

ars  
choralis

CELEBRATING THE HUMAN SPIRIT THROUGH MUSIC

# *Welcome Yule: Imagining Peace*

Conceived and conducted by Barbara Pickhardt, artistic director

Produced by Barbara Schamest



Released: December 6, 2020

*"For this concert, we sing with our hearts filled with  
hope for a more peaceful and just world."*

**Sopranos**

Beth Abrams  
Kim Anderson  
Kailey Campbell  
Laurel Cross  
Leëta Damon  
\*Ellen Davidson  
\*Shannon Donnell  
Sheila France  
Christina Gardner  
Ivy Green  
Sonja Maclary  
\*Amy Martin  
\*Katelyn Noecker  
\*Susan Palmgren  
\*Lynn Peck  
\*Sally Rubin  
\*Cathy Schuyler  
Anita Shamansky  
Sue Ellen Sheeley  
\*Anna Tuttman  
\*Carolyn Wolz  
\*Ginny Workstus

**Altos**

\*Ann Belmont  
Barbara Berlind  
Edith Bolt  
\*Anne Brueckner  
Tracy Dowd  
\*Linda Dunne  
Rachel Holt  
\*Nancy Howell  
\*Sarah Kessenich  
\*Mary Leonard  
\*Holly Moore  
Mary Noecker  
\*Barbara Schamest  
\*Jan Solow  
Marla Ulrich  
Sue Ulrich

**Tenors**

Harvey Boyer  
Mark Josefski  
Mark Lindeman  
\*Rebecca Lowe  
\*Jim Noecker  
Ed Peters  
Tony Stiker  
\*Matt Ulrich  
Cynthia Werthamer  
\*Todd West  
\*Bill Wolz

**Basses**

\*Tony Coretto  
Andrew Cymbal  
\*Greg Dinger  
\*Mike Haller  
Rob Hollinsed  
Keith Langston  
Jim Moore  
\*Chuck Snyder  
\*James Ulrich  
John Wolfe

\*Participated in Virtual Choir

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# *From the Podium*

December 2020

Dear Friends,



For years Ars Choralis has heralded the coming of winter with concerts celebrating diverse December holidays. Some performances showcased classical choral music; others were based on historical events, books and films, religious holidays, and ethnic and spiritual traditions. Fanciful or serious, the performances were known for including the unexpected: Medieval mystery plays, Boar's Head processions, shadow theaters, a Victorian tea, mummers' plays' sword fights, Moravian brass playing outdoors to welcome concertgoers, children popping out of hiding places as partridges, pear trees and more and, thanks to P.D.Q. Bach, even King Kong. I thought we'd done it all. I was wrong.

This year Ars Choralis has tapped into the power of technology to deliver its annual holiday message of joy, goodwill and peace in a way unimagined in the past. Undaunted by the restrictions of the current pandemic, our virtual Welcome Yule concert can be enjoyed in the comfort of your living room and shared with friends and family around the world. Furthermore, it can be revisited throughout the holiday season, as you wish.

The concert remains the December celebration you have enjoyed for years. You will hear some of your favorite holiday songs interwoven through Maya Angelou's poetry read by musician, actor and veteran of the legendary 1969 Woodstock Festival, Gilles Malkine.

You will feel right at home hearing the sweet sounds of Greg Dinger's guitar and Erica Pickhardt's cello while Hudson Valley images of photographers Anne Brueckner and Mary Leonard create a visual backdrop, enhancing the words and music. You will see the yearning for peace in the familiar faces of Ars Choralis members and soloist Matt Ulrich as they sing Johanna Hall's poignant words "...with open hearts we hear the call to live in peace, to hate no more."

Throughout 2020 we have seen hearts opening to mutual respect and true kindness. But we have also witnessed unprecedented division and unrest, leaving many of us frightened and deeply concerned about our future. We hope that "Welcome Yule: Imagining Peace" will give us respite from the ill will of recent months and fill us with renewed confidence in the power of love and the promise of peace.

Barbara

# *About the Artists*

Woodstock-based **ARS CHORALIS**, formed in 1965, is a chorus of singers from all walks of life, drawn together by a mutual love of singing and a belief in the power of music to create harmony among people. The chorus is known for its diverse programming, from classical concerts to “message concerts” composed of music, readings, dance and visuals.

Ars Choralis was named Organization of the Year by the YWCA of Ulster County in 2015 for the chorus’s extraordinary service, dedication

and contributions to the community. In May 2017 the Arts Society of Kingston honored Ars Choralis with its Artistic Excellence and Innovation Award for Music.



**BARBARA PICKHARDT** (artistic director) has had a multifaceted career involving teaching, conducting, composing, arranging and performing as a pianist and harpsichordist. Pickhardt has been associated with Ars Choralis for over 50 years, first as a singer and since 1976 as its Artistic Director and conductor. She was affiliated with the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra as harpsichordist, pianist and supporting choral conductor for over 20 years, led the choral music and piano music departments at SUNY Ulster and was the assistant music director and pianist for the Overlook Lyric Theater. She founded the Hudson Valley Youth Chorale and was its artistic director for 13 years, during which time the group performed throughout the Northeast and abroad. Pickhardt maintains a piano studio in her home in Woodstock, where she continues to compose and arrange choral music, creating her uniquely thoughtful and inspiring choral programs.

**BARBARA SCHAMEST** (producer) is a life-long choral singer who joined Ars Choralis in 2019. A retired marketing executive, she brings a strong artistic sense as well as her musical and organization skills to translate Barbara Pickhardt’s vision for the Welcome Yule concert into video.

# About the Artists



**MAYA ANGELOU** (1928 – 2014) was an American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees. Angelou is best known for her series of seven autobiographies, which focus on her childhood and early adult experiences. The first, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), tells of her life up to the age of 17 and brought her international recognition and acclaim.

**GREG DINGER** (guitar) plays throughout the Hudson Valley as a soloist and with various ensembles. He teaches music/guitar at SUNY New Paltz, SUNY Ulster, Bard College and at his home studio in Woodstock. He is president of the Woodstock Symphony Orchestra and Ars Choralis, and a board member of the Mid-Hudson Classical Guitar Society, and also performs in the pop/dance band Fishbowl.



**JOHANNA HALL** (lyricist) is a lyricist, journalist and producer. Her songwriting career began with *Half Moon*, written for Janis Joplin in 1970 at the star's request. That launched the collaboration with musician John Hall that produced a catalog of music, including the Orleans hits, *Still The One* and *Dance With Me..* Her lyrics have been sung by Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Chaka Khan, James Taylor, Ricky Scaggs and others. With Barbara Pickhardt, Hall created the opera, *Miracle in Bethlehem*, which premiered in Woodstock, NY in December 2018. Born with printer's ink in her veins, she has had a long career as a journalist, writing for the Village Voice, the Woodstock Times, Crawdaddy and other publications.



# About the Artists



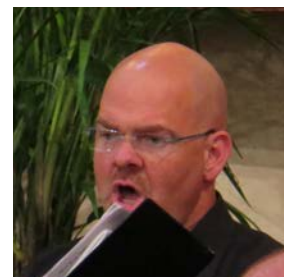
**JOHN HALL** (musician, composer, guitarist) founded the band Orleans and wrote their hits, *Still The One* and *Dance With Me*. He cofounded MUSE, Musicians United for Safe Energy, which produced the No Nukes concerts, film and recordings. His activism led him to serve two terms as a US Congressman from NY. Continuing to write and record, he has a new record coming in 2021.

**GILLES MALKINE** (narrator) has been performing practically all his life, from summer stock at the Woodstock Playhouse to Off-Broadway, from strumming at Dave's Fruit Stand (now Sunfrost Farms) to the 1969 Woodstock Festival where he appeared with Tim Hardin. His present comedy team with Mikhail Horowitz is legendary: their work spans 28 years and includes music, poetry, parody, satire, songs, video and theater. Gilles has composed and performed guitar and sting pieces, arrangements, songs and scores in varying styles, and is a regular National Public Radio commentator on the topic of women in history for *51%: The Women's Perspective*.



**ERICA PICKHARDT** (cello) is assistant principal cellist with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, Hudson Valley Philharmonic and Schenectady Symphony. She performs frequently throughout New York as a guest performer with numerous choral and chamber ensembles and is a founding member of the Eribeth Piano Trio. Pickhardt has been the featured soloist with the Schenectady and Woodstock orchestras. She teaches cello at Emma Willard School in Troy and maintains a private studio outside of Albany, where she lives with her husband and four cats.

**MATT ULRICH** (tenor) has been a member of Ars Choralis for more than 20 years and has been featured as a soloist in concerts and on numerous recordings. He enjoys making music with his family and friends in Ars Choralis.



# *“Welcome Yule”*

Composer: Barbara Pickhardt

Recorded at Bearsville Studio by John Hall, 1998

Photo Credit: Henry Sykes

Producer: Barbara Schamest





# *“Amazing Peace”*



President Barack Obama presenting Angelou with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, 2011



Gilles Malkine & Barbara Pickhardt

Poet: Maya Angelou

Narrator: Gilles Malkine

Producer: Barbara Schamest

“Amazing Peace” was written for the 2005 White House tree-lighting ceremony. Used by permission of Caged Bird Legacy, LLC

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# *“Quiet Place”*



John Hall

Composers: John Hall, Johanna Hall, Jonell Mosser

Recorded at Bearsville Studio by John Hall, 1998

Soloists: Matt Ulrich, Wendy Lowe

Cello: Erica Pickhardt

Guitars: John Hall, Gregory Dinger

Edited and mixed: John Hall and Barbara Pickhardt

Mastered by Todd Levine

Producer: Barbara Schamest

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# *“Time to Remember the Poor”*

Arranger: Gregory Dinger

Soloist: Matt Ulrich

Guitar: Gregory Dinger

Cello: Erica Pickhardt

Recorded, edited, mixed and mastered

at The Clubhouse Studio, 2019

Producer: Barbara Schamest

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Matt Ulrich



Erica Pickhardt



Gregory Dinger

# *“Peace on Earth”*

Composer: Barbara Pickhardt

Lyrics: Johanna Hall

Recorded virtually by Ars Choralis in September 2020

Learning videos: Tony Coretto

Video Production: Sara Langworthy, DevelopPlay, LLC  
[www.developplayllc.com](http://www.developplayllc.com)



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