

DUBUQUE
CHORALE

Ode to the Arts



October 25, 7pm
October 26, 2pm
First Congregational Church UCC

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A Message from Mark Niemer

Dubuque Chorale President

We are surrounded by a myriad of artistic experiences, and artists may be inspired by one genre to create their own interpretations in another. In 1884, George Seurat evoked the timelessness of ancient Greek and Egyptian sculpture when he created his magnificent painting *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte* (which you can view at the Art Institute of Chicago). In 1984, Stephen Sondheim based his musical *Sunday in the Park with George* on this painting, and today we are singing "Sunday" from that musical.

The Dubuque Chorale is blessed with immensely talented members, as evidenced by two songs from this concert composed by Chorale members. Associate Director and tenor/bass Than Chesher set his composition to the text of a poem by Stephen Crane. Than imagines this as a mostly one-way conversation, perhaps between two people negotiating unrequited love, and one party does not truly listen to the other. Mary Bryant, soprano, was inspired to compose her song in celebration of her pastor's ordination. It speaks to the quietness of finding inner peace and renewing one's spirit, along with transcending worldly concerns. Keep this in mind as you listen to these selections.

Our concerts, organizational growth and innovative programming would not be possible without the support of our corporate, government and foundation sponsors, and the many individuals who contribute to our operating and endowment funds every year. These gifts allow us to purchase music, rent venues, work with professional musicians, promote our events and keep admission prices low or free. Your contributions also allow us to cover tuition for young singers who are in need of financial assistance, making the Children's Choirs accessible to all who love to sing. By attending our concerts and showing your support, you have become part of the Chorale family too. We thank Premier Bank, Gronen, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Iowa Arts Council, the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the City of Dubuque, the Dubuque Racing Association, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Henry Family Foundation, the Wahlert Foundation and the Schoen Family Charitable Trust for their generous financial support. We also thank First Congregational United Church of Christ, Grand View Methodist Church, Bread of Life Presbyterian Church, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and Church of the Nativity, and Greater Dubuque Development Corporation for gifts in kind of rehearsal, performance, and office space.

If you have any questions about upcoming performances, wish to join the ensemble (no auditions), or wish to get booking information for the Dubuque Chorale Cadenza chamber ensemble for civic or private functions, please visit us at www.dubuquechorale.org or email president@dubuquechorale.org. Thank you again for joining us for this wonderful performance. We look forward to seeing you again in the future.

Dubuque Chorale Artistic Staff



DR. AMANDA HUNTLEIGH is Artistic Director of the Dubuque Chorale, and serves as Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Clarke University, as well as a founding member of the Dames of Dubuque a cappella vocal trio.

Huntleigh holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from the University of Washington, a Master of Music degree in conducting from George Mason University, and a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Wartburg College. In January 2016 she earned her certification as a Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analyst through Integrated Movement Studies. She is thankful for her conducting mentors, Drs. Lisa A. Billingham, Geoffrey Boers, and Giselle Wyers, as well as her movement mentors, Colleen Wahl and the late Cadence Whittier. Huntleigh has conducted choirs touring in Chile, Iceland, Italy, and Latvia, and taught choral, instrumental, and general music in Illinois, Virginia, and Delaware public schools earlier in her career.



KARMELLA SELLERS is the Children's Choirs Program Director for the Dubuque Chorale and conducts the Legati Singers, the more advanced of the two Children's Choirs. Having been a music educator for over 34 years, she brings a wealth of experience with her to this position and firmly believes that music not only enriches lives, but also teaches discipline, teamwork, and responsibility. As a music specialist in the Dubuque Community School District since 2005, she has served the community through teaching elementary children about the wonders of music and choral singing.

Sellers is originally from Los Angeles, California. She received her Bachelor of Music Education from Grand Canyon University (Phoenix, Arizona) and her Masters in Elementary Education from Northern Arizona University. In 2009, Sellers achieved National Board Certification.

When she is not sharing in music-making with children, Sellers likes to read, to travel with her husband, Rory, and to spend time with her grown children and not-so-grown grandchildren.



VICTORIA BAUSMAN is the director of the Staccati Singers of the Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs. In addition to directing the Staccati Singers, Bausman teaches K-5 General Music at Bellevue Elementary School. Apart from teaching and directing, Bausman enjoys singing with the Dubuque Chorale and Cadenza.

Bausman earned a Bachelor's degree in Music Education as well as a Vocal Performance Certificate at Elmhurst University in Elmhurst, IL. During her studies, Bausman had multiple opportunities to travel to other countries, such as Jamaica, Austria, and the Czech Republic, to widen her horizons as well as further her experience in music and teaching. Prior to teaching in Bellevue, Bausman was the general music teacher and choral director at Galena Middle School and Galena High School.



THAN CHESHER is the Associate Director for the Dubuque Chorale. In addition to the Dubuque

Chorale, Cheshier directs the choirs of Dubuque Senior High School and teaches a Modern Band class introducing students to contemporary instruments and recording techniques. He has directed choirs in Iowa and Minnesota, where students earned honors in conference, state, and national honor choirs.

Chesher comes to Dubuque with 28 years of professional musical experience performing for amusement parks, cruise ships, and onstage as a vocalist and bassist. His academic research includes individual well-being through music, student musician identity, and popular music in schools. Chesher received his Master of Arts in Music Education from the University of Iowa and his Bachelor of Music Education from Morningside College.



DR. SHARON JENSEN holds music degrees from Calvin College, the University of Texas, and the University of Michigan. The recipient of a Rotary Fellowship, she studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna, Austria, where she received the Artist's Diploma.

She has performed with orchestras throughout the Midwest and at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall for four consecutive years. In July 2016, she was a pianist for the Prague Choral Festival and performed with members of the Czech Philharmonic in Smetana Hall. Jensen has also been heard on the *Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts* broadcast by WFMT in Chicago, along with NPR's *Landmark Live* and *Sunday Afternoon Live from the Chazen*.

Recently retired from a 35-year university teaching career, Jensen maintains a piano studio in Dubuque, IA. In 2015, she was honored as the Nationally Certified Teacher of the Year from the state of Iowa and in 2020 as the Iowa Foundation Fellow.



AMANDA HAUTA, MM, is an adjunct professor at the University of Dubuque where she has taught World Music. She sings with the Julien Chamber Choir and teaches piano and accordion lessons. She loves accompanying the Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs. She completed a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of Northern Colorado and a Master of Music degree from the University of Minnesota Duluth. Hauta's current project is learning how to play bagpipes with the

Dubuque Fire Pipes and Drums. She lives in Dubuque with her husband and two sons.



Brazilian pianist **DR. KEISY PEYERL XAVIER** has established herself as a distinguished solo and collaborative pianist. With a diverse artistic background and a robust foundation in Classical piano, Peyerl Xavier's journey culminated in the attainment of a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance from the University of Southern Mississippi, complementing her earlier degrees obtained in her homeland. Peyerl Xavier's accomplishments include clinching First Prize in the MMTA Collegiate Competition and securing high positions in prestigious contests, like the "National Piano Competition from the Brazilian Academy of Music" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She has enriched her skills through masterclasses with eminent pianists globally, from École Normale de Musique de Paris, the San Francisco Opera Center, and Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Germany. Currently Assistant Professor of Music and Collaborative Pianist at Clarke University, Peyerl Xavier's achievements are amplified through her dynamic artistry and profound connection to music.

Get Inspired with Ode to the Arts

By Sarah Slaughter

"I can't think of any single thing that has had more impact on my life than the arts," says Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs (DCCC) Program Director Karmella Sellers. Humans are naturally creative, and the act of creation can ripple out to touch myriad aspects of our lives. Arts and culture institutions strengthen communities both economically and socially, providing an opportunity for those of different backgrounds to gather together for a common experience. Studies have linked arts participation to positive mental and physical health outcomes, such as reduced cognitive decline in older adults, lowering cortisol levels, and improving mood. "For me personally, singing is restorative," says DCCC Staccati Singers conductor Victoria Bausman. "It grounds me, re-energizes me, and helps me carry joy into daily

life. The same can be true for anyone who finds their own creative outlet.”

Whether we engage with works of art as a creator or an observer, the arts are an invaluable tool for helping people process and express emotions. The opening number “Some Nights,” by fun.—a popular band from the 2010s—shows the perspective of a young artist wrestling with who he is and questioning the decisions and sacrifices he has made on the road to fame and success. The song was written while the band was on tour abroad and lead singer Nate Ruess was struggling with the pressures of being far from home.

The children’s choirs will demonstrate the mood-boosting power of music with their rendition of “I Whistle a Happy Tune” from Rodgers and Hammerstein’s musical *The King and I*. In the story of the show, the governess Anna, who has just arrived in Bangkok to teach the King’s children, uses the song to encourage her own son and calm his nerves as they adjust to their new surroundings.

Arts education for young people has been shown to increase emotional resilience, empathy, and self-efficacy. In their work with the DCCC students Sellers and Bausman have witnessed these effects firsthand. “We get to watch our singers grow as humans,” says Sellers. “They become more confident, more compassionate. We solve problems together, we learn discipline and work ethic. It’s a beautiful thing to watch.”

Another goal of this concert is to highlight the connections between different artists and modes of expression. “Cross-artistic connections are important to me because it is an opportunity for one artist to shine a light on other art and artists,” says Dubuque Chorale Artistic Director Dr. Amanda Huntleigh. This concert will shine that light on two artists from the Chorale’s own membership—soprano Mary Bryant and Associate Director Than Cheshier have each composed original songs that will be performed by the Chorale. “It is a beautiful opportunity for the composers to hear their pieces come to life with live voices, and be an active part of the performance preparation,” says Huntleigh of the collaboration.

Bryant’s piece “Be Still” takes inspiration from religion, using music to illustrate a spiritual message. The piece was composed for the ordination of former First Congregational UCC pastor (and daughter of one of our Chorale singers) Reverend Kaity Kemp, with text from her favorite verses in Psalm 46 and Romans 12:2. The text calls the listener to find peace and renewal through faith. While composed for Rev. Kemp’s ordination, Bryant also associates the piece with her daughter. “I ended up composing the core of ‘Be Still’ during a day of extremely heightened anxiety. My daughter was

having major, hours-long surgery, and I really needed to be still. I wrote the music that I needed to hear during that time.”

Chesher’s piece “And you love me” is a setting of a poem by 19th-century American poet Stephen Crane. The text explores the complexity of human relationships, depicting the joy and anxiety of falling in love. “I found Crane’s poem in a book of poems I bought from a dusty book store years ago. When I came across ‘And you love me’ it was one of those odd things you hear composers say—it immediately sang as I read it.”

When two forms of art combine, the audience is able to engage multiple senses at once and deepen their experience of the work. The song “Sunday” from Stephen Sondheim’s *Sunday in the Park with George* depicts the artist Georges Seurat finishing his most famous work, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*. “At Such a Dizzy Height,” composed by Joan Szymko, takes inspiration from the stained glass windows of Marc Chagall with lyrics adapted from letters between the artist and his wife, Bella.

The final piece of the concert, “Connected” by Brian Tate (performed by the combined choirs), challenges our human tendency to focus on differences between people, and reminds us instead of how we are all bound together. Bausman, who will conduct the piece, says “the piece uses music—a universally human art form—to express a philosophical idea also found in literature, religion, and cultural traditions: that we are part of something larger.” The interconnectedness is illustrated in the music by the rhythmic patterns and how each of the seemingly distinct lines for the various voice parts weave together to form a tapestry of sound.

Dubuque has a lot to offer in terms of arts experiences, including ballet, a symphony orchestra, plays, museums, murals, art shows, and of course choral music. We hope this concert inspires audience members to explore the arts in our community and find ways to tap into their creative side!

Lyrics available online at
<https://dubuquechorale.org/concerts/ode.pdf>



Ode to the Arts

Some Nights.....Jeff Bhasker, Andrew Dost,
Jack Antonoff, and Nate Ruess
arr. Mac Huff

Cadenza

Danielle Phillips, Danielle Scaffidi, and David Scaffidi, vocal soloists

I Whistle a Happy Tune from *The King and I*.....Richard Rodgers
arr. Cristi Cary Miller

DCCC Combined Choirs

Be Still.....Mary Bryant

Chorale

Music Alone Shall Live.....Traditional German Canon
arr. with additional music by Donald Moore
Staccati Singers

And you love me.....Than Chesher
Chorale

The Poet Sings.....Z. Randall Stroope
Legati Singers

Sunday from *Sunday in the Park with George*.....Stephen Sondheim
Cadenza

Thomas Taylor, guest conductor

At Such a Dizzy Height.....Joan Szymko
Chorale

Ann Duchow, violin

Haley Nicholson, cello

Thomas Taylor and Mary Bryant, vocal soloists

Mouth Music.....Dolores Keane and John Faulkner
Chorale Trebles

Tantsulaul.....Veljo Tormis
Chorale Tenor-Basses

Canto de Pílon.....Traditional Venezuelan Song
arr. Cristian Grases
Combined DCCC and Cadenza Trebles

Connected.....Brian Tate
Combined Choirs

Translations

Tantsulaul

Las aga meie Mari tulla,
küll mina teen tal jalad alla.

Ait-tali-rali-raa, ali-ramp-tamp-taa,
Utireetu, utireetu, trallallaa.

Mul sukakannas suured augud
just nagu vana mära laugud.

Kõrv minul ajab jorupilli,
Alt-Tare Jüri torupilli.

Dancing Song

Let our Mari come,
I shall get her on her feet.

Ait-tali-rali-raa, ali-ramp-tamp-taa,
Utireetu, utireetu, trallallaa.

My sock heels have holes
like an old mare's blaze.

My ears are singing as if
Jüri from next door were playing the
pipes.

Canto de Pílon

Pila que pila, María, pila el maíz
Hoy, hoy hoy, hoy pilé todo el maíz
hoy, hoy, hoy, hoy, que mamá mandó a
pilar
pilé yo, piló María, y también piló Pilar

Pestle Song

Grind and grind, María, grind the corn
Today, today, today, today I ground all
the corn
today, today, today, today, that mother
ordered to grind
I ground, María ground, and also Pilar
ground

Fall 2025 Roster

Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs

Legati Singers

Charlotte Bellows
Lillian Connolly
William Dunn-Peroski
Kylie Duschner
Cammie Eigenberger
Josephine Enzler
Delilah Fosdick
Gabby Hanske
Kinley Henning

Aramis Huntleigh
Spencer Kafer
Ben Leach
Jay Martin
Conor McDonald
Ava Melburn
Jaina Moser
Kita Neuhaus
Ian O'Toole

Austin Roling
Felicity Schetgen
Kinley Silvestri
Vivian Stepan
Kiersten Thoma
Sophia Timmons
Lillian Winter
Ethan Worzalla

Staccati Singers

Evelyn Aguilar
Clara Bellows
Madeleine Connery
Lilah Dierksen
Hazel Foust
Nazarene Gephart
Hugo Hauta
Anora Heiderscheit

Henry Henze
Kennedy Johannsen
Addilynn Kail
Louella Kaune Billmeyer
Hazel Kelly
Leona Lansing
Marlowe Loar
Addison Luedtke

Audrey Manemann
Charlie Mary Moreno
Gabriel Murphy
Clara Pennington
Adeline J. Roling
Jayla Young

Artistic Staff

Dr. Amanda Huntleigh, Artistic Director
Karmella Sellers, Children's Choirs Program Director, Legati Singers Conductor
Victoria Bausman, Staccati Singers Conductor
Than Chesher, Associate Director
Dr. Sharon Jensen, Dubuque Chorale Accompanist
Amanda Hauta, Children's Choirs Accompanist
Dr. Keisy Peyrerl Xavier, Cadenza Accompanist

Board of Directors

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Macayla Albee

Nicholas Anderson
Doug Henry
Greg Orwoll
Sarah Slaughter
Susan Tonn

Dubuque Chorale

Soprano

Jeannie Adams*

Macayla Albee*

Emily Amato

Victoria Bausman*

Erin Beatty

Mary Bryant*

Thalia Cutsforth

Catherine Douillet

Kaitlyn Engelken*

Mary Beth Ferring*#

Genevieve Gourley

Susan Hansen

Maci Helle

Jennifer Hermsen

Sharon Jensen*

Any Jones

Elle Kosciuk

Lisa Landgraf

LaDonna Manternach

Jennifer Mauss

Twyla Pereira*

Anna Reed

Mary Jo Rooney

Danielle Scaffidi*

Sarah Slaughter

Anita Smisek

Alto

Elyse Acompanado

Michelle Balek

Becky Bryant

Becky Canovan

Teresa Eckhart*

Lorrie Etheredge*

Ann Gile

Melissa Jensen

Roxanne Johnson

Mary Kelley

Cheri Kraske

Laura Marcy

Rocio Pérez

Danielle Phillips*#

Nicole Soer

Laura Southworth*

Deanne Sulla

Katey Theis*

Rachelle Vize

Norah Webster

Tenor

Nicholas Anderson*#

Daniel Knepper

Robert Nunez

Mia Scott

Michael Sivill*

Thomas Taylor*

Ben Wintress

Bass

Joseph Amato

Than Chesher*

Charles Forster*

Nick Glab

Tom LeVoor

William Riley*

David Scaffidi*

Allan Simms*

Wes Struebing

Curt Zeimet*

*Member of Cadenza

#Section Coordinator

Dubuque Chorale 2025-26 Season

Holiday Family Concert

Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs join the DSO

Saturday, December 6, 1PM

Five Flags Theater

Holiday Concert,

Dubuque Chorale joins the DSO

Saturday, December 6, 7:30PM

Sunday, December 7, 2PM

Five Flags Theater

SongFest

Dubuque Chorale hosts local community and collegiate choirs

Saturday, February 7, 7PM

Eleanor Roosevelt Middle School

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

Dubuque Chorale joins the DSO

Saturday, April 18, 7:30PM

Sunday, April 19, 2PM

Heritage Center, University of Dubuque

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Harmony

Saturday, May 2, 7PM

Sunday, May 3, 2PM

Bread of Life Presbyterian Church

History of the Dubuque Chorale

By Danielle Phillips

The Dubuque Chorale is a community choral organization composed of singers from Dubuque and its outlying regions. Dennis Williams founded the Chorale in 1971 for the initial purpose of studying and performing choral masterworks with orchestra; appropriately, the first concert season featured Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *The Creation*. Since its inception, the Chorale has performed over 60 major choral works and its mission has evolved to include great choral music from many genres. The group's 50+ years of performances, over 1,100 singer-alumni, and more than 40,000 audience members can all attest to the accomplishment of this mission.

The Chorale presents concerts every fall and spring as well as performing additional engagements throughout the year. In 1986, they began collaborating with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra during *Holiday Concerts*. This relationship still endures today, with the Chorale continuing to join the DSO onstage for the holidays and often for another classical work during the symphony's season. Many European and North American venues have hosted the Dubuque Chorale since it started touring in 1994, and the group has performed on tour with distinguished singers from various locales.

In the 2010s the Chorale worked to increase its reach and impact, adding a chamber choir, Cadenza, in the fall of 2012. This smaller ensemble gives the Chorale more performance flexibility, increasing its exposure as a community arts leader and advocate, and Cadenza frequently sings at local events as well as at Chorale concerts. In 2013, the Chorale began hosting *SongFest*, an annual choral festival featuring numerous collegiate and community choirs that promotes cross-generational collaboration among singers in Dubuque and its surrounding areas to this day.

The 2014-15 season saw the launch of the Dubuque Chorale Children's Choir, a group of approximately 50 singers in third through sixth grades, and in 2022 a second Children's Choir was added. The purpose of these choirs is to provide the children of Dubuque and nearby communities with an extracurricular creative outlet, to expose students to music and performance opportunities they may not encounter in school, and to allow them to interact and form relationships with others who are dedicated to choral excellence.

The Dubuque Chorale continues to flourish today under Dr. Amanda Huntleigh, who began her tenure as Artistic Director in 2018. Since its founding, the organization has grown to include singers from a diverse array of occupations, ages, and socio-economic statuses, and its repertoire and artistic programming have expanded to include new collaborations and educational opportunities. The Chorale persists in realizing its mission under Huntleigh's inspired direction, seeking out innovative community partnerships and broadening its repertoire of classics and contemporary music.

*Thank you, Dubuque Racing Association!
The Dubuque Chorale is grateful for the
DRA's generous support of SongFest!*



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The Gronen team is proud to be part of our community revitalization. For over 20 years, we have served as a catalyst for community, redeveloping over one million square feet in Dubuque's urban core, while collaborating with more than 20 nonprofit organizations. We believe that strong partnerships are essential in transforming vision into reality.

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As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, we are grateful for the support of these generous donors for our 2023-24 and 2024-25 operating funds.

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Jim & Bernita
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Mary Kelley
Patricia Leamer, in
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Johnson
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Alan & Susan Hattel
James Kelly
Ellen Kremer
Bob Lehmann
Carol McClenahan, in
honor of M. Lee
McClenahan
Lucille Nicholson

We are particularly grateful to our many volunteers for your hours of dedication and service! Special thanks to our In-Kind Contributors, particularly First Congregational United Church of Christ for the use of its beautiful sanctuary for this concert.

Looking Ahead... Dreaming Big!

If you would like to help secure the future of the Dubuque Chorale, there are many ways to get involved! **Please fill out this form and return it with your donation.**

I would love to receive concert information. ☐ Mail ☐ E-mail

☐ I love to sing and would like more information on becoming a member.

☐ Please let me know how I can volunteer to help the Chorale.

☐ I would like to support the mission of the Dubuque Chorale with a cash donation in the amount of \$ ____.

☐ I would like to make a donation to the endowment fund in the amount of \$ _____. (For more information on our fund, see below.)

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You can also scan the QR code here to make a donation on our website at **www.dubuquechorale.org**, or send your check payable to: Dubuque Chorale, 900 Jackson Street, Suite LL5-2D, Dubuque, IA 52001.



The Dubuque Chorale is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Your donation supports the arts in Dubuque and helps us continue our mission of presenting fine choral works to the Tri-States.

Dubuque Chorale Endowment Fund

We have established the Dubuque Chorale Endowment Fund to invest in the long-term future of the Chorale through the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. Donations are tax deductible and Iowa residents are also eligible for a 25% state tax credit. To learn more contact the Community Foundation at 563-588-2700 or go online to www.dbqfoundation.org.

Thank you for considering a donation given through the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque to support our endowment fund.

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