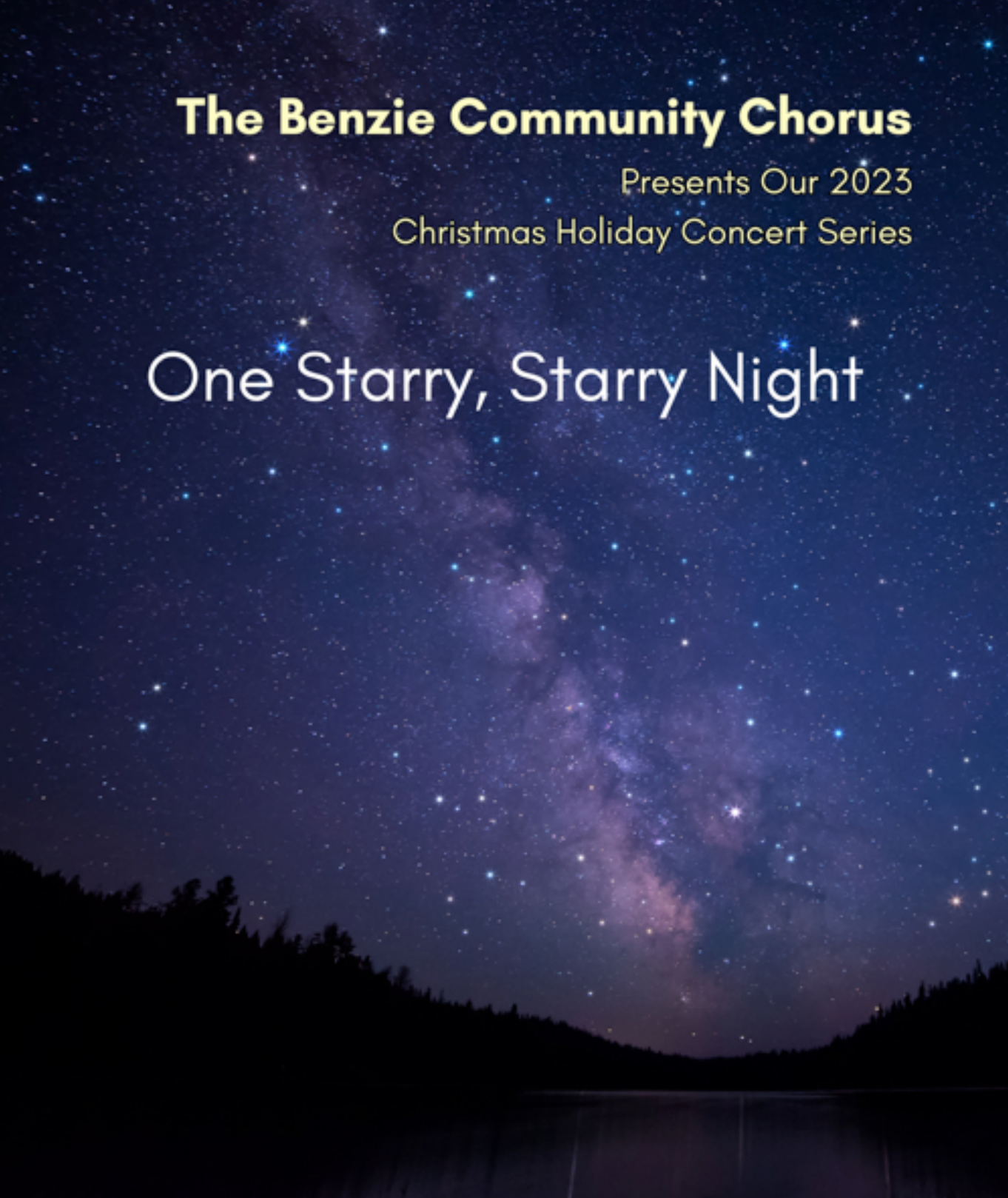
The Benzie Community Chorus
Presents Our 2023
Christmas Holiday Concert Series
One Starry, Starry Night

One Starry, Starry Night....

“We are travelers on a cosmic journey, stardust, swirling and dancing in the eddies and whirlpools of infinity. Life is eternal. We have stopped for a moment to encounter each other, to meet, to love, to share. This is a precious moment. It is a little parenthesis in eternity.” Paulo Coelho

“Skeptic or believer in the traditional biblical Christmas story, the holiday season brings everyone the opportunity to explore the magnitude and potential of events in one solitary night - or day - that can change the trajectory of history’s legacy.” Dinah Haag

This evening we celebrate light that shines with hope most brilliantly in darkness. We also celebrates stars. “For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream.” Vincent Van Gogh.

“The spirit-world around this world of sense Floats like an atomosphere, and everywhere Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense. A vital breath of more ethereal air.” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

“Music is the ethereal connection between this world and other.” Stella Benson

The Benzie Community Chorus

One Starry, Starry Night

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, December 8, 9 and 10, 2023
7:00 p.m.

*Please help the flow of our time by holding your applause except where indicated with an asterisk.**

"Surely the Presence" Lanny Wolfe (b. 1942)
Composed in 1977, this is one of over seven hundred songs and fourteen musicals written by this songwriter, musician, music publisher, and music educator. The Columbus Ohian recorded over seventy projects and won two Dove Awards in 1984; all from a person who taught himself to play piano by ear.

An excerpt from "Reaching Toward the Millet Fields"
As a result of his work with the ecstatic love poems of the 14th century Persian poet Hafiz, also known as the "Invisible Tongue," Daniel Ladinsky crafted "Light into words-to make the Luminous Resonance of God tangible to us."
Rachel Higgins, reader

"The Winter's Night" Nicholas Myers (b. 1987)
Mr. Myers is an American composer, orchestrator, organist and music director of St. Catherine of Genoa Church in Washington Heights, NY, and the recording secretary of the New York Theatre Organ Society.

> "Deep in the night quiet and still while all the world's asleep dreaming of what they will. Out from the warmth, out in the cold. Snowflakes are falling, covering the earth, telling the world winter has come. Making the earth come to new from old. Tapping the window, brushing the ground. Soft as a dream, dreams pure as white, white as the snow."

“Sure on This Shining Night” Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)
Mr. Lauridsen is an American composer and academic teacher, a recipient of the National Medal of Arts, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, composer-in-residence, and professor emeritus of composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, where he taught for fifty-two years until his retirement in 2019.

> “Sure on this shining night of star-made 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, I weep for wonder wand'ring far alone of shadows on the stars.”

“O Come, Emmanuel” Elaine Hagenberg (b. 1979)
Ms. Hagenberg is an American composer from Iowa and her work has literally spanned many planes: the globe, genres of choral music, and singers of all ages, although her Facebook page indicates Musician/Band. Most often performed in meters of two or four, the triple meter and “mysterioso” marking make this a good fit for this evening.

*** “Christmas Day”** Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
Mr. Holst was an English composer, arranger and teacher, best known for his orchestral suite *The Planets*. He hoped to become a pianist, but was prevented by neuritis in his right arm, hailing from three previous generations. Unable to support himself by his compositions, he played the trombone professionally and later became a teacher.
As good teachers often make use of that which is available, it makes sense that Holst would interweave “Good Christian Men Rejoice,” “God Rest You Merry Gentlemen,” “Come, Ye Lofty,” and “The First Noel.”
Judith Bosma, Dale Herscher, Dave Limer, Ray Miller, Nancy Reed, Laura Sheffield, Kyle Taylor, Lisa Tracy, ensemble singers

*** "And the Glory of the Lord"**
George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
Mr. Handel was a German-British Baroque composer, eventually becoming a naturalized British citizen, well known for his operas, oratorios, concert and organ concertos. Almost blind, he died in 1759, a respected and rich man, and was given a state funeral at Westminster Abbey. This selection is from his most famous work, *Messiah*.

"I Wonder As I Wander" John Jacob Niles, Arr. Steve Pilkington
This tune is a Christian folk hymn, typically performed as a Christmas carol, written by American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles (1892-1980). Mr. Niles, along with Odetta, Joan Baez, Burl Ives, Peter, Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan revived American folk music in the 1950s and 60s. Mr. Pilkington is an American associate professor at Westminster Choir College, Mr. Pilkington has taught every aspect of the church music curriculum for twenty-five years.
Liz Negrau, soloist

"The First Noel" English Carol, W. Sandy's Christmas Carols, 1833
arr. Dan Forrest (b. 1978)
Mr. Forrest is an American composer, pianist, educator, and music editor born in Breesport, New York. His teachers include his elementary school teacher starting him on piano at the age of 8 and studying with the famous choral influencer, Alice Parker. Of this piece, the sheet music company, J.W. Pepper states, "Forrest's setting of this beloved carol takes a wonder-filled, reflective gaze inside the stable in Bethlehem."

*** "Night of Silence"** John Ferguson (b. 1941)
Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Ferguson is an organist, teacher, and composer of hymns, organ, brass, and percussion. Back in the day, if you grew up singing in (Lutheran) church choirs in Minnesota, you probably sang a few of his pieces before you graduated from high school. When cued, you are invited to sing with us.

> Silent Night, holy night. All is calm. All is bright. Round yon virgin, mother and child. Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.

Nancy Boehm; organ

INTERMISSION

"The Twelve Days of Christmas" arr. Gabriel Harrison (b. 2001)
Fittingly, Mr. Harrison is not only our youngest composer, he is also a student at Louisiana Tech University where he is pursuing a degree in secondary education with a minor in music.
This classic English cumulative Christmas carol was first published in the late 18th century and is perhaps one of the top-most recognizable tunes, possibly having more variations than can be counted. The cost of all 364 items amounts to $210,972.66 in 2023. The cost and singing pales in comparison to the performance of our two baritones: Dorian Olson and Gregory Reed.

*** "Star Carol"** John Rutter, CBE (b. 1945)
Born and educated in England, Mr. Rutter's love of sacred choral music caused him to create his own choir, The Cambridge Singers. In his earlier days, he collaborated with Sir David Wilcocks, creating an anthology of 5 choral volumes of British (mostly Christmas) choral music. Star Carol was composed in 1972.

*** "That's Christmas to Me"** Scott Hoying, Kevin Olusola, Katy Clark and Penny Clark, arr. Mark Brymer (b. 1957)
As producer and arranger for two different school textbook series; head of music production clients such as Six Flags Theme Parks, Disney; and a Gospel Music Dove Award winner, Mr. Brymer is one of the leading musicians in choral singing.
Jeanne Hafer, Rachel Higgins, Michelle Thompson, Sabina Vera, and Maria Wolowiec

*** "Hope for Resolution"**
Paul Caldwell (b. 1963) and Sean Ivory (b. 1969)
Messers Caldwell and Ivory began spontaneously arranging music together in the early 1990s while they both worked with a community-based youth choir in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Tonight's piece is a perfect example of their propensity to bring together musical elements of various cultures.
The text "Of the Father's Love Begotten," was written by Spanish poet, lawyer and judge Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-c. 413) who began writing poetry at the age of 57. English Anglican priest, John Mason Neale (1818-1866) translated the doctrinal hymn which was paired with a plainchant melody most commonly used today. Caldwell and Ivory brought all the previous to the Zulu anti-apartheid song, "Thula Sizwe".

"Nation, do not cry. Jehovah will protect us.
We will attain freedom. Jehovah will protect us."

Marianne Hill, flute; Serenity Schulz, clarinet

*** "Heavenly Peace"** "Away In a Manger" arr. Joel Raney (b. 1956)
Once thought to be a German carol attributed to Martin Luther, this beloved lullaby is now thought to be an anonymous American creation that enjoys great popularity in England. John Thomas McFarland (1851-1913) added a third verse in 1892.
Mr. Raney started playing the piano sometime between learning to walk and learning to read. His taste for gospel music began in a rural Baptist church in Alabama that spurred him to earn a masters degree in piano performance at The Juilliard School.
Kyle Taylor, solo

*** "White Winter Hymnal"** Fleet Foxes
Fleet Foxes is an American indie folk band formed in Seattle, Washington, in 2006. Indie folk music hybridizes acoustic guitar melodies of traditional folk music with contemporary instrumentation. The band's name is a result of a conflict with their first choice, "The Pineapples," deciding that the final name was "evocative of some weird English activity like fox hunting." "White Winter Hymnal" is their first single that reached heights in the music world thanks to the a cappella group Pentatonix doing a cover of it. Despite its title containing the word "hymnal," White Winter Hymnal does not inherently carry a religious meaning, serving instead as a metaphorical reference and introspection on human connection and the cycle of life and the simpler time of childhood.

"I was following the pack, all swaddled in their coats
With scarves of red tied 'round their throats
To keep their little heads from fallin' in the snow
And I turned 'round and there you go And, Michael, you would fall and turn the white snow Red as strawberries in the summertime."

Cory Bissell, Cody Bowers, Liz Negrau, Molly Morris, Dorian Olson, Greg Reed, Ed and Sandy Scarbrough

“Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)”
Phil Spector, Ellie Greenwich, Jeff Barry, arr. Lisa DeSpain
Ms. DeSpain is a Utah native, New York City-based composer of opera, musical theatre and concert works known for her American sound. She’s composed works for ensembles from the US Air Force Band to string quartets, dance companies to Broadway, high school groups, and professional songs and works. This song was made famous by the voice and styling of Darlene Love and TV host David Letterman’s invitation to sing it during the Christmas holidays.

*** “Lift Your Light”** Mary McDonald (b. 1956)
Beginning playing hymns by ear at the age of 5, Ms. McDonald has risen to great heights as an American composer, arranger, producer, pianist, and organist. Having taught herself, improvising, before learning how to read music, accompanying the Tennessee Men’s Chorale for 36 years, serving as the first woman president of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, Ms. McDonald also served as the sacred choral editor for a major music corporation for more than 20 years. This piece seems like the right one to send us into the holiday season.

We will present our 2024 Summer Concert Series
June 22, June 23, June 24, July 13, 14 and 15.

OUR ACCOMPANIST Susan Snyder is a collaborative pianist on staff at Interlochen Center for the Arts. She is a solo piano performer with orchestras all over the world, and is the Organist/Choir Director at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Interlochen. She spent a fair bit of her life as a flute specialist and performer, but her focus is more on piano and her menagerie of furred family these days. Susan also enjoys Bikram yoga.

OUR DRUMMER Cody Bowers is a graduate of Benzie Central High School and has an audio engineering certification. His dream job is to be able to write and play music.

OUR DIRECTOR Dinah Haag obtained her undergraduate degrees in music education at St. Cloud State University and a Master of Divinity degree from Bethel Theological Seminary, all of which took place in Minnesota. She finds it amazing that she's been able to be and work and live in this amazing place since 1998.

OUR SINGERS

Delores Berta
Cory Bissell
Bob Boehm
Nancy Boehm
Judith Bosma
Jeryl Colby
Phyllis Crowell-Van Hammen
Dawn Cummings
Myra Elias
Ginny Freeman
Bob French
Melissa Gilbert
Kay Gossens
Jeanne Hafer
Melissa Hamp
Abby Hayes

* Founding Members

Dale Herscher
Rachel Higgins
+Marianne Hill
Kathi Houston
*Fran Johnson
+Kelly Larmour
Dave Limer
Peggy Link
Leslie McElduff
*Sharon McKinley
Maureen Merry
Ray Miller
Molly Morris
Liz Negrau
Samantha O'Brien
Becky Ogilvie
Bruce Ogilvie

+Dorian Olson
Stan Otto
+Gregory Reed
Nancy Reed
Ed Scarbrough
Sandy Scarbrough
Serenity Schulz
Laura Sheffield
Kyle Taylor
Shelley Thompson
+Lisa Tracy
Sabine Vera
Christine Walkons
Judy Welch
Karyn Wells
Maria Wolowiec

+ New Members

The Benzie Community Chorus is grateful

- to the good people of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church and Frankfort United Methodist Church for the gracious use of their space and facilities. We are also thankful for the people of St. Philip's Episcopal Church for allowing us to hold our rehearsals there.

- you who have chosen to spend this time with us. Should you feel inclined to give an additional gift to the Chorus, simply use your phone to scan the donation QR code on the back page. Should you choose to do so, we are even more delighted. Thank you.

- our volunteers. There are so many things with which you help, and our shows are all the better for your additions.

Publication 78 Data List: Organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. Users may rely on this list in determining deductibility of their contributions. BCC is on that list.

Our concerts are made possible in part by 100+ Women Who Care. We deeply appreciate their support.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the BCC, please contact any chorus member or give our director Dinah Haag a call at 231-651-0311. Rehearsals for our summer concerts will begin around the beginning of March, 2024. The date will be announced on the chorus website (www.benziechorus.org) and on our Facebook page (Benzie County Chorus). To keep up with all our events, please feel free to check out both sites.

Unwanted programs can be recycled in the black boxes at the "entrance" tables.

If you don't know about our music scholarships, check our website.

BC3 Donation