

“Vox Femina sings with dramatic assurance and vocal poise.” —Los Angeles Times

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DON'T MISS IT!

Diva Moment!

June 24 and 25, 2005
Zipper Concert Hall, Downtown LA

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“NEWS AND NOTES” FROM VOX FEMINA LOS ANGELES

JUNE 24-25 CONCERT CLOSES VFLA'S 8TH SEASON

BEAUTIFUL MUSIC, STAR TURNS, A FEW SURPRISES:

Diva Moment!



What happens when 34 divas descend on one stage for an evening of some of the best music ever written for women's voices? Find out at “Diva Moment,” VFLA's third concert this year, on June 24 and 25 at the Colburn School of Performing Arts, Zipper Concert Hall, 200 S. Grand Avenue, Downtown Los Angeles.

When discussing “Diva Moment,” VFLA Artistic Director Dr. Iris S. Levine says, “This concert is an opportunity to hear and see VFLA perform some of the most beautiful operatic repertoire composed for women's voices, as well as some of the most interesting, inspiring and fun songs from musical theatre.”

Like opera and musical theatre, “Diva Moment” will be quite theatrical in its presentation and should be lots of fun for audience and singers, alike. Iris adds, “Yes, it's true – for some of the pieces, the singers will actually descend from the risers! It will not be your ‘typical choral concert.’”

In response to a question about the concert's title, Iris responded, “Many think of a diva as a histrionic, egotistical female singer. And, while that is one definition, the word ‘diva’ actually comes from the Latin word for ‘divine.’ We have 34 rather divine voices in VFLA. In this concert the audience will get to know many of them individually through solos and small group performances.”

“Diva Moment” continues VFLA's tradition of focusing its third concert of the season on celebrating women's lives. “Somewhere within every woman there is a diva,” says Iris. “This concert acknowledges that, honors it, celebrates it and enjoys it.”

Don't miss “Diva Moment!” Order your tickets now for Friday, June 24 or Saturday, June 25. Simply log on to www.voxfemina.org or call 310-391-2402. Both performances will begin at 8:00 p.m. at the Colburn School of Performing Arts, Zipper Concert Hall, 200 S. Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles.

Find out what happens when 34 divas descend on one stage!

PROFILES

GET TO KNOW MEMBERS OF THE VOX FEMINA LOS ANGELES FAMILY

In each issue, we introduce you to many of the “faces” you’ve seen smiling at you from the risers! Our singers, staff and volunteers come from widely diverse backgrounds, but we all share one thing in common — making the world a better place through music!

— Meet second soprano JUDITH MARTIN



Judy heard about Vox Femina through a fellow singer, but it was a fortuitous meeting with Iris at the VFLA booth during pride week that clinched her decision to audition.

She was relieved to sing the final note of “Summertime” at her audition. But panic set in when Iris said “Just for fun, try singing it in another key!” Judy is now celebrating her seventh year with VFLA.

Judy’s musical genes come from her father, who played bass guitar and standup bass with Billie Holliday. After high school, Judy was awarded a scholarship to study music in Europe, but a pregnancy curtailed those plans. She finally got to tour Europe 18 years later with the West Coast Singers.

Judy believes that “Being in Vox is an awesome experience for any woman. The diverse talent both musically and professionally combined with the supportive atmosphere is so stimulating you can’t help but want to be there.”

On the personal side, Judy has a son, 24, and daughter, 20, has been with her partner Diane for five years and owns a housecleaning business. In her down time, Judy loves listening to classical music, reading science fiction and donning her Star Trek uniform to attend all the Trekkie conventions.

Judy loves motorcycles and plans to own one sometime in the future. You won’t be able to miss her – she’ll be the woman on the lavender bike!

Many of you have been privileged (as have we) to experience the ASL translations of Leticia Velez, themselves works of musical expression.

Christine Meade, Leticia’s mentor, friend and prior ASL interpreter for VFLA, asked Leticia to collaborate on the “Canta Para Todos” concert because of her experience working from Spanish to ASL. The collaboration was so successful that it continues to this day.

The music is a “natural” for Leticia who grew up surrounded by traditional Mexican ballads, corridos and sones in a family of self-taught musicians. She learned to read music and play an instrument at age five.

Leticia says, “Whenever I hear VFLA’s music,

the scenery concealed in every word is movingly revealed to me. Transforming those images into ASL has been one of the most joyous experiences of my life.” She also appreciates VFLA’s camaraderie. “It feels so good to walk into rehearsal and have so many lovely people welcoming me.”

In her day job, Leticia is Lead Interpreter at Pasadena City College and coordinates services for deaf students on campus. During her own time, Leticia loves reading, cooking for friends and writing a “good short story.”

Oh, what instrument did young Leticia play? “The accordion,” she says with a characteristic smile.

— Meet ASL Interpreter LETICIA VELEZ



— Meet second alto TERESA WILLIS



Poet, actor, writer, singer...Teresa Willis is committed to a myriad of artistic endeavors, which fortunately (for us) include singing in VFLA and co-producing our concerts. Determined to join the group after “falling in love with Vox” at its very first performance in 1997, Teresa auditioned and became a member in VFLA’s first full season, eight years ago.

Teresa hales from Louisville, KY, where she developed a love of choral singing in high school. She continued singing in college and community choirs, in rock bands, and as a solo cabaret artist in New York City.

But VFLA is the first choir since high school that “has met and surpassed my expectations. I love working with Iris; her passion is infectious.” Another aspect of VFLA is important to Teresa as well; she considers it “important to have

contemporaries in the lesbian community.” The group’s passion and commitment “inspire other artistic endeavors in my life,” which include hosting monthly poetry readings and a lead role in an independent film, *Forgiving the Franklins*, to be released in June.

The culmination of her efforts is *Eenie Meanie*, a performance piece she wrote and performs that explores racial issues. Following a performance at the LA Women’s Theater Festival, Teresa is thrilled to be taking the show to the Edinburgh (Scotland) Fringe Festival this August

Teresa resides in Burbank with longtime partner Cricket, dogs Edith and Mabel, and intrepid feline Opie. Between artistic pursuits, she is a Pilates instructor in Studio City. Thankfully, she has a website, teresawillis.com, where she can keep track of her many activities!

Dr. Iris S. Levine on Sabbatical for 2005-2006

Guest Conductors Announced for VFLA’s 9th Season

The previous issue of *News and Notes* announced that VFLA’s Artistic Director, Dr. Iris S. Levine, will take a one-year sabbatical during the 2005-2006 season.

We are pleased to announce VFLA’s three guest conductors for next season:

- Donald Brinegar for Fall 2005
- Dr. Jon Bailey for Winter 2006
- Nancy Sulahian for Summer 2006

“I cannot think of three finer artists in whose hands to trust VFLA’s devoted audience members and singers,” says Iris. “Each will bring a different musical point of view to VFLA, and all will bring their excitement and enthusiasm at working with us. Our 9th season will be very exciting and I’m looking forward to experiencing it from the audience!”

Donald Brinegar is Professor of Music and Director of Choral and Vocal Studies at Pasadena City College, instructor of voice at Pomona College, and co-director of the Three-Summer Master of Music in Choral Conducting program at California State University, Los Angeles. In 1996, he formed the Donald Brinegar Singers, which has performed to standing ovations at the Western Division and National Conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, and amassed an enviable catalogue of compact disc appearances.



Photo by Craig Schwartz

Dr. Jon Bailey is Artistic Director Emeritus of the Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles, having led GMCLA for 13 years. After a distinguished career as a professor of music at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Yale University School of Music, and chair of the music department at Pomona College, Jon “retired.” He now teaches half-time at Pomona and is often commissioned to compose new works. Jon was a major impetus behind VFLA’s founding

eight years ago and invited the 19-member chorus to share the stage with GMCLA in 1997 for its first public performance.

Nancy Sulahian is Music Director of the Los Angeles Master Chorale Chamber Singers which presents teaching concerts, workshops and master classes to over 20,000 students in LA each year and has directed performances with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the Idyllwild Arts Summer Festival Choir and the Southern California Junior High Honor Choir. Since 1998 she has been Music Director of the annual Disneyland Christmas Candlelight Ceremony and, since 1996, has been Director of Music Ministries at the First United Methodist Church of Glendale.

“We are thrilled,” said Bettie Teel and Gaby Yanuzzi, co-chairs of VFLA’s Board of Directors. “We believe VFLA’s 9th season will be one of dynamic concerts and spectacular growth. We hope to see all of you there!”

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT VOX FEMINA LOS ANGELES?

Make a donation and become a member of OMNI VOCES, volunteer your time, or consider joining our board of directors!

Call 310.391.2402 or visit our website at www.voxfeminala.org for more information!



Calling All Singers

Do you break out in song while sitting in L.A. traffic? Do you sing in the shower, but really long for an audience? Sounds like you should be singing in a chorus. Auditions for VFLA’s 2005/2006 season will be held in August.

Women of all ages, sexual identities and musical experience are invited to take part in the audition process. If you love singing a variety of repertoire, read music, can commit to the rehearsal/performance schedule for one year, and can carry out VFLA’s mission statement, then this could be the right chorus for you. For more information on the audition process or to schedule an audition, log on to our website at www.voxfeminala.org or call (310) 391-2402.

Win a 1-week trip to Provence for 2!

\$100 per ticket.

Limit of just 200 tickets! Great odds! Limited availability – buy now! Winner receives:

- Round-trip airfare for 2 from Los Angeles to Marseilles, France*
- 1 week (7 days/6 nights) at Mas du Petit Grava*
- 1 gourmet dinner provided at Mas du Petit Grava

All proceeds benefit Vox Femina Los Angeles, a 501(c)3 organization. Tickets are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Vox Femina Los Angeles is a women's choral ensemble dedicated to the performance of quality choral literature with an emphasis on music by women composers. VFLA is a family of diverse women who are lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual. Through music VFLA celebrates women and builds bridges within and beyond the lesbian and gay communities.



This 18th Century country home is surrounded by the gardens and orchard that provide most of the fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers used within it.



Mas du Petit Grava is an ideal place to spend a few restful days or to use as a base from which to visit Southern France's quiet villages, busy cities and incomparable beaches.

Rooms are spacious, comfortable and furnished with antiques from the area. For quiet times, the Mas has an extensive music and reading library. Breakfast and an evening cocktail hour are included.

Mas Du Petit Grava generously donated by Ike Iloputaife and James Watson, visit www.masdupetitgrava.net



There is a swimming pool and gym along with bikes and walking trails for exercise.

Mas du Petit Grava is located in the heart of Provence near the Roman cities of Arles and Saint Remy where Van Gogh created many of his most famous paintings.



**Purchase your ticket online at:
www.voxfeminala.org or call 310-391-2402**

* Winner receives two round-trip coach tickets from Los Angeles to Marseilles, France. Trip must take place between September-October, 2005 or March-May, 2006. In addition to airfare and one gourmet dinner, trip includes 1 week (7 days, 6 nights) at Mas Du Petit Grava. Additional transportation, meals, incidentals, taxes and gratuities are the responsibility of the winner