



CORO LUX



Chorus of Light



NEWS OF NOTE



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February 2021 Volume 2 Number 2



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Kristen Norman offers a preview of our February 2021 issue

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! It is my pleasure to welcome you to the second *CoroLux* newsletter of 2021! We say goodbye (and good riddance) to 2020, and are delighted to bring you a new series of articles, interviews, and all things choral music. With the pending distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine, we hope the time will soon come to end the restrictions that have limited our ability to gather together for so long. Indeed, a metamorphosis is soon to be underway, as we emerge from our proverbial cocoons to come together and Sing!!! As a result, *Coro Lux* will soon have upcoming concert details to announce, and we are so looking forward to sharing the gift of music with you again!



Coro Lux "new" Type M Steinway

This month we have no shortage of interesting pieces for you. In an article about a recent St. Paul Lutheran Church piano acquisition, LaVonne Yazzie has written with wonderful perspective about the often under-appreciated nature of pianos and their necessity for choral music. An insightful examination of choir and orchestra collaboration, written by Kristin and Wayne Thelander, delves into both the choral and orchestral musician's perspectives on this occasionally fraught and ultimately rewarding experience. In turn, Ashley Jonkman has written for us an informative article about *Coro Lux* members Kristin and Wayne Thelander. Kristin and Wayne are both accomplished orchestral musicians and sing alto and bass respectively in *Coro Lux*.

Thank you for joining us in perusing this newest issue of the *Coro Lux* newsletter. We are truly excited about what the spring will bring with respect to choral music, and we invite you to join us along the journey! [Return to contents page](#)

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The addition of a new piano benefits St. Paul Church, Coro Lux and musicians.

by LaVonne Yazzi

What is required to create music? At its most basic level, musical creation requires an instrument, instruction, talent and practice. As a child growing up, I always had an ear for music. My earliest memories are of my uncle and I cruising the reservation in his pickup truck listening to old country music on the radio. For a Navajo child growing up in Gallup, New Mexico, the fine arts music scene was almost non-existent and private instruction practically impossible, a far-off pipe dream.

It wasn't until I attended high school in a small Arizona town where I was offered the privilege of receiving the instruction necessary to develop any vocal talent. Through the support of musical teachers, parent and student volunteers, fundraising boosters, and the many other contributors to our high school musical program, I was able to develop my vocal talents, singing in the regional and all-state choirs in high school, dabbling in vocal fine arts during my undergraduate years at UNM, and ultimately, joining the professional choir that is *Coro Lux*.

My story, no doubt similar to those of other *Coro Lux* singers in our choir, demonstrates the interconnection of resources necessary to help young musicians achieve their musical potential. To create music, a complicated network of support is necessary, and the organization that is *Coro Lux* is no different. I realize in the writing of this article that I have taken for granted the fact that our choir has access to the best vocal musicians in Albuquerque and, by proxy of our symbiotic relationship between vocalist and pianist, to the finest pianos to accompany our weekly practices and concerts. To put it plainly, without a beautiful piano instrument, *Coro Lux's* sound would not be possible.

In order to appreciate the fine instruments that are available for our use, it is important to understand the history behind the church's pianos. Greg Flynn and Alicia Ruch-Flynn, *(continued on next page)*

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<http://www.stpaulabq.org/>

St. Paul Lutheran Church
A reconciling in Christ Community

(pianos continued)

who up until recently have been very active members of the congregation, have left Albuquerque due to work obligations and were not able to take their excellent Kawai grand piano along with them on their move. In a gesture of kindness and generosity, the Flynns have given their Kawai grand piano to St. Paul Lutheran Church on permanent loan to the congregation. The Director of Music, Dr. Jeremy Wirths, has decided that the Kawai piano is the best instrument to use in the church sanctuary, replacing the Steinway Model M piano to be utilized by *Coro Lux* permanently.



The "new" *Coro Lux* Steinway

The Steinway piano, which has sat in the church sanctuary for all these years, was donated by the children of Janet Weed after her sudden and untimely passing 17 years ago. Janet, a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and a well-known musician in the Albuquerque community, was a longtime member of St. Paul Lutheran Church. Janet was also a singer involved with Opera Southwest and a piano teacher affiliated with the state chapter of MENC (Music Educators National Conference). As the Kawai piano will be kept in the church sanctuary moving forward, the Steinway piano will be placed in the choir rehearsal room, giving our Artistic Director, Brad Ellingboe, a break from the arduous work of pushing the piano from the sanctuary to the choir rehearsal room before and after choir practice every Tuesday.

In closing, the creation of music on a basic level might only require instruction, an instrument, talent and practice, for an organization like *Coro Lux*, it requires a large team of musicians, volunteers, teachers, and financial supporters in order to function. The work that goes on behind-the-scenes, as demonstrated by the generosity and efforts to ensure access to a fine piano instrument, allows both congregational and professional singers affiliated with St. Paul Lutheran church to create vocal music in the present while inspiring young musicians of all backgrounds to reach for those pipe dreams by making fine arts accessible to all those with an ear for music. [Return to contents page](#)

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Karen Ellingboe

CORO LUX

Getting the covid-19 vaccine distributed: The Pit to become mass vaccination site for UNM Health

by guest columnist
Karen Ellingboe, MSN, RN
(Executive Director of Ambulatory Services, UNM Hospitals)

Ever since the start of this pandemic, it's been "all hands on deck" within the UNM Health System, and my own role within the UNM Hospital structure has changed to fill the emerging needs of the situation. Lately I've been playing a lead role in getting the UNM Basketball Arena, fondly known as "the Pit," ready to become a site for mass vaccinations.

This has entailed a great deal of work by a great many people. We have, of course, been in constant communication with the Department of Health, since the coordination of getting everyone in the state vaccinated falls under their purview. In addition, we've been working with UNM Athletics, the Office of the State Fire Marshall, multiple departments within the hospital, and the state office for Accessibility (to ensure that differently abled people have full access), to name just a few.

Along with this we need to schedule professionals from within our organization, and coordinate volunteers from outside the organization to administer the vaccinations, and to keep track of who has been vaccinated the first and



External view of UNM's Pit

(Continued on following page)

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(Vaccine continued)

second time. The vaccine itself needs to be brought from the Hospital to the Pit in sufficient quantity to keep the process running smoothly and avoid any waste of vaccine. All these staff have other full-time responsibilities within the organization that now must be balanced with running the Pit as a vaccination site for as long as it takes to get the pandemic under control. This entails a great deal of coordination.

I want to emphasize that in order to get vaccinated, all residents of New Mexico must register through the state Department of Health (NMDOH). The University of New Mexico Hospital is just one of the distributors of the vaccine once an individual becomes eligible for vaccination. Beyond this, I think the best thing I can do is share some portions of the official press release from the UNM Hospital on this topic, as follows.

Long known for housing some of the most iconic and memorable moments in New Mexico's history, The Pit at The University of New Mexico will be home to another watershed moment. It will be transformed into a mass vaccination site for UNM Health officials to administer COVID-19 vaccines to the public.

UNM Health officials have been administering vaccinations with guidance and support from the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH). Just last week the DOH announced the next phase of vaccinations are starting.

"It's really important to have a large space where



Interior view of UNM's Pit

(Continued on following page)

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There's a time for applause, and a time for a helping hand

Although many of our activities have been curtailed by the need to quarantine, nonetheless, our expenses continue. As we do everything in our power to emerge from this pandemic as a healthy organization, we ask that you consider making a contribution. Coro Lux is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and all donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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(Vaccine continued)

we can keep people socially distant and move them quickly through vaccinations,” said UNM Hospitals Chief Executive Officer Kate Becker.

Vaccinations at the Pit will begin Wednesday, January 20th. UNM Health officials estimate they will be able to vaccinate 3,000 people a day at the facility. So far the health system has administered more than 10,000 Pfizer doses to health care workers and first responders. This includes second booster doses that are required for full immunization.

While vaccinations will take place at The Pit, all registrations to be vaccinated must go through the **DOH vaccination registration portal**. UNM Health officials are encouraging the public to sign up now and wait for notification from DOH when they are eligible to receive the vaccine.

“As New Mexico’s only academic health center we have had the opportunity to play an integral role in the effort to vaccinate our state,” said Douglas Ziedonis, MD, MPH, Executive Vice President for UNM Health Sciences and Chief Executive Officer of the UNM Health System. “This effort goes right to the heart of our mission, to care for all New Mexicans.”

Becker and Ziedonis both stressed that even with vaccinations New Mexicans shouldn’t let down their guard. “We need to continue to wear a mask in public, stay socially distant and practice good hygiene,” Becker said. “We know that immunity is not instantaneous after vaccination,” Ziedonis added. “It will take time, but this is the light at the end of the tunnel we have all been searching and hoping for. It will be important for New Mexicans to register on the DOH website, get vaccinated and return for their second dose when instructed to do so.”

Officials do not have a timeline on how long The Pit could be utilized for vaccinations but DOH’s phases are projected to last through the summer. There are also still unknowns about how long the vaccination lasts in a person’s system and if more booster shots will be needed down the road.

“This is a start. There will be more information to come in the months ahead but right now when we think about getting our lives back, protecting our loved ones and opening back up our state, being vaccinated is the quickest way to do that,” Becker said.

For more information on the COVID vaccine or how to get registered **visit the DOH website:**

<https://cv.nmhealth.org>

(Much of this column has been drawn from the official UNM Hospital Press release of 1/12/21 by Alex Sanchez)

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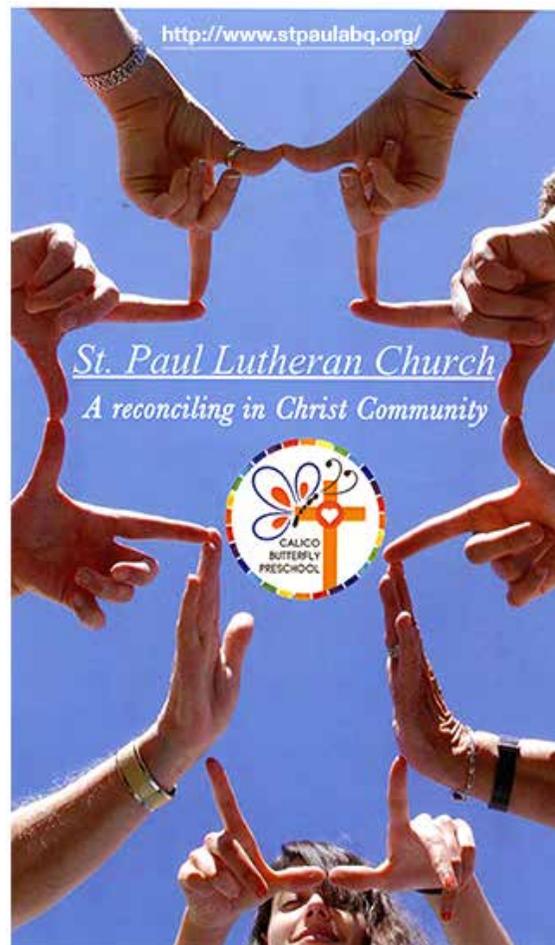
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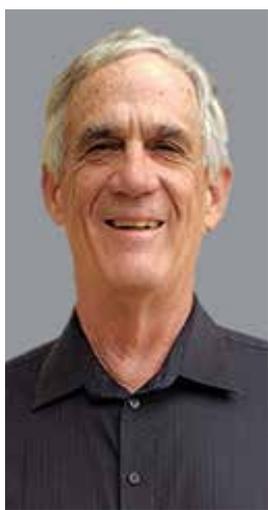
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Choir and Orchestra Collaborations: Challenges and Solutions

By Kristin and Wayne Thelander

Choirs and orchestras collaborate often, and when they join forces they perform some of the greatest of western music: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Britten, Bruckner, Handel, Haydn, Mahler, Mozart, Vaughan Williams, and Verdi, to name a few. These great works are rewarding to perform for both the choir members and the orchestra members, to say nothing about the audience experience.

We thought the readers may be interested in an orchestral musician's perspective of this partnership. Having graduated from St. Olaf College (Northfield,



St. Olaf College Christmas Festival

MN), our orchestra collaborated with choirs frequently. Since then, we have performed with orchestras for more than 80 years between us (!), and we also sing in *Coro Lux*. Wayne is a bass player and orchestra conductor (he leads the UNM Health Science Orchestra during "normal" times), and Kristin was a "French" horn soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. *(continued on next page)*

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(Collaborations continued)

We know that choirs really look forward to performing with orchestra. They will sing major works by major composers, hear beautiful instrumental colors, and be a part of a large musical force that audiences appreciate. But is there a downside, too? We have learned, as *Coro Lux* members, that the choir is often terribly crowded on stage, causing overheating and inability to even hold music at a proper distance. We have seen this lead to major discomfort and even fainting among choir members. Sometimes orchestras play too loud in sensitive passages, and if the orchestra conductor is leading the performance, the tempos may not be what the choir is expecting or prepared for. Choir members are often baffled and even insulted when the orchestra manager calls for a break or end of rehearsal – even in the middle of a phrase! They need to understand that this is not a personal affront, but a result of years of labor negotiations that prevent professional musicians from being asked for “just five more minutes” or “can we just finish the piece?”

Now for the orchestral player’s perspective. Too often choir members talk among themselves during rehearsals, even while the orchestra is trying to tune (no! no!). Some (not all) choir members come late to rehearsals, which is never acceptable in an orchestra. When the late-comer arrives s/he crawls through the percussion or bass section and over other choir members! Obviously these “choir” habits are best moderated by a choir director who is sensitive to these problems and warns the choir to be on their best behavior.

Orchestral players are also often crowded when a choir is added to the back of the stage. Since horn players are usually at the back of the orchestra, this is particularly problematic for them. As you know, the horn is a “backwards instrument,” with the sound coming from the back of the player. When choir members are too close, this changes and muffles the sound of the horn, much to the distress of the horn section. Kristin has even experienced

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(Collaborations continued)

choir members resting their music on her head (no! no!).

Choir members should never walk into or through the orchestra space. Many of the players' instruments are more valuable than their cars! When there is a break in rehearsal or intermission in a concert, orchestra musicians often have no choice but to leave their instruments on stage, and accidents are disastrous.

As far as musicianship is concerned, choirs must keep their eyes on the conductor. They are seated behind the orchestra, and they can easily lag behind if they are not watching closely. This is especially important if preparation has been done by the choir director and then one or two rehearsals and concerts are led by the orchestra conductor.

Choir members should keep in mind that professional orchestras are extremely limited in number of rehearsals before concerts, due to tight budgets. The most difficult orchestra concert is unlikely to have more than four or five rehearsals, and many concerts will get only one or two. Choirs, on the other hand, have probably had weeks of rehearsal. So if orchestras are still fussing with bowings at rehearsal, choirs should be patient with this necessary discussion.

From our perspective, it would help greatly if orchestras and choirs understood each other better. And the conductors of each group should discuss things like space requirements and setup prior to the first rehearsal. We must say, this does not often happen. Too often the conductors themselves are not sensitive to space requirements! Staff members usually do the setup, and the conductors have no idea what is happening. If everyone communicates in advance, it will save time and discomfort, and lead to a much more inspiring performance experience.

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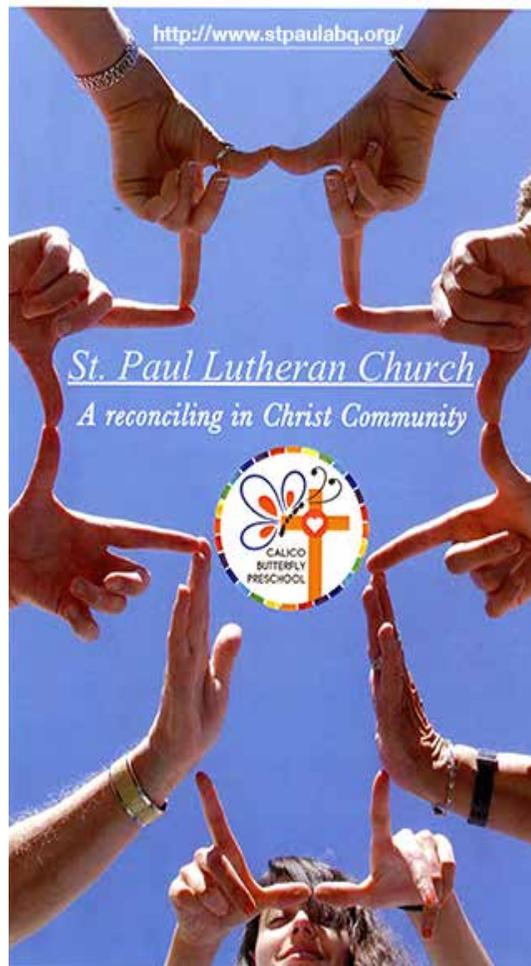
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Kristin and Wayne Thelander: accomplished orchestral musicians

By Ashley Jonkman

Wayne and Kristin Thelander have lived most of their lives performing and teaching music. While they're each accomplished professional musicians in their own right, *Coro Lux* is one of the places they've been able to perform together, and they couldn't be happier about it.

The two met the first week of college at freshman orientation at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, and have been together ever since. They promised they'd wait until they were finished with school to get married, and made good on their promise, tying the knot on none other than graduation night! Both music majors, Wayne immediately started teaching and directing orchestra after college, and Kristin went on to earn a Master's in Music History at University of Minnesota and a Doctorate in Horn Performance at University of Wisconsin.

The Thelanders have deep roots here in New Mexico—Wayne grew up here and is a graduate of Highland High School. It was here in Albuquerque that Wayne grew to love music and became inspired through the direction of a great many mentors. He began playing the violin, and quickly switched to string bass, where he found his niche. As he progressed in his studies and proficiency, he was bitten by the teaching bug. Originally planning on majoring in math, he found there was something else he'd rather put his efforts toward—"I loved helping students discover what they could do," he said. "Seeing the spark go off in their mind made me say to myself, maybe this is something I could do." After retiring from storied careers in music education in Iowa, the Thelanders returned to New Mexico, and Wayne is now conducting the Health Sciences Center Orchestra—a joint endeavor between the UNM College of Health Sciences and the Department of Music. While this year has put the ensemble on hold, he's ready to get back on the podium as soon as he's able.

As Wayne was inspiring high school orchestra students, Kristin was doing the same at the university level. A horn and music history professor (first at UNM, then at University of Iowa), she went on to become the Director of the School of Music at UI in the year 2000. She came from a musical family—her father sang in the Fargo-Moorhead Opera and her mother sang in and directed the church choir. Like many of us, Kristin started learning music on the piano, and then added the horn. While she entered St. Olaf as a math major, she couldn't stay away from music either, and eventually followed her true passion as a musician.

(continued on following page)

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(Thelanders continued)



The Thelanders at play.

While teaching and inspiring the next generation of musicians, Kristin and Wayne began a family of their own and adopted two children from South Korea. Now, both kids are grown and live

here in New Mexico as well. Jon is 36 and has two children of his own, (whom Kristin and Wayne spend time with at the zoo!) and Sara is 33, and lives with them part-time.

Though they haven't performed together as much as one might think of two professional musicians, the two have shared more life than most spouses. 5 years ago, Kristin was in dire need of a kidney. After waiting on the transplant list because of a genetic disease called Polycystic Kidney Disease, Kristin prepared to begin dialysis. It was then that Wayne got tested to see if the two might have the same blood type—and he just happened to be a match. Wayne underwent the surgery and proceeded to donate his kidney to Kristin. Wayne enthusiastically encourages anyone to become a donor, saying “If I didn't have the scars, I wouldn't even know I'd donated a kidney!” To anyone considering becoming an organ donor, Wayne says “Go for it!”

While being in an immunocompromised state because of her donated kidney has made this past year more difficult for Kristin, the Thelanders are making the best of it by doing what so many of us have learned to do: slowing down, spending time outdoors at the zoo and botanical gardens (and the golf course!), organizing their home, reading and enjoying movies. Kristin is a member of the *Coro Lux* board and stays busy contributing her time and expertise to our ensemble.

If they had to listen to one piece of music for the rest of 2021, Kristin was quick to answer that it would have to be Stravinsky's Rite of Spring. For Wayne? “Definitely not Schubert.” While it's rare to have music simply playing at the house, they both enjoy classical, opera, Broadway and some jazz.

The Thelanders are a modest duo—while they're confident in their musical abilities, they are the first to say they're still learning to be vocalists. For two instrumentalists who went to St. Olaf, they have plenty of experience singing, but say one of the best parts about being in *Coro Lux* is the constant need to perform at their highest level and be pushed to learn more. They both enjoy rehearsals and being asked to continue learning about vocal technique. With all their combined years of experience, the Thelanders know a good conductor when they see one, and they say “Brad is definitely a very good musician and a great choral conductor.” The best part about *Coro Lux* according to them: the camaraderie, making good friends, and making good music.

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BRUNI-KARR
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Albuquerque Professional Property Management Bruni Karr Agency Mission Statement: The mission of BKA is to provide quality service to single-family property owners and residents in Albuquerque, New Mexico, demonstrating integrity and professionalism. Bruni Karr Agency, Karr Agency, is operating in Bernalillo County, New Mexico, specializing in full service, single-family residential property management. The company has been operating since 1979. The Bruni Karr Agency, a leader in the Albuquerque single-family residential property field, which manages approximately 400 single-family residential properties and is a member of the National Association of Residential Property Managers ® (NARPM)

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Great ways to financially support Coro Lux

If you are currently required to take minimum distributions from your IRA, you might consider a charitable contribution instead

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Who qualifies?

- You must be 70 1/2 at the time of the distribution.
- You may distribute any amount up to \$100,000 per tax year.
- You and your spouse may make combined distributions up to \$200,000.
- You may distribute from your traditional IRA and IRRA.
- Charitable distributions from 403(b) plans, 401(k) plans, pension plans or other retirement plans are ineligible.

How do you apply this strategy?

- The distribution proceeds must be paid directly to Coro Lux.
- Charities must receive distributions no later than December 31 of the respective tax year to be considered as a donation to the charity for the year.
- You cannot receive any goods or services in return for the IRA charitable distribution.

Can you use the charitable distribution to meet any required minimum distributions for the year?

- Yes, you can use up to the entire \$100,000 per person each year to satisfy any required minimum distributions you may have for the year, please consult your tax advisor for the detailed rules. The amount distributed as a charitable IRA distribution is included in the owner's required minimum distribution for the year, if any.

Your financial advisor should work with you and your tax advisor as you evaluate this strategy to determine whether it makes sense in your overall estate plan. [Return to contents page](#)



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News from other organizations



Polyphony is led by Dr. Maxine Thevenot. Our Mission: Voices of New Mexico promotes the talent of New Mexico musicians in the context of vocal ensemble performances. This equates to both the preservation of historical music and the promotion of new music (especially by New Mexican composers).. For more information, go here: www.polyphonym.com



Many members of Santa Fe's **Sangre de Cristo Chorale** met through music. To help you celebrate Valentine's Day, some of them share their stories in the February 10 video posted on the Chorale's website (<https://sdcchorale.org/>). The February 24 video, "Where Are They Now?" provides updates on some of the apprentices who have sung with the group over its forty-plus years. And we've posted a video of an art song recital presented in January by Music Director Fred Graham and Accompanist Debbie Wagner in conjunction with the Southwest Arts/St. John's United Methodist Concert Series.



For the latest performance schedule go to: <https://nmphil.org/>

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