

In Appreciation

UBUNTU Niagara extends their sincerest thanks to all the volunteers and supporters who offered their gifts of time and talent to make this evening possible:

Guest Artists:

Johanna Agnew
Niagara on the Lake Ukesters
Hayden Muzyka – Accompanist: Angela Maccarroni
Bernadette James
Mari Shantz
Laurel Candler
WomEnchant Chorus and Drummers
Artistic Director, Laura Thomas; Accompanist, Laurel Candler
Trillium United Church Minister: The Rev. Barb McGill
Emcee: Janice Arnoldi
Event Coordinator: Agnes Liles
Reader: Sybil Wilson
Reception Host: Lida Samardzic
Penny Auction: Caroline Misener, Mau'veen Dayrell Johnson
Donation Personnel: Colleen Smith, Liz McGregor
Sound: John Senn
At the Door: Wayne & Jill; Lynne & Sandra
Kitchen Assistants: Judith & Dave Pritchard; Leona & Wally Knash
Photographer: Eiled Given
Social Media/Graphic Design: Lena V. Nielsen
Care-taker: Carrie Calder

A special Thank you to Trillium United Church for providing the perfect venue and the support essential to the success of this evening as well as to those, not mentioned, who helped to organize and implement this fund-raising Cabaret. Your help, along with the audience support, enables all of us to do what we can to eradicate the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the African Continent.

UBUNTU *Niagara*

proudly presents

EMPOWER THE PEOPLE

World AIDS Day Fundraiser for

Stephen Lewis Foundation

with

Janice Arnoldi, Emcee

and performing artists

Hayden Muzyka | Johanna Agnew | Laurel Candler

Mari Shantz | Niagara on the Lake Ukesters

WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers

Friday, November 29, 2024

Trillium United Church

415 Linwell Rd., St. Catharines



Proceeds Donated to:

the Stephen Lewis
FOUNDATION

UBUNTU *Niagara*

Welcome

UBUNTU Niagara extends a warm welcome to you all. We proudly present Empower the People, World AIDS Day Fundraiser for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, in recognition of the power of community-led efforts that are driving change throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

We are grateful to see familiar faces in the audience – friends who have journeyed with us for this project since our beginnings in 2003. We are pleased to see new faces, and we acknowledge the supporters who quietly send Light, prayers and dollars, even if unable to be physically present with us.

We welcome our performing artists: Hayden Muzyka, Johanna Agnew, Laurel Candler, Mari Shantz, Niagara on the Lake Ukesters and WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers and thank them all for their most generous donation of time and talent.

And now, we invite you to relax, experience our evening's program, participate in our Penny Auction, make a donation directly to the Stephen Lewis Foundation, and enjoy our reception.

About the Stephen Lewis Foundation

The Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) was honoured to receive the 2024 Lions Humanitarian Award at the Lions International Convention in Melbourne, Australia in June. In accepting the award, SLF Co-Founder Iana Landsberg-Lewis thanked Lions International for recognizing the power of community-led efforts, and for shining a well-deserved spotlight on community-led partners who are driving change in their communities.

A very short list of community-led efforts includes:

Hope in Action: Community-led efforts to end the dual epidemics of gender-based violence and HIV.

Action for Rural Women's Empowerment: All communities should have equitable access to essential needs such as water, food, shelter, education and health services that are environmentally friendly.

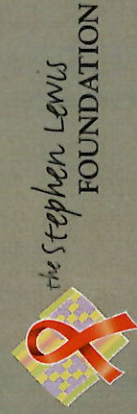
The 25th International AIDS Conference 2024 in Munich. "The conference addressed disparities in the HIV response due to political dedication, resource allocation, racial biases and limited community engagement. Despite challenges, AIDS 2024, instilled in me a sense of optimism in global talent and dedication to combat the HIV epidemic. Community-led initiatives are seen as crucial once resources are decentralized and governments show strong commitment." Ndinini Kimesera Sikar, Executive Director and Co-Founder of MWEDO, Tanzania

The grandmother's movement will not rest. One year ago, grandmothers from 10 countries in sub-Saharan Africa held gatherings to reflect on their work, the Campaign and the current state of the HIV epidemic. African grandmothers are organizing. They are marching to demand rights and recognition of their struggle to raise grandchildren in the wake of the AIDS crisis.

Unleashing the Power of the People

Supporting Community-Based Leadership to End HIV & AIDS

From our inception in 2003, the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) has been asserting that if only a critical mass of community-based organizations (CBOS) could receive adequate funding, they would turn the tide of HIV & AIDS in Africa.



This is not just about survival;

people can thrive, free from fear, oppression

and violence --- everywhere. To me, that's a future worth fighting for.

Colin Druhan, Executive director of Pride at Work Canada and
Stephen Lewis Foundation Board Member.

EMPOWER THE PEOPLE

World AIDS Day Fundraiser for the Stephen Lewis Foundation
November 29, 2024

The Rev. Barb McGill, Trillium United Church Minister
Welcome and Opening Remarks

Johanna Agnew, Vocalist
Come to the Cabaret (from Cabaret) Music: John Kander, Lyrics: Fred Ebb

Niagara on the Lake Ukesters
Try a Little Kindness Glen Campbell
I Believe in Music Mac Davis
With a Little Help from My Friends The Beatles
I Just Called to Say I Love You Stevie Wonder

Hayden Muzyka, Vocalist
With Angela Maccaroni, Accompanist
Misty Song by Laufey

Peel Me A Grape Music: Errol Garner, Lyrics: Johnny Burke
 Song by Diana Krall

Johanna Agnew, Vocalist
What I Did for Love (from A Chorus Line) Marvin Hamlisch
For Good, a duet with Bernadette James (from Wicked) Stephen Schwartz
There's a Fine, Fine Line (from Avenue Q) Lopez and Marx

Agnes Liles, Event Coordinator
Donation Appeal

INTERMISSION

Mari Schantz, Vocalist
Every Time I Feel the Spirit African American Spiritual
How Great Thou Art Stuart K. Hine
I Know Who Holds Tomorrow Ira F. Stanphill

Sybil Wilson, Reader
An African Tale Traditional African Story
 Told by James Kwegyir Aggrey of Africa
 Adapted by Christopher Gregorowski
 Pictures: Niki Daly



Laurel Candler, Vocalist
WomEnchant Drummers
Kuku

Traditional Guinea

WomEnchant Chorus
Sahayta
The Bottom Soloist: Betsy Tauro
May Your Cup Be Always Full

Ben Alloway
Zap Marna
Alison Burns

Closing Remarks

Janice Arnoldi, emcee
WomEnchant Chorus
Walk Sister, Walk

Nan Thompson

Refreshments will be served at the performance

Janice Arnoldi, Emcee

Janice Arnoldi is passionate about reducing the stigma surrounding mental health. For the past 25 years Janice has spoken openly about living with manic depression (bipolar disorder) in an effort to foster understanding of mental health and addiction. She is the host of the radio show and podcast Life Unscripted – Stories of Mental Health and Addiction, which airs weekly on 610CKTB. Janice is on the Board of Directors of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce and has joined the Board of The Willow Arts Community. She has helped raise money for mental health causes, including the Women and Wellness event which has raised \$350,000 for Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara. Janice has worked with Positive Living Niagara, OUT Niagara and the Ontario AIDS Network.

Hayden Muzyka, Soloist

From a young age Hayden has spent her time making and enjoying music, taking lessons and learning a plethora of musical instruments. Hayden, a grade 11 student is a part of the Blessed Trinity Music program in Grimsby led by Mrs. Angela Maccaroni, who will be accompanying her on piano. Through her involvement in Choir, Concert band, Jazz Choir, Drum-line, Combo and music council, she hopes to become a better artist and performer, further evolving her talents.

Johanna Agnew, Soloist

Johanna Agnew is a St. Catharines native who has been singing her way through life.

She began her studies as a young girl with Terri Pothier who taught her both vocal and piano and was involved in high school productions at the St. Catharines Collegiate. She took the classical music route at Wilfred Laurier University and then began her teaching career with the District of Niagara School Board. Before children, she performed in the Garden City Productions of Cabaret, playing Sally Boles, as Hope in Anything Goes, and Polly in Crazy For You. She has been a member of the Niagara Chorus, and presently sings with the Silver Spire United Church choir.

She enjoys teaching her Grade 7/8 class, and music classes at Parnell Public School. She also is a mom to Ayden and Owen, spending many hours at soccer fields and, along with Alastair, chauffeuring their sons to their various activities.

She is delighted to be part of a fundraising project for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, alongside WomEnchant.

Laurel Candler, Accompanist

Laurel is a Niagara native who has been active in the arts community for many years. After graduation from the theatre arts program at University of Waterloo (a long time ago), she returned to her home community of St. Catharines. Laurel sang for 20 years with the Niagara Vocal Ensemble, a 12-voice treble choir and has performed in dozens of community productions throughout Niagara, including playing in the pit of Garden City Productions' You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown and The Addams Family. Favourite credits include Mama Rose in Garden City Productions' Gypsy and Martha in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? at the Firehall Theatre in Niagara Falls. Laurel retired from 30 years of teaching with the District School Board of Niagara and is happy to be part of the WomEnchant family.

Mari Shantz

Having a lifelong enjoyment of music, both as performer and also as audience member, Mari started out playing violin and piano in my childhood, and began voice lessons in her teen years. As a child Mari greatly enjoyed playing baroque music on the violin, and, since she was raised in a musical household with a minister for a father, Mari was frequently called upon to play hymns on the piano. Her enjoyment of singing led to undergraduate and graduate degrees in voice performance.

When life felt full with work, studies, and childrearing, she found ways of feeding her need for music by maintaining a small teaching studio (voice and piano), and also in part-time employment with various local parishes. Periodic opportunities to collaborate with musical groups (e.g. soprano soloist for Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass, Mozart's Requiem, Blue Bridge Festival, and Stephen Leacock Summer Festival with the Ardeleana Chamber Music Society), along with concertizing has provided her with an ongoing sense of joy in sharing music with others. In her daily life she is a Spiritual Care Practitioner for Hotel Dieu Shaver, supporting people recovering after injury or illness, and enjoys creating art in her free time.

Niagara on the Lake Ukesters

Established in 2012, the Niagara on the Lake Ukesters provides a forum for musical expression and contributes to the Niagara Regional Community through financial donations, outreach and community service.

The "Ukesters" meet every Sunday at the NOTL Community Centre and play from a sing-along repertoire of over 300 songs from all genres from 1925 to the present.

Through honorariums and monthly dues, the Niagara on the Lake Ukesters have donated over \$40,000 to a variety of non-profit organizations along with donating many hours to assist in fundraising for various Community organizations and events.

For more information check out our Meetup Page
www.meetup.com/niagara-on-the-lake-ukesters
or on Facebook www.facebook.com/notlukesters

WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers

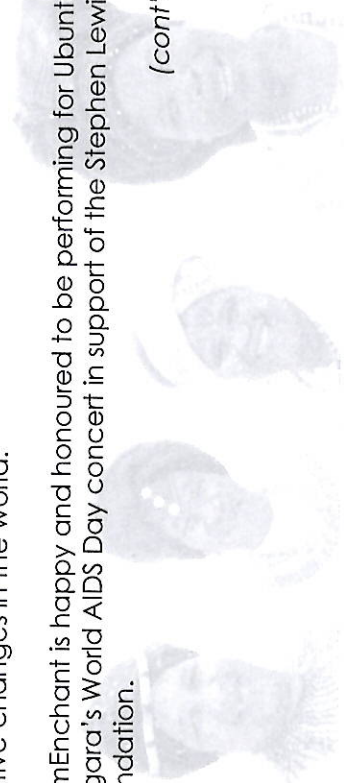
In 1992, inspired by the music heard at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, a group of women in Hamilton decided to form a feminist choir which would sing about peace, justice, caring for the earth, equality for all and an end to violence; a group that would champion music by women composers and songwriters; an ensemble that could perform to help raise money and awareness for important local causes; and a community of women who wanted to improve conditions for disadvantaged people at home and around the world. Following months of research and with help from the leaders of other women's choirs, Laura Thomas called the first rehearsal of Unnamed Hamilton Feminist Chorus in February, 1993. A few years and many choir discussions later, we became The WomEnchant Chorus.

Over the years the choir has performed in support of organizations whose goals and missions aligned with ours as well as in our own, self-produced concerts. On April 29, 2018 WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers proudly celebrated 25 years of sisterhood and song with a Gala Concert at Hernder Estate Wines, with assistance from community sponsors, friends and supporters. A few weeks later we were honoured to receive the Town of Grimsby Civic Recognition Award in celebration of our 25th Anniversary promoting positive change to the Town of Grimsby and surrounding communities. This recognition is an indication that the world still needs our work after 25 years.

As a community of women from a wide variety of backgrounds and musical experience, we honour our common thread - the desire to sing and play 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 to play and sing music that gives voice to our experiences and our commitment to making positive changes in the world.

WomEnchant is happy and honoured to be performing for Ubuntu Niagara's World AIDS Day concert in support of the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

(cont'd...)



WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers (cont'd)

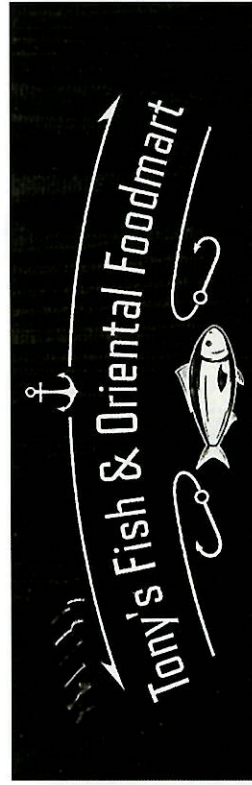
WomEnchant has participated in many events centred around women's equality, anti-violence, peace, social justice and care of the Earth that include:

- Benefits for women's shelters
- Take Back the Night rallies
- V-Day anti-violence events
- Niagara Leadership Summit for Women
- International Women's Day celebrations
- World AIDS Day concerts in support of the Stephen Lewis Foundation
- Earth Day celebrations and events supporting environmental concerns

For more information about WomEnchant, please visit our Face Book page or email:

womenchantchorusanddrummers@gmail.com

WomEnchant
CHORUS & DRUMMERS



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St. Catharines, ON
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Open Mon to Sat 11-6

Sunday closed

Adventure for your culinary senses!

Laura Thomas, Conductor

Laura Thomas is a conductor, arranger, composer, percussionist and teacher. She is the Artistic Director of the Hamilton/Niagara area *WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers*, Music Director of the *Dundas Valley Orchestra*, and Conductor of Hamilton's *Hope & Harmony Youth Choir*. Her past positions include Music Director of the *Niagara Youth Orchestra*, Artistic Director of the Niagara-based chamber choir, *Choralis Camerata*, and Director of the *Niagara College Jazz Band*. She is the Principal Percussionist of the *Niagara Symphony Orchestra* where she also served as Associate Conductor for thirteen years.

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. She has performed with and conducted many orchestras and ensembles around the Golden Horseshoe and Southern Ontario.

A member of Niagara's popular eclectic folk/blues band, *BroadBand*, she also performs regularly with her *Vintage Jazz* ensembles. Her compositions and arrangements can be heard in the music of *Flutes en Route!* featuring Douglas Miller and the

recordings and performances of *BroadBand*, *WomEnchant* and other ensembles. She has written for stage, orchestra, choral and jazz ensembles including a *Concerto for Jazz Trio and Orchestra* and A *Kindergarten* for students and orchestra. Her recording credits include the *Aradia* Ensemble CD for Naxos Records, "*Ballet Music for the Sun King*", the *Niagara College Jazz Band's "On the Move"*, Rich Blend's self-titled CD, *sisterLune's "Wonder"*, and *BroadBand's "LIVE at the Black Sea Hall"* and "*BroadBand*".

History of UBUNTU Niagara

In Africa there is a concept known as Ubuntu, the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others." - Nelson Mandela

The journey to becoming UBUNTU Niagara began in 2003 at the former St. Andrew's United Church, Port Dalhousie. On this journey over several years many people shared the sense of Ubuntu through prayers, music and meditations. Three people - Agnes Liles, Gloria Simon Gould and the late Agnes Atwell - wanted to do more to respond to an appeal by Stephen Lewis for help toward the eradication of HIV/AIDS in Africa. But how?

We took our idea to Laura Thomas, Artistic Director, WomEnchant Chorus. Our first fundraiser event to assist the efforts of the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) to provide anti-viral drugs occurred in 2008 through a concert by WomEnchant Chorus. The choir has engaged in several varied events annually to raise funds. Each year the amount of money increased and this has encouraged us to continue the work.

In 2015 as the horizons of WomEnchant Chorus broadened, UBUNTU Niagara came into being. We retained with gratitude the help of several members of the choir. Contributions of Caroline Misener, Elizabeth Agnew and Mau'veen Dayrell-Johnson as co-producers are invaluable.

Although the Covid pandemic halted fundraising activities for three years, SLF advised that several donors responded to UBUNTU's letter of appeal to send dollars directly to the foundation during those years. THANK YOU.

The future may hold other circumstances beyond our control which challenge our commitment, but UBUNTU Niagara's efforts to support the tireless, selfless, dedicated work of the Stephen Lewis Foundation will persist.

Membership in UBUNTU Niagara is open to all who wish to participate, bringing the spirit of Ubuntu.

Namaste, Mau'veen Dayrell-Johnson Agnes Liles Caroline Misener

ubuntuniagara@yahoo.com

Strengthening human rights

Together through our partnerships with community-led organizations, we are building a more just and equitable future and dismantling the root causes of the HIV epidemic.

Meg French, SLF Executive Director



PRESENTED BY  TD READY COMMITMENT

NIAGARA JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL

Twilight Jazz & Blues
monthly concert series

Summer Music Festival
June 20-29, 2025

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