

RCMC

The River City Mixed Chorus Presents...



The Gender Blender!

Saturday June 21st, @ 7:05 pm
Sunday June 22nd, @ 4:05 pm

PFLAG Omaha

Monthly meetings: Second Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
7020 Cass Street, Omaha, Nebraska
In Mead Hall, west end of building

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From the Director

gen-der (ˈjen-der) *n.* 1. sex 2. the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex.

It's safe to say that all of us become acquainted with the idea of gender at a young age. However, our knowledge about gender and our own experience with gender have probably grown and stretched as we've gotten older. Some of us gradually come to find ourselves limited by or at odds with the second dictionary definition above. Others of us come to understand that our sexuality and our gender expression can be two completely different things. And some of us face down enormous cultural barriers to live through the process of accepting ourselves as transgendered.



When the River City Mixed Chorus approached me about composing a substantial piece for this concert on the theme of "gender," I was both excited and a bit overwhelmed. Even as I accepted the commission, I wondered, "Would I be able to bring forth anything significant? Insightful? Delightful? Transformative?" I began to journal about ideas around gender, and to interview others regarding their thoughts and experiences with gender.

Before I knew it, I had not only interesting material but a plethora of stories that ranged from funny to heart-wrenching. The unexpected happened, including my meeting a truly inspiring transgendered woman from rural Nebraska, whose story I found to be so moving that I felt it required its own entire movement. It became very clear that gender is not a simple topic, and that beneath the surface of our culture's easy solution of "men" and "women" is something a whole lot more complex, interesting, and challenging.

blen-der (ˈblen-der) *n.* one that blends

The end result is a piece that, perhaps, expresses this integration of diversity through its defiance of categorization. The text crosses boundaries by exploring gender from multiple perspectives, by ranging from humor to pathos, and by offering a vision of a community in which all people are open to the completeness of both their own and each other's unique expressions of self. Carrying these ideas is a lush and varied musical setting in which broad, "orchestral" gestures stand side by side with quirky jazz idioms, and where pop-style tunes blossom into Rachmaninoff-like moments of ecstasy.

This integration of diverse elements reflects the nature and values of the River City Mixed Chorus, which prides itself with being a "family" that is both close-knit but also open and welcoming, that is made up of both gay and straight men and women, and where community happens across the lines of gender and orientation. As the chorus performs this new work, they offer a living model of the sentiment expressed in the text: "I will be complete when we are all complete, so I will stand for all of you and all of me, all of us, all together!"

- Mark Kurtz, Director

From the President

Welcome to the River City Mixed Chorus' Gender Blender concert. Thank you for starting your summer with us.

We are excited to bring you the world premier of our very own Music Director's commissioned piece "The Gender Blender". Mark Kurtz has such an amazingly creative (and a bit twisted!) mind and has stretched and challenged the Chorus with his music. Thank you, Mark, for continuing to push us and expect great things from us. Your vision for RCMC allow us to bring fun, emotional and thought provoking music to our audiences.



The talented group of people you see on stage tonight made a commitment back in January to give their time, talent, money, and occasionally food, to bring you this concert. We have rehearsed as a Chorus, individually and in small groups. We have put in well over 3000 hours of rehearsal time working on note progressions, harmonies and the "flavor" of the music to bring our audiences a finished product that we are very proud of and something we hope you will savor and enjoy.

Be sure to check back with us next year as we celebrate our 25th season!! It promises to bring back many of the show stopping numbers of the past 25 years.

Thank you for being here and supporting the River City Mixed Chorus.

Sincerely,

Travis Wilcox
President, Board of Directors

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Auditions

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Mark Kurtz

Director

Mark Kurtz is active as a director, performer, and composer of music that creates wholeness among diverse people and musical styles. His studies began at the North Carolina School of the Arts, where he received a Chancellor's Award for Excellence and graduated as Outstanding Senior. From there, he continued studies at the University of Michigan School of Music, where he was twice named an Angell Scholar and graduated with highest honors. His Master of Arts degree is from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, where he lived and worked in musical theater, church music, and composition, before moving to Omaha in 2000.



His compositions have been performed across the United States, in Canada, and in Europe, winning awards from Westminster Choir College and the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. Recently, he has begun offering workshops on creatively using the organ for contemporary music.

Mr. Kurtz is currently Director of Music Ministries at First United Methodist Church as well as Music Director of the River City Mixed Chorus.

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Salli Compton

Accompanist

Salli is thrilled to be working with a chorus she has admired for years. A musical junkie, Salli has played for *Breathe* and *Elegies for Angel, Punks and Raging Queens* for Snap! Productions, *Carousel* and *My Fair Lady* for the Omaha Community Playhouse, *West Side Story* and *La Cage aux Folles* for the Chanticleer, *The Medium*, *Six Women With Brain Death* and *Nine* for Little Apple Productions, *Tommy* for the Shelterbelt, and *Lewis and Clark: Manifest Destiny* and *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?* for Creighton University. She accompanies the North Side Christian Church Choir, plays for the local students of Dr. Lauren Pickles Voice Studio, and teaches private piano lessons. A professional at Dundee Elementary School, Salli enjoys teaching character lessons and acting as Recess Goddess. Her most amazing gig to date is playing in a church combo with her son, Whit, on bass and her son, Luke, on drums.



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Collin Gibbs

Sign Language Interpreter

Collin Gibbs has been a professional Sign Language Interpreter/Transliterater in the Metro area for about 10 years. Collin graduated with his Associates of Applied Sciences Degree in Sign Language Interpretation from Iowa Western Community College in 1996. He has been working predominately in the Post-Secondary setting since then. He also interpreted "A Big Bent Broadway Bash" and "It Takes a Rainbow Village" for the River City Mixed Chorus. He lives in Omaha with his partner of 12 years, David.

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The Gender Blender

The Gender Polka

Music & Lyrics by David Maddux

Counselor: Pat Gromak
Dancers: Holly Davis, Alyson Meadows, Jerry Meis,
Michael Taylor-Stewart, Vicki Grunwald, Rita Gross

William's Doll

Music by Mary Rogers, Lyrics by Sheldon Harnick

William: Jon Holloway (from "Free to Be You and Me")
Narrator: Sean Buster
Grandmother: Karen Davidson
Father: Rick White

Masculine Women! Feminine Men!

Music by James V. Monaco
Choral Arrangement by Jane Ramseyer Miller

O Disturbing Boy

Music & Lyrics by Rover Seeley and Philip Littell
Men's Chorus (from "Naked Man")

Lola

Music & Lyrics by Ray Davies

Holly Davis and Travis Wilcox, soloists
Featuring: Victor Hahn, Megan van Alstine, Jon Holloway
Vicki Grunwald, Kristi Hooper, Wendy Wright

Joan of Arc

Music & Lyrics by Ruth Huber

Women's Chorus
Reader: Marian Todd

I Am What I Am/We Are What We Are

Music & Lyrics by Jerry Herman
(from "La Cage aux Folles")

Featuring: Jean Rollin, Jerry Meis, Sean Buster, Susan Knutzen
Sharon Arnold, Stan Brown, Wayne Moore, Chris Davis

***** Intermission *****

Cheek to Cheek

Music & Lyrics by Gweneth Walker

Dancers: Alyson Meadows, Holly Davis, Travis Wilcox,
Michael Taylor-Stewart, Vicki Grunwald, Aby Gross,
James Sawyer, Megan Van Alstine
Choreography: Anna Terman-White

I Think He's Gay

Wendy Wright and Jean Rollin, Soloists

Music & Lyrics by Pussy Tourette

I'm Every Woman

Featuring: Michael Taylor-Stewart, Julie Divis, Rita Gross,
Tina Kreuzenstein, Mark van Kekerix, Kristi Hooper,
Reo Newring, Sharon Arnold

Choreography: Gary Allinger

Music & Lyrics by Nickolas Ashford
and Valerie Simpson

The 23rd Psalm - Dedicated to My Mother

Bobby McFerrin

The River City Mixed Chorus Present the World Premier of:

The Gender Blender

Music & Lyrics by Mark Kurtz

On the Day

Ashley's Story

Lori Adams, Soloist

Power Play

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Emcee: | Michael Taylor-Stewart |
| Mr. Capitalist Pig: | Mark van Kekerix |
| Mrs. Wife Wannabe: | Alyson Meadows |
| I. Mabel Dyke: | Tina Kreuzenstein |
| Prit E. Boy: | James Sawyer |

Gender M lange

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| First Solo: | Sharon Arnold |
| Second Solo: | Megan van Alstine |
| Third Solo: | Wayne Moore |

All Together

Singers and Musicians

Soprano

Lori Adams
Sue Chamberlin •
Jen Crider •
Aby Gross
Rita Gross † 
Vicki Grunwald
Judy Hancock
Sharon Jasnowski •
Alyson Meadows ♦
Reo Newring
Jean Rollin
Megan Van Alstine (MSL)
Amy Wendling •
Wendy Wright

Alto

Susan Adams
Sharon Arnold
Dana Bainbridge •
Megan Bret •
Ann Coderko •
Karen Davidson
Holly Davis
Julie Divis
Laura Finken •
Pat Gromak
Kristi Hooper
Susan Knutzen
Tina Kreuzenstein 
Deb Melichar §
Sarah Phelps
Judy Prenzler
Carol Ramsey
Edie Russell
Peggy Ryan
Marian Todd †

Tenor

Tony Barnes
Roger Bennett •
David Brady •
Scott Bryant •
Bob Burgarino
Sean Buster
Mark Curley •
Scott Hegenbart •
Jon Holloway (MSL)
Duane Lundeen
Frank McKee
Jerry Meis
Andy Melichar
James Sawyer ♦
Michael Taylor-Stewart
Mark Van Kekerix
Rick White †
Daniel Whitehouse •
Travis Wilcox
Larry Wilson

Bass

Brian Adams
Craig Boetger
Stan Brown
Darryl Burgdorf •
Chris Davis
Eric Ernsberger •
David Etmund •
Victor Hahn †
Chris Holst
Mark Ledbetter •
Scott Miller
Wayne Moore (MSL)
Tom Nielsen •
Patrick Rapier

• Leave of Absence

† **Administrative Section Leader**

 **Music Section Leader**

♦ **Dance Captain**

 **Music Librarian**

§ **Chorus President**

Instrumentalists

Salli Compton, Piano
Vince Krysl, Percussion
Casey Sheets, Bass Guitar

Behind the Scenes

Artistic Staff

Mark Kurtz - Musical Director
Gary Allinger - Assistant Director
Salli Compton - Accompanist
Collin Gibbs - Interpreter

Board of Directors

Travis Wilcox - President
Andy Melichar - Vice President
Chris Davis - Secretary
Mark Curley - Treasurer
Sharon Arnold
Anne Boyle
Michael Dantzler
Norm Melichar
Michael Taylor-Stewart
Rick White
Jerry Meis

Back Stage

Melissa Linn - Stage Manager
Jim Kaup - Assistant Stage Manager

Fifth Voice

The Fifth Voice is a non-singing, volunteer group associated with the River City Mixed Chorus. Thanks to the efforts of The Fifth Voice, the chorus is able to accomplish many of its non-performing events such as our annual Garage Sale and preparations for this evening's performance.

RCCM would like to thank the individuals listed below for their dedication and assistance with supporting the chorus.

Alex Gross
Bobbi Fisher
Bobby Samon
Brain Burleigh
Cari Johnson
Darryl Clay Burgdorf
Dave England
Dennis Goodwater
DeWayne Greim
Donald-Brian Johnson
Ejay Jack
Ellie McKiernan
Hank Kuhlmann
Jacob Rapier
James Kaup
Julie Belian
Kathy England
Keene Ruff
Kevin Rose
Krissa Lee-Regier
Laura England
Lisa Broadway
Marisa Ozuna
Mark Aartun
Michael Dantzler
Mike McClellin
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Scott Hegenbart
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Jon Holloway
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Rose Knutzen
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Elmorine Hites McKiernan
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Andy Melichar

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Shirley Racek
Carol Ramsey

Jean Rollin
Kevin Rose
Carol Russell
Edie Russell
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Troy Swier
Lois Todd-Meyer
Mark Van Kekerix
Patrick Wait
Larry Wilson

In Memoriam

Chuck
Alen
Chip
Jerry Kruse
Jerry Peck
Johnathan
John
Marilyn
Norm
Tim
Dana

Joel
Brandon
Vance
Fritz
Steven
Jonathan D. Cole
Ronnie
Bruce Beyersdorf
Mark Farmer
Aleta Fenceroy

Gary Allinger

Assistant Director



Gary Allinger is an Iowa native who moved to Omaha 12 years ago and has been an active member of our community ever since. Gary graduated with his BA in Music Education from the University of Northern Iowa and spent 11 years teaching secondary vocal music in Waterloo, IA and Missouri Valley, IA. He graduated from The University of Nebraska at Omaha in 2006 with his Masters in Conducting and is currently enrolled at The University of Nebraska in Lincoln working towards his Ph.D in Administration. Gary is currently working with the leading retirement community here in Omaha, NE and has joined the River City Mixed Chorus this season as the Assistant Director. Since choosing music as his career, Gary has performed professionally as an opera singer in New York, Chicago and here in Omaha. Even though not currently in the classroom as a teacher, he is still an active state adjudicator for music contests, a clinician, guest director and choreographer around the states of Iowa and Nebraska. Gary is also the current reigning Mr. Gay Pride Nebraska 2007-2008, representing our GLBT community across the state and nationally. Gary is thrilled to be a part of such an amazing group of talented performers and is overwhelmed with the contagious passion and enthusiasm the River City Mixed Chorus displays in its membership. He has a great deal of respect for our community and is a proud representative of our chorus and the Nebraska GLBT community and those who support us.



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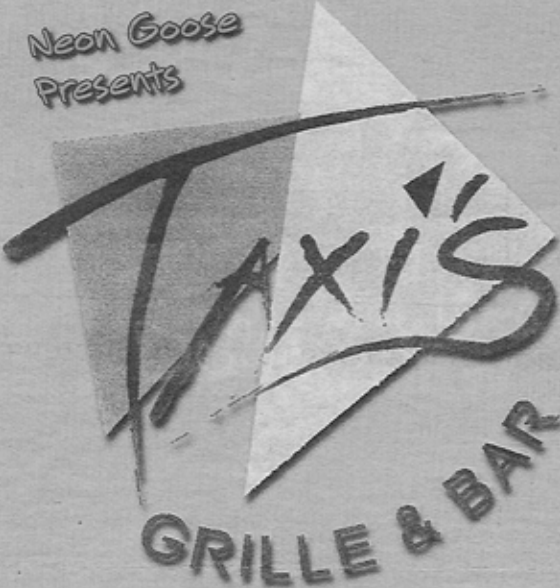
Special Thanks

This concert would not have been possible without the support and dedication of:

The Mammel Family Foundation - for their generous support.

Mark Kurtz - for his dedication and creation of an incredibly brilliant composition for this concert.

Salli Compton - for her countless hours of rehearsing and finger stretching in preparation for this concert.



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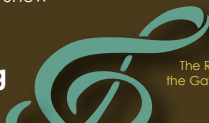
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