



Bayou Notes

The newsletter of the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston

Volume 3, Number 1

Fall 1995

Stories of the Season

GMCH begins season with holiday concerts in Houston and Galveston

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, under the direction of interim artistic director James Winslow, presents "Stories of the Season: Fables, Carols & Holiday Songs" on Friday and Saturday, December 8 and 9, 1995, at 7:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin (at Southmore), Houston. The chorus will repeat the program at the Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, Galveston, on Saturday, December 16, at 8 p.m.

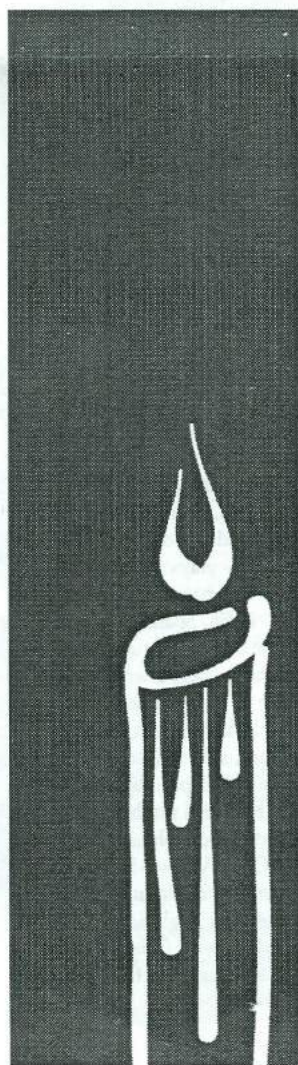
The chorus will present an exciting variety of works for this year's festivities. Audience favorites such as "Survivors!", "A Season for Lovers," and "Music of Hannukah" will return, along with "White Christmas," "We Need a Little Christmas," and many other familiar holiday numbers. In addition, GMCH continues its tradition of excellence in non-English music with three varied Latin works, "Haec Est Dies," "In Dulci Jubilo," and "Gaudete." To round out the evening, director Winslow has selected an eclectic group of works in which the traditional meets the modern: Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Nine Carols for Male Voices (Unaccompanied)" and Kirke Mechem's "Blow Ye the Trumpet" from the opera *John Brown*. And what would a holiday concert be without a little Handel? If you're sick of the "Hallelujah Chorus" but still need your dose of majesty, come hear the chorus trumpet "Hallelujah, Amen" from *Judas Maccabeus*.

The 1995-96 season promises to be one of the busiest and most rewarding in GMCH history. The season started with a brief performance at the HATCH Awards Banquet in October, and we'll round off December with appearances at the Interfaith Service of Hope and Remembrance, World AIDS Day ceremonies, and at Moody Gardens the afternoon of the Galveston holiday

concert. The chorus gains speed with a possible spring offering, the annual June Pride Week concert, and finally a week-long trip to Tampa for GALA V, an international gathering of lesbian and gay choruses which promises to be the largest convention in that city's history.

Tickets for the Houston concerts are \$12 (general admission) and may be

purchased by contacting a member of the chorus or by calling 713/227-ARTS. Tickets will also be available at the door, but seating is limited, so buy yours early! Tickets for the Galveston concert are \$10, \$15, and \$20; box seats are \$25-30. Call 1-800-821-1894 or buy tickets from any chorus member. For more information, call 713/521-SING. ♪



Gay Men's Chorus of Houston
James Winslow, Artistic Director

Stories OF THE Season

*Fables, Carols
& Holiday Songs*



Bye (For Now) To David Weber

GMCH acknowledged a debt of gratitude by presenting departing president David Weber with the first Jeff Cothran Memorial Award at the general membership meeting in September.

Weber served the chorus over many years as librarian, board member, long-range planning committee chair, and as president from July through September of this year. Regrettably, his employer transferred him to San Antonio effective October 1, so he was forced to resign before completing his term as president.

At the September meeting, board member and former president Rex Gillit introduced a resolution to create the award and to bestow it upon Weber in recognition of his years of service and his peerless contributions to the organization. The membership voted in favor of the resolution and thanked Weber with a standing ovation.

Dave promised to continue to give the chorus his support from afar. He will be sorely missed. ♪

GMCH Needs You!

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston is always looking for new members—whether they can sing or not!

Singing members participate in all of GMCH's annual events, which this season include a possible spring musical event, a Pride Week concert in June, and a week-long trip to Tampa, Florida, in July 1996 to attend GALA Festival V. The GALA Festival is the quadrennial gathering of GALA Choruses (the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses), an international alliance of more than 140 men's, women's, and mixed choruses dedicated to providing leadership and inspiration to the lesbian and gay movement through excellence in the choral arts.

Non-singing members can also participate in all chorus events, providing help and support for our musical endeavors. Do you have backstage technical experience? We need help setting stages, lighting, and organizing halls for concert events. Marketing and sales more your thing? Take charge of ticket sales and advertising. Of course, we can always use volunteer fundraisers! We welcome anyone who shares a commitment to our mission.

New members are especially welcome

this season, which is highlighted by the release of GMCH's first commercial recording, *To Friends and To Life*, and by our trip to Tampa. These two events give us the best opportunity ever to showcase our talents to Houston, to Texas, and to the international choral community. ♪

GMCH Welcomes Winslow as AD

As a six-year member of the Houston Grand Opera, James Marley Winslow has grown accustomed to excellence in performance. In September, he joined GMCH to continue the pursuit of excellence as interim artistic director through the holiday concerts. At the November 12 meeting of the board of directors, the board voted to extend Winslow's appointment through the end of the 1995-96 season.

Winslow has taken part in more than 20 HGO productions, including world premieres by Carlisle Floyd and Sir Michael Tippett. He has worked with a distinguished list of directors and choreographers.

Since 1988, Winslow has worked with Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, serving as a tenor soloist and section leader and as assistant conductor. He has performed with the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit, and in Houston at Christ Church Cathedral, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, and St. Michael's and St. Cecilia's Catholic Churches.

Winslow received his bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in 1988. He has had private conducting studies under Larry Rachleff, conductor of the Shepherd School Symphony.

His training includes fencing, classical guitar, dance, mime, yoga, stage movement and battle, and stage crew and stagecraft. Winslow plays guitar, piano, violin, and flute and has studied German, French, Italian, Latin, Spanish, Japanese, and Russian. He is an avid outdoorsman.

Winslow's teaching experience includes serving as choirmaster, chair of the vocal department, director of the handbell program, and director of the jazz ensemble at Episcopal High School in Houston; as handbell teacher at St. Stephen's Episcopal School; as private voice coach at Quail Valley Middle School; and teaching choir and music theory at Sharpstown High School.

He is married to Lynn Griebing. We welcome Lynn and James to the GMCH family! ♪

Chorus Elects New President

At the September general membership meeting, members elected Ralph Sikes to take over the office of president of the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Sikes had served since July as the chorus' vice president.

Sikes has ambitious plans for the organization.

"I would like to strengthen the financial base of GMCH through increased ticket and advertising sales, development of corporate underwriting of concerts, development of a chorus supporters' donation program, and through increased membership," he said.

Other goals he has set include securing modest office space before the end of December to facilitate chorus business and sales of our recording. He would also like to upgrade the salary of the artistic director, institute a search for an executive director, and increase GMCH visibility through a comprehensive, unified marketing program for the concert year, as well as through recruitment of non-singing community members. Another goal is the creation of project team manuals to simplify the transition after each year's elections and to reduce the "learning curve" for project volunteers.

Sikes is a Houston native. He graduated from Waltrip High School in 1972 and from the University of Texas at Austin in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in botany and philosophy. He attended Washington Theological Coalition in Silver Springs, Maryland, while at seminary with the Paulist Fathers.

He worked as a business manager for the Church of the Good Shepherd in Manhattan before returning to Houston, where today he is owner of Sikes Drapery Corporation.

Sikes' musical background includes having studied violin from age 10 to age 16. He played in junior high and high school orchestras, in the All-City Youth Orchestra for two years, and in the pit orchestras for high school productions of *Carnival*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, and *On the Town*.

Sikes studied voice for six months in Washington, D.C., while at seminary, and also in Manhattan, where he sang in the Church of the Good Shepherd choir.

Ralph says he also soloed on Broadway, but at the wrong end—208th Street!

The office of vice president will be filled by appointment or election in the near future. ♪



GMCH Announces Release of *To Friends and To Life!*

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston is pleased to announce the release of our first commercial recording, *To Friends and To Life: The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston Celebrates Its Fifteenth Anniversary*. This anthology of chorus history looks back at the chorus' first 15 years through 15 favorite songs.

TF&TL includes former GMCH artistic director John-Michael Albert's award-winning "A Season for Lovers" and the premiere recording of his moving suite, *Though Much Is Taken, Much Abides*, four songs with one story to tell.

"Though loss has the capacity to paralyze us with grief, life should be lived by doing," explains Albert. "The past is always with us in the present, and it is the combination of the two that carries us into the future. The true measure of the quality of life is not in terms of loss, but simply in terms of those we live life with."

The suite features guest performances by violinist Alan Austin, who has

performed with the Houston Ballet Orchestra and the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, and cellist Steve Estes, who has performed with the Houston Masterworks Chorus and with the Houston Symphony. The recording also highlights the talents of soprano Jeanette Matley, who has performed with the Houston Grand Opera in *Der Meistersinger* and *Madame Butterfly*, and recording engineer John Proffitt, the general manager of radio station KUHF.

Engineering equipment problems delayed the release of *TF&TL* for three months. The release is the culmination of more than two years of planning, rehearsing, recording, engineering, and manufacturing. Community support for the project has been overwhelming: the chorus' Track Sponsorship drive found 14 individuals and groups willing to invest \$1,500 each in the recording:

Tim Baker and Steve Edwards
Thomas Chelena and Daniel Malachowski
Gayle Goddard and Lynne Weynand

Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection

David Opheim and Rex Gillit

Randy R. Reddemann

Mike Salavarria

Maddie Teller-Kook and Alan Kook

Jeffrey Wade

David Weber

Donald Wilson and Ken Hansen

The bass section of GMCH

Members, family, and friends of GMCH,

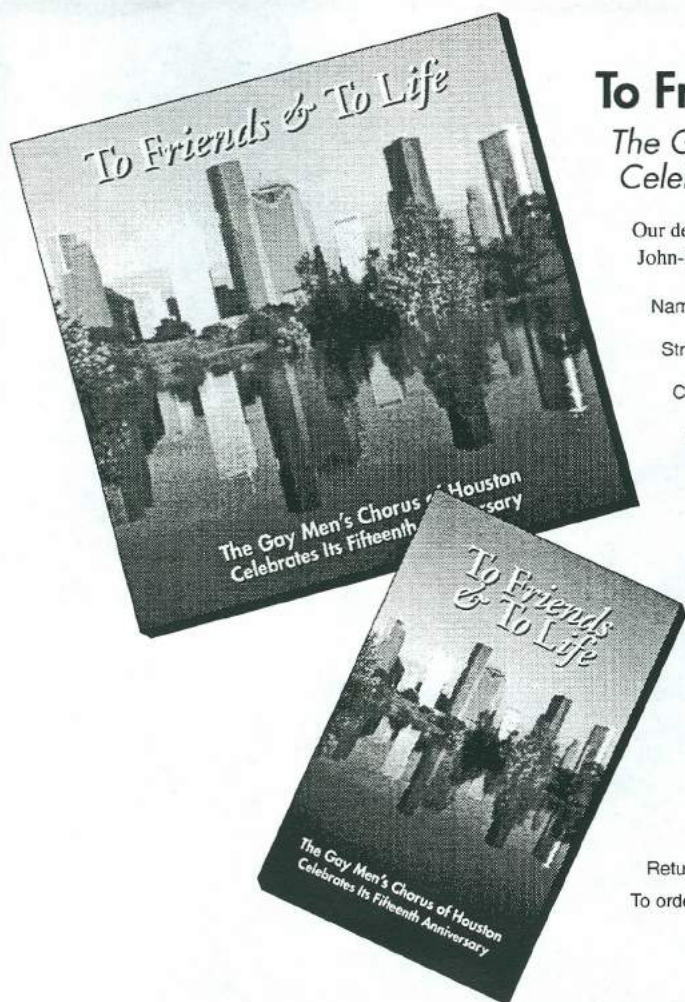
in memory of deceased members

The families and friends of GMCH in

honor of their loved ones in the chorus

To Friends and To Life is dedicated, in the words of the title song, "to all we have touched, both present and gone," and to the friends the chorus will enjoy in the next 15 years.

Copies of To Friends and To Life will be on sale at our holiday concerts and at various other venues in the coming months. Call 713/521-SING for more information, or use the order form below.



To Friends and To Life

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston Celebrates Its Fifteenth Anniversary

Our debut recording chronicles the history of GMCH in music and includes John-Michael Albert's *A Season for Lovers*, GALA Festival IV Competition Winner (1992).

Name _____

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Stories OF THE Season

Fables, Carols
& Holiday Songs



Friday, December 8, 1995, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, December 9, 1995, 7:30 p.m.

First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin, Houston
General admission \$12. *Limited seating.*

Call 713/227-ARTS or 713/521-SING.

Saturday, December 16, 1995, 8 p.m.

Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, Galveston
Tickets are \$10, \$15, \$20; boxes \$25-\$30.

Call 1-800-821-1894.

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is the newsletter of the

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston
James Winslow, *interim artistic director*

Ralph Sikes, *president*
David E. Gebo, *secretary*
Mike McNamara, *treasurer*
Edward F. Gumnick, *designer and editor*



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P.O. Box 541004
Houston, Texas 77254-1004
713/521-SING



Our Mission:

We sing to achieve excellence in men's choral music. We provide a nurturing environment for our members and offer a source of pride, unity, and support to our diverse communities.