

WomEnchant Chorus

Laura Thomas, Artistic Director; Tannis Beamer, Accompanist

WomEnchant is a choir of women from a wide variety of backgrounds and musical experience. Our common thread is the desire to sing music that celebrates our lives, calls for peace and justice, and demonstrates the power of sisterhood and song. We welcome all women who want to learn and sing music that gives voice to our experiences and our commitment to making positive changes in the world.

Since our beginning in 1994, WomEnchant has participated in many events centered around women's equality, peace, anti-violence and social justice. We have performed at benefits for shelters, International Women's Day concerts, Take Back the Night rallies, V-day anti-violence events, the Stephen Lewis Foundation World AIDS Awareness Day and performances for women's centers and social service agencies. Our appearances also include services and events celebrating and supporting Earth Day and environmental concerns.

In 2007, the WomEnchant drumming group was formed to give women the opportunity to learn about and perform on hand drums. Some of the drummers come from within the choir, while others belong only to the drummer's circle. The WomEnchant Drummers perform with the choir and on their own.

To accommodate women from both the Hamilton and Niagara areas, we rehearse in Grimsby on Monday nights from September to May. For information about performances and membership please email us at: womenchant@yahoo.ca

Laura Thomas

WomEnchant's Artistic Director, Laura Thomas, is a conductor, arranger, composer, percussionist and teacher. In addition to her position with WomEnchant, she is also Music Director of the Dundas Valley Orchestra, Associate Conductor of the Niagara Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the Niagara Youth Orchestra. She was, for six years, Artistic Director of Niagara's Choralis Camerata. She has appeared as a guest conductor with many ensembles including the Huronia Symphony, the Etobicoke Philharmonic and the North York Concert Orchestra.

Ms. Thomas holds a master's degree in conducting from New York's prestigious Bard College, where she studied with Harold Farberman. She is also a graduate of Hamilton's Mohawk College and McMaster University, where she studied percussion and composition. Since 1985, she has been the Principal Percussionist with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra. As well, she is a member of Niagara's popular eclectic folk quintet BroadBand and performs regularly with her Vintage Jazz ensembles.

In her work with WomEnchant and BroadBand, Ms. Thomas has found the opportunity to combine music and activism. Both ensembles perform for a wide variety of social justice events and causes and have raised thousands of dollars through benefit concerts.

Tannis Beamer

Tannis Beamer has been playing piano for the sheer joy of it for as long as she can remember. She completed a major in Applied Human Nutrition and a minor in music at the University of Guelph. She has spent her career thus far further exploring her two passions in life: wellness and music. For the last ten years Tannis has taught private piano lessons in the Niagara Region while also studying with leading sound therapists in Canada and the US to learn how the intentional use of sound and music can soothe the body, mind and spirit.

This is Tannis' third year as accompanist with WomEnchant Chorus and her fourth year with WomEnchant Drummers.

"Do All You Can"

World AIDS Day Observance and Benefit Concert

PROGRAMME

Monday, December 1st, 2014

Mountainview United Church
150 Glendale Avenue, St. Catharines

Proceeds donated to:



the
Stephen Lewis
FOUNDATION

Labyrinth

History

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol for the spiritual journey, which has been used by many cultures. The first one was found in Chartres Cathedral in France which had been constructed between 1194 – 1200 AD and was used for making spiritual pilgrimage or seeking guidance from God.

Meaning

The circular shape represents unity and wholeness. The single pathway into the centre and out again represents the path of life or the spiritual journey. The winding path represents times when we feel close to God, at peace with our life, and also times when we feel distance from God and our purpose seems unclear. The 3 stages of the walk are like the 3 stages of spiritual growth. The path in represents Purgation, letting go of old patterns that prevent growth. The centre represents Illumination, insight into our connection with the Divine and our life situation. The path out represents Union, integration of our insight into our life in the world.

Thank You

WomEnchant would like to thank all individuals who have been the connecting thread to the various segments of this very successful event to raise funds for the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Our special thanks to:

Silver Spire United and Mountainview United churches for jointly sponsoring this year's World AIDS Day Observance and Benefit Concert;

Mountainview for hosting the event, providing the Labyrinth, as well as many hands to do essential work behind the scene;

Jackie Szymanski for producing concert tickets, flyers and programmes;

All individuals who donated dollars, items for the penny auction, bake sale, and refreshments;

Scott Rosts, St Catharines City Editor, *Niagara this Week*; *Niagara this Week*, IT'S HAPPENING;

The City of St. Catharines website;

St. Catharines Standard; *Sunmedia, Niagara Calendar*; *News in Port Colborne and Wainfleet*; *Cniagara*;

All community organizations, churches and businesses throughout Niagara, that helped to publicize our event through display and distribution of posters, everyone who helped through social media promotion.

Our audience, without whom success this evening would have been impossible.

Gloria Simon-Gould, who initiated recognition of World AIDS Day in 2004, and paved the path for its annual observance;

The Stephen Lewis Foundation, whose model of courage and selfless determination to eradicate HIV/AIDS in Africa motivates us to do all we can.

Namaste,

the divine in us rejoices in the light of the divine in you

“Do All You Can”

Programme

6:30 Penny Auction, Bake Sale

Gym

Labyrinth

Chapel

7:30 Welcome and Remarks from

Rev Dwain Ketcheson

Sanctuary

Performance by WomEnchant

Chorus & Drummers

Followed by Refreshments and Auction Results in the Gym