SOLSTICE!

Light is returning, even though it is the darkest hour.

Aurora Chorus * December 21, 2003
**Director's greeting**

**Dear Friends**

Here we are, on the longest night of the year, to tell and listen to a story that connects us. We are Christians, Jews, Pagans, atheists, Buddhists, Muslims; we are women and men, elders and children — all gathered in this big room that we will make sacred with our common humanity. Together we will recognize the power of darkness and celebrate the return of the light. And as the Earth cycles eternally through the seasons, we acknowledge the seasons of our lives and the lives of those we love.

It is such a privilege and joy for us in Aurora Chorus to celebrate Solstice with you. Thank you for joining us this evening. I hope that our gift of song brings delight, warmth and joy to your Holidays.

Blessings and Peace,
Joan Szymko
Director, Aurora Chorus

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**AURORA CHORUS VISION & MISSION**

**VISION:** Powerful women singing peace

**MISSION:** To inspire and reflect the universal yearning for peace by giving voice to women

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**Board Greeting**

**Good Evening, and Welcome!**

"Solstice!" marks the beginning of Aurora's twelfth season of exceptional choral music. If you are hearing Aurora for the first time tonight, you're in for a special treat. (And if you're a returning audience member, you already know what's in store.)

This season Aurora continues to grow musically and organizationally. We're offering season tickets for the first time, and our season includes three major concerts instead of the usual two. Aurora will be going on tour for the first time, performing in Seattle in April with the Seattle Women's Chorus, who will be joining us at our May concert. Organizationally, we are reaching out to elevate Aurora's visibility in the community with a new business plan, a more focused effort at publicity, and a fully committed Board of Directors, which includes both chorus members and members of the Portland community.

Everyone here tonight is involved in the ongoing success of Aurora: our Artistic Director, Joan Szymko, whose talent and vision spark the flame of each concert; the singers, who learn the music with joy and enthusiasm and play a significant role in producing and publicizing the concerts; the Board of Directors, who provide organizational guidance and direction; and all of you who attend our concerts, support us, and "spread the word" about this growing group of powerful women singing peace.

Thank you, and welcome to tonight's show!

Gayle Koszegi
Chair, Aurora Chorus Board of Directors

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**We are Aurora.**

We are women in harmony for peace.

We are mothers and grandmothers, sisters and daughters.

We are artists, poets, healers and homemakers.

We are professionals, managers, teachers, therapists, musicians and health care specialists.

We embody diversity, in our political work, our spiritual practices, and in our relational choices.

We are advocates for the healing of the earth.

We are activists involved in this community.

We are women on all stages of the journey, and we all love to sing!

We are thrilled to sing to you and with you.

Patti Kreipe
— "The Power of Women Assembled" concert, 1993
Turning, turning spirits yearning, reaching for the night.
Colors going, shadows growing, darkening the light.
Ancient story told, renewed with the cold;
Mystery of light burnt into the night.

Linda Hirschorn

Support the Arts in Oregon
...and receive a tax credit!

The Oregon Cultural Trust is a long-term funding plan for preserving Oregon's arts, heritage and humanities. Donate any amount to Aurora Chorus (up to $500 for individuals, $1000 for couples filing jointly, or $2500 for corporations). Donate the same amount to the Oregon Cultural Trust. Take a dollar-for-dollar credit against the Oregon income tax you owe for the amount of your donation (100% credit for individuals and couples, 80% for corporations).

For more information, visit www.culturaltrust.org.

Remember to Donate by December 31 to Get the Credit for 2003.

Thank You! to Our Donors
2003 to date

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Aurora Chorus • PO. Box 80312 • Portland, OR 97280-1312
Director

Now in her eleventh season as director of Aurora Chorus, Joan Szymko (SHIM-koh) has over twenty years of experience as a choral conductor, composer, teacher and performer in the Pacific Northwest. Throughout her career she has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to creating and presenting quality choral music, especially for women's voices. As resident composer for the acclaimed Do Jump! Movement Theater (1995-2001), Szymko performed her music with the company at home in Portland and on tour with runs on Broadway in New York, the Kennedy Center and the Geffen Playhouse in LA.

Ms. Szymko is emerging as a composer of renown, and her music is now being performed by choruses across the country. Her work was showcased most recently at the national convention of the American Choral Directors Association in New York City in February, 2003. She received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the Oregon Arts Commission (2001) for choral composition, and was selected to participate in the ASCAP Foundation’s prestigious Film Scoring Workshop in LA (2001).

Szymko has a passion for rhythm and percussion and has recently launched Mother Tongue Drum Circles. A CD collection of Szymko’s original vocal compositions, OPENINGS, features Viriditas, a select chamber ensemble Szymko founded and directs. Her choral music is published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing and Treble Music Press.

About Aurora

Aurora Chorus honors the strength and beauty of women’s lives through the fine art of choral singing. The chorus demonstrates the uplifting and transformative power of music. Aurora sings peace – for ourselves, for our community, and for our planet.

Since 1992, Aurora Chorus has welcomed singers from the Portland metropolitan area and maintains a membership of over 100 singers. Led by director Joan Szymko, Aurora has become a source of strength and inspiration for our community through finely crafted performances of music as rich and diverse as the lives of the women who sing.

Aurora presents at least two major concerts each season, with average audiences of 900-1,200 per concert presentation. Aurora also makes appearances at community outreach events throughout the year. A CD celebrating Aurora’s 10 years of singing for peace was released last year.

Recent Area Appearances

- “Domestic Violence Awareness Month/An Afternoon to Remember” co-sponsored by Bradley-Angle House and First Congregational Church (Oct. 03)
- “PeaceQuake” PSU South Park Blocks (Sept. 03)
- “Wings to Fly” with Portland Gay Men’s Chorus (June 03)
- “Earth Chant” Earth Day (April 03)
- “International Women’s Day” PSU (March 03)
- “Portland Peace Rally” downtown Portland (Jan. 03)
- “MLK Day Celebration” Chiles Center (Jan. 03)

Carry it home to your children, carry it out in the street.
Carry it on to the ones you love and on to the ones you meet.
Carry it light on your shoulder, carry it deep in your soul.
For we have been blessed with magic, and the magic will make us whole.

Betsy Rose

Accompanist

Stephanie Thompson received her B.A. from Willamette University and her M.A. from USC, studying with Jean-David Coen, Antoinette Perry and Daniel Pollack. An alumni of the Aspen Music School, she teaches at Lewis and Clark College, and is a freelance pianist in the Portland area.
The Longest Night*
Julie Forest Middleton

It was the longest night.
People gathered from near and far, in small groups and large.
To share their tears and grief, and the darkness in their hearts.

A year like no other, this was,
Testing us beyond what we'd ever imagined.
Day after day, week after week, we found ourselves growing.
And becoming sturdy, because there was no other choice.
And the solstice fire was lit, and the candles passed.
And the light of the new year's dawning lifted our heavy hearts.
And brought us brightness and hope.
It was the longest night, the longest night.

*In 1997, Julie Forest Middleton and Stasa Morgan-Appel, choir buddies in Philadelphia's Anna Crusis Women's Choir, discovered they shared a dream of creating a winter solstice ritual. They worked with Anna Crusis and local Unitarian churches, leading solstice events for three years in a row; the fruits of their labor are contained in the publication, "A Winter Solstice Ritual," Emerald Earth Publishing, wwwEmeraldEarth.net. Seven songs and several readings in tonight's concert are contained in this excellent resource that serves as a blueprint for creating a ritual celebration.

Membership & Event Information

Want to sing with Aurora or plan ahead to attend our next concert? Register to join or add your name to our mailing list to receive advance notice about future performances.

Sign up in the lobby!
For more information CALL 503-AURORA-1 or VISIT www.AuroraChorus.org

Deep, deep, deep, into the heart of the winter
Deep, deep, deep, into the womb of the Mother
Deep, deep, deep, where there is no other song but the song of my soul.
Anne Bearheart

THE PERFECT GIFT!
Aurora's 10th ANNIVERSARY CD!

Celebrating a Decade of Women Singing Peace.
Aurora Chorus comes "Full Circle" with a tenth anniversary CD recording of chorus and audience favorites, new favorites and featuring two powerful premieres, works commissioned especially for Aurora's tenth Anniversary: "I Am" by music director Joan Szymko and "A Circle of Women Singing" by our very first guest artist, Betsy Rose. Add this very joyous and heartfelt celebration to your CD library or give the perfect gift!

Get Yours Now! — In the Lobby or online @ www.AuroraChorus.org

Handmade Truffles
Framboise Kahlua Amaretto Grand Marnier
Courvoisier Bourbon Rye Dark Chocolate Hazelnut

All Nuts No Nuts Liqueurs
Grand Marnier Courvoisier Bourbon Rye Dark Chocolate Hazelnut Frangelico Ralnut Butter Framboise

Nonalcoholic Boxed Singles
Rice Dark Chocolate Hazelnut Frangelico Ralnut Butter Framboise Kahlua Amaretto Grand Marnier

In Lobby Eat Now Take Home
SOLSTICE!

Light is returning, even though it is the darkest hour.

Turning, Turning
(Solstice/Chanukah Chant)

Linda Hirschorn
arranged by Joan Syzmko

Narrator: “Let’s breathe deeply together...”

Robin Sutherland

Black Elk Speaks
Susan Fullmer, reader

We are a Circle

Rick Hamouris
arranged Szymko

Invocation: Earth Mother, Star Mother
Rachel Brooks, reader

Benedicta Es
Chris Carol, arranged by Susan Schleef

Lady of the Season’s Laughter
Soloist: Cathryn Heron
David Hurd, arranged Syzmko

Solstice Chant
Anne Bearheart
arranged by Julie Middleton

PLEASE SING WITH US:

Deep, deep, deep, into the heart of the Winter
Deep, deep, deep, into the womb of the Mother
Deep, deep, deep, where there is no other song
but the song in my soul.

Narrator: “Waiting alone in the dark...”

Take Back the Night

Susan Osborn, Berger & Halley
arranged Szymko

What Is This Night?

Barbara Gray, Susan Fullmer,
Rachel Brooks and Jean Wright, readers

Solstice

David York/Judith Barrington

Narrator: “Every seed is a promise...”

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Stephanie Thompson, piano
Abby Seemann, flute
Brian Gardiner, tom's & percussion
Carol J. Timper, guitar
Marylyn John, mandolin

HEARTBEAT RHYTHM ENSEMBLE

Maura Del Vecchio
Marilyn John
Roberta Jortner
Cathy Monnin
Veronica Vodicova
Aurora Chorus * December 21, 2003
Joan Szymko, director

Kore Evohe

Narrator: "Lighting the way..."
John Schrag
based on a chant by Sabina Becker

In Dulci Jubilo

Soloists:
Judi Ranton, Jayme Armstrong, Gwen Porus

Pentatonic Alleluia

Joni Hartman & Jenna Scott

Light Is Returning

PLEASE SING WITH US:
Return again, return again
Return to the land of your soul.
Return to who you are. Return to what you are.
Return to where you are born and reborn again.

The Longest Night

Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach
arranged Szymko

Return Again

Charlie Murphy
arranged Szymko

The Christians and the Pagans

Dar Williams
arranged Szymko

Soloists:
Joni Hartmann & Jenna Scott

Narrator: "Each of us carries a Light..."
Jean Wright, reader

This Little Light of Mine

traditional
arranged by Ysaye Barnwell

We've Got the Power

traditional, South Africa
arranged Szymko

Narrator: "We have taken a journey..."

Carry It Home

Betsy Rose
arranged Szymko

READING CREDITS

"Let's breathe deeply together..." adapted from A Winter Solstice Singing Ritual (WSSR)
"Black Elk Speaks" from Black Elk Speaks by John G Neihardt, University of Nebraska Press.
"Invocation: Earth Mother, Star Mother" from The Spiral Dance by Starhawk.
"Waiting alone in the dark..." adapted from "What Is This Night?" from WSSR.
"Every seed is a promise..." from WSSR.
"Lighting the way..." adapted from WSSR.
"Each of us carries a Light..." adapted from WSSR.
"Our Deepest Fear" from A Return to Love by Marianne Williamson.
"We have taken a journey..." adapted from WSSR.
Solstice! The longest night.
Solstice! When black is bright.
Solstice! When dreams take flight.
We welcome this magical night!
Judith Barrington

Are you moved...

TO SING WITH AURORA?
Aurora Chorus welcomes singers of all skill levels from the Portland metropolitan area. We are pleased to answer your questions, or to place you on our waiting list for next term!

TO HELP... BUT MAYBE NOT TO SING?
Aurora Chorus is always looking for volunteers to join our community of strength and inspiration, and to support our vision of "POWERFUL WOMEN SINGING PEACE."
We have a place for you here!

TO LEARN ABOUT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES?
Aurora Chorus is working to expand our reach into the community, and is seeking sponsors who support our vision. Would you like to contribute financially to the health of Aurora?

PLEASE CALL 503-AURORA-1 (503-287-6721) or E-MAIL info@aurorachorus.org

So the Christians and the Pagans sat together at the table,
Finding faith and common ground the best that they were able,
Lighting trees in darkness, learning new ways from the old
And making sense of history
and drawing warmth out of the cold.
Dar Williams
Aurora Chorus: powerful women singing peace

SOPRANO 1
Michele Ahonen
Claudine Blake
Andrea Burke
Maxine Burton
Heather De Munn
Joyce Follingstad
Christine Hayward*
Cathryn Heron
Fay Hicks
Kashala Hill
Susan Kaeder
Amy Kelchner
Ann Wilson
Jenna Scott
Judi Ronton**
Michele Ahonen
Heather De Munn
Aurora Chorus: powerful women singing peace

SOPRANO 2
Jayme Armstrong*
Elaine Ball
Kathelin Brewer-Cole
Sherry Briskay
Christine Brown
Mairi Burns
Patricia Cormican
Maura Del Vecchio
Kaye Exo
Eva Hueneke
Kim Jefferies
Sue Jensen**
Roberta Jortner
Statik Kaeder
Brooke Latzke
Myrtie McKenzie
Marya Hazilla
Marya Hazilla*
An'daesha K'Treva
Andrea Burke
Michael Burke
Nathan Burke
Madeleine Burke
Mairi Burns
Patricia Cormican
Merlene Delgado
Rick DeVitis
Ellen Fiskus
Victoria Gill
Jennifer Mize**
Jane Moore
Marilyn Lindberg
Belle Mann
Gwen Porus
Ellen Reardon
Linda Jo Reinhard
Gillian Schmidt
Deborah Smith
Catherine Thomsen
Carol Walker
Katy Bernie Wolum

ALTO 1
Annie Auxier
Patricia Ayerza
Catherine Chen
Karen Christensen
Margot Foege
Kelly Fitzpatrick
Susan Fuller
Jennifer Gates
Cathy Golden
Nancy Grant
Barbara Gray
Joni Hartmann
Marylyn John*
Diane Kenedy
Mary King
Denise Kossover-Wechter
Gayle Koszeig**
Marylin Lindberg
Belle Mann
Gwen Porus
Ellen Reardon
Linda Jo Reinhard
Gillian Schmidt
Deborah Smith
Catherine Thomsen
Carol Walker
Katy Bernie Wolum

ALTO 2
Joan Andrews
Liz Bartell
Rachel Brooks
Ceara Carver
Jan Corwin
Mary DiCarlo
Lisa Fithian-Barrett
Victoria Gill
Jeanette Hankins
Marya Hazilla
Marya Hazilla*
An'daesha K'Treva
Jeanne Kinsley
Linda Milone
Weisha Mize**
Jane Moore
Carol Perrin
Ellen Pitcher
Laurie Shentes
Pris Taylor
Carol (CJ) Timper

**Music section leader
*Administrative section leader

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Sue Jensen
Mary King
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So hold on to love, and love the pain that you feel
Hold on to hope and trust that the night will reveal
the stars that surround us,
and the Magic the sunlight conceals.
Susan Osborn

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