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NEWS OF NOTE

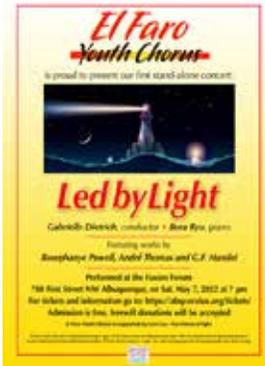


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May 2022 Volume 3 Number 5



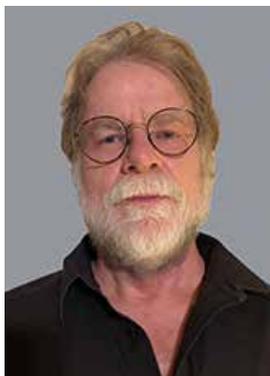
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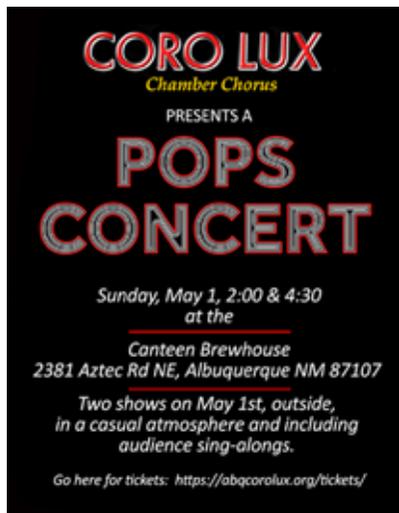
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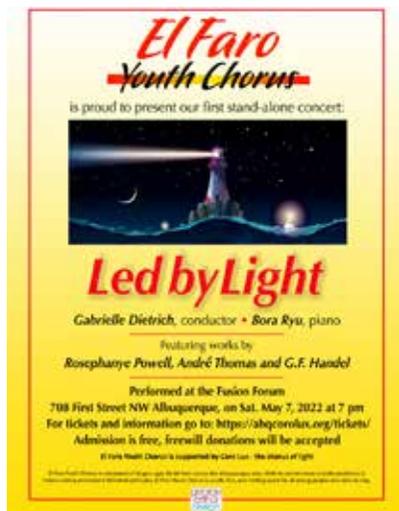
# CORO LUX

**Ashley Jonkman reveals the interesting articles you'll find in this month's issue**

As we wrap up our first full *Coro Lux* season in more than two years, it's hard to believe we actually made it! In this issue of our monthly newsletter, we'll have a recap of our concert on



Poster for the Brewhouse concert



El Faro concert poster

be sure we will be back, ready to make music come September. And in the meantime, look for our newsletter with important updates about our ensemble and other happenings all summer long! [Return to the contents page](#)

April 3rd with the New Mexico Philharmonic by the talented choral music enthusiast, LaVonne Yazzie. A true classical music fan and supporter (as well as musician and vocalist herself!) she knows her stuff and is most apt to give this recap and review of our performance of Ellingboe's *Requiem*. We'll also meet longtime CL member and party-planning phenom, Antoinette Utsinger, in an interview written by yours truly. We'll hear from bass and resident physician Dr. Joe Alcorn about the latest on the Covid front, as well as our monthly salutation from our artistic director, Bradley Ellingboe. Although we will be finishing our season this month on May 1st with our Annual Pops Concert at the Canteen Brewhouse and the May 7th concert by our *El Faro* Youth Chorus, all of our supporters and friends can



## CORO LUX

### Ellingboe conducts Ellingboe concert recap and information on the upcoming Canteen Brewhouse performance on May 1st

by LaVonne Yazzie

Over the past weekend, I had the pleasure of attending the April 4<sup>th</sup> New Mexico Philharmonic spring concert Ellingboe Conducts Ellingboe featuring *Coro Lux*. This time, I was attending not as a *Coro Lux* singer, but as a normal audience member with a musically inclined friend for company. On this sunny Sunday afternoon, we entered Immanuel Presbyterian Church for the 3pm concert. After the welcoming usher scanned our electronic tickets and gave us concert programs, we found our seats.

The church had already begun to fill, and I heard the light chatter of friends and families and the stringed instruments getting in a last-minute practice. I sensed and welcomed the excitement and anticipation that only precedes live performances. My friend perused the program while I detailed the raw vocal talent in *Coro Lux* and in the choir’s Artistic Director, Bradley Ellingboe. On this occasion, I had not done any research on the compositions. I wanted my first time hearing Robert Alexander’s Concerto Grosso for Strings, Op. 164 and Bradley Ellingboe’s *Requiem* to be an unexpected experience, with the music washing over me like a wave on the ocean.

At 3pm sharp, the conversations around us died down and the orchestra tuned their instruments before the concertmaster entered, followed by the conductor, Bradley Ellingboe. Brad shared opening remarks about Robert Alexander’s Concerto Grosso, and we learned that the last time this piece was performed was in Vienna in 1935. I was fascinated to hear how Alexander’s family brought his composition to Albuquerque, where this piece would once again be enjoyed in a symphonic setting. Brad acknowledged the difficult times globally, dedicating this requiem’s performance to all those we have lost during the COVID-19 pandemic and for an end

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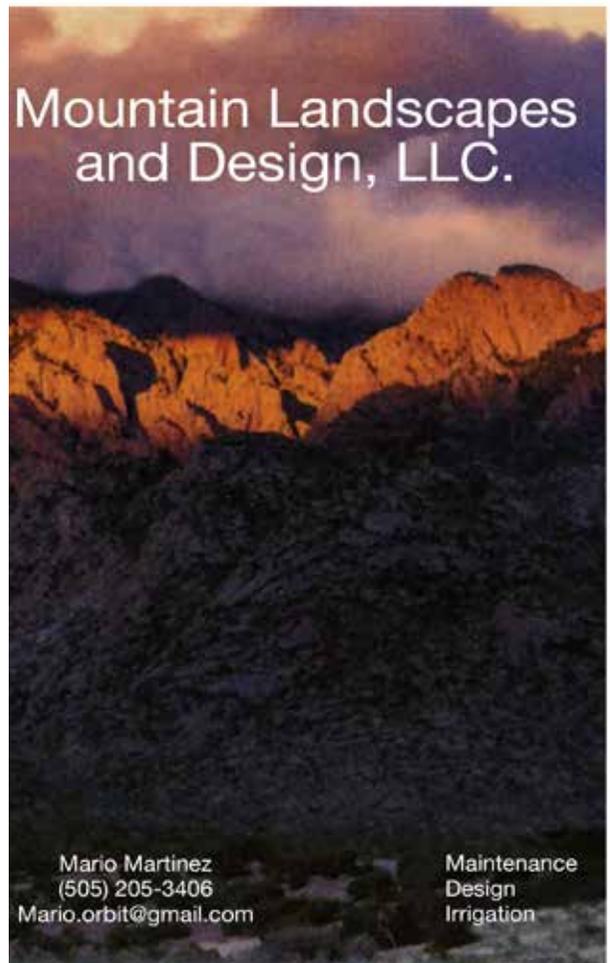
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(Ellingboe continued)

to the conflict in Ukraine.

Brad promptly turned to the Philharmonic and began conducting the Concerto Grosso for Strings, Op. 164. After two years of listening to mostly streamed music through my Air pods, it was heavenly to hear the musical dynamics of a live performance; the precise bowings of the strings, all attentive to the masterful conducting of Bradley Ellingboe. After the concerto was finished, a brief 15-minute intermission allowed for a break and a musical transition in between the two different compositions.

The next composition performed was Bradley Ellingboe's Requiem. The Introit set the stage for an otherworldly, ethereal sound, with the various choral voices blending in simple harmonies that swelled to beautiful crescendos. The Kyrie (performed in the original Greek appropriate for a mass), moved between the voice parts of the choir and the brass and woodwinds culminating in a gorgeous musical collaboration. The Graduale featured the organ and the cello and reminded me of the grandeur and reverence that you feel upon entering a beautiful cathedral whose only purpose is to glorify God, while the Psalm conveyed the depth and despair of Jesus dying crucified on the cross.

The Offertory featured the poem "Death by Not Proud" by John Donne set to music with hauntingly beautiful Alto solo performed by Rebecca Brunette. The Sanctus and Benedictus portion of the mass was awe-inspiring, with the choir's powerful vocals reinforcing the power of God. The Communion Evensong astounded me, with the complex and beautiful harmonies giving me goosebumps. The Elegy (a reprise of the Introit) was a song for the dead to rest eternally. The concert ended with a standing ovation for the NM Philharmonic, Coro Lux and Bradley Ellingboe, and I speak for the audience when I say we all left changed that Sunday afternoon.

In closing, the New Mexico Philharmonic spring concert Ellingboe Conducts Ellingboe featuring Coro Lux was a rousing success and resulted in an unforgettable experience for myself and the captive audience. For the next upcoming performance, Coro Lux Chamber Chorus presents a Pops Concert on Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 2pm and at 4:30pm at Canteen Brewhouse (2381 Aztec Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107). These two shows will be performed in Canteen's outside patio and will include audience sing-alongs. For tickets, please visit the ABQ *Coro Lux* website at <https://abqcorolux.org/tickets/>.

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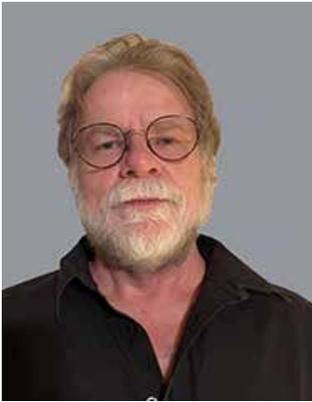
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## Vax Americana

by Dr. Joe Alcorn

The word “widget,” per the Oxford English Dictionary, entered the language from America in the 1930s with the meaning “a product that does not exist, used as an example of a typical product.” This hypothetical product is so uniform that individual widgets are totally interchangeable. The ultimate faceless commodity, then, and I speculate a concept that could not have existed until the assembly line arose some 50 years earlier in meat packing and guns and automobiles, eventually to become the dominant model for manufacturing. SO dominant that we push back now with “artisanal” products, making a virtue of the variability that the assembly line was designed to eliminate.

Absolute uniformity is a subtly widespread concept, arguably now part and parcel of agricultural monoculture, standardized school curricula and “best practice” medical treatment algorithms. We have internalized the concept so thoroughly that we don’t think twice about the assumption that a person with a Bacterial Infection - say a simple bladder infection - has a multitude of microbial widgets: identical little E coli, for which the proper smart-munition— an E coli-targeting antibiotic— will crisply clear the field, every bug exploded by the single perfect drug. Whereas, the reality is that cystitis is mediated by a population of bacteria with some diversity in their aggressiveness and in their antibiotic responsiveness - which is why you want to take the full treatment as directed, to be sure you kill off not just the most antibiotic-sensitive bugs, but also those which might be more resistant to treatment. Failure to eliminate those is exactly how we inadvertently breed antibiotic-resistant bacteria. They are NOT all widgets, but rather a crowd of similar, but not identical, microorganisms.

Similarly, we might assume that if we have, in spite of all our efforts, been afflicted with Sars CoV 2, then a few billion individual viruses or *viri* of the “strain

*(Continued on the following page)*

## Great ways to financially support Coro Lux

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- 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, pension plans or other retirement plans are ineligible.

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- The distribution proceeds must be paid directly to *Coro Lux*.
- Charities must receive distributions for each tax year no later than December 31 of the respective tax year to be considered as a donation to the charity 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, subject to reduction if you made a tax-deductible contribution; 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.**

(Vax Americana continued)

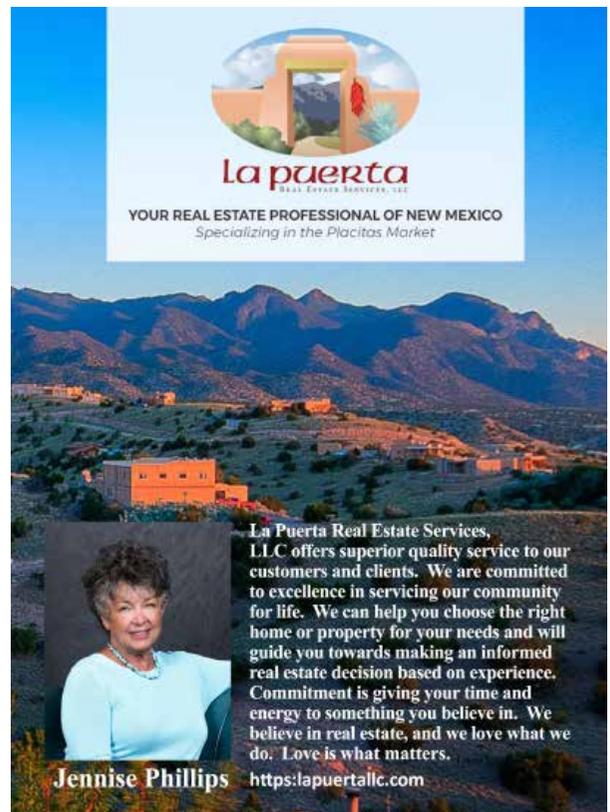
de jour” (Omicron version 1 lately ), all identical, must be the culprit. We even describe it in the singular: “THE virus.” And then we expect that proper vaccination will induce THE antibody to engage this virus and take it down before it can do significant mischief.

Is it possible, though, that we find ourselves misled by the elegant simplicity of these conceptual assembly lines of viral and antibody widgetery? Sars CoV 2 *vir* are not all identical any more than humans are. They may share features and capabilities and perform similar tasks, but with every viral replication the small errors that creep into *their* assembly result in small changes in structure (and sometimes function) and a ‘family’ of similar but not identical *vir* evolve. If a small variation results for any reason(s) in more efficient replication, THAT variant may become dominant - survival of the fittest. But there will always be some variation in the structure in a SARS CoV 2 viral swarm.

Luckily our immune system grew up with the reality that virtually ALL threats are Non-Widgety. Much of our antibody response is directed at the most prominent recognition site (antigen) in this swarm. But antibodies bracket this target, some of them not perfect matches, but close enough so that if the viral antigen acquires additional mutations, the subtly altered antigenic site will still be recognized. Which is why a person who has had exposure, say, to a particular strain of the Influenza Virus might have some immune protection against similar though not identical strains. Most of your antibody response to the inciting ‘flu might hit it like hitting the bullseye of a target. But a secondary set of arrows might hit the concentric rings around the target. Then the NEXT slightly different ‘flu that came through, might find those second and third-order arrows, already drawn up, hit IT right in the kisser.

It’s as if you are Dudley Do-right (for those of you who remember Rocky and Bullwinkle and don’t mind some metaphoric gumbo) and you are primed to go immediately after any mustachio-twirling villain. That Mustache is his striking identifying feature, his antigen. But with a little luck, some of the antibodies produced in response to the villain’s mustache were actually recognizing the underlying sneer or maybe even the nearby arched eyebrows. Should Snidely Whiplash’s villainous clean-shaven brother ever show up, he might still be recognized and promptly engaged by antibodies directed to these less prominent features, though likely without quite such a quick recognition or

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(Vax Americana continued)

robust response.

Why go on and on about non-Widgety virus and antibody? I think it's relevant right now for a couple of reasons.

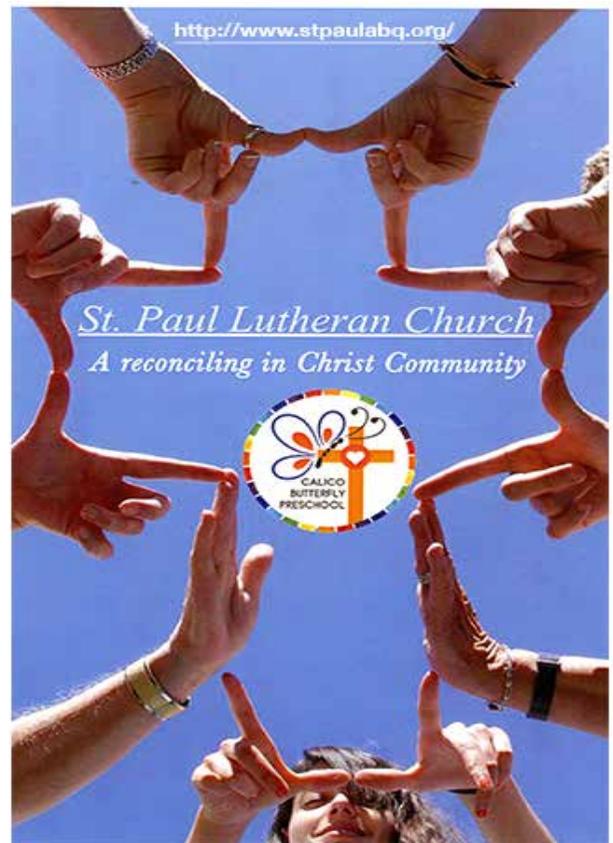
One is that, as we have increasing prevalence of the Omicron 2.0 variant, (called BA.2), we have discovered that folks who had the original Omicron variant are pretty well protected. (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00558-w>). BA.2 is even more contagious than the original Omicron that swiftly became the most dominant form of virus late last year. But if you got it since then - and we don't know how many of us did because the US has never figured out how to keep stats for home-testing but I was one of them - you are pretty UNlikely to get BA.2.

This seems to be an example of the immune system response to BA.1's "mustache" being broad enough to cross-cover for the clean-lipped BA.2 (Though in fairness as described in previous columns, there IS that other arm of "innate" immunity with reactive T-cells and the Rig-1 system etc that also participates - its not ALL about the antibodies....)

The mRNA vaccines (and boosters) also induce good, if somewhat temporary, protection against serious illness from BA.2 (though not so good on prevention of infection) but having had BA.1 infection seems even better. Why is that? What is the difference between the immunity conferred by vaccine vs. conferred by infection?

Probably this is the difference between presenting Dudley with the Mustache or presenting Dudley with Snidely Whiplash himself. A single antigen (or mustache) primes a response and makes Dudley hyper-vigilant for any mustachioed intruder. But the experience of the actual Omicron BA1 illness— Snidely himself, if you will— prompts a response not JUST to the mustache, but also to the sneer, the high hat, the cape, the skulking and the tying of Nell to the railroad tracks. The vaccine induces robust and effective antibodies to the most prevalent antigen out there (along with the scatter that brackets that target) while the illness may provoke a less intense response, but offers a larger array of potential antigen sites. Which is probably why the COMBINATION of having had COIVD-19 AND vaccination induces the most durable immunity of all (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00961-3>). These data are pre-Omicron, but one of the studies cited in this report found 'hybrid immunity' from both infection and vaccine lasted 6-8

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(Vax Americana continued)

months, longer than the impact of vaccine alone.

Finally, while in general we seem to find the reduction in serious disease and death by full vaccination and a booster is durable, the protection against infection itself wanes over 4-6 months. Hence, especially for people with pre-existing conditions or plans that would be thwarted by infection, individuals may still seek masks and distancing. But if you are in a group for whom a second booster is approved, you might want to take into account whether you have had the infection itself. Omicron has been in some ways like an unpleasant auto-inoculation that comes to you unscheduled. I missed a couple of choral practices as a result of the illness, but under these circumstances I'm not going to think about another booster for at least 4-5 months. One more reflection....

We have discussed in very general terms how a population at varying risk of COVID 19 complications could have varying durations of immunity after vaccination further complicated by COVID 19 illness, all in the context of a changing pattern of viral variants as well as seasonal change that alter our preferred location and impacts the duration of airborne viral suspension.

Given that every single component of the human/SAORS CoV 2 interaction varies, is it really surprising that there are currently no hard and fast universally embraced policies pertaining to all people all the time? The US track record with COVID 19 compared to other developed countries has been strikingly poor (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/02/01/science/covid-deaths-united-states.html?fbclid=IwAR0Qh6z-la7gEppzpDaBuA5KCTjYzsj9vo1CjZG93UdE5gXwf9wQUS6-Mg>).

Yet the principles remain clear: get vaccinated; get boosted; if at risk for complications or if in regular contact with folks who might be at risk, then avoid high-density indoor crowds and/or distance and mask to the extent possible. And if, despite all this, you test positive, stay home!

These aren't edicts and they carry no guarantees. They are just the sensible behaviors which reduce the risk that the virus gets out of my respiratory tract and into yours. We may not have done as well as some other countries, but credible estimates suggest that what we HAVE done has saved at least 2 million American lives. So don't wait for the perfect pellucid public health directive - take sensible precautions and keep alert. We still don't know how many siblings Snidely has...

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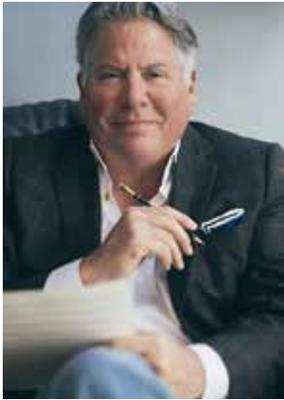
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# CORO LUX

## Looking ahead to the last two *Coro Lux* concerts for the 2021–2022 performance year

by Bradley Ellingboe

Now that we have our (very successful!) April performance with the New Mexico Philharmonic in the rear view mirror, it's time to look forward to our May performances: first, two "Pops Concerts" on May 1st at the Canteen Brewhouse, and then the first free-standing concert by our new *El Faro* Youth Chorus on May 7th at the Fusion Forum performance space in downtown Albuquerque. Let me talk about the Canteen concerts first.

Since the inception of *Coro Lux* we've usually ended our seasons with a concert of lighter fare. Although the "damndemic" interrupted that tradition for a couple years, we're delighted to once again return to the Canteen Brewhouse for two performances on the same day. That is, Sunday, May 1st at 2:00 and 4:30 pm.

The Canteen has an ideal setting for these casual concerts. Their performance space is a covered patio, open on the sides, with a small stage at one end. Think "Santa Fe Opera with beer!" In keeping with this season's efforts to try to do what we can to help with mental health issues after two years of quarantine (e.g., the monies we raised during FebFest that we donated to the NM chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness) the pops concerts selections have been chosen with optimism and a return to wonderful spring weather in mind. Titled "May Day! A Program Celebrating Spring and Wellness" the concert will feature tunes like "The Rose," the spiritual "If I Can Help Somebody" and a tasty choral arrangement of Dolly Parton's "Light of a Clear Blue Morning."

And as usual with our pops concerts, there'll be plenty of sing-alongs to engage the audience. This year, as an added treat, the sing-alongs will be accompanied by the wonderful trio called "Strange Holler" a group which includes our very own Shelly Ley on guitar and vocals. Sing-along tunes include: Carole King's "You've Got a Friend," George Harrison's "Here Comes the Sun" and "What a Wonderful World," made famous by Louis

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(Last two concerts continued)  
Armstrong.

Tickets are now on sale and there are only 100 spots for each show. This concert always sells out, so you'll want to get your seats as soon as possible. The cost is \$12 adults, \$10 for seniors and \$5 for children. The venue is dog-friendly, but don't bring a cat unless you want to see me engage in a sneeze-festival. For more information, and to buy your tickets, go here: <https://abqcorolux.org/tickets/>. No masks or proof of vaccination required.

In the fall of 2021 we formed a youth chorus in order to perform Brubeck's *La Fiesta de la Posada*. That piece required one and, still in the midst of the pandemic, most of the school choirs in our area were not meeting in person— at least not in the early fall, when we were solidifying our plans.

It turned out that the response to this ensemble



Gabrielle Dietrich

was extraordinarily positive, not least because of the leadership of our own Dr. Gabrielle Dietrich. "Gabby" is a gifted conductor with a special love for this age group. Along with the extremely musical Dr. Bora Ryu accompanying the group, they've grown in size, skill and musicianship in the last 5 months.

After we gave our performances of the Brubeck, the Board and I decided we needed to keep this group going, not least because there is something of a dearth of musical outlets in for young singers in our community. And so we're delighted to announce that the ensemble, called *El Faro* ("the lighthouse") has been continued this spring and will give their first-ever stand alone concert on Saturday, May 7th, at the Fusion Forum (708 First St., NW) in downtown Albuquerque.

Their repertoire will feature music by Rosephanye Powell (our FebFest conductor!), André Thomas and George Frederic Handel. Tickets for this concert are free but need to be reserved in advance. No proof of vaccination is required, but we do ask that all in attendance wear masks, as there is yet another new and highly contagious variant out there. To reserve your ticket, go here: <https://abqcorolux.org/tickets/>

And when these concerts are over, the season will be completed. A strange season, indeed, but one we'll never forget. We trust that by the fall we'll be back to normal, but in the meantime, we hope to see you on May 1st and 7th!

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**CORO LUX**

**Ashley Jonkman  
interviews Antoinette  
Utsinger, *Coro Lux* so-  
prano and  
party planner  
extraordinaire**

It may not come as a surprise to many of *Coro Lux's* members and patrons that Antoinette Utsinger's personal mantra is a familiar, yet profound one: 'do random acts of kindness, whenever you can.' Antoinette is known as our party planner extraordinaire and takes care of all things celebratory for *Coro Lux*. Whether it's an after-concert celebration, or a Fat Tuesday, post-rehearsal King Cake, she knows how to make people smile, and delights in the creativity it takes to make celebrations fun and meaningful. She is dedicated to helping others and loves animals, making the world a better place, wherever possible.

Antoinette was born and raised right here in Albuquerque, and has been singing ever since she was a little girl. Music is likely in her genes—her father sang in the Army Air Corps with Glenn Miller in World War II, while stationed in Paris, and even recorded a 78 disc. Growing up as a kid in the 60's, one musical memory sticks out to Antoinette: the day her family got their first stereo system, she noticed that it came with a sampling of some free LPs. Among the recordings was one of various Broadway Hits. She listened to that album over and over, hairbrush in hand serving as a microphone, and effectively began teaching herself to sing. Two years later, at age 10, Antoinette began playing flute in the elementary school band. When she turned 12, she was definitely interested in music, and her mother had taken notice, gifting her with a huge, blue and yellow guitar that Antoinette could barely get her arms around. Self-motivated, Antoinette taught herself how to play Beatles songs, figuring out the chords by ear!

After majoring in Fine Arts at Fort Lewis College in Durango (later transferring to UNM), Antoinette has held a plethora of different jobs, from working as a manager at La Montanita Co-op, to working as a professional model, to owning her own pet care business for several years. She's also a certified herbalist and has always carried supplements and herbs with her on various *Coro Lux* tours, ready to help out anyone in need of relief from various

*(Continued on following page)*



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**John Kirk, CPA**

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(Antoinette continued)

ailments. She recently retired from her pet care business, and now spends some of her time decluttering the family home of her grandparents that was left to her by her mother. She's also an avid gardener, growing all of her own vegetables and herbs, and a lifelong animal lover, providing food and birdbaths for many wild birds who come to visit her yard, as well as taking care of her dogs and cats. She loves to cook at home, and enjoys salsa dancing and hearing live music when she can. As for her own taste in music, Antoinette loves many things, from her roots in blues and jazz, to Broadway, pop and rock.

It wasn't until 1999 that Antoinette joined her first choral group. She was invited to sing in the University Chorus at UNM by a couple of friends who were already singing with the chorus. Not having read any music since playing flute in elementary school, Antoinette was a bit apprehensive and the first piece she sang happened to be Beethoven's Ode to Joy. A seasoned soprano, who also sang with the Symphony Chorus sat next to Antoinette, showing her the ropes of sight reading and helping her get her choral feet under her. Refusing to stop learning, Antoinette got a deck of flash cards from Music Mart that helped her continue her self-guided studies in reading music.



Antoinette Utsinger

Antoinette has been singing with *Coro Lux* since its inception and says while she's still learning the ins and outs of music, she's come a long way since that first rehearsal of the University Chorus in 1999. One of her favorite things about *Coro Lux* has been the wonderful places she's gotten to visit with the choir. "I've seen places in the world that I never would've gone to before, like Slovakia, Croatia, and Switzerland. Singing with other choruses around the world is amazing—there's something about music that unites us all. I love hearing our voices merge together with the other voices from across the world." She says she's learned so much about classical music under Brad Ellingboe's guidance over the years; "I love the variety that he introduces. It's not just strictly sacred music." In addition to musical experiences, Antoinette loves the camaraderie found in *Coro Lux*. "The people in *Coro Lux* are like an extended family. Everyone is nice and kind, and serious about what they're doing. It's so nice to be a part of that." [Return to the contents page](#)



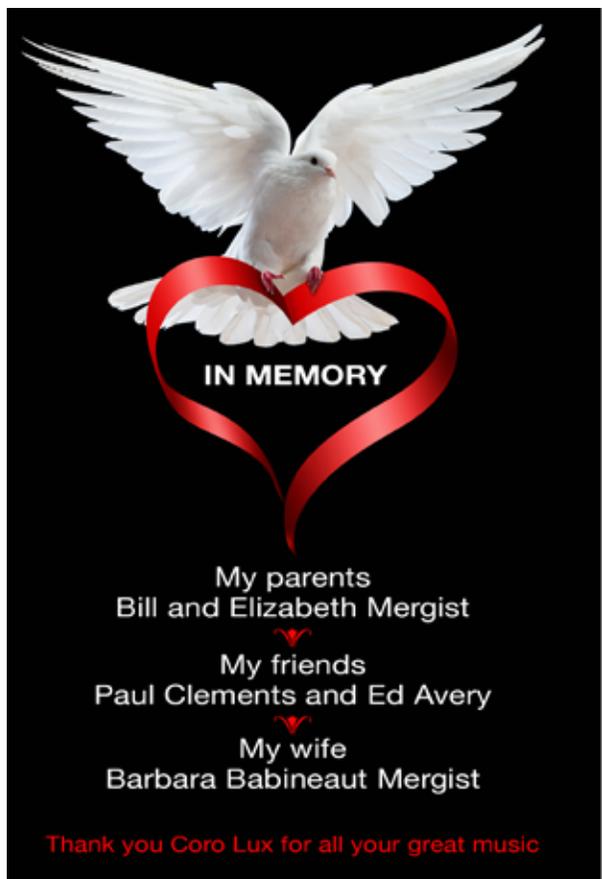
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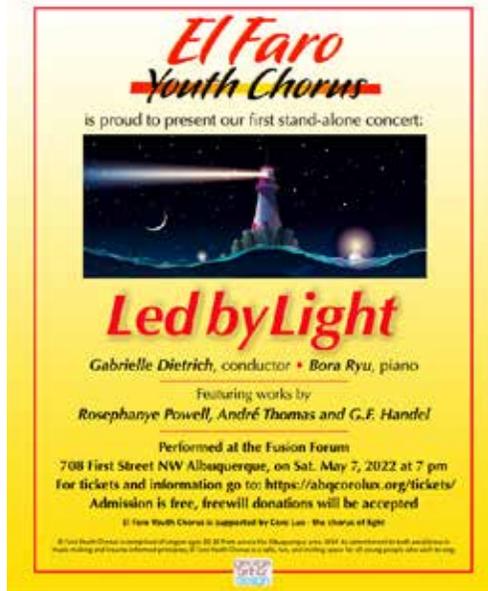




**Gabrielle Dietrich, the conductor of the new El Faro Youth Chorus, writes about the 2022 spring performance season<sup>B</sup>**

As most of you know, El Faro Youth Chorus (EFYC) was founded in Fall 2021 as both an outreach arm of *Coro Lux* and an ensemble to sing the children’s chorus parts for the Brubeck “La Fiesta de la Posada.” The ensemble has increased its numbers for the spring, and now includes singers from age 10 through 15. EFYC is also the first-ever trauma informed chorus, which means the choristers, staff, and volunteers who do the work of this ensemble are dedicated to trauma informed principles such as empathy, respect, safety, inclusion, and teaching and learning as whole people: body, mind, and emotions. “El Faro” means “the lighthouse,” and like a lighthouse, we are committed to sharing the light inside ourselves with others through music. It is fitting, then, that our very first stand-alone concert on Saturday, May 7, is entitled

“Led by Light.” The repertoire is diverse, encompassing classical, folk, and pop genres and five languages, all on themes of finding light in the darkness and discovering and sharing our own light. Our choristers will sing in unison, but also in 2-4 part harmony — we’ve worked hard on mastering and polishing our music, and we are excited to



share it! We are also excited to be performing at the Fusion Forum in the heart of the downtown arts & cultural district. The website for this venue describes it as: “a civic meeting place, a creative campus that incites new works, discussion and creative exchange.” The newness of this venue and the open spirit by which it was inspired is a perfect match for EFYC and its mission, and we are so looking forward to sharing our program with our friends, families, and *Coro Lux* community.

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**2021/2022 SEASON**

December 18, 2021  
**6th Annual Children’s Messiah**  
A free event for children of all ages.

December 31, 2021  
**Symphony No. 9, Beethoven**  
New Year’s Eve at the Lensic

March 31 & April 2, 2022  
**Awakenings: Music of Diversity**  
Music for Upper Voices, featuring the world premiere performance of a piece by Jenny Olivia Johnson.

April 30 & May 1, 2022  
**The Creation, F.J. Haydn**  
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Links to other organizations websites



### SANTA FE WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE

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Links to videos and more are on the Chorale's website (<https://sdcchorale.org/>).



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Lauridsen interview



Rutter's "Magnificat"

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