heartbeat

“heart beat,
surfbeat,
earthbeat...

wood & shell,
string & bell, skin

stretched over bone”

— Susan Osborn
A Letter from the Concord President

Welcome to Aurora’s season finale! Heartbeat! What a wonderful title for a program featuring this incredible ensemble of women where “having heart” holds equal footing with having a voice. It’s the way the heart complements the voice that makes Aurora a musical treasure in our community.

If you’re not familiar with the Concord Community of Choirs, tonight is an excellent way to meet us. We are an organization that features seven individual choirs with opportunities to sing for toddlers through adults, vocally experienced or not. We could be the perfect place for you to express yourself musically. Please call us on our Concord line at 721-0262.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the many contributors to the Concord Community of Choirs. Your donations are deeply appreciated and valued. Please accept our gratitude.

The Concord Community of Choirs is made up of diverse individuals who love the differences they see in one another and in our choirs. We all beat to different drums, but when it comes to our commitment to and love for our choral organization, our hearts beat as one. We’re glad that you’re here with us this evening.

Blessings to All,

Denise L. Andersen

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Concord Community of Choirs

DIRECTORS

David York: Artistic Director, Concord Community of Choirs; Director, Concord Choir
Joan Szymko: Aurora, Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
Ray Elliott: satori
Steve Peter: coro uomo
Mary McCarty: Chrysalis Concert Choir
Denise Andersen: Chrysalis Celebration Singers

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If you would like to receive information about the Concord Community of Choirs and our 1998-99 season, please sign our mailing list in the lobby or leave a message on the Concord Line at 721-0262.

WE DO NOT SELL OR TRADE OUR MAILING LIST
Director's Biography

Joan Szymko

Conductor and composer Joan Szymko is grateful to be a working artist. Trained as a choral conductor and music educator, she has been leading choruses in Seattle and Portland since 1981. A prolific composer, Joan has penned over 40 compositions – countless vocal arrangements, two musicals and other theatrical music. Joan's arrangements and compositions for women's voices have been performed by choruses across the country. Her musical, "Cradle and All" will receive its Midwest premiere this August in Indianapolis. Currently Joan directs Aurora Chorus, Viriditas (both members of the Concord Community of Choirs) and Portland State Community Chorus. Joan is also a resident composer and frequent performer with Do Jump Movement Theatre.

Joan will be taking a huge step forward in 1998 as she produces "OPENINGS," a CD recording featuring music she has composed for Aurora, Viriditas and Do Jump including performances by Viriditas, Elektra Women's Choir (Vancouver, B.C.), Opus 7 (Seattle), Thomasa Eckert (Seattle) and others. "OPENINGS" will be released in the fall of 1998. See the display in the lobby for additional information.

Season Preview: Aurora 1998-99

Next season you can expect Aurora to continue to give our audience musical experiences that celebrate community, heart and peace through music. In December, we'll continue our tradition of bringing you truly "seasonal" music that everyone can enjoy – songs and music that invoke the spirit of winter and the changing seasons – the Solstice and the seasons of life. The time and venue for "In the Winter" will be announced in future Concord Community mailings – so make sure you're on our mailing list (call 721-0262 or sign up in the lobby).

Come spring of 1999, Aurora will present "As a Woman" a pre-Mother's Day concert honoring the mother in all of us. Julia Ward Howe's original "Mother's Day Proclamation" will be heard in a new original musical setting. This show will really feel like a festival, as various women artists and ensembles will join Aurora as we also celebrate women and the musical arts in Portland! "As a Woman" will be presented on May 2 at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall.

Aurora Members Reach Out

At concert time everything finally comes together. Months of preparation and rehearsals culminate in the magical moments of our performance. Excitement is high and we are delighted to sing for you. Another part of Aurora that is just as exciting is that we reach out beyond these staged concerts to spread the joy that music can bring. Several times a year Aurora's Outreach Committee works with organizations and communities to arrange for 40 or more Aurora members to sing at special events. Recently we have sung for: the Women Empowered Beyond Beijing Conference, the New Year's Day Cavalcade for Peace, International Women's Day, and for the families and residents of St. Andrew's Care Center. This summer, in early August, Aurora will participate in the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Celebration of Peace.

We encourage you to think of Aurora as being part of your celebration whether it honors peace and justice, friendship, human rights, environmental concerns or the arts. If you are interested in hosting an outreach performance, please make sure you contact Aurora in the early planning stages of your event. The more we know about what is planned, the more time and effort we can be put into a quality program. Aurora director, Joan Szymko chooses music that is inspiring and uplifting. She works hard to match songs to the theme of the event.

Outreach performances are near and dear to the hearts of the women in Aurora. Sharing our feelings through music can really bring us all closer together. Please contact Dorothy Krogh (234-0636) of Aurora's Outreach Committee for more information.

The legendary Chinese sage, Lao Tsu, recorded his prophetic wisdom in the volume Tao Te Ching (The Book of the Way). Language and cultural translations undoubtedly reduce Lao Tsu’s brilliance to a mere shadow of its original truth. Still, there’s no escaping the timeless wisdom of these simple, yet profound ideas. With Lao Tsu’s inspiration, David York wrote two of the Tao Rounds for the alto section of Concord Choir this past fall, “The Four Great Powers” and “Emptiness.” Aurora will sing these two, plus a third that David composed especially for us! “Success and Hope” is set to another text by Lao Tzu and we are pleased to be singing its premiere performance today.

Well, Enough Said About That! Regardless of your philosophy about the universe and our place within it, Bernice Johnson Reagon says, “you still gotta get up in the morning... go outside, walk down the street, try to be decent to each soul you meet...” Amen!

The Celtic heart of singer/songwriter Maire Brennan (Clannad) is beating full force in Beating Heart, a song about the endless search for love. The heart and soul of so much Native American wisdom is in the simple art of gratitude. Cherokee Morning Song, remembered and recorded by singer (and part Cherokee) Rita Coolidge, is an expression of thankfulness for witnessing another morning. In these prosperous days, our culture takes a lot for granted. However, greeting the morning after a night’s sleep in a warm, safe place is a luxury that is out of reach for many of us. Forty years ago, Malvina Reynolds wrote I Cannot Sleep, a plea to the fortunate to take some responsibility for the care of homeless, hungry children.

Today, we still have children in need. In our land, violence is commonplace in the media and our youth is hungry for more than food. Individual rights seem to increasingly take precedence over the common good. It is so important to teach our children about the power of community and the gift of compassion. Take Back the Guns is a pledge we can make to our children that our world will become a safer place.

Wonfa Nyem, an Akan song from Ghana, West Africa, is an anthem primarily associated with mourning. (See translation page 5) It is also sung at festivals as a reminder of the community’s conscience. It’s important to fulfill one’s obligations lest you find yourself orphaned or isolated by life’s travails and in need of help yourself with no one to turn to.

We are all familiar with the African proverb It Takes A Village to raise a child. Joan Szymko’s composition presents that message joyfully and celebrates the gift of children to our communities. Tema is a teaching song from the Shona people of Zimbabwe, Southeastern Africa. The Shona have many songs that teach their children how to behave in society and shows them how to become responsible adults.

A big part of understanding community is truly believing that we are all interdependent and that what happens to one of us affects all of us. Alla Bozarth’s poem Call, commands us to wake up to “a new sound of roaring voices in the deep.” Change of Heart is a melodic statement of hope that it’s not too late to hear that call. Both Call and Change of Heart recognize the importance of personal power and of cutting a path for change. That path can be both personal and political. These songs carry images of fire; not as a destroyer, but as creator, purifier and a force to be reckoned with. We send you off with an old favorite of ours, Heart to Heart. Its message is simple: creating peace really is a matter of how we relate to each other day in and day out.
Jubilant Song

Nana

Invocation

The Earth Is Singing My Name

Earthchant

Promessa de Pescador

She Speaks

Tao Rounds

Success and Hope (premiere)

Well, Enough Said About That!

Beating Heart

Cherokee Morning Song

I Cannot Sleep

Take Back the Guns

Wonfa Nyem

Tema

It Takes a Village (premiere)

Call

Change of Heart

Heart to Heart

James McCray

poetry by Walt Whitman

Susan Osborn and Bill Lauf

arranged by Joan Szymko

Kate Ellen Campbell

Marjan Helms

poem by Dar N’var

Colleen Haas

vocal arrangement Diane Benjamin

Dorival Caymmi

Susan Osborn

arranged Szymko

David York

text by Lao Tsu

David York

text by Lao Tsu

Bernice Johnson Reagon

Maire Brennan

arranged Szymko

traditional Cherokee

arranged by Rita Coolidge,
adapted Szymko

Malvina Reynolds

arranged Szymko

Therese Edell

arranged by J. David Moore

traditional Akan (Ghana)
as sung by Akrofor Choir
ed. by Adzenyah

traditional Shona

transcribed by Barbara Lindquist

Joan Szymko

text after a traditional
African saying

Joan Szymko

poem by Alla Bozarth

Holly Near

arranged by Steve Milloy

Wayne Green and Brian Potter

arranged by Green
Translation: Wonfa Nyem

Buee – a wail of mourning
Awerhowsem – “A sad situation”
Wonfa nyem – “Do it to me” (let something happen to me as well)
Wonfa nyem onye birih wonfa nyem – “Do it to me; it doesn’t matter; do it to me”
Abou abeyekye – “The animal, the tortoise”
Agyanka ba e – “an orphan”
Dabi na wodzi beba – “Tomorrow it will be your turn”
Na ho wo wo nso wobehu – “Then you will see” (how sweet or sour the situation is)

Expanded translation:
This is a sad occasion for me. Why has this happened to me, that I am alone like a tortoise
and in so much sorrow. It doesn’t really matter anymore, you can no longer hurt me because
the worst has already happened. He claimed to be self-sufficient like the tortoise, and now he is
alone, isolated. Although now it is my turn to experience hardships, tomorrow it will be yours.
Then you will see how it feels, whether sweet or sour.
CONCERT OPPORTUNITIES

JUNE
◆ BROTHERS, SING ON! - satori
June 6, 8pm • Bethlehem Lutheran
(details on page 9)

AUGUST
◆ APOLLO & HYACINTH - Concord Choir
August 22, 8pm • Newmark Theatre
World Premiere Ballet
COMPOSED BY DAVID YORK
BENEFIT FOR CASCADE AIDS PROJECT
(details on back cover)

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Men interested in joining satori are encouraged to call for information regarding next season (their fifth anniversary!).

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