

DURANGO CHORAL SOCIETY NEWS

SPRING 2025

♪♪♪♪♪ NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR ♪♪♪♪♪



We are now mid-way through our “Take Flight!” season, with some exciting concerts scheduled for this spring. If you are ready for a road trip, join us for our concerts, entitled “Journeys,” on Friday, March 28, 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 29, 2 pm, at Summit Church.

Come travel with us as we take flight on a journey of the spirit, sail the crashing waves of the seas, get our kicks on Route 66, and soar over the hills of Monte Ceceri! The Durango Choral Society and Durango Women’s Choir will perform contemporary pieces by Elaine Hagenberg, Ola Gjeilo, Christopher Tin and the Wailin’ Jennys. For Saturday’s performance, we welcome special guests from the Telluride Choral Society, returning for our annual spring collaboration. Our songs will carry you to your dream destination!

It is truly a special moment when the entire DCS family performs together. On Saturday, April 26, the shining faces of the Durango Children’s Chorale and Durango Youth Chorus, directed by Amy Barrett, will join forces with the Durango Choral Society adults in “If I Cannot Fly, Then Let Me Sing”. With this concert we celebrate the joy of singing, with a diverse program of multi-cultural music from Bach to the Beatles.

Capping off our 2024–2025 season is our annual Cabaret fundraising concert. This year, we return to the Durango Arts Center with music of the stage and screen. The Durango Women’s Choir, along with featured soloists will be “Puttin’ on the Ritz!” with a selection of music from Phantom of the Opera, Wicked, La La Land, Irving Berlin, and more. Opening music will be provided by Adam Swanson, pianist extraordinaire! Come out and support DCS in our final concert of the year—we guarantee a hugely entertaining evening, along with a special live-auction prize that you won’t want to miss!

As we head into the summer, 42 singers and family members will literally “take flight” as we travel to Florence for a series of concerts. This trip was originally planned for the spring of 2020, but was unfortunately cancelled due to the pandemic. Our beloved Linda Mack Berven, Director Emerita, will join us for this tour and will conduct Antonio Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, while I conduct two performances of contemporary sacred repertoire. If you happen to be in Italy in early June, we’d love to see you there!

In closing, we in the Durango Choral Society know that none of what we do would be possible without the generous support of our donors, sponsors, and audience members. Your generosity is fundamental towards fulfilling our mission of bringing high-quality concerts and music education to our region. The opportunity to thank you, through song, is our greatest joy. We hope to see you at our concerts this spring as we continue our journey!

Grazie mille (a thousand thanks),

Rhonda L. Muckerman
Artistic Director
Durango Choral Society

DCS ITALIAN DINNER, MARCH 1



KIDS CORNER

The DCC and the DYC had a busy holiday season performing at the Community Concert Hall for the Annual DCS Christmas Concert, followed by providing musical support to the Nutcracker Ballet. This spring season is just as busy with Miss Amy directing 44 singers, including 3 sets of twins. The oldest singer is 15 and the youngest is 5! Rehearsals are in full swing for the April Spring Concert, titled "If I Cannot Fly, Then Let Me Sing." The kids will be joined by the big DCS chorus. Mark your calendars for a joyous and heart-warming concert at Christ The King Church, Saturday April 26, at 4 p.m.



February was all about All-State. Six singers attended Elementary All-State in Colorado Springs (at the Broadmoor!), directed by Victor Johnson. It was a great experience and the kids did a great job. Singers included: Abril Belman, Michelle Belman, Maggie Gerela, Molly Gerela, Serenity Hernandez, and Ruby McCall.



Middle School All-State, also in the Springs, was directed by Dr. Dale from Dallas, and was a success. Singers included: Tommy Jensen-Silvester and Brigham Barrett.

High School All-state was held at the beautiful and historic Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Alamosa. The church was built in 1922, and features a Mission Revival/Spanish Revival style. Breeanna Barrett and Bella Stewart represented Durango.

And last, but not least, on Sunday, March 9, the kids kicked off Durango's annual Bach Festival at the Bach Festival Youth Chorus.

SAVE THE DATES

For more information and ticketing options, please visit durangochoralsociety.org. And when you visit our webpage, scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on the link to our YouTube videos. If you missed a concert, this is your opportunity to enjoy some beautiful music. You can also access our past concerts via [Durango Choral Society - YouTube](#)

Journeys

Friday, March 28, 7 p.m. and

Saturday, March 29, 2 p.m.

Summit Church, 2917 Aspen Drive



If I Cannot Fly, Then Let Me Sing

Saturday, April 26, 4 p.m.

Christ the King Lutheran Church, 495 Florida Road

Come (back) to the Cabaret

Sunday, May 4, 5 p.m.

Durango Arts Center, 802 East 2nd Avenue

**What good is sitting
Alone in your room?
Come hear the music play.
Life is a cabaret, old chum,
Come to the cabaret!**

After a few years away, we are so happy to be returning to the Durango Arts Center, the birthplace of our famous annual Cabaret. This will be a “new” refreshed event, with a focus on fabulous music. Make plans to dine downtown after the show at one of Durango’s outstanding restaurants. However, the DAC provides a cash bar and snacks for your enjoyment. The evening will include music from Adam Swanson, The Durango Women’s Choir, featured soloists, and a live-auction prize that you will not want to miss! See you there!

A FELLOW MUSICIAN

Adam Swanson joined the DCS for our Christmas Concert at the Community Concert Hall and we are thrilled that he will be joining us again for our annual Cabaret at the Durango Arts Center on May 4. You do not want to miss this event! Although Adam needs no introduction to anyone who lives in Durango and loves music, here's a short bio of this hugely talented musician.



Adam Swanson is one of the world's foremost pianists and historians of vintage American popular music, including ragtime, early jazz, the Great American Songbook, and more. Adam has been a featured performer and lecturer at ragtime and jazz festivals across the United States and abroad, and he is the only four-time winner of the World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest. He made his New York debut in Carnegie Hall at the age of nineteen, where he performed with Michael Feinstein. Adam appeared alongside pianist John Arpin at the Bohem Ragtime and Jazz Festival in the Republic of Hungary, and he has also toured Switzerland and Australia. Adam has accompanied silent films at the prestigious Cinecon Classic Film Festival in Hollywood and performed privately for Oscar-winning Disney/Hollywood composer Richard M. Sherman (*Mary Poppins*, etc.). At the age of twenty-one, Adam performed a solo concert at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C.

Adam holds a bachelor's degree in classical piano and a master's in musicology from the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. He has been mentored by other ragtime artists including the famed Max Morath and legendary 1950s recording artist Johnny Maddox, who was one of Adam's greatest influences. Adam has recorded albums with noted musicians such as former rock star Ian Whitcomb, the Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra, and the Bar D Wranglers. Adam's recordings have been used on the CBC TV show *Murdoch Mysteries*. Listen to Adam's livestream virtual concerts on his Facebook page and YouTube channel. Visit his website at <https://www.adamswanson.com> and enjoy his music most Saturdays at the Diamond Bell Saloon in the Historic Strater Hotel, in Durango.

And for a very special treat: join the return of the Durango Ragtime and Early Jazz Festival in April 2025! The greatest ragtime and classic jazz musicians from around the United States will descend upon Durango, for four days of concerts, silent movies, seminars, after hours jam parties, and much more. All events will take place at the Durango Arts Center and the Strater Hotel. Celebrate America's first truly original music—ragtime and jazz—in an incredible location.

Durango Ragtime and Early Jazz Festival RETURNS!

Historic Strater Hotel and Durango Arts Center

April 3–6, 2025

www.durangoragtime.com

VIVA VIVALDI



Did you know that Antonio Vivaldi was a red-haired priest? And that he ran an orphanage for young girls???

Vivaldi's crop of curly red hair, inherited from his father, prompted friends to nickname the composer 'il Prete Rosso'—the red priest. His father was just nicknamed 'Rossi'—redhead. Don't be fooled by the white hair in the picture—the composer was wearing a wig!



Our Director Emerita, Linda Mack Berven, is channeling Vivaldi in anticipation of conducting his beautiful *Gloria* in Florence, Italy in May, on a concert tour.

Linda was set for this trip to Florence in 2020, which had to be cancelled due to Covid.

Welcome back Linda!
And hopefully good riddance to Covid.



Today Vivaldi is one of the most popular of all composers, who during his lifetime enjoyed considerable success and fortune, which he squandered through extravagance, and when he died in Vienna he was buried in a pauper's grave. For two centuries after his death, the *Gloria* lay undiscovered until the late 1920s, when it was found buried among a pile of forgotten Vivaldi manuscripts.

However, it was not performed until September 1939 in Siena in an edition by the composer Alfredo Casella. This was by no means an authentic edition (he described it as an 'elaborazione'), as he embellished the original orchestration of trumpet, oboe, strings, while reducing the role of the continuo, and cut sections from three movements. It was not until 1957 that the now familiar original version was published and given its first performance at the First Festival of Baroque Choral Music at Brooklyn College, NY.

From The London Concert Choir notes and Wikipedia.org

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Courtney Ashmore to purchase much-needed riser rails
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Julia Dodd for sponsoring the Italian dinner
Gay and Dick Grossman to purchase choral sheet music
Steve and Marti Kiely for sponsoring the Italian dinner
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Thank you for the significant gift from the estate of Linda and
Jon Geer that will be used to establish the Linda Mack
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