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Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire to explore the trans experience through *Trans(Posed): Songs of the True Self*

CHICAGO – The Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire are proud to announce the choruses' first mission concert slated for debut on Saturday, April 2, 2022 and Sunday, April 3, 2022 in the Gannon Concert Hall at DePaul's Holtschneider Performance Center in Lincoln Park. The concert, **TRANS(POSED): SONGS OF THE TRUE SELF**, is a curated choral exploration in support of the trans experience aimed at opening hearts and minds, fostering empathy and understanding; and ultimately, creating visibility to drive change.

"Our choruses have been a beacon of hope for the members of our community and its allies dating back to the rise of the gay rights movement," said Windy City Performing Arts Board Chair **Mark Hein**. Windy City Performing Arts is the parent non-profit of Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire. "It's exciting to feel that sense of hope and activism with a new vigor as we crown our first post-pandemic season with a mission concert exploring the trans experience."

Selecting **TRANS(POSED): SONGS OF THE TRUE SELF** as the title for the concert represents an interesting take on the use of *trans* and the idea that transposition moves an idea or concept to a different place or context, reflecting the concert's overall mission to foster empathy and understanding.

"We're singing on a theme that can be both illusive for and at times met with hate by mainstream communities," said Windy City Performing Arts Artistic Director **Dr. William Southerland**. "But, through our exploration, we hope to open hearts and minds, offer people a chance to cultivate empathy from our music that nurtures understanding – in the audience and on the stage."

Among the choral works being performed at the concert are **two world-premiere pieces**.

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Composer **Kyra Leigh's** *Love and Art*, combines biblical themes (love) set with quotes of renowned Grammy-winning trans composer **Wendy Carlos** (art). The work for soloists and chorus mixes genres, free-form and improvisation to explore a “de-gendered” approach to the human voice.

“Gender norms can be a real barrier for trans musicians,” said **Leigh**. “Exploring areas of the voice and range outside the ‘gender box,’ can lead to a more inclusive experience for trans and non-binary musicians. More importantly, looking beyond the context of words to see their meaning independently is a broad metaphorical device that can help all of us learn to be okay in our personal chaos and help us make peace with things that previously may have raised deeply difficult questions in our souls.”

Composer **Saunder Choi's** *Verum Corpus* is a beautiful, multi-movement work for chorus and string quartet that sets text from trans and two-spirit, disabled, queer, femme poet **Amir Rabiya** alongside the Christian text *Ave Verum Corpus*. **Choi's** collaboration with **Rabiya** and **Rabiya's** on the story of transformation, completion and attainment of the true body has delivered a stunning commission that draws parallels relevant to the experience of queer and transgender survivors of abuse and marginalization.

Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire – Chicagoland's original LGBTQ+ choral organization now in its 42nd season – will offer a *Meet the Composers* session as part of the concert. Featuring a discussion with **Leigh** and **Choi**, as well as a reception with the two and **Southerland**.

Tickets are on sale now for both performances. **TRANS(POSED): SONGS OF THE TRUE SELF** premieres Saturday, April 2, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at DePaul's Gannon Concert Hall. *Meet the Composers* will be held ahead of the Saturday evening performance. The concert will be repeated on Sunday, April 3, 2022 at 2 p.m. in the Gannon Concert Hall.

Tickets range from \$20 to \$65. Information is available at windycitysings.org and tickets are available through the Holtschneider Performance Center Box Office. If you need ticketing assistance, please contact the Box Office at **773.325.5200** or by email at musicboxoffice@depaul.edu. **Box Office Hours:** Tuesday - Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

ABOUT WINDY CITY GAY CHORUS AND WINDY CITY TREBLE QUIRE:

Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire are the two choruses that operate under the Windy City Performing Arts non-profit umbrella and sing to inspire change, celebrate diversity and honor the dignity of the LGBTQ+ community.

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Each ensemble performs a variety of musical styles from classical to pop with a clear focus on musical excellence regardless of the style of music. The choruses have a long history of performing major choral works including commissioned pieces.

In September 2003, the ensembles made history by becoming the first choruses in a Gay, Lesbian Bisexual and Transgendered (GLBT) organization to sing the National Anthem at an Illinois professional sporting event, at the Chicago Free Press sponsored "Out at the Ballgame" day at U.S. Cellular Field, opening for the Chicago White Sox vs. Cleveland Indians game.

Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire have a rich and rewarding history that has continued to find our singers performing in a number of enriching venues, including the Steppenwolf and Redmoon Theatre companies, at the opening ceremonies of the modern wing of the Art Institute, and at Carnegie Hall as part of the Susan Komen Sing for the Cure project. Members of our choruses have most recently shared the stage with Hugh Jackman as part of his concert in Chicago, performed at Ravinia with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Marin Alsop, and appeared in January at a Chicago Bulls game to sing the U.S. National Anthem.

The Windy City Gay Chorus and Treble Quire are unique among LGBTQ+ choruses in that they perform both separately and together across a three-concert season each year. Both choruses comprise four sections, which includes tenors (1 and 2), baritones and basses for the Gay Chorus; and, sopranos, mezzo-sopranos, and altos (1 and 2) for the Treble Quire. The separateness of the choruses and their ability to work together coupled with a high degree of technical ability creates an agility that is rare among the LGBTQ+ choral movement.

Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire are members of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA).

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