



SATURDAY
JUNE 13, 2026
3:30 PM MATINEE



HOME

a musical exploration of home and belonging

Artistic Director

Edette Gagné

Collaborative Pianist

Karen Lee-Morlang

PACIFIC SPIRIT UNITED CHURCH

Vivaldi Chamber Choir

Saturday June 13, 2026 at 3:30 PM

Artistic Director: Edette Gagné
Collaborative Pianist: Karen Lee-Morlang
Guest Percussionist: Bruce Henczel

Message from the Artistic Director – Edette Gagné

Welcome to the closing concert of our 2025-26 season!

Preparing for this concert has been a transformative process for us as a choir and for me as a director. The theme of “home” evokes big emotions, which have led to many discussions and much reflection alongside the dedicated effort required to bring this music to you today. We have grown as individuals and as a community - making this a very special show.

We continue to amplify voices in this show - Canadian composers like Stuart Beatch, Rupert Lang, Donna Rhodenizer and Mary Alice Conrad - BIPOC composers like B.E. Boykin, Tracy Wong, Saunder Choi - and new to us voices like MaryAnne Muglia. We also lean into some warm favourites like Homeward Bound (both versions) and Va Pensiero, which is possibly one of the world’s best-known opera choruses.

We share the pain of missing one’s homeland - we share the joy in family and chosen family - we share the hope for a world where there is safety and peace - and we share the way that music calls us all home.

As we enjoy today’s journey together, I hope the music will move you, inspire you and maybe even give you some “happy goosebumps”. Vivaldi Chamber Choir is a chosen family – and coming together every week is definitely like coming home.

~ If you have friends, family or colleagues on Vancouver Island, please invite them to catch one of three shows we will be performing (July 2 to 4). See our website for more details and let us know if you would like to share a poster. ~



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Vancouver Island Tour
July 2 to 4, 2026



HOME *a musical exploration of home and belonging*

Artistic Director **Edette Gagné**
Collaborative Pianist **Kinza Tyrrell**

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PROGRAMME NOTES, TEXTS, & TRANSLATIONS

Sehati (One Heart): This is an uplifting piece rooted in acceptance and belonging. It also humbly captures [her] gratitude and loyalty to the choral community, a sanctuary for many. The song encourages listeners to “come home” to a community that is “still here, together.” ~ Tracy Wong ~

Clapping together, singing as one. Singing together, Still here, together
Come home, Always, one heart, here. Oh one and harmonious, a bouquet of hearts
Still here, together. Come home, Come home together. Walking together.

Come Home: The piece opens with a plaintive alto solo, then a bass takes over while the choir gradually builds with achingly beautiful, lush harmonies. The soprano and bass soloists end the piece as quietly as it began.

After Music: Josephine Preston Peabody’s poem expresses a sentiment that is immediately understandable and moving. Music has the innate ability to ‘call’ and ‘move’ us, but how does one intimate that aspect properly? How do we speak of music’s stirring of our heart and ways? How do we speak of its ‘otherness’?

Journey Song: Captures the sacred moments of personal journey experienced in discovering a place for one’s own voice in the all-encompassing Great Song of Life. The piece is about finding acceptance, moving forward, and making room for all voices that contribute to the interconnected harmonies of life.

Va Pensiero: This chorus is also known as “Chorus of the Hebrew Captives”. It is listed in the programme as “Va Pensiero”. Verdi took the story of the 70-year history of the captivity and enslavement of the Jews in Babylon in 587 BCE by Nebuchadnezzar (Nabucco) for this opera. “Va Pensiero” represents the longing of the enslaved Jewish people in Babylon for their homeland. It also has an emotional connection to the earlier enslavement and eventual release of the Jewish people from Egypt. ~ Peter Munns ~

Va Pensiero, Go, thoughts, on golden wings;
Go, settle upon the slopes and hills, where warm and soft and fragrant are the breezes of our sweet native land!
Greet the banks of the Jordan, the towers of Zion ...
Oh my country so beautiful and lost! Or so dear yet unhappy! Or harp of the prophetic seers,
Why do you hang silent from the willows? Rekindle the memories within our hearts, tell us about the time that have gone by
Or similar to the fate of Solomon, give a sound of lament; or let the Lord inspire a concert
That may give to endure our suffering.

Come Home: This piece speaks of the memories and the loved ones who make home a special place. Although the composer’s beloved home province of Nova Scotia provided the inspiration for this song, no matter where we are, the call to return to our roots is a strong sentiment that resonates deep within us.

Goin’ Home: The theme from Dvořák’s Largo was adapted into a spiritual-like song "Goin' Home", by composer and lyricist William Arms Fisher whom Dvořák met during his American sojourn. We hear the orchestral introduction in the piano and the orchestral interlude in the choir. ~ Edette Gagné ~

Entreat Me Not to Leave You: The text from the Book of Ruth is what is commonly referred to as the Old Testament. The speech from Ruth to Naomi is a beautiful and profound statement of love and life commitment, and particularly notable as an expression of such commitment made between two women. Whether or not the relationship between Ruth and Naomi was ever “romantic”, in the contemporary sense, is ultimately an unanswerable question. Nevertheless, the passage is one that has become a common scripture reading for weddings, especially same-gender weddings. ~ Matthew Emery ~

Homeward Bound: In 1964, a young, homesick songwriter named Paul Simon was stranded at a train station in Widnes, England. Missing his girlfriend Kathy Chitty and tired of the lonely, exhausting life of touring small folk clubs, Simon penned the ballad to express his desperate desire to return to America.

Stardust: The singers call for “a home where we can run” in memory of Ahmaud Arbery, “a home where we can pray” in memory of the victims of the Mother Emanuel shooting, “a home where we can breathe” in memory of George Floyd, and a home “to sleep and dream without fear” in memory of Breonna Taylor. When we sing, we pray twice, and it is my prayer that this piece stirs all who hear it to call for justice for the people of colour taken from this world before their time and without concern for their humanity. “If we are only stardust, let your names reach to the sky above us. Like petals wafting on a breeze, we lift you up beyond our reach.” ~ B.E. Boykin ~

Chosen Family: The fourth movement in a choral song cycle about family, *Chosen Family* begins with an extended image of eagles coasting through the summer sky as friends are gathered down below, sharing food and drink together. Weaving together moments and themes from across the entire work, the piece ends by recognizing the connection we all share—between people, in nature, and across the Earth.

Message Out to Sea (Dear Mom...): I collaborated with my good friend and poet Brian Sonia-Wallace and asked him to write a heartfelt letter to loving mothers who remained a refuge for their LGBTQ+ children. The line “Beyond understanding, there lives laughter” was inspired by a conversation I had with my mom a few years after I came out. I remember her telling me that she didn’t fully comprehend my journey of self-discovery within the LGBTQ+ community, but she nevertheless remained a safe, loving space that allowed me to discover, navigate, and learn how to thrive as a gay immigrant. Towards the conclusion of the composition, I made a deliberate choice to quote one of my favorite hymn tunes, the Hyfrydol. In the Unitarian Universalist tradition, of which I am part of, this tune is set to the text “Blue Boat Home” – which similarly uses a lot of water/harbor imagery. Brian and I rewrote the text to “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” to connect more deeply with the themes of refuge and all-encompassing love. ~ Saunder Choi ~

Homeward Bound: Finding your true calling in life; knowing that those who love you trust that you will return... I wrote this song for a loved one who was embarking upon a new phase of life's journey, to express the soul's yearning to grow and change. ~ Marta Keen ~

We Rise: Like a phoenix reborn from the ashes, “We Rise” forcefully expresses the idea that the human heart, though weary, remains wild, untamed, and unstoppable.

PROGRAMME

Sehati (One Heart)

Music by Tracy Wong 🌸
Words by Mohd Fairuz bin Mohd Tauhid (b. 1982)

featured soloist: Dinah Ayre

Words of Welcome

Come Home

Music by Rupert Lang (b. 1948) 🌸
Words by Emma Moberly (1847-1935)

Featured Soloists: Arianna Cheveldave, Aaron Lau, Steve Froese

After Music

Music by Eric William Barnum (b. 1979)
Words by Josephine Preston Peabody (1874-1922)

Journey Song

Music by Mari Alice Conrad (b. 1981) 🌸
Words by Anna Marie Sewell (b. 1965) 🌸

Va Pensiero from the opera *Nabucco*

Music by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)
Libretto by Temistocle Solera (1815-1878)

Come Home

Words & Music by Donna Rhodenizer 🌸

Goin' Home

Theme based on *Largo from New World Symphony, Op. 95*.

Music by Anton Dvorák (1841-1904)
Words & adaptation by William Arms Fisher (1861-1948)

Homeward Bound

Words & Music by Paul Simon (b. 1941)
Arranged by Roger Emerson (b. 1950)

INTERMISSION

Remember to purchase your 50-50 tickets!

Entreat Me Not to Leave You

Music by Dan Forrest (b. 1978)
Words adapted from Ruth 1:16-17

Stardust

Music by B.E. Boykin (b. 1989)
Words by Brittney Ray Crowell

Chosen Family

Fourth & final song from the song cycle of the same name

Music by Stuart Beatch (b. 1991) 🌸
Words by John Barton (b. 1957) 🌸

Message Out to Sea (Dear Mom...)

Music by Saunder Choi (b. 1988)
Words by Brian Sonia-Wallace

Homeward Bound

Words & Music by Marta Keen (b. 1953)
Additional music by Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
Arranged by McKay Crockett

Featured soloists: Richard Cunningham, Bri LeFever, Steve Froese
Small Treble Ensemble: Olivia Selig, Susie Britnell, Arianna Cheveldave

Drawing Our 50-50 Winner 🎁

We Rise

Words & Music by MaryAnne Muglia (b. 1996)

The Greater Vancouver Vivaldi Chamber Choir Society acknowledges that the land on which we live, work, and play is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



Edette Gagné – Artistic Director

Edette Gagné is a visionary leader who inspires others to go beyond what they thought were limitations, to achieve amazing results. In her work around the globe with professionals and amateurs, Edette creates communities where people feel valued, included and safe to take chances, so that they can grow, flourish and be their best.

Edette increases sponsorship and audience growth; historically by up to 300%, by connecting with and engaging community support for performing arts organizations. As a strategist, Edette works with boards and stakeholders to find flexible, resilient ways to re-invent their organizations when facing challenges; so that they can create responses that are flexible and adaptive to needs as they emerge.

As an artistic director, stage director and music director of orchestras, choirs, opera and musical theatre groups, Edette champions creative programming, including staging and performances that captivate artists and audiences alike. She is known for inspiring performers to rise above the ordinary. Throughout her career creating international touring shows, facilitating grand scale events on location, and transforming performing ensembles to realize their potential, Edette brings a deep work ethic and a commitment to creative collaboration.

Edette resides in Vancouver, BC with her wife Melisa and several wonderful, rescued animals. She recharges her batteries with cooking, mindfulness, gratitude and reading.

Karen Lee Morlang – Collaborative Pianist



An award-winning performer, educator and producer, Karen Lee Morlang has been lauded as “funny, brainy and creative.” After specializing in art song and chamber music for her post-graduate degree from UBC, she then taught as a Sessional Lecturer at the UBC School of Music while continuing her own education and performing in different parts of North America, Europe and Asia. Karen has been featured at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival, MusicFest Vancouver, the World Peace Forum, Women’s Worlds Conference, the Vancouver Folk Festival and has been broadcast on CBC Radio.

In addition to working with the Vivaldi Chamber Choir, Karen enjoys collaborating with local choirs such as Chor Leoni Choral Society, Summerchor, EnChor, Vancouver Welsh Men’s Choir, BC Girls Choir and St Thomas More Collegiate. With her passion for reaching new audiences for classical music, Karen has also directed recital and lecture series for the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Vancouver Public Library, the UBC Main Library, and completed a three-year project with the UBC Learning Exchange in the Downtown Eastside producing and teaching the Music Appreciation 101 course. As part of her work in the DTES, Karen co-coordinated the “Night Before the Opera” events at the Carnegie Center with the Vancouver Opera.

Previously Karen also created and hosted a mini-series called “Nuts & Notes” on CBC Radio One as well as guest hosting on Westcoast Performance for CBC Radio Two. In exploring her own voice while playing piano with other singers, Karen was a founding member of the vocal groups The Lady Larks, The K Sisters and The No Sh!t Shirleys. September 2022, Karen assumed the role of Music Director at St. Francis-in-the-Wood Church in West Vancouver, where she leads the St. Francis-in-the-Wood Choir and the Coast Mountain Men’s Chorus.

Karen is also committed to curating and delivering many performances annually for elders living in long-term health care and retirement communities. She estimates that she has personally performed over 1000 concerts for seniors in two decades! When not at the piano or computer, Karen takes great pleasure in pursuing other passions such as riding her motorcycle, boating, fishing, hiking, swimming, reading, sewing, fussing over her potted plants and now learning to coordinate her lower limbs in the form of tap-dancing.



Bruce Henczel - Guest Percussionist

Percussionist, composer, workshop facilitator, and string player, Bruce Henczel has amassed a wide variety of musical styles. He received his Master of Music in percussion from U.B.C. shortly after winning the Concerto Competition on marimba. He has toured Ireland and Eastern Canada as a fiddler and drummer. He performed on Kenya’s National Nipashe News show and has taught and performed throughout that country. He is the composer, arranger, string player, and drummer with Winter Harp. He has performed as a concerto soloist with numerous orchestras and wind symphonies in B.C. His print music is published by Honeyrock in Pennsylvania and distributed internationally by Steve Weiss Music.

Vivaldi Chamber Choir

Edette Gagné, Artistic Director
Karen Lee-Morlang, Collaborative Pianist
Miriam Davidson, Administrative Assistant

Sopranos

Yasmine Bia
Susie Britnell
Arianna Cheveldave
Cara Elrod
Winnie Gibson
Denise Gilbert
Sarah Little
Olivia Selig *
Andrea Teigelhoefer

Altos

Dinah Ayre *
Margaret Archibald
Roz Coulson
Bev Ferguson
Bri Lefever
Karen Millard
Eve Munns
Rebecca Citlali Nichols
Cheryl Thomas

Tenors

Jeff Carmichael
Matt Emery
Steve Froese *
Jordan Hiller
Jorge Vega

Basses

Richard Cunningham
Jack Foster *
Jeremy Hay
Aaron Lau
Michael Loo
Mike Millard
Peter Munns
Kees van den Doel

* Section Lead

On Leave

Valie Madejska
Michelle Arduini
Sarah Ebert
Al Kvern
Sarah Lamont
Angel Liu
Freda Miller
David Kaplan



Our heartfelt thank you to the following individuals:

- Our volunteer board of directors who work tirelessly behind the scenes to help us achieve our musical dreams
 - All the volunteers who assisted today with Front of House
 - Pacific Spirit United Church and their staff
- Arianna Cheveldave - Choir Librarian and Rebecca Citlali Nichols - Librarian Assistant
 - Miriam Davidson for programme design/layout
 - Kevin Zakresky - Music Director, St. Titus Anglican Church
- The Artistic Team of this choir, without whom Edette's visions could not come to life
- Every member of Vivaldi Chamber Choir (and their loved ones) for sharing their time and talents and love as part of our choir community

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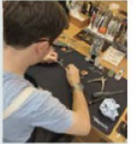
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