



 **QUEER URBAN ORCHESTRA**  
presents

# PRIDE GALA DOUBTLESS MAGICK

feat. Jordan Rutter-Covatto, counter-tenor  
World premier of Derek Weagle's Doubtless Magick

Saturday, June 15, 2024 • 8:00 p.m.  
Church of the Holy Apostles • 296 9th Ave.  
*David Bloom, Artistic Director*  
**[QueerUrbanOrchestra.org](http://QueerUrbanOrchestra.org)**

## From the Artistic Director

Welcome, friends!

I am overwhelmed with gratitude. First of all, I'm so grateful for the musicians of QUO, who have put so much passion and *work* into this *Chosen Family* season. What they've achieved is absolutely stunning — thank you! The amazing staff and Board of QUO has dedicated an immense amount of effort to making this year a success for our organization — grazie mille. And to YOU, our community. We wouldn't and *couldn't* do this without you. That you are present tonight demonstrates your deep support for our organization — merci beaucoup.

Tonight's program is centered around a substantial new work by our Associate Conductor, Derek Weagle. You are the work's first ever audience. What they've made is a testament to the magisterial magic that is queerness and is tailor-made for our musicians, including five featured soloists. We're also thrilled to welcome guest artist Jordan Rutter-Covatto for this world premiere, commissioned for QUO by our very dear michael shattner — tausend Dank!

Hayao Miyazaki's whimsical anime film *My Neighbor Totoro* holds the serendipitous and transformative nature of the chosen family at its core. Two magical opera excerpts from the queer history of opera open the program. In peak QUO fashion, all of tonight's featured composers are or were queer with the exception of Joe Hisaishi, though Totoro and their kind are pretty queer, right?

From all of us at QUO, enjoy yourself tonight, and once again, arigato gozaimasu!

Lots of love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bloom". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.



**David Bloom** is a conductor equally at home in orchestral repertoire, opera, and new music, noted for his “dazzling precision and grace” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), “intelligence, elegance, and passion” (*Opera News*), “ferocious and focused” (*The New York Times*) performances, and “breathtaking and inspired programming” (*Shepherd*

*Express*). He dedicates his work to collaborating with artists and communities to inspire creativity, empathy, and joy.

He is Co-Artistic Director of Contemporaneous, a 23-member New York-based ensemble he co-founded in 2010, and has been Co-Artistic Director of Present Music, Milwaukee’s long-running new music ensemble, since 2019. In 2023, he became Artistic Director of New York’s Queer Urban Orchestra and Principal Conductor of the orchestras at New York University, where he also teaches conducting.

In such venues as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, MoMA, and Park Avenue Armory, Bloom has guest conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Jacaranda, The Crossing, Ensemble Connect, Choir of Trinity Wall Street, and Kronos Quartet, among others, and worked with soloists Dashon Burton, David Byrne, Helga Davis, Isabel Leonard, Iarla Ó Lionáird, Courtney Love, Hila Plitmann, and Dawn Upshaw. Especially active as an opera conductor, Bloom has led productions for Washington National Opera, Opera Omaha, Beth Morrison Projects, Tri-Cities Opera, PROTOTYPE Festival, Teatro Grattacielo, Experiments in Opera, the American Opera Project, and more. In 2023, he conducted the premiere of Dylan Mattingly’s six-hour opera *Stranger Love* at Walt Disney Concert Hall, directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz.

He has conducted over 450 world premieres and collaborated with such composers as Donnacha Dennehy, Du Yun, inti figgis-vizueta, Michael Gordon, Judd Greenstein, Nathalie Joachim, David Lang, Tania León, Emma O’Halloran, and Julia Wolfe. In 2021, he conducted Present Music in the world premiere of Raven Chacon’s *Voiceless Mass*, which went on to win the 2022 Pulitzer Prize.



Musician/Educator/Wearer-of-Many-Hats  
**Derek J. Weagle** (*they/them*) is a Brooklyn-based artist and healer invested in the disruption of social and academic barriers around classical music, as well as the preservation of music-making as an act of joyful humanness. With a practice rooted in syncretism, Derek can be found equally comfortable in roles ranging from conductor to composer, performer to teacher.

They hold a B.M. in Music Education from UMass Lowell and an M.M. in Composition with a minor in Choral Conducting from New England

Conservatory, as well as a Certificate in Sound Healing from the Sage Academy of Sound in Woodstock, NY. Current engagements include work as an independent Sound Healing Practitioner, Associate Conductor of the Queer Urban Orchestra, Artistic Director of the Adelphi University Vocal Ensemble, Founding Artistic Director of Bloom Sound Collective, Composer & Owner at Risanare Music, Board of Directors for the Refugee Orchestra Project.

Their work as a composer has received recognition both nationally and internationally, including the American Prize in Composition, the International Horn Society, and the International Composition Competition Harelbeke. For more information on Derek's artistic practice and services offered, see their website at [www.derekjweagle.com](http://www.derekjweagle.com).

### **QUO Board of Directors & Staff**

David Lohman, President

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**Jordan Rutter-Covatto** is a countertenor whose practice combines virtuosic vocal technique with method acting processes and Baroque gesture to create performances lauded as “riveting...frightening to behold” (*Opera News*) and “the best operatic moments” (WQXR).

Rutter-Covatto is a sought-after collaborator for contemporary operas and new music. They have worked with The American Opera Project, Beth Morrison Projects, American Lyric Theater, and NYU Tisch’s Opera Lab. They created the role of Kyle in Robert Paterson’s opera *Three Way* at

Nashville Opera and Brooklyn Academy of Music, and can be heard on the original cast recording. They made their company and role debut as Doodle in *The Scarlet Ibis* at Chicago Opera Theater.

A passionate performer of Baroque repertoire, Rutter-Covatto has performed in major works including Handel’s *Messiah*, Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*, and Scarlatti’s *La Giuditta*, in addition to performances with La Fiocco and operamission. They have performed the role of the Sorceress in *Dido & Aeneas* with Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, covered it with Heartbeat Opera, and were set to perform it with Cerddorion before the production’s cancellation due to COVID-19.

Rutter-Covatto has also appeared off-Broadway in Lot Vekemans’s *POISON* with Origin Theater Company and in the principal role of Clark in Johnny Lloyd’s *birthday birthday birthday* with Columbia University’s New Plays Festival.

Rutter-Covatto prides themselves on bringing classical music outside of its traditional boundaries, working with MET LiveArts in Mingwei Lee’s *Sonic Blossoms*, singing Schubert Lieder for museum patrons. They have also performed all four volumes of William Bolcom’s *Cabaret Songs* at the historic Duplex bar in the West Village and on the High Line as an artist in the *mile long opera* by David Lang.

Rutter-Covatto is a proud Vietnamese-American and member of the LGBTQ+ community and seeks to bring communities together through storytelling and shared experience.



# QUEER URBAN ORCHESTRA

David Bloom, Artistic Director  
Derek Weagle, Associate Conductor

**Saturday, June 15th, 2024 - 8:00pm**

**Church of the Holy Apostles, NYC**

## ***Pride Gala: Doubtless Magick***

from *Samson et Dalila: Danse bacchanale* (1867-1876)

Camille Saint-Saëns

David Bloom — conductor

from *Orlando: Verdi allori* (1733)

George Frederic Handel

Jordan Rutter-Covatto — countertenor

David Bloom — conductor

from *My Neighbor Totoro Symphony* (1988, arr. 2002)

Joe Hisaishi

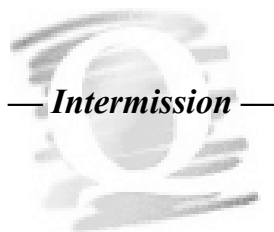
I. *Hey Let's Go*

V. *The Path of the Wind*

VII. *Catbus*

VIII. *My Neighbor Totoro*

Derek Weagle — conductor



— ***Intermission*** —

*Please take a moment to silence mobile phones.*

*As a reminder, recording of any type of tonight's program is strictly prohibited.*

*From the Ordo Virtutum* (1151, arr. 2024)

world premiere

Hildegard of Bingen,

arr. Derek Weagle

Jordan Rutter-Covatto — countertenor

Derek Weagle — conductor

*Doubtless Magick* (2023-2024)

Derek Weagle

world premiere, commissioned for Queer Urban Orchestra by michael shattner

I. *Inspiravit*

II. *The Great Silence*

III. *Truth*

Jordan Rutter-Covatto — countertenor

Brian Shaw — oboe, English horn, bass clarinet, and saxophones

Julia Cohen — trumpet, flugelhorn, and conch shell

Phong Ta — violin

Bjorn Berkhout — cello

Nolan N Dresden — piano and celesta

David Bloom — conductor

## About QUO: The Queer Urban Orchestra

**Queer Urban Orchestra** (QUO) is the Northeast's only orchestra rooted in the LGBTQ+ community. Celebrating queer artistry from its membership to featured composers and performers, the orchestra promotes equity and empathy. QUO was founded in 2009 as New York City's first orchestra specifically serving the LGBTQ+ community. Since its inaugural concert, the orchestra's membership has grown to 100 musicians, and the group's collaborations with the Danspace Project have resulted in praise from *The New York Times*.

The orchestra has premiered numerous works and has collaborated with Anthony Roth-Costanzo, Ariadne Greif, Ryan Roberts, Andrew Yee, Jasmine Rice LaBeija, Empire City Men's Chorus, Youth Pride Chorus, and Stonewall Chorale. Since 2023, QUO has been led by Artistic Director David Bloom and Associate Conductor Derek Weagle. Previous Artistic Directors have included Ian Shafer, Julie Desbordes, Nolan N Dresden, and Brandyn Metzko.

## **Violin I**

Phong Ta †  
Rafael Albertini  
Belinda Bauer  
Brian Harrington  
Andy Holland  
Nick Johnson  
Andro Kim  
Jordan Lee  
Arielle Lubin  
Nic Salas  
Dane Stalcup  
Navida Stein  
Roi Trawon  
Liann Wadewitz  
Trevor Wadleigh  
Shang Young

## **Violin II**

Kevin Tan \*+  
Klaudia Amenabar  
Christian Balmaseda-  
Lucca  
Jonathan Balsano  
alva bostick  
Kevin Chau  
Carla Eilo  
Peter Fifield  
Andre Gillard  
Josh Li  
mel martini  
CoryAnn Pitts  
Andres Rodriguez-  
Aponte

Ligia Sakurai  
Holly Melissa  
Seefeldt  
Jessica Waddell  
Wiqar Farooqi  
Bob Wei

## **Viola**

Noah Green \*  
Karishma Gottfried  
LeiOra Hughes  
Marion Lederer  
Hali Linn  
JohnMark Ofrasio  
Haley Pearson  
Mason Pilevsky  
Nicholas Singletary  
Jacob Szilagi  
Nathan Threlkeld  
Dustin Zuelke

## **Cello**

Bjorn Berkhout \*  
Navin Manglani +  
Joshua Dent  
Alex Humesky  
Nicholas Saunders  
Scott Semanski  
michael shattner  
Brittany Taylor  
Penglong Zhu

## **Bass**

Jared Chamoff \*+  
George Nicholson  
Andrew Op't Hof  
Hirokazu Yokoyama

## **Flute/Piccolo**

Justin Lee \*  
Craig Devereaux +  
Scott Oaks

## **Alto Flute**

Scott Oaks

## **Oboe**

Matthew Hadley \*+  
Alan Hyde  
Christian Smythe

## **English Horn**

Brian Shaw  
Christian Smythe

## **Clarinet**

Daniel Olson +  
Chase Hogan  
Alice Petre

## **Bassoon**

David Lohman \*+  
Kevin O'Brien  
Mark Romatz

† **Concertmaster**

\* **Principal**

+ **Section Leader**

**French Horn**

Kyle Walker \*  
Lynn Caron +  
Bryan Jacobowitz  
Lance Lucas

**Trumpet**

Ron Nahass +  
Julia Cohen  
Erin Kulick  
Ryan Yacos

**Trombone**

Ryan Gochee \*  
Nick Denton  
Ryan McTernan

**Bass Trombone**

Alex Arellano +

**Tuba**

Adam Rosenberg

**Percussion**

Andrew Berman \*+  
alva bostick  
Jay Neger  
Álvaro Rodas  
Sami Smith  
Derek Weagle  
Hannah Webster

**Harp**

Stephanie Babirak

**Piano/Celesta**

Nolan N Dresden



**Thank you for spending your night with us.  
Have a safe and happy PRIDE!**

## About the Music

### Camille Saint-Saëns: from *Samson et Dalila: Danse bacchanale* (1867-1876)

French composer Camille Saint-Saëns's operatic masterpiece, *Samson et Dalila*, had a protracted gestation, with a premiere finally taking place in Weimar after French opera houses refused to stage a biblical story. In this climactic dance from the third and final act, crowds drink and dance with abandon as they taunt a blinded and shackled Samson. *Bacchanale* refers to Bacchus, Greek god of wine, parties, and fertility. The scene opens with a seductive, slithering solo oboe and evolves into a tune that smacks of Parisian dance hall music. A lush theme at the core represents Samson's heart of gold, but a raucous development of the snake-charmer music has the final word.



**Camille Saint-Saëns** (1835-1921) was a wildly popular composer during his lifetime for works in every imaginable genre, including the first film score by a renowned composer and a bevy of works that defy genre altogether, such as his famous *Carnival of the Animals* and a mini-extravaganza for a band of toy instruments. In his 1846 debut as a concert pianist, he offered to play any of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas from memory as an encore, an unheard-of feat (then as now), all the more astonishing when offered by a ten year old. Saint-Saëns was a true polymath: in addition to music, he excelled in the fields of poetry, playwriting, philosophy, geology, archaeology, astronomy, botany, and mathematics.

The consensus among scholars is that Saint-Saëns was queer. In mid-19th Century France, the composer realized that marrying was essential for his reputation. Aged 40, he married Marie Truffot, some 20 years his junior. Citing his busy schedule, he begged off a honeymoon, and the couple instead settled with Saint-Saëns' ever-dominant mother. They soon had two sons who died tragically six weeks apart in 1878 when they were only two years and six months old, respectively. Though they never divorced, Saint-Saëns walked out on Marie one day while on vacation, and the two never met again. Though he was remote and secretive, Saint-Saëns entertained lavishly at his Paris home, where he

occasionally performed in drag. He was a devotee of Parisian pissoirs even when, in old age, he was reduced to peeking.

### **George Frederic Handel: from *Orlando: Verdi allori* (1733)**

By the dawn of opera history in the early 1600's, women had been banned from singing for congregations in church in most of Christendom for centuries. High-voiced music was sung by men who had been castrated when they were young, preserving their pure, stratospheric voices for the rest of their lives. In early operas, castrati, as they were called, played high-voiced roles of women onstage. Eventually, high-voiced parts were written for male characters as well. When Handel penned his opera *Orlando* in 1733 London, women were performing in operas, but the tradition of writing high-voiced male characters remained in vogue. Women singers were often cast in these roles as castration became less common. From the beginning, an expansive vision of gender has been an important facet of opera; today, it opens space for more inclusive interpretations.

Tonight's aria from *Orlando* was written for a character named Medoro, originally a high-voiced male role that was portrayed in the premiere by a woman. In a mythic and magical predecessor to the new movie *Challengers*, pagan princess Angelica (read Zendaya) plays the heartstrings of both Medoro and Orlando. In *Verdi, allori*, time stops as Medoro sings of their love for Angelica, perhaps as they scratch M♡A into a tree, hoping others (Orlando, probably) will envy what they share with ~~Zendaya~~ Angelica.



**George Frederic Handel** (1685-1759) is best known for his 42 operas and numerous oratorios, all of which are a testament to his dramatic genius. Very little is known of his private life. We do know that he never married, once shrugging off King George II's inquiries about his love life by insisting that he had no time for anything but music. He also moved in circles in which homosexuality was an open secret. Dr. Ellen Harris' authoritative research on queer themes in Handel's music has taken the conversation to new depths, but many scholars contribute only vitriol and attempts to

quash any inquiry into the sexuality of the composer of *The Messiah*. Critic Joshua Kosman asks, “Where, after all, is the outrage over music historians’ interest in deducing the identity of Beethoven’s ‘Immortal Beloved,’ or charting Wagner’s extramarital affairs?”

**Joe Hisaishi: excerpts from *My Neighbor Totoro Symphony* (1988, arr. 2002)**

*My Neighbor Totoro* is an anime film produced by Studio Ghibli, directed by Hayao Miyazaki, and with an orchestral score by Joe Hisaishi. It follows the story of two young sisters who move with their father to a house in the countryside. Their isolation in a new place is compounded by the absence of their mother, who is sick in a distant hospital. The sisters make unlikely friends with a family of mysterious creatures with deep connections to the natural world. They look part bear, part penguin, and part owl; one of the creatures is named Totoro.

One day, the younger of the sisters (Mei) is overwhelmed by a need to see her mother. She sets out on her own and gets lost on the way to the hospital. Her sister (Satsuki) asks for Totoro’s help to find her. Totoro summons Catbus (which is exactly what it says on the tin) and saves the day.

Speaking of chosen family, Totoro and their little family of extremely huggable bear/penguin/owls exist in a magical realm that is completely sealed from humanity, except for these two girls, whom they embrace, in their own way.



**Joe Hisaishi** (b. 1950) is in his global era. Last year, he signed an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon, the world’s leading classical music record label, and he was nominated for a Golden Globe. He has been adorned with awards and honors in Japan since the early 1990’s, and more recently international and western awards. He tours the world frequently to conduct his best known work for the films of visionary director and animator Hayao Miyazaki. Hisaishi wrote the scores for all but the first of Miyazaki’s twelve feature films, and his music is essential to the big-hearted, whimsical stories.

## Hildegard of Bingen, arr. Derek Weagle: *From the Ordo Virtutum* (1151, arr. 2024)

This music is at the same time the oldest and the newest music QUO has ever played. The source material comes from a work called *Ordo Virtutum* (Order of the Virtues), written by Hildegard of Bingen in the mid-12th Century, well before most of the instruments you hear tonight were invented. Tonight's arrangement by Derek Weagle was completed less than a month ago.

*Ordo Virtutum* is written for voices and instruments in a genre known as morality play, a genre that Hildegard created when she wrote this piece. It would be about 450 years until the dawn of opera history, and a full century before the next morality play. In fact, *Ordo Virtutum* is the only medieval music drama that survived in full. Significantly, this is not just the first music drama by a woman or by a queer person; this is the first, full stop.

The plot of this monumental work, usually lasting about an hour and a half, is the journey of a human soul and its struggles between good and evil. The work was written for the women of Hildegard's Abbey, so women's voices sing in the chorus and all of the leading roles: the Soul and the 17 Virtues, including Hope, Innocence, Patience, and the Queen of the Virtues, Humility. Token appearances are made by male singers in a chorus of Prophets and of course the Devil, who never sings, only grunting or yelling.

Derek Weagle's boundless imagination is on full display in their new arrangement as they draw from music and texts throughout the morality play in a way that demonstrates the beauty and depth of Hildegard's work.



**Hildegard of Bingen** (1098-1179), or Saint Hildegard, was a Benedictine abbess in medieval Germany, and her astonishingly broad work as a poet, composer, philosopher, mystic, and healer continue to resonate today, even after the better part of a millennium since she lived. Whereas almost all composers of her time and many thereafter remained anonymous, she was among the first identifiable composers in the history of

Western music, boldly writing her name on her compositions, some 80 of which survive today.

Hildegard's compositions are significant also for their distinctive voice, which Alex Ross characterizes as "the cosmos singing in one voice." Her exceedingly ornate and luxurious music is unique among a vast sea of chants that followed the ascetic style guidelines of the Cistercian Order. This is not to mention her work's bald ambition in duration and demands of the performers. Some of her songs push the range of the human voice beyond even is required to sing Wagner's Isolde or Strauss' Salome. Her singers must have been a wonder to hear.

To Hildegard, one nun in particular was a wonder to behold: Richardis of Stade, who was reported to be stunningly beautiful. In 1151, the same year as Hildegard is believed to have written *Ordo Virtutum*, Richardis was appointed the abbess of a distant convent, and Hildegard started a furious campaign to stop her transfer, writing panicked letters to church officials. She appealed to Richardis herself: "Daughter, listen to me, your mother, speaking to you in the spirit. My grief flies up to Heaven. My sorrow is destroying the great confidence and consolation that I once had in humankind." The details of their relationship are a mystery, but Hildegard's admiration for Richardis is preserved in her deeply emotional writings.



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**We were together. I forget the rest.** is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

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## Texts and translations

### George Frederic Handel: from *Orlando: Verdi, allori*

Verdi allori, sem-pre unito conservate il nostro nome,  
come unito sarà il cor.

E poi dite a chi le miri, dà qual mano quando e come fosse in voi si ben scolpito;  
se volete che sospiri, invidiando il nostro amor.

*Oh, green laurels, preserve  
our names united forever  
as our hearts will be.*

*Then tell whom that is looking at them  
whose hand it was that  
wrote such nice ciphers and when and how,  
if you want him to sigh  
envying our love.*

### Hildegard of Bingen, arr. Derek Weagle: *From the Ordo Virtutum*

O fortunate soul,  
O sweet creature of God,  
You who have been created in the profound height of the wisdom of God,  
you love much.  
O fugitive soul, be strong, and clothe yourself in the armor of light!  
O how glorious warrior are you who endure all things.

### Derek Weagle: *Doubtless Magick*

#### **I. *Inspiravit***

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting—  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things.

— from *Wild Geese* by Mary Oliver

O quam mirabilis est [...]  
Nam cum Deus inspexit faciem hominis  
quem formavit,  
omnia opera sua in eadem forma  
hominis integra aspexit.

*Oh how miraculous it is, [...]  
For when God looked into the face [God] created,  
[God] saw fulfilled all of [God's own] works  
in that same human form.*

– from *O quam mirabilis* by Hildegard von Bingen,  
trans. Hugh McElroy

نَفْسِي فِدَاؤُكَ يَا مَنْ لَا أَبُوحُ بِهِ  
عَلَّقْتُ مِنِّْي بِحَبْلِ لَيْسَ يَنْقُضِبُ  
كَمْ سَاعَةً مِنْكَ خَطَّتْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ

nafsī fidā'uka yā man lā abūḥu bihi  
'aliqta minnī biḥablin laysa yanqaḍibu  
kam sā'atin minka ḥaṭṭataha malā'ikatun

*I sacrifice myself to you. You are my secret. And we are bound together by an  
unbreakable cord. How busy you kept the angels when they made you!*

– from *Love in Bloom* by Abū Nūwas, trans. & translit.  
by Abigail Scott-Rosenfield and Eric Ballouz

I am she who is born of the Seven Stars and Orion.  
I cast aside the shadow of death and usher in the dawn,  
And soothe the scorch of day with balm of night.  
I call to the sea waters and pour them out onto your face.

– adapt. of Amos 5:8 by the composer

C'est pour cela que je suis née!

*I was born for this!*

– Joan of Arc

## II. The Great Silence

“And I am out with lanterns looking for myself.”

– excerpted from a letter from Emily Dickinson to Elizabeth Holland

Te deseas otra. La otra que eres se desea otra... Y ahora [ocultes] tu corona [...],  
has renunciado a tu reino por las cenizas.

*You wish to be someone else. Your other self wishes she were someone else... And  
now [you hide] your crown from sight. [...] you have exchanged your realm for  
ashes.*<sup>^</sup>

はらなか や  
もの にも つかず  
なく ひばり

haranaka ya  
mono ni mo tsukazu  
naku hiba

*in the middle of a field  
with nothing to cling to  
a skylark sings*<sup>^^</sup>

En ti es de noche. Pronto asistirá al animoso encabritarse del animal que eres.  
Corazón de la noche, habla.

*It's night inside of you. Soon you'll witness the rearing up of the brave animal  
that you are. Heart of night: I ask you to speak.*<sup>^</sup>

はな に ええり  
はおりきてかたな  
さす おんな

hana ni ee ri  
haori ki te katana  
sasuu onna

*drunk on flowers  
the woman armed with a sword  
wears a man's jacket*<sup>^^</sup>

¿Y yo? ¿A cuántos he salvado yo? El haberme prosternado ante el sufrimiento de  
los demás, el haberme acallado en honor de los demás...

De haberla tenido cerca, hubiese vendido mi alma a cambio de  
invisibilizarme... En un himno harapiento rodaba el llanto por mi cara. ¿Y por  
qué no dicen algo? ¿Y para qué este gran silencio?

*What about me? How many have I saved? After prostrating myself before the  
pain of others, after silencing myself in honor of everyone else...*

*If I'd had it close at hand, I would've traded in my soul to be invisible... In a  
ragged hymn, the tears rolled down my face. Why doesn't anyone say anything?  
Why the great silence?^*

^from "Extracting the Stones of Madness" by Alejandra Pizarnik,  
trans. Yvette Siegert  
^^verse by Matsuo Bashō

On that glad night,  
I went out  
in secret, for no one saw me,  
with no other light or guide  
than the one that burned in my heart.

Ah, the sheer grace!  
O, guiding night, more lovely than dawn!

– from *Dark Night of the Soul*,  
a treatise by St. John of the Cross

O vos omnes qui transitis per viam attendite et videte...

*O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see...*

– Lamentations 1:12

### III. Truth

...aún me atrevo a amar...

*...still I dare to love...*

– from "A Beggar Voice" by Alejandra Pizarnik,  
trans. Yvette Siegert

I became the sea  
and each atom flamed out of me in glory  
I became fire  
and each moment became an eternity...

– quote by Rumi

The Truth has shared so much of Itself  
With me  
That I can no longer call myself  
A man, a woman, an angel,  
Or even pure  
Soul.

Love has  
Befriended [me] so completely  
It has turned to ash  
And freed  
Me.

– from “I have learned so much” by Hafiz

One day the sun [said]  
I am just a shadow [...]  
I wish I could show you,

When you are lonely or in darkness,  
The Astonishing Light  
Of your own Being!

– from “My Brilliant Image” by Hafiz

O quam mirabilis est inspiratio que hominem sic suscitavit.

*O how miraculous is the inspiration which kindles human life.*

– from *O quam mirabilis* by Hildegard von Bingen,  
trans. Hugh McElroy

C’est pour cela que je suis née!

*I was born for this!*

– Joan of Arc

Here I am!

## About Our Home: Church of the Holy Apostles

QUO has made its home at the Church of the Holy Apostles since 2010, but Holy Apostles has been welcoming LGBT groups and parishioners since the beginning of the gay rights movement in New York. “I know of few New York City LGBTQ organizations which did not have a home at some point in their history at the Church of the Holy Apostles,” says Father Rand Frew, 12th Rector of Holy Apostles. (*continued on next page*)

When QUO violinist Joey Plaster discovered that the Gay Activists Alliance had its headquarters at Holy Apostles in the early seventies, we reached out to Fr. Frew for more information. He shared, “The annual Pride March was announced in the bulletin and verbally, and people were encouraged to take part for the expansion of human rights. The Chelsea Gay Association met at Holy Apostles. The late Vito Russo’s documentary, groundbreaking film *The Celluloid Closet* was first previewed and shown at Holy Apostles with commentary by Mr. Russo.



**QUO: The Queer Urban Orchestra** would like to thank the following donors for their continued support. Any donation to QUO is tax deductible as we are a 501(c)(3) certified organization. With your generous support we are able to keep music on our stands and instruments in our hands.

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Concert Program Assembled by Nolan N Dresden  
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# Highlights of the 2024- 2025 Season

We're thrilled to share a sneak peak of our 2024/2025 season!

The season will kick off with a celebration of QUO's 15th anniversary, featuring QUO's Concertmaster **Phong Ta** alongside music by **Schubert**, **Ravel**, and QUO's own **Noah Green**.

In March 2025, we will launch the first-ever **QUOfest**, headlined by a concert celebrating 10 years of marriage equality in the US, including a return to the podium by former Artistic Director **Nolan N Dresden**, and music by **Yaz Lancaster** and **Gershwin**. The festival also includes a chamber concert, a family program, and a sound healing event.

The season will feature QUO's signature blend of orchestral favorites from **Prokofiev** to **Mahler**, diamonds in the rough from **Omar Thomas** to **Cécile Chaminade**, and a major world premiere by **Rajna Swaminathan**.

Our 2024/2025 season will also feature performances at new, exciting, and larger venues and a dazzling roster of guest artists. Stay tuned for the full announcement!

*ANY AND ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED REGARDING  
THE 2024-2025 SEASON IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE  
WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION.*



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