campbell +  
Norm Duttweiler Jr. \*  
Ron Houk  
Mike Rogers  
Hanford Searl, Jr.  
Tim Stuff  
Robert J. Szustak \*  
Kevin L. Thompson

### Baritone

Travis Ballard  
Leonard Cercone Jr.  
Gregory L. Ciupak  
Gerardo Gaddi \*  
William H. Gardner  
Jeffrey C. Hunt  
Zak Kineke \*  
Geoffrey Kutnyak \*  
Ramón Meléndez  
Raymond Neil  
Andy Newbert + \*  
Eric Nowak  
Christopher Pearson  
Joseph Puma  
Woody Sipprell  
Dennis C. Stuart  
Ron Sutz  
Cedric "Flip" Taporco \*  
William K. Wachob  
Kevin Woodcock

### Tenor II

Nicholas Becht  
Kyle Eberth \*  
Robert M. Egan  
Joseph Grieco  
William C. Hardy  
John Macomber  
Roger Parris +  
Mark J. Peszko  
Devin Rooney  
Jim Simonis  
Jeffrey J. Strauss  
David Tear  
Artie B. Vanderpool  
Jason Ward

### Bass II

Pierre Albrecht-Carrie  
Pete Bleckinger \*  
Steve Bukowski  
Gerry Frenette \*  
Randy Kozlowski + \*  
Timothy H. Mahiques \*  
L. Martin Palcic  
Brian Rotach  
Mark Smith  
Michael A. Smyntek  
Donald Yager  
Joseph Zimmerman

+ Indicates Section Leader

\* Indicates Small Group Ensemble



## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

### Non-Singing Members

Jack Ashwood  
David Batt  
Dennis J. Bolton  
Scott Carr  
Jaime Goldfuss  
Susa Gruttadauria  
Michael Longo  
Marge Maloney  
Mark Mancuso  
Scott Nachbar  
Christopher P. Reybrouck  
James Rigo  
Michael Shanahan  
Larry Van Heusen  
Cynthia Van Ness

### Silent Member

Danny Winter aka Vicky Vouge  
1934-2012  
Michael P. Gillis  
1955-2013

### Artistic Director

Ciaran Krueger

### Accompanist

Jonathan Rizzo

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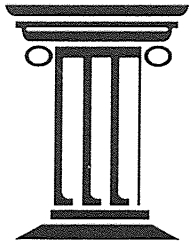
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Rob Black  
Steve Bukowski  
Robert Egan  
John Macomber  
Eric Nowak  
Robert J. Szustak  
Artie B. Vanderpool  
Don Yager

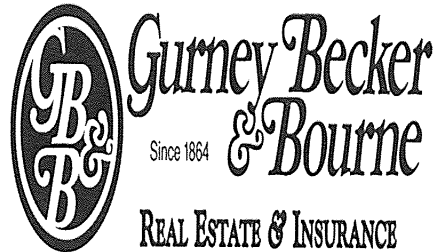
### Musicians

Christopher Hart, Percussion  
Timothy Mroz, Bass



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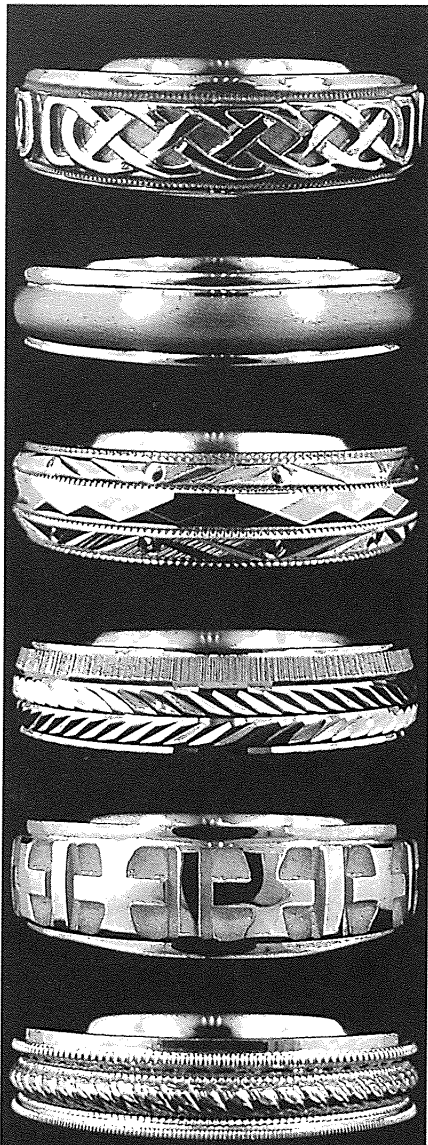
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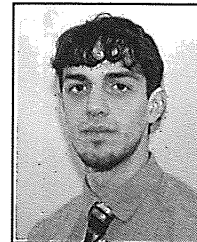
buffalogaymenschorus.org

## About the Artistic Director



**Ciaran Krueger** is a native of Buffalo and a veteran of the concert hall and stage. He has a familiarity in a wide range of repertoire in everything from classical to gospel to musical theatre. Krueger's musical career began at age six when he joined St. Paul's Cathedral Men and Boys choir under the direction of Bruce Neswick. Since then, he has been involved in music constantly. Mr. Krueger holds a Master's of Music in Choral Conducting under the instruction of Harold Rosenbaum at the University of Buffalo. In 2011, Mr. Krueger joined the BGMC as the organization's second Artistic Director. He is currently the Music Director at St. James UCC in Hamburg and a full time Pre-K – 6th Grade Music Teacher in the Niagara Falls City School District. Mr. Krueger lives in the Town of Tonawanda with his wife, Lisa and their two beautiful daughters, Caoimhe and Maisie Joy.

## About the Accompanist



**Jonathan Rizzo** has been performing as a pianist, keyboardist, and percussionist in the WNY area for the past decade. Originally studying percussion and euphonium as a music education major at SUNY Fredonia, he began to take seriously the idea of performing as a pianist after studying there with international award-winning pianist Sean Duggan. After graduating Fredonia with a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education, Mr. Rizzo began studying classically with pianist Steven Bianchi and then with Dr. Emily Boyce at Buffalo State College. While at Buffalo State, he won the school's concerto competition, performing the first movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto No.20 in D Minor with the Buffalo State Philharmonia.

Mr. Rizzo holds the position of "Music Accompanist" at St. James UCC in Hamburg, performing services on both piano and organ.

As a member of the band Blueshift, Mr. Rizzo has performed at many venues both in Western New York and beyond, playing such events as Warped Tour in Cincinnati and The Niagara Falls Arts Festival, and has opened for such internationally-known acts as Tony Levin's Stickmen and Green Jelly. Locally, Blueshift frequently performs at venues such as The Tralf and Mister Goodbar.

## About the Accompanist (continued)

An avid songwriter, Mr. Rizzo is currently in the mixing stage of a solo album in which he performs his songs on piano, keyboards, drums, bass, guitar, and vocals, satirically entitled "Generic Pop Music." His music can be heard at [www.jonrizzomusic.bandcamp.com](http://www.jonrizzomusic.bandcamp.com).

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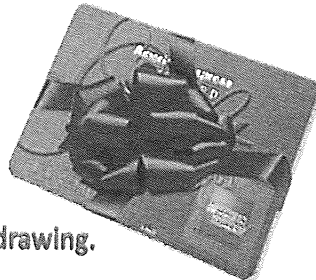
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## The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

At end of 1999, the vision for a Gay Men's Chorus in Buffalo was conceived. Guided by Roger Parris, a vigorous group of men explored this concept thoroughly. With the support and success of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus behind them, these men decided that it was time for Buffalo to join the growing list of LGBT choruses all over the world.

After 15 months of intense work, a Steering Committee had written by-laws, filed papers of incorporation, raised seed money, written a mission statement and elected officers. After a thorough search, Barbara Wagner was asked to be the Founding Artistic Director and would join the ranks of only two female conductors of Gay Men's Choruses. Wagner, in turn, requested that Debi Overton-Niles be invited to serve as the Founding Accompanist.

The first auditions were held in May 2001, and rehearsals were to begin on September 11, 2001, a day of infamy in our nation. The men and Wagner held hands that first rehearsal and sang- "from you I receive, to you I give, together we share and from this we live." We also learned "How Can I Keep From Singing" and began forging the bonds that still hold us together today. "How Can I Keep From Singing" became our theme song and was the very first music our first audience heard as the Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus processed down the aisles of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo.

Our February 2002 inaugural concert, "Music From the Heart", set the tone for our future. The energy that surrounded the BGMC that night validated the reality of our beloved chorus, and the bonds we formed continue to remain strong. The audience that first night was huge- the church was filled, chairs lined the aisles and sadly, people had to be turned away at the door. Our audiences continue to be large and diverse, and we now sing three performances in each concert series.

We have been the gracious recipients of many awards, including three awards from Artvoice's "Best in Buffalo" found us elected as "Best Chorus" and the prestigious Buffalo and Erie County Arts Council Award for exceptional contributions to the arts and cultural community in Western New York. The BGMC has also been a recipient of community service awards from AIDS Community Services, and has been recognized by the Empire State Pride Agenda in 2005 with the ESPA Award for Community Service for the excellence of their music and their dedication to the community. We have also had the tremendous honor of performing with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra twice, once in 2004 and again in 2006 under the direction of Joann Faletta. We have also performed on the Ars Nova "Viva Vivaldi" series, by the request of Marylouise Nanna.

*Continued on page 46*



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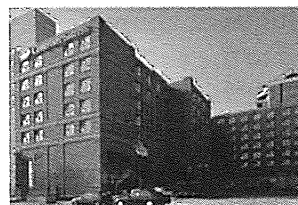
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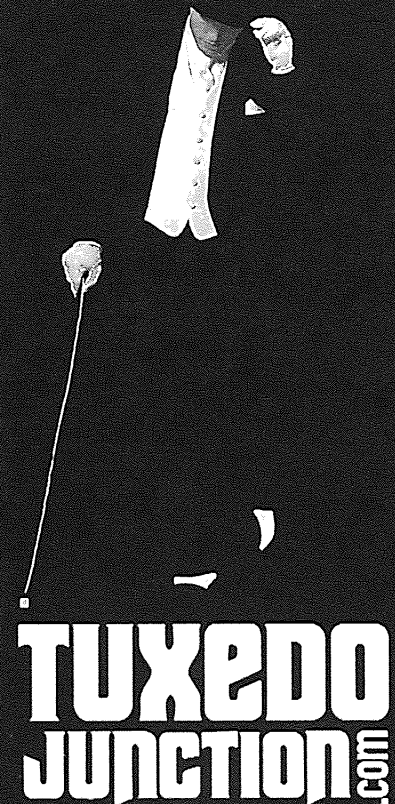
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Continued from page 44

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

In December 2008, the BGMC presented its first series of holiday concerts, entitled "Hope for the Holidays." There were three totally sold out performances, and it has become a holiday tradition for the Western New York Community, including being offered the opportunity to sing each year at the lighting of the Albright Knox Christmas Tree.

At the end of the 2010-2011 season, Founding Artistic Director Barbara Wagner retired from her position as Artistic Director of the BGMC, and turned her baton over to our organization's second Artistic Director, Mr. Ciaran Krueger. Since the Fall of 2011, Mr. Krueger has led the chorus to new heights with growing audiences, new musical adventures, and dedicated musicianship.

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

## Come Join Us in Song

The BGMC thanks all its members, volunteers, and audiences, past, present and future. We also extend to the entire Western New York Community an invitation to join our organization as either a volunteer or singer. We welcome new singers with open arms. And, as always, we welcome any man, gay or straight, who wishes not only to sing, but to join our mission to seek through song to enlighten as well as to entertain. Auditions for our spring semester will take place Monday January 19, Tuesday, January 20, Monday January 26 and Tuesday January 27 at St. John's Grace, 51 Colonial Circle, Buffalo, NY 14222. All auditions take place at 6:00pm. A prepared piece is not required to audition. Please email [info@buffalogaymenschorus.org](mailto:info@buffalogaymenschorus.org) for more information. Rehearsals start on Tuesday, January 20th and run every Tuesday through May from 7:00pm - 9:45pm.

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

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 AIDS Community Youth Services Benefit, Erie, Pennsylvania  
 AIDS Family Services- 2 Benefit Concerts  
 Amherst High School GSA Conference  
 Amherst Unitarian Universalist Church Benefit Music Program  
 Arrival of the Amistad  
 Benedict House  
 Benefit Concert for and with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and the Olmsted Conservancy  
 Benefit for AIDS Community Services, Langston Hughes Center  
 Benefit for MOCHA  
 Benefit for the Darwin Martin House (Architect- Frank Lloyd Wright)  
 Buffalo AIDS Walk  
 Buffalo Seminary  
 CARES Benefit for the University of Buffalo Dental School  
 Concert benefitting roof repairs at Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic Church  
 Delaware Park Winter Concert  
 Domestic Violence Awareness Fundraiser  
 Fredonia State College Diversity and Multicultural Program  
 GLYS sponsored Gay and Straight Alliances Workshop  
 Habitat for Humanity Benefit Concert  
 Katrina Relief Funds- Benefit Concert  
 Love Unbound Benefit for Christian Unity Church  
 Mark's Place Benefit Concert, Niagara Falls, NY  
 PFLG and GBLT Youth Alliances complimentary tickets to every concert  
 Roswell Park Institute, Carly's House Benefit  
 St. Paul's Cathedral Youth Program Benefit Concert  
 The Nichols School Diversity Week  
 Tree Lighting Ceremony for Women's and Children's Hospital  
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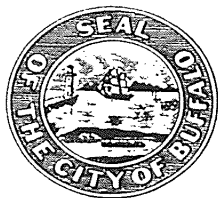


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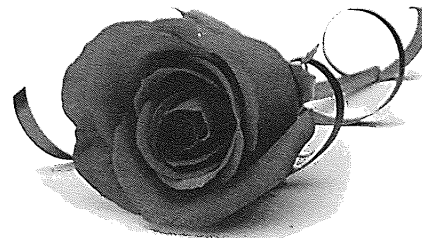
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