

MUSIC

Under the direction of Joan Szymko, the 120 women of Aurora Chorus will take over the Schnitz on May 5 in "Singing for Our Lives," a benefit concert for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. "Themes such as faith and the yearning for peace are certainly not new to Aurora, but never has the chorus juxtaposed these themes so sharply with that of our own mortality," explains Szymko, talking about this special event.

The centerpiece of the evening will be the choir's performance of "Where I Live: A Breast Cancer Oratorio" by Minneapolis composer Diane Benjamin. The piece combines spoken stories of cancer patients with seven choral songs that vividly convey the emotional dimensions of the disease. Szymko's favorite passage is "Help Me," from an essay by Katherine Trayham:

Come here where I am,
Do the little thing.
Don't tell me who died.
Do tell me who's living, despite the odds.
Don't tell me to quit reading about it.
Help me laugh.
Don't tell me how great I'm doing.
Forgive me everything.

Diane Syrcle of the Portland Opera will be the guest soloist, and the group will be accompanied by members of the Oregon Symphony.



Janice Scroggins

Singing for their lives

Aurora Chorus teams up with musical guest stars to fight breast cancer

BY ORIANA GREEN

"The months preparing for this concert have been an extraordinary time for our chorus, because singing about a topic as immediate, tragic and heroic as the fight against breast cancer has taken great emotional strength on the part of individual members," Szymko says. "Aurora is a community—we create a space for women to share about their lives. Cancer, particularly breast cancer, is close to home."

After the intermission, some fabulous Portland performers will take the stage. Modern dancer Josie Mosely will premiere "On Holding On," a solo piece she choreographed just for this event. She will dance to a cappella choral music composed by Szymko and sung by the incredibly tight vocal group Viriditas. Accompanying them will be Nancy Ives of the Oregon Symphony on cello.



Joan Szymko

Viriditas also will sing "Nada Te Turbe (Let Nothing Disturb You)," a setting of the words of Teresa of Avila.

That will be followed by 15-minute solo sets from blues/soul diva Linda Hornbuckle, stellar jazz vocalist Nancy King and Janice Scroggins setting the piano figuratively on fire.

Aurora will return with music by Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey in the Rock. For the grand finale, all performers will join in on the anthem "Singing for Our Lives," first sung by Holly Near and thousands of mourners during a candlelight procession after the assassination of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and openly gay City Supervisor Harvey Milk.

According to Szymko, "Like those who walked and sang together that night, we sing because we grieve, we are frustrated, we feel vulnerable, we want answers, we want justice, we want to live full lives, we draw strength from each other—all of us from all walks of life." □

SINGING FOR OUR LIVES starts 7:30 p.m. May 5 at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, 1037 S.W. Broadway. Tickets are \$16 and \$20

with sponsor seating at \$50 from 503-721-0262, the Portland Center for the Performing Arts box office or Fastixx.

Spring has sprung
The grass has ris...
I wonders where
My lover is?



Hint...
See
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New Location



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Help Us Celebrate!

We're inviting all supporters of LGBTQ youth to a day of fun and frolic with Vanguard Youth Services (formerly Phoenix Rising), home of the Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center (SMYRC), Roots & Branches, Bridge 13, and the Washington County Pride Project!

Open House Fri, April 27 11am- 9pm

- 11 a.m. Press Conference at SMYRC
- 12-3 p.m. Youth-guided tours of the new SMYRC space.
- 3-7 p.m. CARNIVAL! Including games of chance and skill, carnival food, and sideshow attractions showcasing the talents of SMYRC youth. Plus Dunk-the-Drag-Queen!
- 7-9 p.m. Cabaret Show featuring Misha, Rose Empress XXXVIII, our very own Rosebud XXIV Abby and Thorn XXV Chance De Valmont!



Vanguard Youth Services
a program of Network
Behavioral HealthCare

Bring your loved ones and tell all your friends and don't forget to bring your checkbook and sense of charitable giving, too! Remember, SMYRC is for youth 23 and under, so this could be your only chance to see all the fun we have when you're not around!

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