

## 10<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Season

New season. New logo. New challenges. Same excellence. This spring, CCW begins its 10th Anniversary year with the premiere of *The Nightingale*, a choral opera for young voices. This luminous work is a worthy vehicle for showcasing CCW's artistry and an exciting springboard for its celebratory season. The 10th Anniversary will be marked by events large and small, giving the CCW community a chance to review highlights of the Chorus's history.

Plans include the commission of a piece by innovative Canadian composer Stephen Hatfield. Hatfield's complex rhythms and chant-like motifs borrow from world cultures and create rich textures. Hatfield will lead choristers in a full day workshop prior to the introduction of his composition in the Spring Concert of 2006. Alumni will be invited to participate and experience first-hand Hatfield's engaging teaching style. Recent alumni will remember Hatfield's dynamic "Las Amarillas."

CCW's 2005-2006 program will feature four "NSO Pops: Happy Holidays!" concerts with Marvin Hamlisch and the NSO, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, conducted by internationally acclaimed Bach specialist Helmuth Rilling, and Mahler's Eighth Symphony with Music Director Leonard Slatkin and the NSO. The Mahler performance will fortuitously occur during the week of Chorus America's National Convention.

A South American tour in the summer of 2006 is in the exploratory stage. In the past, CCW has embarked on a number of international tours and has participated in festivals in Italy, the Czech Republic and Austria, and, most recently, England and Wales.

The prestigious performances scheduled for the anniversary year are clear evidence of the success CCW has earned and enjoyed over nine years. From its founding in 1996 by Joan Gregoryk, CCW soared to its position as one of the foremost children's choruses in the nation. Listening to the well-trained voices of CCW, we are lifted above the din of difficult and uncertain times. On hearing the Treble Chorus sing "Sakura" at the National Cherry Blossom Festival or the Concert Chorus blend harmoniously in four parts in the opening scene of *The Nightingale*, we take joy and look forward to another season and the next decade of singing.

## From the Director

We are on the threshold of our 10th Anniversary, appropriately marked by our new logo that appears on this page. The logo reflects the spirit of our organization and helps to solidify our identity locally and nationally.

This year's calendar has been especially full with an unprecedented number of performances since January. Concert choristers appeared with Marvin Hamlisch and the Master Chorale at the Kuwaiti Embassy Benefit for Iraqi refugees. During the festivities, General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.) and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie were honored with Humanitarian Awards. The Chamber Ensemble participated in a concert celebrating "talented young artists from the DC metropolitan area" at the Lincoln Theatre, and members of the Concert Chorus joined the Choral Arts Society in a sold-out performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall. The Treble Chorus sang at the Opening Ceremony of the National Cherry Blossom Festival and partnered with the Glorystar Children's Chorus and Metropolitan Baptist Children's Choir for our annual "Building Community Through Song" event at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church. These various performances at different venues show that CCW continues to play a highly active role in the cultural life of the city.

The entire CCW community is eagerly anticipating the premiere of *The Nightingale* at GWU's Lisner Auditorium. Preceding the opera, the Treble Chorus will take center stage and sing two Chinese folk songs, which composer Imant Raminsh used in the opera, as well as his "Song of the Stars" and several American folk songs set by Aaron Copland. Singers in both Treble and Concert Choruses will have the opportunity to work with Mr. Raminsh when he comes to Washington to guide CCW in the final preparations for his wonderful opera. In a "Meet the Artists" session before the Sunday matinee, Mr. Raminsh and Stage Director Catherine Flye will discuss various aspects of the production.

I hope all of you will attend a performance on May 14 at 7 p.m. or May 15 at 2 p.m. and share the excitement of our extraordinary venture – the world premiere of *The Nightingale*.

Joan Gregoryk



- inside
- Gala 2005
- Features
- Alumni News
- Calendar

## A Message from the President of the Board

In the fall edition of this newsletter, I noted that we are in the midst of an exceptionally active and challenging time for CCW. As we progress through the current season, the high level of activity continues apace. Our annual gala, held in February, was the most successful fundraising event in our history and a triumph of volunteerism. Our full performance schedule speaks for itself, and preparations for the May debut of *The Nightingale* have naturally required an extraordinary input of energy and creativity from those involved in this unique project.

But our efforts have also focused on plans for next year's celebration of our 10th Anniversary, and in that context we have begun to develop relationships with a variety of organizations. These include corporate entities that value partnerships with music and arts education programs committed to excellence and diversity. They include, as well, Canadian-American business groups. Additionally, we are exploring potential alliances with the offices of local leaders, notably the DC Mayor's office.

This evolving strategy, establishing links with corporate and community leaders in the DC metropolitan area, is designed to create higher visibility and new opportunities for CCW, enhancing its stature within the field of music and arts education for young people. In promoting CCW, our intent is to convey that CCW is more than a first tier choral music education program. We are in the business of helping to develop responsible citizens: young people with a sense of the true meaning of excellence, who understand the value of hard work, personal accountability, commitment to others and the benefits derived from collective achievement. Few of our young people will go on to careers in music, but all can benefit from the larger lessons to be learned from such an experience. It is my hope that this message will resonate with and capture the imagination of leaders of organizations that can support the continued growth of CCW in the future.

Thanks to all in the CCW community who give of themselves to provide this opportunity for our young singers.

Alexander M. Miller

## CCW Gala 2005



Photo: Bob Keating

Chamber Ensemble singing at Gala 2005

The Children's Chorus of Washington celebrated "The Year of *The Nightingale*" Gala on Saturday, February 26, at the historic Glenview Mansion in Rockville, Maryland. The Chinese greeting, "Enormous Welcome," expressed the concept of this year's gala event, which was designed to honor the spirit of the upcoming premiere of *The Nightingale* opera. By any measure and all accounts the evening was an "Enormous Success."

As 170 guests, including CCW board members, staff, parents and friends, mingled in the thematically decorated mansion, they enjoyed Chinese delicacies and libations provided by DC caterer Spices Restaurant.

CCW welcomed representatives from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Zhang Tibin, First Secretary for Cultural Affairs, and two of his associates. The embassy's contributions of Chinese New Year displays and Tsingtao beer added an authentic flair.

The CCW Chamber Ensemble, wearing t-shirts silk-screened with Chinese characters and spring festival hats from Hong Kong, performed at intervals throughout the evening, demonstrating the excellence of our choral music education program. In addition, attendees were treated to the sounds of Treble and Concert Choruses from a treasury of recordings dating back to CCW's founding.

Professional auctioneer Fred Reger entertained guests as they bid on a broad range of donations in the silent and live auctions. The "Build-an-Orchestra" appeal for funding the orchestra of *The Nightingale* raised more than \$16,000. The Surprise Raffle, two round-trip tickets on Independence Air, was won by Concert Chorus parents George and Adele Ashkar. As many observed, the Ashkars, who have helped sponsor this

event for several years, were appropriately rewarded for their long-term generosity. At the end of the evening, Joan Gregoryk drew the name of the Raffle winner. The prize, the choice of a Vespa or \$3,000 cash, went to Gary Mansfield and Lisa Lenhart, guests of Concert Chorus parents Sarah Frech and Mark Robinson.



Photo: Bob Keating

Gala 2005 Co-chairs Jean and Bill Catherwood

Gala 2005 was both a festive celebration and an unprecedented financial success. Supporters invested generously in CCW's future. Total proceeds from the benefit were substantially higher than amounts raised at previous benefits, including Gala 2004. CCW extends its gratitude to the hardworking volunteers and enthusiastic donors for a truly outstanding evening.

Gala Co-chairs Jean and Bill Catherwood

## CCW Stakeholders

All members of the CCW community are, in a broad sense, stakeholders in the organization. Throughout its history, stakeholders have made significant contributions to and maintained strong associations with CCW. As CCW enters its 10th Anniversary season, stakeholders – choristers and alumni, current and past parents, friends and supporters – reflect on the past and simultaneously anticipate the future.

Last fall, board members, preparing for the next decade, asked several stakeholders to comment on what they had found most valuable in their relationship with CCW. There was unanimous agreement that music is of vital importance in the lives of children. The primary impetus for their involvement with CCW was its excellence: in training, performance and the fostering of individual growth and discipline. Stakeholders noted that, from its inception, the Chorus had maintained the highest standards of the choral art, comparable to those of the major adult choruses in the metropolitan area with which CCW sings. One stakeholder, refer-

ring to the exceptional quality of CCW's program, said that his family's support of CCW was "a vote against some of the coarsening elements in our contemporary way of life and a vote for beauty and the best of our musical heritage." Another voiced that, most importantly, CCW instills musical integrity and shows concern for young singers as developing musicians.

Stakeholders shared a feeling of joy in their relationship with CCW, not only with the endeavor itself, but also with the people associated with the organization. They praised CCW's role in nurturing talent and building self-confidence and, consequentially, its positive impact on choristers' schoolwork and other activities. They cited other benefits, such as exposing participants to other cultures through repertoire and tours, and engendering respect for one another through working together and with other groups, nationally and internationally. "The enrichment and breadth of understanding gained through these experiences have life-long ramifications."



Photo: Quentin Furlong

Treble Chorus at the National Cherry Blossom Festival

Looking ahead, stakeholders were eager to see CCW increase its membership and extend its outreach in the city, perhaps by expanding the successful "Building Community Through Song" series. They envisioned "more collaborative ventures or showcases with other children's arts groups." One stakeholder suggested adding an ensemble with a separate agenda, one that would focus on performing and recruiting in schools.

Overall, in the words of a devoted stakeholder, participating in "an artistically oriented program devoid of certain ambiguous pressures and motivations other human endeavors are fraught with [is] truly a good and worthy thing." In their comments, stakeholders touched on every aspect of CCW's mission, affirming it and celebrating the fulfillment of its promise over the past nine years.

## CCW at ACDA

CCW was well represented at the American Choral Directors Association National Convention in Los Angeles in February. Founder and Artistic Director Joan Gregoryk and Treble choristers Aaron Clark and Faith Snyderman participated in this event that drew thousands of presenters and attendees to the City of Angels.

Aaron and Faith, chosen by audition for the National Elementary Children's Honor Choir, joined over 250 fifth and sixth graders from 41 states in singing a varied program conducted by Iris Lamanna in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. Faith, who was also featured in a small ensemble, said, "It was a joy to be a part of the whole experience." Aaron recalled two of his favorite songs, "Can You Hear Me?" which was enhanced by sign language and "I'm Part of the Rainbow." Both singers started an e-mail correspondence with choristers they met at the convention.

Joan Gregoryk, along with Emily Ellsworth of the Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus and Roberta Q. Jackson of the Portland Symphonic Girlchoir, presented the Interest Session, Creating a New Genre: A Choral Opera for Young Voices. The three commissioners of *The Nightingale* showed and provided commentary on video segments of their work in progress. They explained that the objective of the commission was to give children the focus in the opera genre, engaging them from start to finish in a leading capacity. Doreen Rao, renowned for her contributions to the world of children's choral music, attended the session and said, "Bringing opera into organizations of children is an essential part of the cultural development of this country."

From the outset the directors viewed the innovative project as an opportunity for growth. Singers face the demands of intricate vocal writing, character delineation and stage direction. Adjustments to costumes, scenery, lighting and accompaniment by a chamber orchestra are all part of an exhilarating learning process.

Composer Imant Raminsh's setting of Hans Christian Andersen's timeless story opened a world of exciting possibilities to those present at the Interest Session. Attendees enthusiastically applauded Joan Gregoryk and her colleagues for their collaboration, which has provided new direction, momentum and inspiration for children's choral work.

## The Beat Goes On Alumni News

**Elizabeth Hankla**, a student at National Cathedral School, was accepted into Juilliard's college preparatory voice program last fall and travels to New York City every weekend for lessons. She sings in NCS's a cappella group Sarsaparilla.

**Katie Kaplun**, a freshman at Georgetown University, sang last semester in the Georgetown University Concert Choir, led by Dr. Gerard Yun. Dr. Yun wrote a piece for the National Cherry Blossom Festival that the Treble Chorus performed. This semester, Katie is participating in GU's Chapel Choir and Admissions Ambassador Program.

**Braden Lake** has the leading role in the St. Albans/National Cathedral Schools' spring production of *Evita*. Earlier in the year, she played Susan in *Company*. She continues to sing in three ensembles: Madrigals, Chorale and Sarsaparilla.

**Joe Mannarino**, now a tenor, has been singing non-stop. He played Rapunzel's Prince in *Into the Woods* in a community theater group. Currently, he has the role of Pops, the stage doorman, in *Kiss Me Kate*.

**Megan McQuighan** sings in the James Madison University Chorus. During the winter, she had two solos in *A Ceremony of Carols*. She is active in the SGA and co-hosts a radio show.

**Stephanie Robinson** attends Yorktown High School, where she sings in the Advanced Chorus. She continues to study piano and to keep up with a demanding program at The Washington School of Ballet. She was accepted into Boston Ballet's Summer Dance Program.



Photo: Jean Calhoun

Members of the Concert Chorus at the Kuwaiti Embassy Benefit

## Calendar Spring 2005

March 26 at 5:30 p.m.  
National Cherry Blossom Festival  
Opening Ceremony  
(*Treble Chorus*)  
Mandarin Oriental Hotel

April 10 at 4 p.m.  
"Building Community Through Song"  
(*Treble Chorus*)  
With Glorystar Children's Chorus  
& Metropolitan Baptist Children's Choir  
Metropolitan Memorial United  
Methodist Church

May 14 at 7 p.m. and May 15 at 2 p.m.  
**Washington, DC Premiere**  
Imant Raminsh: *The Nightingale*,  
**A Choral Opera for Young Voices**  
(*Concert Chorus*)  
**Spring Concert**  
(*Treble Chorus*)  
GWU's Lisner Auditorium

May 21 at 8 p.m.  
Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*  
(*Concert Chorus*)  
With National Philharmonic  
Music Center at Strathmore

Children's Chorus of Washington  
4626 Wisconsin Avenue, NW  
Suite 100  
Washington, DC 20016

June 5 at 6 p.m.  
Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*  
(*Concert Chorus*)  
With American Youth Philharmonic &  
Choral Arts Society  
George Mason University

## New CCW Board Member

CCW welcomes new board member Judi A. Teske, who recently retired as Senior Director of Strategic Advocacy for Amgen, a global biotechnology company. Prior to joining Amgen twelve years ago, she served for three years as a political appointee at the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she was the principal liaison between Secretary Louis B. Sullivan and Congress. Active with a number of fundraising efforts, she currently serves on the Board of the Providence Health Foundation.

CCW #8629



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Donald Cotton, Accompanist

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Ann DuBose, Administrative Assistant  
Maxine Pagliano, Concert Manager

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**CHILDREN'S  
CHORUS**  
*of Washington*  
  
Joan Gregoryk  
Founder & Artistic Director