

CONTRA COSTA CHORALE  
*Presents its 2024 Spring Concert*

*Make Our Garden Grow*



**KENSINGTON**  
Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>

**WALNUT CREEK**  
Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

# I Come With My Songs

World, I come with my songs;  
I come, singing.  
If indeed you have wrongs  
I come to undo them.

Make ready your terrible beauty.  
I come with my songs.  
It shall be my dear duty  
To praise and adore you.

Do you hear my heart from afar  
Beating high like a drum?  
You must hear it even where you are  
Announcing my coming.

I come in awe to your feet  
A lover, drunk  
With the fame of your face; O, sweet,  
I bring you my dreams.

Make ready your beauty. I come  
To praise you with words  
That must shake your streets like a drum.  
Make ready your beauty.

—Elsa Gidlow, 1924

Elsa Gidlow was a British-born, Canadian-raised, American poet, freelance journalist, philosopher who triumphed over childhood poverty, lack of formal education, and family tragedy to become a pioneering lesbian poet, bohemian free spirit, spiritual mystic, and an apostle of Eastern philosophies. In the 1950s, Gidlow helped found a bohemian community in Marin County, California. The community became known as Druid Heights, the name she had given to her land. Completed just before her death, her autobiography, *Elsa, I Come with My Songs* (1986), recounts eight decades of her life story.

—from “Elsa Gidlow & Druid Heights [www.poet-warrior.com](http://www.poet-warrior.com)”

Our beloved Artistic Director, Cindy Beitmen, has departed from this world. Cindy died on April 15th, succumbing to colon cancer after living with it for seven years. Our sadness is profound but our joy in having worked under her brilliant tutelage is huge.

Cindy became our director in 2012. She pulled us up from a struggling community of 30 singers and built us up to 80 members, with each of us singing our top-notch best. She inspired greatness, love, hope and joy. She touched the personal in us. We sang from our hearts. And today, we sing from our collective soul.

We hope you will feel the love in today's concert. Each and every singer is singing to celebrate Cindy's life, her gifts to us, and the grand musical traditions that she instilled in us.

Cindy will live forever as our Fearless Leader.

The Contra Costa Chorale Board



# CINDY BEITMEN

## MASTER GARDENER OF SONG

Cindy Beitmen was born in eastern Pennsylvania into a family that valued music and the importance of its study and practice. She attended college at West Chester University not far from where she grew up, earning a B.S. in music education. Following graduation and a few years of teaching, Cindy began her musical career singing opera in the Washington, DC, area. In addition to opera, Cindy worked for Western Union delivering singing telegrams throughout the area—including one to the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff!



A desire to travel finally spurred her to move to Vienna, Austria in 1982 to study German at the Goethe-Institut, an intense immersive program that somehow turned into seven years of teaching, singing, and conducting in that city. Her primary source of income the first couple of years there came from singing on the Kärtnerstrasse, the main shopping street in the first district—where, she claims, she made more money than in any other job in her life.

Cindy was hired by the American International School (AIS) in Vienna in 1984, which to this day serves students K-12 from as many as 80 different nations. She honed her conducting and musical instrument skills by developing a band and providing lessons on flute and all manner of other instruments (most of which she had to learn along with her students). AIS has a thriving band program today—thanks to Cindy.



From Vienna Cindy moved to Seattle, where she began specializing in early music. She received her Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of Washington (UW). She performed and learned under the tutelage of Margriet Tindemans, singing with Margriet's Collegium and the Medieval Women's Choir. During this time she also performed as soloist with the Seattle Chamber Singers, Broadway Symphony, Vancouver Early Music Festival, and the Early Music Society of the Islands in Victoria, B.C. In addition, she is remembered for her work with the UW Opera, notably her role Katisha in their production of *The Mikado* in the late 1980s.

Performance opportunities, and probably another burst of bold adventurousness, led her to New York City where she sang with Pomerium, the Virgin Consort, Symphony for the United Nations, Ensemble Fortuna based in Boston, and the British ensemble Circa 1500. As a member of the New York

Ensemble for Early Music, she toured throughout the U.S. in the medieval liturgical drama *Herod and the Innocents* and performed the *Resurrection Play of Tours* at the New York Cloisters.

At the invitation of Dr. Edith Copley, Cindy moved to Arizona to teach voice and vocal diction at Northern Arizona University.

Flagstaff became a base for back-road trips all over the Colorado Plateau, and more importantly, it is where Cindy met her spouse Kate Sibley in 1996, leading to other adventures, including many years of



work at the Telluride Film Festival, where Kate served as the Dean of Education Programs.

When Cindy and Kate found they longed for a more urban life (or perhaps it was that adventurous streak again), they agreed that the San Francisco Bay Area would be a good destination, with its strong early music community. Thus, the great adventure of Cindy and Kate's life together took wing.

Cindy built her career in the Bay Area one small job at a time, until she was shuttling among four separate jobs beginning in 2012 when she was hired as artistic director of the Contra Costa Chorale.

In 2017, when Cindy was diagnosed with colorectal cancer, she took a semester off from the Chorale, but also retired as the founder and director of the Women's Antique Vocal Ensemble (WAVE) and choral director/early music instructor at Mills College. She kept her position as music director at St. Albert Priory in Oakland until the pandemic brought that job to a halt. In all of these positions, Cindy was admired and beloved for her adherence to the highest musical standards and for her humor. Additionally, students and performers as well as audience members grew to appreciate her ability to tell great stories through her programming and lessons.

Coming out of the pandemic, Cindy immediately focused all of her professional attention on rebuilding the Contra Costa Chorale, recognizing that one of the greatest damages wrought by the pandemic may



have been the collapse of communities. Cindy was determined that this would not be the fate of the Contra Costa Chorale, so she set about re-energizing the group, gradually building it into the cohesive, tight-knit, beautifully balanced singing ensemble that it is today.

Kate has been at her side through all of this, lugging sound equipment and folding programs for WAVE, attending concerts at Mills and St. Albert's, but most of all serving as general manager for the Chorale. The two of them have made a formidable team, tending to every detail to ensure that the Chorale members know they are always going to be the best they can possibly be. With Cindy providing inspiration in front of them every week, and Kate crossing t's and dotting i's in the background, the Contra Costa Chorale has indeed fulfilled its vision to become a most successful community chorus.

Cindy Beitmen will be remembered as the Fearless Leader of the Chorale.

When she came to the group, it was lagging with about 30 conductorless members.

Serendipitously, Cindy was looking for a community choir to build. It was a match

made in choral heaven for both of them. Cindy found a group of avid singers who loved and revered her, and even watched her once in a while. Under her leadership, the Contra Costa Chorale now has grown to 80 members and sellout audiences. May her legacy continue to support the Contra Costa Chorale and help it to continue this triumphant trajectory.

On the following page is a poem Kate read to Cindy in her final lucid days, at which time she requested that it be included in this remembrance.



# crane poem for my love

aaron abeyta

two cranes fly west  
into a snowy march morning  
these two cranes  
mates for life will both  
outlive us  
and one day my love  
because their wings are powerful  
because they are the highest  
flying of all the symbols of love  
one day  
my love  
these two birds will  
deliver us to the  
place the chinese call  
western paradise  
they are called *xian he*  
heavenly bird  
bird of happiness

because it is custom  
i will draw them with  
tortoises  
bamboo  
stone  
symbols of long life  
for us my love  
i wish us something  
permanent as cranes

and because cranes  
know all the gods  
if one of us should  
lets not say it  
but if  
one of us should  
then the gods will send  
either you or i  
to this mortal place  
and one of us will  
trumpet into the morning air  
one of us will dance  
among the wasted grain  
in the farmer's field

for you my love  
if i'm first  
i will throw feathers into the sky  
i will pray my crane prayer

in the early dawn  
for you  
if i'm first  
i will stand with my head  
buried in my wing  
one leg raised up to my body  
i will  
for you  
stand that way  
so you can see that  
only the tips of my wings  
are black  
there is only that much  
sadness

if i should

lets not say it

only the tips of  
my wings will be sad  
the rest of me will  
burn white and red  
white and red my love  
i'll wait in my red and  
white vigilance  
i will wait

in myth the crane  
lives for a thousand years  
and there are stories  
of how emperors  
loved them  
there are stories of prayers  
tied to the leg of a crane  
so the crane might  
deliver the fallen

how will you  
if  
lets not

but if i'm left  
i will think of  
cranes for you my love  
my prayer  
when you read it  
will be in symbol

for centuries  
poets have loved cranes  
i will write  
how god visits earth  
flown down to us  
on the backs of cranes

for my love i will write  
a crane poem  
that lives in two worlds  
one thin line  
for every crane  
flying into an autumn sky  
and yet another line  
for each crane  
returning to a river's source  
and another line  
for the crane song that tells  
peasants to sow their fields

when i finish these lines  
the poem will fall from  
the sky of continents  
and while the crane sleeps  
i will tie a prayer poem  
to its leg  
for god  
to carry back  
to you  
my love  
my *xian he*  
heavenly bird  
a poem  
a prayer  
like this one  
for you

*Aaron Abeyta is a Colorado Chicano poet whose family was in Colorado when it was still El Norte, part of Mexico. He lives in Antonito where he and his wife Michele grew up, and where he recently served as mayor until term-limited. He has received Colorado and national book awards for his work. This poem comes from his most recent collection, Ancestor of Fire.*

"Love does not just happen. ... Love is a conversion to humanity — a willingness to participate with others in the healing of a broken world and broken lives. Love is the choice to experience life as a member of the human family, a partner in the dance of life..." (Carter Heyward)  
Thank you, Cindy, for choosing, and sharing with me, the life and love we both have found with the Chorale.

*Kate Sibley*

Cindy hides a wicked sharp sense of humor behind a solemn face. I didn't know this until I joined the Chorale.

*Deena Love, soprano*

A stone in the river  
Coaxing the passing waters to sing  
Tumbled in the flood  
To reappear downstream

*Jon Stiles, House Manager*

Thank Thee for breathing Thy Musical Spirit into my life.

*Joy Svihra, soprano*

In a sea of individual voices, Cindy made me feel like my contribution truly mattered—that my part in the Chorale was bigger than my little voice alone.

*Amy Willats, alto*

Billy Joel once said, "Like family, we are tied to each other. That's what all good musicians understand."  
Cindy understood this, and has built a beautiful musical family in the Chorale.

*Martin Morley, Fearless Lieutenant*

Our beloved conductor  
A bright light in our community  
Brave, positive, fun, creative  
Always in our hearts.

*Linda Jones, alto*

Thank you for each and every moment of beautiful music-making. *Le rire et les pleurs.*

*Nan Ayers, tenor*

A keen mind and creative talent,  
A brave heart and fearless soul,  
A capacity to love all the music that is life  
With both a fierce dedication and a whimsical lightness;  
And always knowing she loves you, too.

*Alice Knudsen, tenor*

Cindy – an inspiration to us all. Thank you for years of instruction in the sheer joy of singing and welcoming me into a new community to share it with.

*Stuart Marson, tenor*

Twelve magical years.  
Sing "Hallelujah!" you said,  
And we did.

"Sing your hearts out!" you said,  
And we did.

You led us in spreading joy,  
You gave us your all,  
You drew from us our best.  
We'll cherish the memories,  
And honor you by singing on!

*Karine Schomer, soprano*

"We have fallen into the place where everything is music." Thank you for the music.

*Cyndi Mulligan, alto & Howard Kadis*

I have learned a lot from your conducting style—straightforward, knowledgeable, charismatic, and humorous. Thank you for being a part of my life and helping me feel like a musician again.

*Heidi Ronfeldt, alto*

Cindy Beitmen changed my life.  
She taught me to sing.  
She introduced me to the incredible world of early music.  
I met her in 1999 and she will always occupy a huge place in my heart.  
I love her and will miss her.

*Meryl Sacks, soprano*

Singing with Cindy has brought so much joy to our lives, and  
Being in the generous flow of her special energy has been an inspiration.  
We are ever grateful for her!

*Janet Keyes, alto and Dave Hubbell, bass*

I came "to see a World in a Grain of Sand, and a Heaven in a Wild Flower" (William Blake).

Cindy, please wait for me in heaven so we can play Pinochle together once again.

*Susan Lambert, soprano*

My words for you, Cindy: Energy and Passion. Energy: you are the driving force behind the music we sing. Passion: your love of the music inspires us with every singing because you want the best for the Chorale and the audience. It truly has been an honor to work with you, Cindy. God bless as you take this next journey.

*Gennifer Tate, soprano*

Cindy was the first person to welcome me to the Chorale back in August 2012. I feel so grateful and lucky for all the time she had with us, her weekly voice lessons, sharing her talents and humor. Her musical spirit will live in us always.

*Chris Moriuchi, alto*

Cindy truly was a seed for us all, one who sprouted music.

*Gerri Havlicek, alto*

Cindy, thank you for choosing us to be your project. Thank you for your patience and persistence as you worked tirelessly to teach us and mold us, every rehearsal a valuable lesson. You have created an amazing community/family of music makers. We will continue to work to make you proud!

*Lynne Ono, alto*

Dearest Fearless Leader,  
I discovered this group at a lonely time in my life. Your humor, mentorship, and steady insistence on excellence in technique and quality were ports in a storm. Forever grateful for you and this mighty band of misfits! Fondly,

*Elizabeth Thompson, alto*

After not singing for 35 years, I joined the CCC. Thank you, Cindy, for your enthusiasm, sensitivity and inclusivity and bringing the joy of singing back into my life.

*Catherine White, alto*

Cindy's choral direction was electrifying and profoundly inspiring. I feel lucky to have witnessed such love for music and will always remember her many words of wisdom. Like: if she'd been in charge of creation, she would have started with the singers. Amen to that. Thank you, Cindy, for everything.

*Cathy Edwards, soprano*

Dearest Cindy,  
Your faith in my voice and your encouragement gave me the confidence as a singer that I had never had. Thank you for 17 years of great rehearsals and numerous transcendent musical moments. With much love,  
*Tanya Drlík, soprano*

Dear Cindy; Singing with you briefly, but so amazing an experience. Thank you. Love,  
*Carol Sawdey, alto*

Cindy's Pennsylvania roots, humor, and vocal wisdom will live on in our hearts and minds for many decades to come. Always the community builder, I remember her telling us that the Brahms *Requiem* was written for the living.  
*Greg Lassonde, bass*

Although I was just getting to know Cindy, I really liked her a great deal, and I will really miss her in a big way.  
*Don Wollwage, tenor*

What a joy and honor to have worked with Cindy, whose skillful conducting, sky-high standards, musical knowledge, strength, courage, grace, and quirky humor have made me a better person. What terrible sorrow to have only known her for three concert seasons, when I was hoping for many years with her.  
*Martha Jackson, alto*

Cindy, you're the funniest, craziest best music teacher and friend ever, and I will remember you and miss you every time I sing. Love,  
*Barbara Berry, soprano*

I'm so grateful for this amazing human that I have known and made music together for close to 30 years. I am the better for being blessed for our paths to have crossed. I treasure each of our musical and personal moments together.  
*Ron Cheatham (aka Wolfie), tenor*

I am so grateful I got to sing with you! Thank you for encouraging me.  
*Amanda Moler, soprano*

Gratitude for 12 years of so many diverse experiences, which I have been honored to display as photos, programs, and other memorabilia. Love and thanks forever.  
*JayTee, Archivist and tenor*

Cindy, I am so thankful to have had you in my life. I will miss you at rehearsals, concerts and most of all every Sunday with Pinochle, wine and ice cream.  
*Carole Strauss, tenor*

I am so thankful:  
For you.  
For your music, the music that courses through you and that you share with us.  
For your encouraging, cajoling, pushing, pulling, bribing, and simply inviting us to the heights of excellence where all is bright and beautiful and amazing.  
*Andrea Weber, tenor*

Sing through the line, into light, peace.  
*Debbie Sanderson, alto*

To Fearless Leader, Cindy Beitmen, still leading us into the Light.  
You won't be forgotten; your legacy lives in the stars and all our hearts.  
With heartfelt gratitude for all you continue to give and teach.  
*Ruth Block, tenor*

Cindy was so singular in her approach, her humor, her understanding of the music and what it takes to get singers (especially volunteers) to get to a level of performance.  
The Mozart *Requiem*, which I am so fortunate to have been able to do with her and all of you, was by far one of the best performances I have ever done of it.  
*Rita Lilly, soprano soloist with the Chorale*

What a warm, talented, classy lady. And great musician.  
*Stephen Main, composer,  
"Where Everything Is Music"  
(2016 CCC commission)*

Cindy quickly impressed me with her sense of purpose, her generosity of spirit, her talent, her humor, her courage, and her all-around wonderfulness. Cindy's musical abilities and ear were amazing. She brought out the best in everyone. I truly feel honored and thankful to have known this fearless leader.  
*Karen Glasser, soprano*

Our shared journey began with the stirring notes of Mozart's *Requiem* and, in a poignant turn of symmetry, concluded with the same masterpiece. Having the privilege to sing 'Bonse Aba' alongside my father was an honor that will be eternally etched in my memory. For all the moments we shared, I am forever grateful.  
May you rest in peace.  
*Sylvie Mwila Jonath, alto*

I'm grateful for having known Cindy the past 11 years. She furthered my education as a singer. I appreciated her talent, dedication, knowledge, passion for life and music, forthrightness, and most of all her quick wit. I will miss her greatly.  
*Monica Oliveras, soprano*

Cindy truly loves everyone, and brought that light to us each time we met. I will miss her hilarious self.  
*Chad Keig, bass*

I learned from Cindy that choral music is as much about the magic of people singing together as it is about interpreting notes and words on paper. Every rehearsal, and every concert, was a celebration of this power of making music in community. I will think about music differently for the rest of my life.  
*Anne Jennings, alto*

Thank you Cindy, for introducing me to this wonderful community and to Valerie, for encouraging me to explore my tenor range and giving me wonderful solo opportunities, and most of all for making beautiful music!  
*Mitch Ashley, tenor*

## BARBARA'S GARDEN



*Barbara Dzubay Weisman*

June 11, 1942 - March 20, 2024

Artistic Director Cindy Beitmen's intent in bringing together music written by Black people, women, Indigenous peoples, and the LGBTQ+ community was to make our audiences aware of the breadth of excellent music that too often is not given the status and attention it deserves, overtaken by the dominance of the traditional white hetero male perspective in Western music. We are happy to make a place in our garden for composers of a variety of perspectives, cultures, musical styles, gender expressions, and lived experiences both historical and contemporary—and we look forward to doing this with more awareness and frequency in the future.

This program reflects our shared commitment to increasing awareness of the integrity and beauty of our whole community through service and musical art. Perhaps no one in the Chorale community more consistently advocated and actively worked for these values than Barbara Dzubay Weisman, longtime member of the Chorale. Barbara faithfully sang alto and served in various leadership roles with the Chorale for many years. She always defended and stood up for the rights of all human beings, no matter their place in society. This program is a fitting tribute to and reflection of Barbara, given her lifelong commitment to equality and inclusion.

# PROGRAM

- Tuning Meditation ..... Pauline Olivaros (1932-2016)  
Close your eyes, inhale deeply, and sing any note on “ah”  
1. Inhale – sing note you can hear  
2. Inhale – sing note you do not hear  
Repeat 1 & 2 until ending finger cymbal is heard.
- Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Op.41, no. 1 ..... Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
- Sure on this shining night ..... Samuel Barber (1910-1981)  
Text: “Permit Me Voyage,” James Agee (1909-1955)
- Under the willow tree (from the opera *Vanessa*) ..... Samuel Barber  
Text: Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)
- While all things were in quiet silence ..... Ned Rorem (1923-2022)
- Ambe (Ojibway).....Cory Campbell & Andrew Balfour
- Hark, I hear the harps eternal (trad.).....arr. Alice Parker (1925-2023)\*
- Les fleurs et les arbres ..... Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
- Du bist wie eine Blume (T/B)....Robert Schumann (1810-1856), arr. Mari Esabel Valverde  
Text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)
- When Thunder Comes..... Mari Esabel Valverde  
Text: J. Patrick Lewis  
*Percussion: Philip Knudsen*
- Arise my love (S/A).....Joan Szymko\*  
Text adapted from The Song of Solomon and trad. hymn tune At the River
- Seed (Commissioned to honor Cindy Beitmen) .....Joan Szymko\*  
Text: “Declaration,” Elsa Gidlow (1898-1986)
- Make Our Garden Grow (from the musical *Candide*) ..... Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)  
Text: Richard Purdy Wilbur (1921-2017)
- Gospel Selections..... Gathering Desire Community Fellowship Ensemble  
Director: Rev. Carolyn Anderson  
Keyboardist/Contemporary Artist; Scott Jespersen; Drummer/Percussionist: Louie Lock;  
Bass Guitarist: Corey Penn; Saxophonist: Neil Williford
- Let Everything That Hath Breath ..... Jeffery Ames

\*Conducted by Joan Szymko

# CONTRA COSTA CHORALE

## SOPRANO

Barbara Berry  
Constance Brown  
Julia Carvalho  
Kathie Dreher  
Tanya Drlik  
Cathy Edwards  
Nina Felden  
Amelia Grounds  
Sandy Kruger

Susan Lambert  
Deena Love  
Jean Lutwak  
Mary McQuilliams  
Amanda Moler  
Annie O'Hare  
Monica Olivares  
Lori Panossian  
Anna Ritner

Katie Rodriguez  
Meryl Sacks  
Jenny Sanjeevan  
Karine Schomer  
Ann Smith  
Joy Svihra  
Gennifer Tate

## ALTO

Tess Barbach  
Kathleen Baumgardner  
Kate Buckner  
Judith Carrillo  
Eldonna Cooley  
Claudia Dechow  
Claudia Gerst  
Geri Havlicek  
Yolanda Hogan

Martha Jackson  
Linda Jones  
Janet Keyes  
Christine Moriuchi  
Cynthia Mulligan  
Sylvie Mwila Jonath  
Lynne Ono  
Heidi Ronfeldt  
Debbie Sanderson

Carol Sawdey  
Kate Sibley  
Lee Steadman  
Carol Strand  
Carol Terry  
Elizabeth Thompson  
Cassandra Todd  
Amy Willats  
Katie Wolfman

## TENOR

Mitch Ashley  
Nan Ayers  
Ruth Block  
Michael Gardner

Alice Knudsen  
Stuart Marson  
Jerry Reynolds  
Abigail Smith

Carole Strauss  
Carter Ta  
JoAnn Thomas  
Don Wollwage

## BASS

William Abernathy  
Achi Ben Shalom  
Alexander Ewing  
Kevin Glaz

David Hubbell  
Chad Keig  
Greg Lassonde  
Terry Lee

Peter Liddell  
Ken Saltzstine  
Leo Scurry  
Jim Wong

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tanya Drlik,  
*President*  
Deena Love,  
*Vice President*

Nicki Norman,  
*Secretary/Treasurer*  
Nan Ayers  
Alice Knudsen

Susan Lambert  
Regina Marchione  
Cyndi Mulligan  
Arleen Wong

Kate Sibley, *General Manager*  
Chad Keig, *Graphic Designer*

The Contra Costa Chorale rehearses and performs in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, which occupies land in Huchiun, the unceded territory of the Chochoenyospeaking Ohlone people. We understand that our community continues to benefit from the seizure and occupation of this land. We acknowledge and embrace our responsibility to take restorative action. We affirm that this is deeply felt and commit our members to be in right relationship with Indigenous communities, aligning in solidarity, supporting Indigenous projects, and caring properly for the land.

## EDIE COPLEY ~ GUEST ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



**Dr. Edith “Edie” Copley** was a long-time friend of Cindy. They taught music together at the American International School in Vienna, Austria in the mid-1980s and have remained dear friends ever since.

Edie is a regents’ professor emeritus at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff where

she served as director of choral studies from 1993-2021. She conducted the highly acclaimed Shrine of the Ages Choir and taught undergraduate and graduate courses in conducting and graduate choral literature. The Shrine of the Ages Choir performed at state, regional and national music conferences. NAU choral ensembles under her direction toured internationally to Western Europe, the Peoples Republic of China, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Bulgaria, Istanbul, Estonia, and Latvia.

Prior to her NAU appointment, Edie taught secondary choral music for seven years in Iowa and four years overseas at the American International School in Vienna, Austria. While completing her doctoral degree in choral conducting at the College Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, she served as the assistant and interim principal conductor of the May Festival Chorus, one of the oldest symphony choruses in the nation that regularly performs with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Pops.

Edie also served as music director of the Master Chorale of Flagstaff (MCF), a 100-voice, auditioned community choir, for 23 years. She served as the chorusmaster for the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra for 27 years. Edie conducted numerous choral/orchestral works, including Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Haydn *Lord Nelson Mass*, Britten *War Requiem*, Orff *Carmina Burana*, Bach *B Minor Mass*, Mozart *Requiem* and *Mass in C Minor*, and Duruflé and Fauré *Requiems*.

Edie has received several awards, including *NAU School of Performing Arts Centennial Teacher of the Year Award*, *Arizona Music Educator of the Year*, *Arizona ACDA Outstanding Choral Director Award*, and the *Weston H. Noble Award* from her *alma mater* Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Edie has conducted all-state honor choirs in over 30 states, and choral festivals in major concert halls in the US, including Carnegie Hall. She will conduct a National Multigenerational Choir in Carnegie next spring. Edie has conducted international choral festivals in Germany, the Netherlands, Tasmania, Japan, Luxembourg, Australia, China, Turkey, England, Poland, Oman, Austria, and France. She is also very dedicated to serving the choral profession and is currently the American Choral Directors Association National President-Elect.

Edie is honored to conduct this special concert that celebrates Cindy’s 12 years as the artistic director of the Contra Costa Chorale and her amazing life that brought music, laughter and love to so many people.

## MARTIN MORLEY ~ COLLABORATIVE ARTIST



A native of Montana, Martin Morley has enjoyed a multifaceted career as a pianist, music therapist, teacher, handbell clinician, and conductor. He holds Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in piano performance from the University of Kansas, where he studied with Flora Chiarrapa Silini, Richard Angeletti, and Portuguese

virtuoso Sequeira Costa; in addition, Martin performed for six years in monthly master classes with such luminaries as Gary Graffman, Byron Janis, and

Leon Fleisher. He has toured North America as an accompanist for Columbia Artists Management and been featured as a concerto soloist with orchestras in Kansas, California, and Texas. His keyboard comedy routines have slain audiences in several states. Martin is on the Master Artists roster of the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society, and has performed several times in benefit concerts for the Hope Solutions organization and for the Young People’s Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his position as Director of Worship and Music at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Lafayette, Martin teaches private lessons and continues performing as a soloist and collaborative pianist in the Bay Area and beyond.

## GUEST ARTISTS

It always takes a village to put a Contra Costa Chorale concert together. This concert is no different, except that it is requiring extraordinary effort, collaboration, and most of all love from an even larger village than usual. We are honored to have two very special guest artists who personify that spirit of love.

First and foremost is Joan Szymko, the composer of the Chorale-commissioned song “Seed,” who always intended to be in attendance at these performances. She did not intend, however, to conduct anything, but when circumstances changed, she willingly and generously stepped up to conduct not just “Seed” but also her other song that was scheduled, “Arise, My Love.”

Additionally, as a strong woman making a huge name for herself in the choral world, she has agreed to help us recognize a woman who might be considered the godmother of choral singing in America, Alice Parker, by conducting “Hark, I hear the harps eternal.”

Our other guest artist is probably well known to many in the Bay Area and beyond. We hope that this may not be the only time we’ll collaborate with Rev. Carolyn Anderson, who leads the Gathering Desire Community Fellowship, and who has graciously agreed to bring a small ensemble of gospel singers to take our concert out on a rousingly positive, high note. Put your programs down and your hands together!

### JOAN SZYMKO (B.1957)



Joan Szymko is widely regarded as an outstanding composer of choral music in America today. With a catalog of over 150 choral works, her music is sung regularly at choral festivals and competitions across North America and abroad and has been heard on stage or in sessions at every

National Conference of the American Choral Director’s Association since 2003. The ACDA recognized Szymko’s lasting impact on the choral arts in North America by selecting her as a recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission in 2010. Szymko has composed for professional, church, LGBTQ, children’s, and all manner of academic and community choirs. Her 2016 commissioned oratorio, *Shadow and Light*, a major new addition to the repertoire for chorus and orchestra, shines a compassionate light on the suffering of those journeying through life with Alzheimer’s dementia.

Szymko’s embodied approach to sound, dedication to craft, and insistence on quality texts— all relate to her experience as a conductor and are reflected in her choral compositions. Her settings consistently display a discerning, insightful marriage of words and music. As a resident composer and performer with Do Jump! Movement Theater (Portland), she created underscoring for major touring productions, earning praise from the *New York Times* for her “ethereal vocal music.” This fruitful collaboration has continued: Joan recently completed work on the music score for the Do Jump film documentary, “That Happened.”

Joan lives and works in Portland in the beautiful Pacific Northwest where she has led church and community choirs for over 40 years. A dynamic conductor, she workshops her compositions with choirs in a variety of educational and festival settings across the country and abroad. For more about Joan and her music, see [www.joanszymko.com](http://www.joanszymko.com).

# REV. CAROLYN ANDERSON

**Visionary, Conductor and Keyboard Musician  
With the Gathering Desire Community Fellowship  
Choral Ensemble**



Three-time Grammy Nominee, a Fellow of the Black Theology and Leadership Institute at Princeton Theological Seminary, Ordained Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Carolyn Anderson is recognized for her contributions to vibrant

and exciting gospel concerts throughout the United States, France, and South Africa. Rev. Anderson has been performing and teaching piano and voice for the better part of three decades. Known both for her classical music career and as a master teacher of voice, piano, and choral ensemble singing, always combining stimulating arrangements of Pop/R&B/Gospel, Rev. C, as she is affectionately called, is at home in any musical genre.

**Gathering Desire** - A Community Fellowship, is a 501(c)(3) worship center, a subsidiary of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California - Nevada. Gathering Desire focuses on total personal healing through prayer and through praise! The Holy Text says: Send the singers first, and that is the goal and directive of this fellowship. Our mission statement is to: "Walk Each Other To Heaven" through prayer and praise! The Gathering Desire Community Fellowship is located in Walnut Creek. Members of the Community Fellowship Choir have come together from many of the churches and communities throughout Northern and Southern California. The Choral Ensemble joining us is only a very small portion of the complete Fellowship Choir.

Rev. C brings an exceptional knowledge of the singing voice and a passion for unusual vocal structural arrangements, making her musical productions a driving force with sonic innovation majoring on the one sound that continues to be a constant source of strength - Gospel Music: "*The Soundtrack of the African American Experience.*" Gospel music is the heart and soul of melodies that leave the residue of comfort, wisdom, and peace of mind. Rev. C is currently completing her Doctoral Degree exploring this African American music genre and its effect on our American religious culture. Rev. Anderson has her first publication as a co-compiler of: *Empowered Transformations - Real Stories of Hope*, which is available for purchase on Amazon or from her. Rev. Anderson is in the process of compiling her own publication and invites those interested in being a co-compiler to join in this exciting adventure by reaching out to her at: [Beconomemusical@gmail.com](mailto:Beconomemusical@gmail.com).

## **Community Fellowship:**

Rev. Carolyn Anderson  
Visionary and Creative Director/Pianist  
Kimberly Harding  
Assistant Director  
Gladys Sewell  
Narrator  
Scott Jespersen  
Keyboardist/Assistant Choir Coordinator

# TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

## Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, No. 1

АМИНЬ. ГОСПОДИ ПОМИЛУЙ  
Amen. Lord have mercy.

## Sure on this shining night

Sure on this shining night  
Of starmade shadows round,  
Kindness must watch for me  
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.  
All is healed, all is health.  
High summer holds the earth.  
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night  
I weep for wonder  
Wandering far alone  
Of shadows on the stars.

## Under the willow tree

Under the willow tree  
Two doves cry, two doves cry,  
Under the willow tree  
Two doves cry.  
Where shall we sleep, my love,  
Whither shall we fly?

The wood has swallowed the moon,  
The fog has swallowed the shore,  
The green toad has swallowed  
The key to my door.

## While all things were in quiet silence

While all things were in quiet silence,  
And that night was in the midst of her swift course,  
Thine Almighty Word, O Lord,  
Leaped down out of thy royal throne. Alleluia.

## Ambe

*Ambe, ambe Anishinaabeg  
Biindigeg Anishinaabeg  
Mino-bimaadiziwin omaa.  
Ambe!*

Come in two-legged beings  
Come in all people  
There is good life here  
Come in!

## Hark, I hear the harps eternal

Hark, I hear the harps eternal  
Ringing on the farther shore,  
As I near those swollen waters,  
With their deep and solemn roar. Hallelujah, praise  
the Lamb, Hallelujah, glory to the great I AM.

And my soul though stained with sorrow,  
Fading as the light of day,  
Passes swiftly o'er those waters  
To the city far away.

Souls have crossed before me, saintly,  
To that land of perfect rest;  
And I hear them singing faintly  
In the mansions of the blest.

## Les fleurs et les arbres

*Les fleurs et les arbres,  
Les bronzes, les marbres,  
Les ors, les émaux,  
La mer, les fontaines,  
Les monts et les plaines  
Consolent nos maux.*

*Nature éternelle,  
Tu semble plus belle  
Au sein des douleurs!  
Et l'art nous domine,  
Sa flamme illumine  
Le rire et les pleurs.*

The flowers and the trees,  
The bronzes, the marbles,  
The golds, the enamels,  
The sea, the fountains (waterfalls),  
The mountains and the plains  
Console our pain.

Eternal nature,  
You seem more beautiful  
To a heart in sorrow,  
And art reigns over us,  
Its flame illuminates  
the laughter and tears.

# TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

*continued*

## **Du bist wie eine Blume**

*Du bist wie eine Blume,  
so hold und schön und rein;  
ich schau' dich an, und Wehmut  
schleicht mir in's Herz hinein.*

*Mir ist, als ob ich die Hände  
aufs Haupt dir legen sollt',  
betend, dass Gott dich erhalte  
so rein und schön und hold.*

You are like a flower,  
so sweet and fair and pure;  
I look at you, and sadness  
steals into my heart.

I feel as if I should lay  
my hands upon your head,  
praying that God preserve you  
so pure and fair and sweet.

## **When Thunder Comes**

The poor and dispossessed take up the drums  
For civil rights—  
Freedoms to think and speak,  
Petition, pray, and vote.  
When thunder comes,  
The civil righteous are finished being meek.

Why Sylvia Mendez bet against long odds,  
How Harvey Milk turned hatred on its head,  
Why Helen Zia railed against tin gods,  
How Freedom Summer's soldiers faced the dread  
Are tales of thunder that I hope to tell  
From my thin bag of verse for you to hear  
In miniature, like ringing a small bell,  
And know a million bells can drown out fear.

For history was mute witness when such crimes  
Discolored and discredited our times.

Take up the drums...  
Think and speak...  
When thunder comes,  
The civil righteous are finished being meek.

## **Arise, my love**

Arise, my love, arise my fair one, come away;  
the winter is passed, the rains are all over and gone.  
our winter is passed, the rains are all over and gone.  
And the flowers appear on the earth;  
and the time of our singing has come,  
and a band of many colors is riding the sky.

And we'll gather at the river, that beautiful river  
and we'll gather at the river;  
And there's just one river, just one river.  
Just one river of love  
Arise my love, arise.  
Arise my love, come away.  
Arise, arise!

## **Seed**

I am a seed in the dust,  
A live root bedded in night,  
And I am filled with a lust  
For something the worms call light.  
From what seed-pod I was blown  
Matters little to me,  
Why and by whom I was sown  
Or what the reaping may be.  
I only wait for my hour  
When I shall be done with night,  
When I shall thrill into flower  
And drink till I die of light.

## **Make Our Garden Grow**

You've been a fool and so have I,  
But let's be man and wife (I'll be your wife).  
And let us try before we die  
To make some sense of Life.

We're neither pure nor wise nor good;  
We'll do the best we know;  
We'll build our house, And chop our wood,  
And make our garden grow.

I thought the world was sugarcake,  
For so our Master said;  
But now I'll teach my hands to bake  
Our loaf of daily bread.

Let dreamers dream what worlds they please;  
Those Edens can't be found.  
The sweetest flow'rs, the fairest trees  
Are grown in solid ground.

# TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

*continued*

## **Let Everything That Hath Breath**

Sing unto the Lord a new song.  
Sing unto the Lord all the earth.  
Declare His glory among the nations.  
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!

Magnify the Lord with me and exhalt His name together.  
Hallelujah, bless His name  
For He's worthy to be praised.  
Clap your hands all ye people.  
Shout with a voice of triumph!  
For the Mighty Lord is great and greatly to be praised.  
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Come on and praise the Lord.  
Let's all praise His name.  
Give him the highest praise.  
Praise Him. The Lord.  
Praise Him with the timbrel, praise him with the dance.  
Stand up on your feet and just lift up holy hands.  
Sing "Hallelujah," praise His holy name.  
For the Lord is worthy to be praised!

Let's praise the Lord.  
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.  
You oughta, you oughta Praise Him!

# PROGRAM NOTES

## Introduction

This concert celebrates the rich diversity of choral music, encompassing the work of skilled and forward-looking composers who often may have been marginalized or overlooked by the broader society. The program includes historical and contemporary artists embracing a wide range of perspectives, cultures, musical styles, gender expressions, and lived experiences. Their music celebrates the same things that we've come to expect and love in any choral music. Highlighted in this program are also contemporary composers who lift their (our) voices in protest and even rage at what is happening in their (our) world.

The centerpiece of this concert (the seed, as it were) will be the commissioned world premiere of "Seed" by renowned choral composer Joan Szymko (see bio in Guest Artists section), based on a poem by Elsa Gidlow. This work, commissioned two years ago on the 10th anniversary of Artistic Director Cindy Beitmen's tenure with the Chorale and delivered in her 12th year with the group, now celebrates a whole life that will serve as a seed of inspiration as the Chorale moves into a new era.

## Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016)



Oliveros is celebrated as a central figure in the development of post-war experimental and electronic music. The arc of her career inspired musicians from a wide range of genres, artists, scientists, philosophers, as well as everyday people who were drawn to her all-inclusive theory of Deep Listening. She was a lecturer at Mills College and the University of California, San Diego. Oliveros combined her work with her personal life, first with performance artist Linda Montano and later in a 32-year partnership and creative collaboration with sound artist IONE (Carole Lewis).

## Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)



Composer of some of the most popular concert and theatrical music in the current classical repertoire, Tchaikovsky synthesized native Russian musical practices with formal Western-oriented teaching to create his iconic Russian form. He nonetheless believed that his music belonged to the world at large and actively acquainted Western audiences with his compositions as well as music from other Russian composers. Tchaikovsky was revered in Russia despite open knowledge of his homosexuality through most of his life. In contrast, English-language criticism toward the end of the 19th century turned against him on the basis of his homosexual "character," described in crude and discriminatory terms as "certified to be diseased, hence necessarily alien to that of healthy, 'normal' people." Only recently have Tchaikovsky's archives been made available publicly, helping to correct the misguided and wrongful perception of his life and his art.

## Samuel Barber (1910-1981)



Recognized as one of the most expressive lyric and Romantic composers of the 20th century, Barber's expanse of accolades includes two Pulitzer Prizes (one for his opera *Vanessa*, a song from which is featured in this concert), a Guggenheim Fellowship, honorary doctorate from Harvard University, and the New York Critics Circle Award. For more than 40 years, Barber shared his life and his work with Gian Carlo Menotti, who was Barber's librettist for two of his three operas, including *Vanessa*. Two-thirds of Barber's compositional output was art songs for voice and piano, choral music, and songs for voice and orchestra, making him a much sought after composer for commissioned work. Incidentally, he was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, where Artistic Director Cindy Beitmen attended college to receive her BS in music education.

# PROGRAM NOTES

*continued*

## Ned Rorem (1923-2022)



Rorem wrote many orchestral compositions but was renowned for his vocal pieces. His extensive catalog of choral works was written from the early 1940s to 2008 and numbered more than

60 compositions. He was credited as “The world’s best composer of art songs,” by *Time* magazine. Rorem died at the age of 99 in 2022, just before the American choral world was planning to celebrate his 100th birthday. At a time when composers were following the new fashion of atonal music, he proudly defied that trend and remained true to tonal music. Rorem’s prose was as well known as his music, and his *Paris Diary* included an explicit chronicle of gay life long before such mainstream writing became routine. As with each of the composers featured in this concert, Rorem was the recipient of numerous awards, including a Pulitzer Prize, a Fulbright Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, as well as the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters from the French government.

## Andrew Balfour (b. 1967)



Deeply inspired by his contemporary Cree community and descendents, Canadian composer and conductor Balfour has written choral, instrumental, and orchestral works. He is the

artistic director and founder of the vocal ensemble Dead of Winter, and his founding of the ensemble also coincided with the beginning of his composition career. Dead of Winter’s body of work is known for inter-genre and interdisciplinary collaborations, and has been commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Vancouver Chamber Choir, among others. Like so many Indigenous people in the Americas, Balfour was a victim of forced adoption (see <https://www.theindigenousfoundation.org/articles/the-sixties-scoop>) and sent to live with a

White settler family. Balfour was more fortunate than most, as his adoptive family would encourage his interest in music, which developed through choral singing and playing trumpet and trombone. But the profoundly damaging impact of this government program of cultural annihilation has driven his life’s work to rediscover and celebrate Indigenous forms of expression.

## Alice Parker (1925-2023)



Parker was a composer, conductor, and teacher, studying composition at Smith College and Julliard, as well as with choral conductor Robert Shaw. She composed over 250 original choral works, 11

song cycles, and four operas. A notable legacy is her arrangements of hundreds of folk songs, hymns, and spirituals performed and recorded by the Robert Shaw Chorale. However, she is known and revered in the choral world for her humanist sympathies and for her devotion to choral song and her conviction that communal singing was a deeply human activity. She collaborated with, and trained, choirs and sang in her own church choir until her death in December 2023.

## Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)



French composer, musician, and conductor Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns made his first concert debut at the age of 10. A scholar of music history, he drew his inspiration from the works of

earlier French composers. His extensive body of music included orchestral compositions, concertante works, operas, vocal music, solo keyboard, and chamber works. Saint-Saëns famously gained a reputation for coming in second place behind lesser composers in competitions. While their names have slipped further into oblivion, Saint-Saëns’s works have established a firm footing in the pantheon of French composers, many of whom he taught and inspired.

# PROGRAM NOTES

*continued*

## Robert Schumann (1810-1856)



Robert Schumann was not supposed to follow a life in music, but the law school that his parents sent him to did not inspire him, and he broke free to study music, which he did quite successfully in his short life. Because our focus is not on Robert Schumann in this program, we will merely say that he was well known for his short piano pieces and songs, most of which referenced or were inspired by literary ideas and poems. Such was the case with "Du bist wie eine Blume," an art song that has been arranged for T/B chorus by Mari Esabel Valverde.

## Mari Esabel Valverde (b. 1987)



Composer, singer, and educator, Valverde has been commissioned by the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), Seattle Men's and Women's Choruses, and Boston Choral Ensemble among other prestigious ensembles. She was a featured composer at the 2016 GALA Choruses Festival. Following six years as a high school classical voice instructor, she spent two years specializing in transgender voice training. In addition to her own compositions, and thanks to her proficiency in Spanish, French, and Brazilian Portuguese, she has translated numerous vocal works and documents for non-English speaking communities.

## Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)



Among his many accolades, Bernstein was the first American-born conductor to receive international acclaim. Bernstein wrote in multiple genres, including symphonic and orchestral music, ballet, film and theater music, opera, chamber music, and pieces for the piano. He composed eleven eclectic pieces of choral music. Bernstein reportedly said the

first great music he heard was as a child listening to his synagogue's choir. The details of his personal life have certainly become well known. In response, insights into his career have shed light on both the tension and the creativity resulting from the conflicts between his sexual orientation and his very public life.

## Jeffery L. Ames (b. 1969)



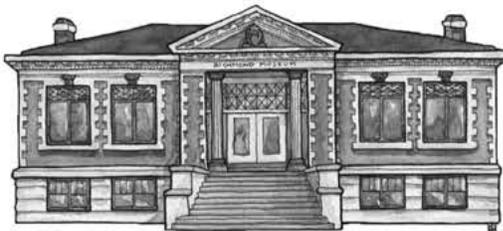
Ames is a conductor, composer, educator, and a Full Professor and Director of Choral Activities at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. He is the first recipient of the National ACDA James Mulholland Choral Music Fellowship, as well as being the first African American to represent the United States in the ACDA International Conductor Exchange Program. He has performed and collaborated with musicians from a broad representation of genres, including Trisha Yearwood, Ricky Skaggs and the Whites, Denyce Graves, Sheryl Crow, and the Rolling Stones.



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# FALL 2024 CONCERT

The Contra Costa Chorale is grieving the loss of our director, Cindy Beitmen, but we will continue to bring beautiful choral music to our public. As our dear departed Director always said,

**"THE SHOW MUST GO ON!"**

## Contra Costa Chorale Fall 2024 Concerts

### December 7

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley  
1 Lawson Road  
Kensington

### December 8

Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church  
1801 Lacassie Avenue  
Walnut Creek



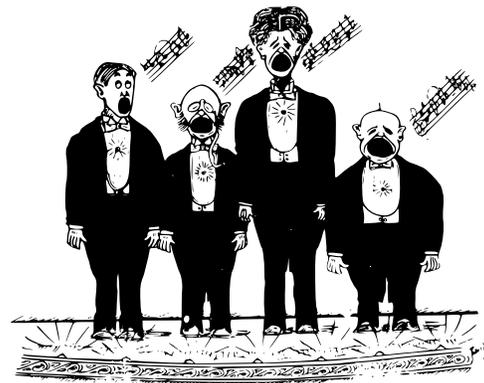
More information will be coming, so be sure to check our website: [www.ccchorale.org](http://www.ccchorale.org).



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Do you love singing in the shower? Did you sing in a high school chorus or church choir as a bass or tenor? Have you always wanted to sing but weren't sure you could? Looking for some new, exciting artistic challenge that's more fun than you could imagine? Want to raise your IQ by leaps and bounds? (Yes, making music makes you smarter!)

Well, take action! **The Contra Costa Chorale wants you.** You'll get great value from weekly rehearsals held in Kensington, including vocal coaching. Our next season runs late January to mid-May. Check out p.15 of this program to see a synopsis of the music. Come join us!



Kate Sibley, General Manager:  
[k8sibley@gmail.com](mailto:k8sibley@gmail.com); (510) 233-3623

# CONTRA COSTA CHORALE

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Contra Costa Chorale commits to promoting music education at all learning levels, to encouraging student participation in the fine and joyous art of choral singing, and to creating and supporting programs that build choral singers and audiences for the future.

Over the past few years, the Contra Costa Chorale has raised funds to support student music programs in Contra Costa County, with the intent to focus on choral music in western and central parts of the county. Currently we have two active programs and are constantly seeking other opportunities.

### OPENING ACT

Since 2017, the Chorale has invited student musicians' groups from Central and West Contra Costa schools to perform as our Opening Act. By the time the Chorale ceased operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, we had featured students from Madera Elementary School (WCCUSD) in Kensington, Orinda Middle School (Orinda Union School District) in Walnut Creek, Korematsu Middle School (WCCUSD), and Dougherty Valley High School (San Ramon Valley Unified School District).

We resumed Opening Act in the fall of 2022, with De Anza High School's choir performing in Kensington. In the spring of 2023, we presented the three recipients of our 2023 Vocal Music Studies Scholarships, with two of them performing to warm acclaim. In the fall of 2023, we showcased the Hercules High School Advanced Orchestra members in Kensington and the Contra Costa School of Performing Arts Bel Canto Singers in Walnut Creek.

This spring we are forging a new community connection by inviting the Gathering Desire Community Fellowship to bring their own work into our program. They will lead us into our final collective number, "Let Everything That Hath Breath."

School musical groups you know could have the opportunity to perform for up to 10 minutes in front of our audience, in either Kensington or Walnut Creek. If you are interested or know of a group that would want to participate, please email us at [cocochorale@gmail.com](mailto:cocochorale@gmail.com) so that we can make a new connection.

### VOCAL MUSIC STUDIES SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2020, the Contra Costa Chorale established a relationship with the West Contra Costa Public Education Fund (the Ed Fund) to provide scholarships to students who need assistance for studies, either at college or for some special program they wish to pursue while still attending high school. Currently, the emphasis is on college scholarships, which the Ed Fund has made available on behalf of the Chorale for the past three years.

In 2021, two \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to Madison Weller, De Anza HS, and Naja Ji Jaga, Middle College HS. Madison pursued her college studies at Contra Costa College with plans to transfer to San Jose State, and Naja began her studies at Boston University.

Another two \$1,000 scholarships were awarded in 2022 to Abraham Blanquel, Richmond HS, and Justin Trujillo, Pinole Valley HS. Both students intend to pursue music careers, Abraham as a musician and in production and Justin as a music teacher—hopefully, in WCCUSD.

For the 2023 scholarships, the Community Connections Committee made the decision to increase the scholarship amounts to \$2,000 each. With a strong choice of candidates, the committee made the additional decision to award three scholarships. This year, the scholars were Kaylee Barron, Richmond HS; Jordan Daniel, Hercules HS; and Aleks Retiro, De Anza HS. Kaylee and Aleks presented the Chorale's Opening Act at the spring 2023 concert.

As of our print deadline, the recipients of the 2024 Vocal Music Studies Scholarship had not yet been selected. We look forward to announcing the students' names at this concert.

### STUDENT SINGERS

Contra Costa Chorale is searching for talented students to join the Chorale for a concert set. We offer local students, either high school or college, a chance to experience being part of a community chorus, attending rehearsals and preparing for the concert alongside the Chorale singers. We expect students to be committed choral singers who have developed musical skills comparable to those of a community chorus, and to be at least minimally familiar with reading music. Students will receive scholarships to cover the cost of their tuition and music.

For more information about making any of these connections with the Contra Costa Chorale, email your request to [cocochorale@gmail.com](mailto:cocochorale@gmail.com).



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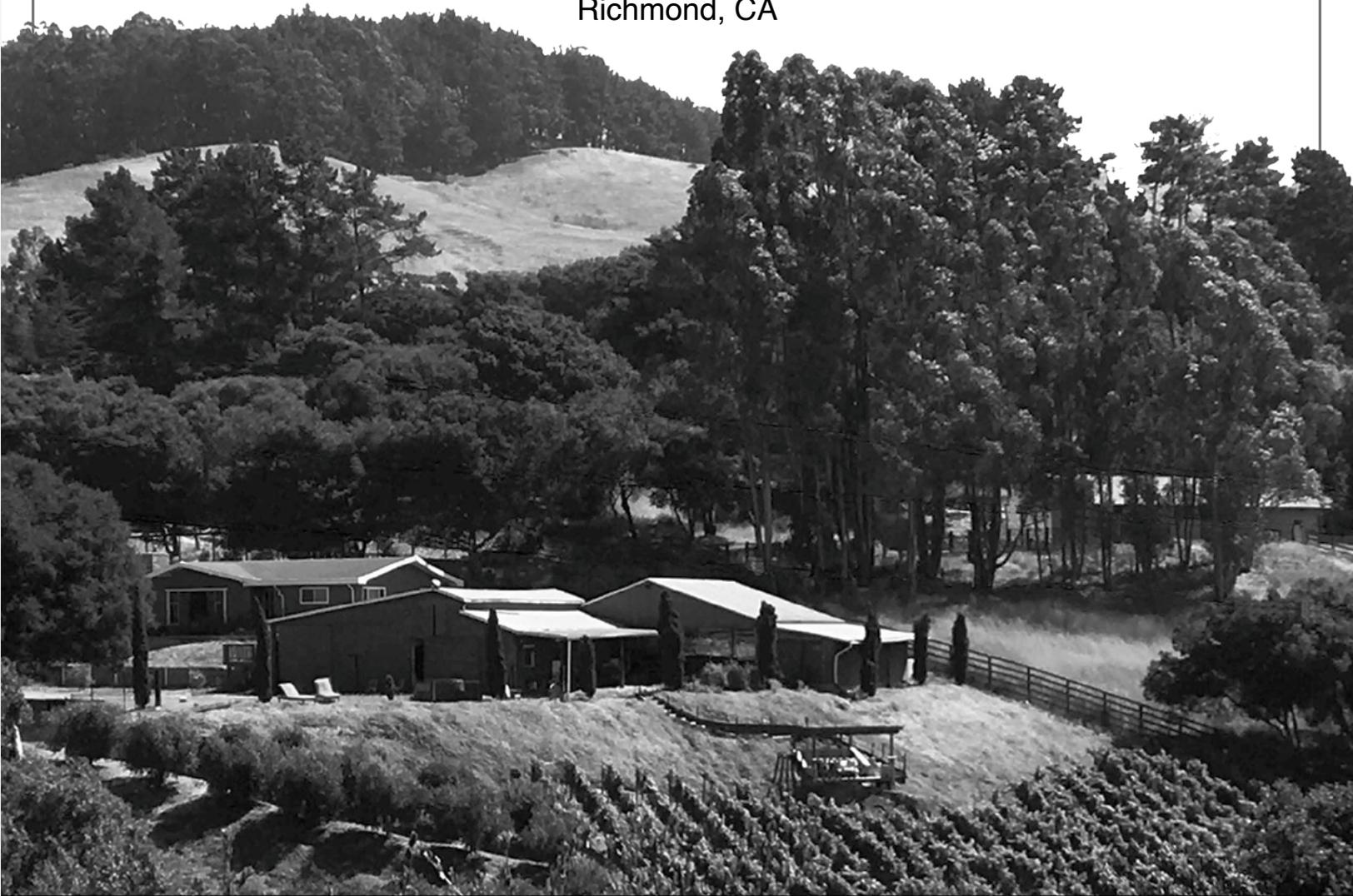
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## Announcing the Cindy Beitmen Legacy Circle

With the sad news of Cindy's passing, we are honoring her through our newly named Cindy Beitmen Legacy Circle. Current singers Janet Keyes & David Hubbell, and Kate Sibley, have already included the Chorale in their estate plans.

We encourage you to create your own legacy for the Chorale by including us in your will or living trust, naming us as an account beneficiary, or by considering other options.

Your thoughtful gift will keep the Chorale strong and help us meet the high standard that Cindy set for us during her 12-year tenure as Music Director.

Questions? For a confidential conversation:

Greg Lassonde (415) 509-4886,  
or [greg.lassonde@icloud.com](mailto:greg.lassonde@icloud.com).



*Cindy,  
forever our muse*

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## Sopranos



First Row, left to right: Barbara Berry, Jean Lutwak, Kathie Dreher, Katie Rodriguez, Joy Svihra, Nina Felden  
Second row, left to right: Cathy Edwards, Gennifer Tate, Meryl Sacks, Tanya Drlík, Monica Olivares, Annie O'Hare, Lori Panossian  
Third row, left to right: Amelia Grounds, Susan Lambert, Deena Love, Jenny Sanjeevan, Karine Schomer, Connie Brown  
Missing from photo: Julia Carvalho, Sandy Kruger, Mary McQuilliams, Amanda Moler, Anna Ritner, Ann Smith



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN

Dylan graduating in Hospitality  
from Sacramento State

Tiger graduating from  
St. Mary's High School

*And*

Jack, Ben, Nicole, Owen, and Meagan  
for a successful year in college

*And*

Sydney for finishing her first year  
in high school

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# CONTRA COSTA CHORALE

## Altos



First row, left to right: Lynne Ono, Geri Havlicek, Katie Wolfman, Yolanda Hogan, Debbie Sanderson, Claudia Gerst  
Second row, left to right: Chris Moriuchi, Lee Steadman, Carol Strand, Cyndi Mulligan, Linda Jones, Kate Buckner, Elizabeth Thompson  
Third row, left to right: Carol Terry, Cassie Todd, Amy Willats, Judi Carrillo, Claudia Dechow, Carol Sawdey  
Fourth row, left to right: Sylvie Mwila Jonath, Eldonna Cooley, Janet Keyes, Kate Sibley, Martha Jackson, Tess Barbach  
Missing from photo: Kathleen Baumgardner, Heidi Ronfeldt

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**Soprano Joy**  
is delighted to praise her two  
beloved granddaughters!

**Scout** is graduating this year from the College Preparatory School and going to Amherst College in the fall! She excelled in team debate, a skill which she brings to the family dinner table, as well as many superb treats she has made.

**Neko** is an ace volleyball player going to tournaments all over the western region. She volunteers to help in the garden, creates artistic ceramics and writes sensitive, heartfelt poetry.

*The Contra Costa Chorale celebrates its new partnership  
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# CONTRA COSTA CHORALE Tenors & Basses



First row, left to right: Ferdinand Bondt, Nan Ayers, Michael Gardner, Alice Knudsen, Carole Strauss, Ruth Block  
Second row, left to right: Mitch Ashley, Stuart Marson, Jerry Reynolds, JoAnn Thomas, Abigail Smith, Carter Ta  
Third row, left to right: David Hubbell, Peter Liddell, Greg Lassonde, Ken Saltzstine, Alexander Ewing, Terry Lee  
Fourth row, left to right: Don Wollwage, Jim Wong, Kevin Glaz, Chad Keig  
Missing from photo: William Abernathy, Achi Ben Shalom, Leo Scurry



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But she saw something in us and took us on  
And we have grown in members and in song.

To thank our Fearless Leader we commissioned  
Composer Joan Szymko to create a choral work,  
From Elsa Gidlow's eloquent poem  
About a seed blown in the dirt.

Like that seed "lusting for light,"  
Cindy is our seed lusting for song,  
And when she blooms we flower beside her  
On a beautiful verdant carpet of lawn.

The most important belief from Cindy we know,  
That singing is eternal,  
Music cannot leave us  
It is in our soul.

Because of Cindy's passion, devotion, leadership and humor,  
We have thrived.  
How blessed is the Chorale to have had Cindy Beitmen  
As our music director, conductor  
And always as our Fearless Leader!

We are the Contra Costa Chorale.

*Claudia Dechow  
Chorale singer*