AURORA CHORUS PRESENTS

a choral extravaganza

love is love is love is love

featuring

BVS Women's Choir ♥ Key of Q (Transpose)
Bridging Voices ♥ Portland Lesbian Choir

First Congregational Church
1126 SW Park Ave, Portland

MAY 20
4:00 pm
Greetings from the Board

There is no time not to love. And love is love is love is love. Today Aurora will sing the last movement of Joan’s “Shadow and Light, an Alzheimer’s Journey in 16 Movements” with the text from 1 Corinthians 13:7-8: Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. We are in a time when not only are there some trying to set fire to the world, but there is also fighting and restlessness over the best path forward to extinguishing that fire. What we have to come home to is love.

As Mahatma Ghandi advised and we will sing, Be the change you wish to see. Paramount to Aurora’s vision of the future is strengthening the love in our community – both by nourishing our tightly knit sisterhood, as well as by collaborating with our broader musical and social justice community. This Spring, the Aurora Outreach Ensemble performed for Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare’s annual gala in support of building resources for mental health services and other wellness programs. In June, the Ensemble will sing as part of the first Community Arts Pavilion at Portland PRIDE.

In being present today at this choral extravaganza as Aurora shares the stage with four choruses that view the essence of love as a central tenet of their missions, you are part of our vision of a world where all will know sweet freedom’s way (Langston Hughes).

Thank you for joining us to celebrate love. In the words of Mother Theresa, we belong to each other.

With immense gratitude, and love,
Jaclyn Leeds, Board Chair

Aurora Board

Jaclyn Leeds, President    Colleen Cornman-Wilcox    Judi Ranton
Kristan Burkert, Treasurer Lisa Fithian-Barrett Joan Szymko, ex officio
Lynn Greenwood, Secretary Lori Kovacevic

About Aurora Chorus

Aurora Chorus was founded in 1992 on the belief that music is a powerful instrument of peace—locally, globally, and within the hearts of all who sing and all who listen. We honor the strength, beauty and diversity of women’s lives through the fine art of choral singing. As a community of women empowered by song, our mission is to be a clear, compassionate voice in an increasingly conflicted world. Comprised of singers from the Portland/Vancouver metro area, the chorus presents three full-length concerts each season and performs at community outreach events throughout the year. Aurora Chorus offers novice and experienced singers alike the opportunity to grow in a nurturing, inclusive atmosphere where healthy vocal production, solid choral technique and a diverse and compelling repertoire support Aurora’s mission.
Bridging Voices QSA Youth Chorus, currently celebrating its fifth anniversary, is the only LGBTQ Youth Chorus in Oregon and one of just eight in the nation. With a mission to create a safe and accessible place for queer, straight, and questioning youth to experience empowerment and unity through music, Bridging Voices includes students ages 13-21 from more than 30 schools in eight districts. Artistic Director Erik Gullickson is in his third season with the chorus, which has grown in that time from eight to some fifty regular members, producing two full concerts each season. A native of Alaska, Erik holds an M.M. in Voice from Temple University and has studied conducting with Alan Harler and Rodney Eichenberger.

Transpose PDX is a gender-affirming community choir that empowers its members by providing a brave space to expand musical skills, develop a sense of identity, and center their voices in song. Founder and Artistic Director, Sebastien Eichvalds, is a music educator and former Assistant Director of Bridging Voices LGBT-Str8 Allied Youth Choir. Key of Q is our a capella group whose mission focuses on rural outreach and visibility. Amir Shirazi, Key of Q Vocal Coach, is a local music director, composer, arranger, and theatre sound designer. His work has been performed by various theatre and music organizations around the country.

The Portland Lesbian Choir, founded in 1986, builds community and harmony through musical excellence, service, and advocacy. Directed by Mary McCarty, PLC is thrilled to be sharing the stage with Aurora Chorus today. PLC invites you to attend their upcoming concert, "Come Together: In Times Like These", on Saturday, June 9, at 7:30pm at St Mary’s Academy.

BVS Women’s Choir is based in Brooklyn, New York. The choir gives numerous concerts throughout the year and made its theatre debut in the Off-Broadway production of “The Events” in 2015 at the New York Theater Workshop. Founding Director Jessica Corbin is in her 17th season as Artistic Director of the Bella Voce Singers. BVS is now a 45-member multigenerational group dedicated to excellence in choral singing. Their mission is to enrich and educate their members and audiences by performing a diverse repertoire with an emphasis on contemporary choral composers, and by bringing other new and lesser-known works to the community. BVS released its first CD, “Songs of Peace and Love,” in 2010, its CD “Hope” was released in December of 2014, and its CD, “Faith Is the Bird,” in 2016. A graduate of Indiana University and Duquesne University, Jessica works as a freelance conductor, accompanist, and vocal coach in and around New York City. She is adjunct Musical Theatre voice faculty at both Marymount Manhattan College and CUNY – Kingsborough Community College, and currently serves as Chair of Music Theatre of Region 1 of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.
Joan Szymko, Aurora Chorus Artistic Director

Joan Szymko has conducted choruses in the Pacific Northwest for over thirty years. She left Seattle for Portland in 1993 to take on the leadership of Aurora Chorus. She soon founded Viriditas, a select women’s ensemble, (1994-2002) and enjoyed a fruitful collaboration with Do Jump! Movement Theater (1994-2012) as a performer, music director and resident composer. She recently served on the choral music faculty at Portland State University as director of Vox Femina (2013-15). As a visiting artist, Joan Szymko workshops her music with choirs in a variety of educational settings across the country and abroad.

Composing for choir is a natural outgrowth of Joan Szymko’s creativity as a conductor. Joan’s dedication to craft and artistry and her insistence on quality texts are renowned. Her catalog of over 100 published choral works is performed by ensembles across North America and abroad. Since 2003, her music has been performed at every National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association. In 2010 the ACDA recognized Szymko’s lasting impact on the choral arts in America by selecting her as the recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission. Szymko’s Shadow and Light, an Alzheimer’s Journey, a major new work for chorus and orchestra, was commissioned by Eugene Vocal Arts and given a successful premiere in April 2016.

Kira Whiting, Aurora Chorus Accompanist

Currently based in Portland, Oregon, collaborative pianist Kira Whiting graduated from Manhattan School of Music in May 2014, with a Master’s in Classical Accompanying with a Vocal Emphasis. Ms. Whiting has participated in master classes with Thomas Quasthoff, Martin Katz, Thomas Hampson, Craig Rutenberg, and Roger Vignoles.

She has performed several art song recitals in Scandinavia, including a program of American art songs with Norwegian soprano Margrethe Fredheim for a balcony concert at the Oslo Opera House. Ms. Whiting was a semi-finalist in collaboration with Dashon Burton, Bass-Baritone, at the Wigmore Hall International Art Song Competition 2015 in London, UK.
Aurora Chorus Singers

**Soprano 1**
Susan Abe
Michele Alderson A
Phyllis Auger
Margaret Blake
Kristan Burkert
Pamela Burrell
Libby Clow+**
Christine Hayward+
Wendy Howard*
Lori Kovacevic
Zoe Lehr
Meredith Peake
Lydia Pickard**
Susan Rinker
Bethany Soule
Ann Wilson

**Soprano 2**
Ali Ayers
Cheyenne Chapman
Bethany Clouse
Patricia
Cornman-Wilcox*
Betsy Dowell+**
Ruth Flores
Lynn Greenwood
Sara Grigsby
Static Kaeder
Lisa Kron**
Jaclyn Leeds
Ruth McCabe
Zsuzsa Nemeth
Nanette Niski
Debbie Paynter
Rebecca Pozorski
Mary Anne Thylesen

**Alto 1**
Nicole Kellan Behnke
Shannon Buono*
Cindy Christensen
Barbara Gray
Patti Harelkin A
Marylyn John
Allyson Knapper
Donna Lieberman
Bunny Marechal
Kim Martin
Peggy McComb
Patricia McKinney
Mary Ellen Morrison
Jackie Rose +A
Judy Soule
Sharyl Swope**

**Alto 2**
Donna Amos
Colleen Cornman-Wilcox
Jan Corwin
Lynn Corwin
Lisa Fithian-Barrett A
Sharayaha Guy
Terri Lewis
Sparky Lindsay
Gaia Mather+**
Debby Pollack
Jill Sanders*
Michele Stemler**
Cindy Zrinyi
+ Harmonizers
++ Harmonizer Chair
** Music Leaders
* Section Managers
A Aurora Coordinating Team

Aurora Outreach Ensemble Members
Phyllis Auger, Margaret Blake, Brenda Brischetto, Kristan Burkert, Cindy Christensen, Libby Clow, Patricia Cornman-Wilcox, Patti Harelkin, Frances Hicks, Lisa Kron, Jaclyn Leeds, Claudia Nadine, Lydia Pickard, Jackie Rose, Michele Stemler, Sharyl Swope

Aurora Outreach Ensemble is available to sing at your upcoming banquet, party, fundraiser, or other special event.

For more information about booking, contact admin@aurorachorus.org.
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Bridging Voices
Erik Gullikson, Director / Evan C. Paul, accompanist

This Land is Your Land  Woody Guthrie, arr. Feigenbaum
Malala  Joan Szymko
Found / Tonight  Miranda, Pasek & Paul, arr. Lacamore
Seasons of Love  Jonathan Larson, arr. R. Emerson

Key of Q
Sebastien Eichvalds, Director

Honeybee  Isabella Bunny Bennett, David Bennett
Would You Harbor Me  Ysaye M. Barnwell
Shut Up and Dance  Berger, Maiman, McMahon, Petricca, Ray & Waugaman, arr. Wayne M. Grimmer

Portland Lesbian Choir
Mary McCarty, Director / Kim Horenstein, accompanist

Count on Me  Bruno Mars, Ari Levine & Philip Lawrence
   arr. Janet Day
In Times Like These  Jim Tullio, LeRoy Marinell & Mavis Staples
   solo: Veronica Darling
   United

BVS Women’s Choir
Jessica Corbin, Director / Melanie Cozzi, Assistant Director

The Dawn is Not Distant  Christine Donkin / text: Genesis 1, 5:5 & H.W. Longfellow
Prism  Lily White / text: Sara Goudarzi
Ingredients of Worth  Jessica Corbin / text: Omayma Khayat
Still I Rise  Rosepahnye Powell

—— 15 minute intermission ——
Aurora Chorus
Joan Szymko, Director / Kira Whiting, accompanist
Casey Bozell, violin / Valdine Mishkin, cello

With BVS Women’s Choir

I Dream a World
Joan Szymko / text: Langston Hughes
“only light, only love” / Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
No Time Not to Love
Joan Szymko / text: Deena Metzger, Szymko
Quite Regularly Gay
Joan Szymko / text: Gertrude Stein

Aurora Chorus

“If you love for Beauty” / Friedrich Rückert, trans. by D.K. Smith
Liebst du um Schönheit
Clara Schuman, arr. Drew Collins
Yes, You
Bobby McFerrin, arr. J.D. Moore
*solo:* Ali Ayers
And So it Goes
Billy Joel / arr. Kirby Shaw

“Meow” / M. Buxbaum, H. Kethcum, M. Benson, A. Vining
Alley Cat Love Song
Paul Carey / text: Dana Giola
Fighting Over What We Believe
Elizabeth Alexander
*soloists:*
Ffe Mwe, Mwe Ffe
Joan Szymko / Bantu adage, Szymko
Not By Might, But With Love
Linda Hirschhorn / text: Zechariah, 4:6
*soloists:* Sharayaha Guy, Lydia Pickard

“love is a place” / e.e. cummings
Love Bears All Things
Joan Szymko / text: I Corinthians 13: 7-8
Swimming to the Other Side
Pat Humphies, arr. Szymko
*solo:* Sharyl Swope
*ensemble:*

Combined Choirs

Brave
Sara Bareilles & Jack Arnoff, arr. A. Snyder
love is love is love is love
Abbie Betinis

READERS (in order of appearance): Rebecca Pozorski, Susan Abe, Sparky Lindsay,
Mary Ellen Morrison, Pamela Burrell, Nicole Behnke, Gaia Mather

*soloists (in order of appearance):* Nicole Behnke, Libby Clow, Lori Kovacevic,
Colleen Cormann-Wilcox

*ensemble (in order of appearance):* Sharyl Swope, Michele Stemler, Libby Clow, Lydia Pickard,
Betsy Dowell, Lisa Kron
Selected Lyrics and Translations

No Time Not Love
There are those who are trying to set fire to the world, we are in danger, there is time only to work slowly, There is no time not to love (© Metzger)

There is time only to love boldly, there is no time for fear — no time not to love.
There are those who are trying to mend the world. (Szymko)

Ffe Mwe, Mwe Ffe
Lyrics ©2013 by Joan Szymko)
(Translation from Bantu)
Ffe mwe, mwe ffe
- They are us and we are them.
gwanga mujje
- Come to our rescue!
Be the change you wish to see.
You can start by looking at me and knowing that I am you and you are me.
We are them and they are we.
I am them and they are me.
We belong to each other.*
(last line in italics from Mother Teresa)

Liebst du um Schönheit
(translation from the German by D.K. Smith)
If you love for beauty,
O love not me!
Love the sun,
She has golden hair.

If you love for youth,
O love not me!
Love the spring
Which is young each year.

If you love for riches,
O love not me!
Love the mermaid
Who has many shining pearls.

If you love for love,
Ah yes, love me!
Love me always,
I shall love you ever more.

Fighting Over What We Believe
Lyrics ©2012 by Elizabeth Alexander.

Talking left, talking right, talking far into the night, Splitting hairs, splitting up,splitting off, Less and more, rich and poor, what to address, what to ignore, What are we really fighting for? Persuade, coerce, convene, disperse, accept or curse? Deny, confess, condemn or bless? Who lives? Who dies? My truth! Your lies!
Bring in, shut out, what’s that all about?
Who gives out retribution and grace?
What to keep, what to spend,
What to give and what to lend?
Some have not, some have a lot.Can we learn to share the things we’ve got?

(Fighting Over What We Believe, cont.)
I see us fighting over what we believe; how to love and how to pray.
We begin with hope and resolve and dreams, and end up fighting over what we believe.
I see us fighting over what we believe, leaving spirits poor and lonely.
I want to use my fighting spirit in a different way instead of fighting over what we believe.
I want to wrestle with the angel ’til the light of dawn, And struggle with my need for pride.
I want to take on my tendency to turn my head, And grapple with why it feels so hard to gently lay our differences aside.
We all believe in justice.
Let’s talk about what that looks like.
And we believe in compassion.
Let’s look at what that really means.
We believe in the holy work of listening, to every voice. Let’s start our conversation there, Instead of fighting over what we believe; it wears us down and wears us out.
We have eyes to see, we have ears to hear, we have hands that long to give and receive.I see us fighting over what we believe, leaving spirits poor and lonely.I want to use my fighting spirit in a different way instead of fighting over what we believe.
(Divide, unite, exclude, invite, day, night, wrong, right, no end in sight...)
We all believe in justice...
Let’s talk about what that looks like
Swimming to the Other Side
(© 1992 Pat Humphries)

We are living 'neath the great Big Dipper
We are washed by the very same rain
We are swimming in the stream together
Some in power and some in pain
We can worship this ground we walk on
Cherishing the beings that we live beside
Loving spirits will live forever
We’re all swimming to the other side

I am alone and I am searching
Hungering for answers in my time
I am balanced at the brink of wisdom
I’m impatient to receive a sign
I move forward with my senses open
Imperfection, it be my crime
In humility I will listen
We’re all swimming to the other side

On this journey through thoughts and feelings
Binding intuition, my head, my heart
I am gathering the tools together
I’m preparing to do my part
All of those who have come before me
Band together and be my guide
Loving lessons that I will follow
We’re all swimming to the other side

When we get there we will discover
All the gifts we’ve been given to share
Have been with us since life’s beginning
And we never noticed they were there
We can balance at the brink of wisdom
Never recognizing that we’ve arrived
Loving spirits will live together
We’re all swimming to the other side.

The Eileen Spencer Scholarship Fund

The Eileen Spencer Scholarship Fund was established in memory of Eileen Spencer, a devoted chorus member for nearly 15 years. The fund assists chorus members with participation fees when financial challenges arise. We invite you to support Aurora singers by making a contribution to Aurora Chorus earmarked “Spencer Fund.”

Join us for cookies and conversation after the show downstairs in the reception area.

Recordings and merchandise from guest choruses also available.
We are Volunteer-Powered, Non-Commercial, Listener-Sponsored, Full-Strength Community Radio for Portland, Oregon, the Pacific Northwest, & the World!

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Concert Credits
Production Coordinator – Patti Harelkin
Stage Manager – Robin Lane
Assistant Stage Manager – Sara Steege
Front of House – Lesley Sepetoski

Sound & Lights – Showdrape Inc. Cassie, Yalchin & staff
Sound Recording – Rod Everson
Concert Graphic Design – Joan Szymko

Special Thanks
Cara, Stephen and staff at First Congregational Church
PSU Music Department, Marylhurst University
All of our amazing volunteers – thank you!
sing with us!
Aurora Chorus is a place where you belong! We welcome women of all ages at all skill levels who seek artistic expression in an empowering singing environment. Directed by renowned choral composer Joan Szymko, Aurora provides women with an outstanding opportunity to grow vocally and just as importantly, to sing words that allow the heart to soar, to grieve, to celebrate and to communicate to our audience our hopes for a more compassionate world.

SAVE THE DATES!
2018-2019 Season
SECRET GARDENS OF THE HEART
Dec 15, 7pm & Dec 16, 4pm
STEP BY STEP, International Women's Day Celebration
March 3, 4pm
LOOK OUT!
May 19, 4pm