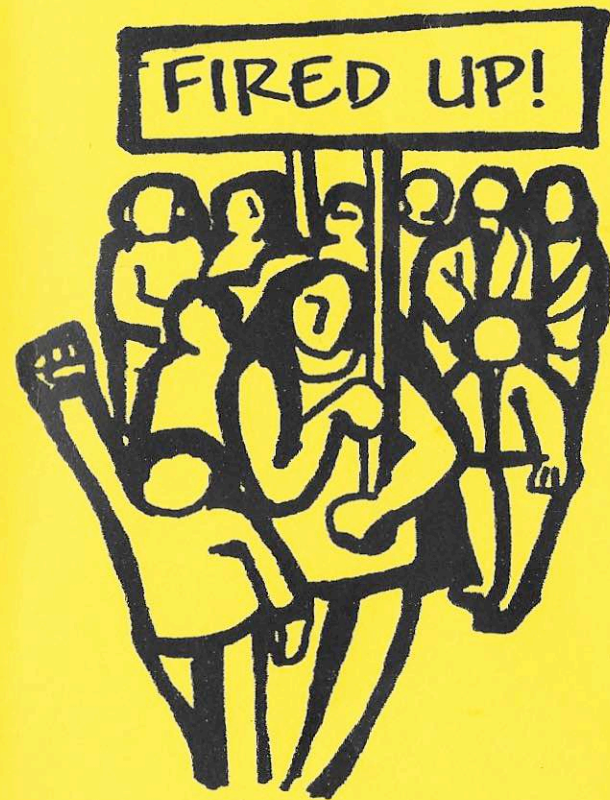


November 2005



CHARIS
The St Louis Women's Chorus



Saturday, Nov. 19, 2005 / 8pm
Missouri History Museum
Lindell at DeBaliviere
Tickets: \$10 / \$12 at door
Info: (314) 664-9340
www.charischorus.org



*"Well-behaved women seldom make history."
- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich*



**We're fired up
for equality!**

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President's Welcome

On behalf of CHARIS, I'd like to welcome you this evening as we open our 13th season with "Fired Up!" The theme is an important one at the History Museum. Some of the music you will hear tonight is played in the exhibit galleries above us.

From the abolition and women's protest movements, to the civil and gay rights movements, this performance will take you along the roads of change and freedom paved by our sister activists. Our country continues to struggle with current protests about the rights of gays to marry, issues of social security and rising health care costs, and most dramatically, the war in Iraq. CHARIS will use her collective voice as a means of solidarity with those who have gone before and, most assuredly, those who will come after.

CHARIS is honored to share the stage tonight with two wonderful and very different groups. **Symmetry**, comprised of Wendy Bruner and Melinda Ohlemiller, have a very unique and beautiful sound. We look forward to singing with them for the first time. Collaborating with **The DisAbility Project** allowed us to grow as we learned how to rap together. In moving beyond our comfort zones, we reaffirmed that change is a good and necessary thing. Many thanks to these special guest artists for joining us tonight. May this be the first of many opportunities to perform together.

We're happy to be joined by several new members tonight, as well as others who have returned to us. And we're missing those who were unable to sing in this concert. As a family, we come and go, but are grateful for the bonds that are formed. And, Georgia, this one's for you. We hope you're back on stage with us soon.

Again, thank you for coming and getting "Fired Up!" with CHARIS this evening.

Sharon Smith, President

Artistic Director's Message
Aric Henson

The idea of change conjures up many feelings. Some experience fear, some hope. For some, both are present. Throughout history, there have been people who, through their courage to speak up or act, have altered the world. While change sometimes bring oppression, it can also bring justice.

Tonight, the women of CHARIS present a program of music that has influenced and documented social change. Spanning movements that deal with abolition, suffrage, civil rights, peace, equality in the workplace, and the rights of disabled and gay people, this concert speaks to all of us in some way. We are thrilled to be joined by guest artists Symmetry and the DisAbility Project, who bring a depth of knowledge and talent that will be transformational.

Over Labor Day weekend, several board members and I represented CHARIS at the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) conference in Kansas City. It was an awesome experience, and we returned home with energy and much information from workshops and fellowship. The high point of the conference for me was a concert given by the Heartland Men's Chorus of Kansas City. One member gave testimony about what brought him to the chorus. He was a straight ally and found many hostile opponents in his workplace. It was their anger and defensiveness that made him choose to sing.

The women of CHARIS have chosen to sing, to raise their voices for the strong and brave who came before them, as well as those yet to find their "voice." We hope you enjoy this evening's concert. If you are inspired to find your voice with CHARIS, we invite you to join us!

CHARIS...



...AND MAKING MUSIC

.....*Ken Curtis*



Artistic Director - Aric Henson

Aric Henson received his musical training at Jefferson College and The University of Missouri, St. Louis. He previously served as director of the GMC Ensemble, Associate Director of the St. Louis Symphony Children's Choir and music director of Faith UMC. He is also a former adjunct faculty member with Jefferson College, where he led the Jefferson College Singers, the Starlight Show Choir and taught private vocal lessons. He has also taught in public and private school settings. Aric also serves as guest conductor and adjudicator for various music festivals. Currently he is on staff at Woodlawn Chapel Presbyterian Church, where he directs The Adult Hand Bell Choir and the Chancel Choir. He also runs a private voice studio in the St. Louis area.

Henson's life revolves around music. He loves to teach and perform and that love has taken him on tours in cities such as Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, New Orleans, Little Rock, San Antonio, Dallas and Austin. Aric holds affiliations with such distinguished music organizations as Music Educators National Conference, Missouri Music Educators Association, American Choral Director's Association and The Missouri Choral Director's Association.

Aric would like to thank the members of CHARIS for their hard work and determination. Thanks also to Scott for his amazing love.

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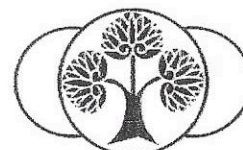
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CHARIS, The St. Louis Women's Chorus

A Herstory

CHARIS was the realization of the dream of its founders Cindy Sohn and Juliet Jackson. With the guidance and support of the Gateway Men's Chorus (GMC), they organized the Committee to Unite Women Singers in the fall of 1992, with the goal of creating a chorus open to all women, regardless of cultural background or musical experience. CHARIS has always been a non-auditioned chorus.

Twenty-five women attended the first meeting of the chorus held in January, 1993. An acting Board of Directors was appointed at that time to organize and direct the activities of the chorus. CHARIS was granted status as a not-for-profit organization by the State of Missouri on September 27, 1993, and received confirmation of its tax-exempt status as a 501c(3) corporation in July, 1994.

The chorus made its first public appearance on May 23, 1993, at Trinity Episcopal Church in a fund-raiser to benefit North side AIDS Outreach. Shortly thereafter CHARIS took the stage with The Gateway Men's Chorus to perform at the latter's Pride Concert in 1993. CHARIS made its solo debut in October, 1993, and has subsequently produced two to three solo performances along with community benefits each year.

Chorus highlights include a performance at the "Notes From Home" series at the Sheldon Memorial on January 24, 1995, at which time the chorus recorded "Dream In Color," its first commercially released tape. CHARIS hosted and performed at the 1995 Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) Leadership Conference for delegates from around the U.S. and a number of foreign countries.

In 1996 CHARIS proudly performed in Tampa, Florida at GALA Festival V. Our performances have benefitted the Cathedral Mission Society, The Names Project, Metropolitan Food Pantry Association, Habitat for Humanity, and Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FLAG).

Merry Keller came to CHARIS as Interim Director in 1999. Merry's exceptional leadership skills and strong background in music both as a performer and teacher provided valuable assets to the chorus. Merry accepted the position of Artistic Director in January, 2000. Many wonderful concerts ensued under her direction. Highlights include "Sing for the Cure," a concert benefitting the Susan G. Women Breast Cancer Foundation in June, 2001 and our tenth anniversary concert, "A Decade of Song," featuring special guest artist Holly Near.

Another era in CHARIS' herstory began in our 12th season, with the leadership of new Artistic Director Aric Henson, former director of the Gateway Men's Ensemble. Aric has directed CHARIS in "Postcards: Journeys of the Heart," at the New City School and "In The Groove" at the Shrewsbury Community Center. "Fired Up!" marks the beginning of our 13th season.

With a talented board of both singers and non-singers addressing management issues, the chorus is looking forward to sharing its voices and vision with its audiences for many years to come.



Sign Language Artist - Glenace Humphrey

Glenace has interpreted for CHARIS since it was founded in 1993, and marks her 29th year as an interpreter in 2005. She is a staff interpreter for Deaf Inter-Link as well as a freelance/community interpreter. Glenace is in her fourth season working hand in hand with Charlie Robin, Managing Director of the Edison Theatre at Washington University. In January, 2004, she had the pleasure of interpreting there for Kate Clinton. Glenace holds national certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). She currently holds the position of RID Region IV Representative, which represents 14 states and three provinces in Canada. She has interpreted in many places in the U.S. and also in Japan and Europe.

Glenace has attended the GALA choral festivals since 1989. Her initiation to GALA was in Seattle interpreting for the Denver Women's Chorus. Later festivals took her to Denver, Tampa, San Jose and most recently to Montreal with the Gateway Men's Chorus. She has interpreted for Bruce Villanche, John Kerry, Maya Angelou, Nell Carter and President George W. Bush. Jeffrey Maynard and the New York City gay Men's Chorus invited Glenace to perform with them in Carnegie Hall in December of 2001 and in June of 2002 with Armistead Maupin. She recently had the honor of interpreting for Ann Hampton Callaway at the Pageant, and Stephen Schwartz, Liz Callaway and Scott Coulter at the Edison Theatre at Washington University. Glenace loves sharing the poetry, inspiration and laughter of music through sign language with the deaf and hearing communities. She is also proud to mention Lloyd, her husband of 37 years, her daughter, son-in-law and two grand-daughters.

"And the trouble is,

If you don't

Risk anything,

You risk

Even more."

- Erica Jong

"One is not born a

woman;

one becomes one."

- Simone deBeauvoir

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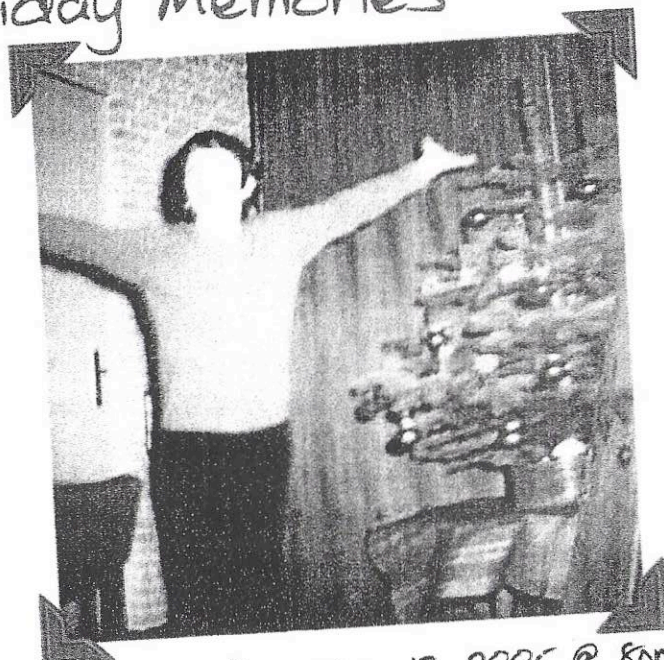
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Set Designer - R. E. Dix

Dix has been an art teacher in the metro St. Louis area for the past 17 years. She currently serves as Technical Director for the District's high school drama department by helping students learn to design and construct scenery for theatrical productions. She gained her technical experience in the mid 80's as a technical assistant for Meramec Theatre. While at Meramec she earned her Associate's Degree in Commercial Art and Advertising Design. Dix holds a B.A. in Studio Art with an emphasis in art education from SIUE. In 1995, she received a MAT in Instructional Media Technology from Webster University. Dix became involved with CHARIS through her friends and has enjoyed her association with the chorus.

Accompanist - Susan McIntosh

Susan has been making music for many years, with her voice and on the piano. She has accompanied soloists and small ensembles in the St. Louis area, and is now proud to be in her fourth season as the principal accompanist for CHARIS. She also enjoys singing with her three girls and plans to make beautiful music for many years with her partner, Dayna Deck.

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*Thanks Warren
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*Love,
CHARIS*



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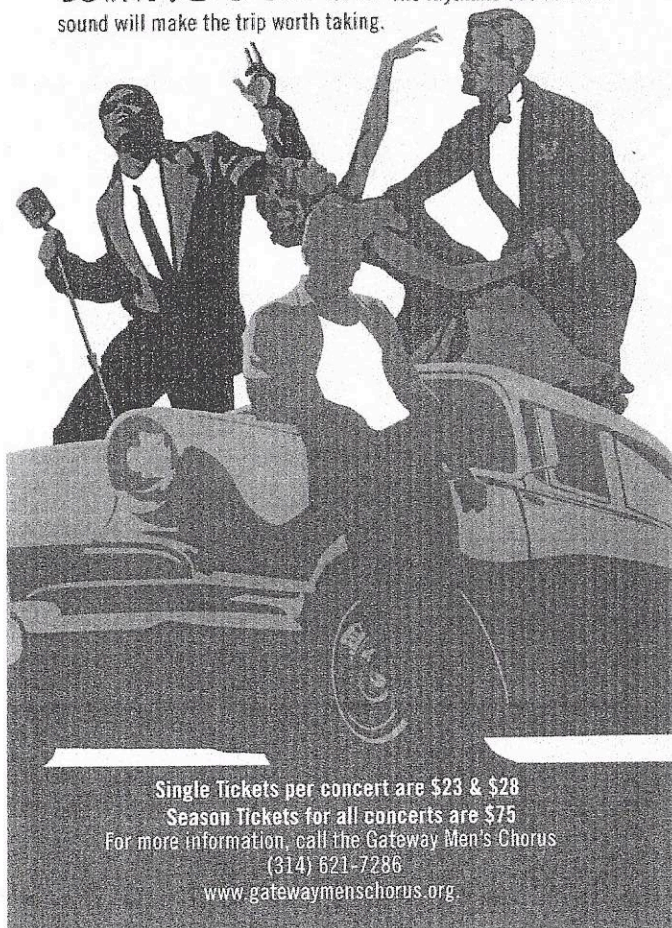
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Who We Are

CHARIS is a lesbian chorus open to all women. We differ in age, size, ethnic background, sexual orientation and abilities but we share a goal to seek musical excellence, voice messages of social justice, and create a fun and supportive place for all women. We are a non-auditioned chorus.

Membership Information

CHARIS extends an open invitation for membership. Rehearsals are currently held Tuesday nights from 7 to 9:30 at Immanuel United Church of Christ, 3460 Jamieson Ave. If you are interested in membership information or attending a rehearsal, please call (314) 664-9340

Board of Directors

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 Kathy Duncan, Treasurer
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 Chatanunya Rawles
 Pat Henry
 Jane Clark
 Linda Clark
 Felicia Scott
 (*) Nancy Folk
 (*) Bill Byrd
 (*) Katrina Pfeiffer

(*) Non-singing members

"Fired Up!": Some Historical Perspective

The fall concert celebrates music of protest and change in the United States. As much as possible, we have selected music that was actually sung by protesters during the relevant historical periods. CHARIS will open the concert with Holly Near's "Fired Up!," which introduces the theme of the concert. We then move on to music from the abolition movement. After the founding of the United States, some of the first protest songs were by and about slaves. These songs were often rooted in religious hymns and spirituals. "Wade in the Water," for example, has lyrics that reference how slaves had to walk through water to cover their scent while fleeing slavery.

Our musical journey continues through the Civil Rights Movement with songs such as "Strange Fruit." This beautiful yet haunting piece, made famous by Billie Holliday, was written by a Jewish school teacher from the Bronx about the horrors of lynching: "Southern trees bear a strange fruit. Blood on the leaves, and blood at the root. Black body swinging in the southern breeze....strange fruit hanging from the Poplar trees." The song "We Shall Overcome," which has become the unofficial anthem of the civil rights and other movements, was first sung during a strike in South Carolina, and quickly spread to union meetings across the country. Indeed, in the early 1900's, unions used songs as a major part of recruitment, solidarity and strikes. The song "Bread and Roses" was one of the best known songs of this period. The lyrics are from a poem by James Oppenheim, inspired by the banners of striking female textile workers proclaiming "We want bread and roses too!"

CHARIS begins the second half of the concert with a series of songs about women's issues. "Oh Dear, What Can the Matter Be?" highlights the tradition of transforming existing music into protest songs by setting new words to popular tunes. Suffragists did just that when they sang, "Oh dear, what can the matter be, women are wanting to vote." Things become more physical in "The

Stove," in which a woman destroys the symbol of her oppression – the stove – by "pounding it into bits."

Holly Near was a major force in bringing lesbian music to a wider audience. Through her song "Simply Love," we will ask "Why does my love make you shift restless in your chair, and leave you in despair? It's simply love...my love for a woman." CHARIS pays tribute to the peace movements of the 60's and 70's with several familiar songs. John Lennon's "Imagine," first recorded during the Vietnam War era in 1971, has become the official anthem of the human rights organization, Amnesty International. "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?," written by Pete Seeger in the 1950's, is a sad reminder about the price of war that found new meaning during the anti-war protests of the 60's.

CHARIS concludes the concert with songs reflecting more recent social justice music, celebrations of diversity, and a call for peace and harmony. These include Sweet Honey and the Rock's "Would You Harbor Me?," Holly Near's "I Ain't Afraid," and Melinda Ohlemiller's (from guest artist Symmetry) "Unison."



"Fired Up!"

Act I

Fired Up

By: Holly Near / Arr. J. David Moore

Wade In The Watah

Traditional Spiritual / Arr. Ysaye M. Barnwell

Featuring: Jane Clark, Wendy Bruner, Kristen Meyers,
Sharon Spurlock, Nadine Varner, Dina Young

Follow The Drinking Gourd

African-Amer. Spiritual / Arr. Valerie Showers Crescenz

Strange Fruit

By: Lewis Allen / Arr. Kristine Boerger

Lift Every Voice And Sing

By: James and Rosamond Johnson

*Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmony of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise,
high as the list'ning skies, let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

We Shall Overcome

Traditional / Arr. Aric L. Henson

Bread And Roses

By: Mimi Farina and James Oppenheimer /
Arr. Donna Diekhof

Guest Artist: The DisAbility Project

"Hello"

"DisAbility Rap"

Act II

Oh, Dear! What Can The Matter Be?

English Folk Song / Arr. John Carter

Featuring: Sherry Angus, Linda Clark, Pat Henry, Julie Lynch,
Susanna Roe, Terri Velasco, Susan McIntosh, Katleen Duncan

The Stove

By: Zae Munn and Ann Kilkelly

Simply Love

By: Holly Near / Arr. Steve Milloy

Imagine

By: John Lennon

Solo: Deb Salls

Where Have All The Flowers Gone?

By: Pete Seeger / Arr. Mark Sirett

Featuring: Julie Lynch, Nadine Varner

Guest Artist: Symmetry

Megan's Gone To Fight

By: Melinda Ohlemiller

Not Me

By: John McCutcheon

There Is A Spirit

By: Carrie Newcomer

Would You Harbor Me?

By: Ysaye M. Barnwell / Arr. Merry Keller

Featuring: Kendra Henry, Nancy Phillips, Sharon Smith,
Linda Clark, Barbara Gilchrist, Denise Peterson, Jane Clark,
Wendy Bruner

I Ain't Afraid

By: Holly Near / Arr. J. David Moore

"Sermon:" Rev. Dr. Deborah Lawson

Unison

By: Melinda Ohlemiller

CHARIS
The St. Louis Women's Chorus

Aric Henson, Artistic Director
Susan McIntosh, Accompanist
Glenace Humphrey, Sign Language Artist

Sopranos

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Jane V. Clark | Linda Clark |
| Deb Salls | Julie Lynch |
| Kristen Meyers | Carol Weisman |
| Pat Henry | Angie O'Gorman |
| Kendra Ellen Henry | Wendy Bruner |
| Kathleen Duncan | Sharon Smith |
| Susan McIntosh | Darlene Daugherty |



Altos

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Barbara Gilchrist | Sharon Opp |
| Charlotte Ellis | Sharon Spurlock |
| Dina Young | Susanna Roe |
| Terri Velasco | Sherry L. Angus |
| Pat Moran | Nancy Phillips |
| Denise Peterson | Candice Freeman |
| Kim Powlishta | |

Guest Artists

Symmetry: Wendy Bruner, Melinda Ohlemiller

The DisAbility Project: Joan Likpin, Director, Sarah Shimchick, Ashley Nanney, Kendra Elliot, LaRoy Smith, Ana Jennings, Lorrie Bielicke, Tom Allen, Bryan Jones, Barb Hamilton

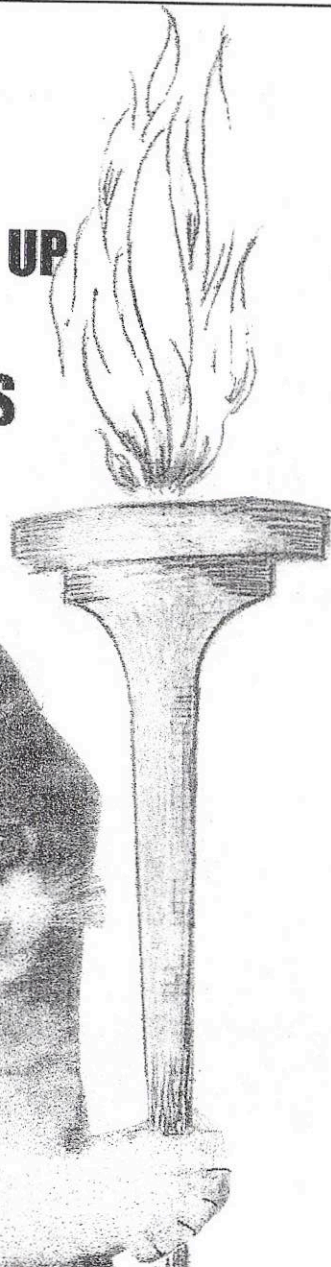
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Guest Artist: Symmetry



Photo by Karen Huss

Symmetry, a creative new folk duo formed in 2004, is proud to join CHARIS in tonight's concert, "Fired Up!" In between practice and gigs around St. Louis, Melinda Ohlemiller and Wendy Bruner spend their days working for St. Louis ARC. Both women were raised in musical families, with strong church music traditions. Even though born and raised 2000 miles apart, (Wendy from Saskatchewan, Melinda from Indiana) they now come together, as professional colleagues and with the close harmony that is the hallmark of Symmetry. They perform the works of many admired singer-songwriters, as well as original songs born of their strong convictions and of life's lighter moments. For booking information, contact (314)-647-2723



*Guest Artist :
The DisAbility Project*

CHARIS is pleased to welcome guest artists from The DisAbility Project, whose performance brings attention to the stereotypical assumptions many make about those who are part of that culture. More importantly, however, they emphasize the abilities and contributions that come from the disabled community. Indeed, The DisAbility Project, founded in 1996 by Joan Lipkin and Fran Cohen, advances this mission: to empower individuals, honor their stories, spark imagination, foster community, encourage civic dialogue, and enhance public awareness about disability through innovative theater of the highest quality. Such advocacy is more important than ever. According to the 2000 Missouri Census, more than 17% of the state population experiences some form of disability, whether it's sensory, cognitive or mobility related. Nationally, there are over 55 million people with disabilities.

Now in its 10th season, the DisAbility Project brings together amateur performers with professional artists to create innovative material based on lived experiences. They have performed for over 30,000 people, bringing art and advocacy to educational institutions, conferences, special events, festivals, religious and civic groups, and corporations. The group is comprised of people with and without disabilities who are diverse in age, race, ethnicity, class, education, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability and performance experience. The impact of their work is reflected in the many awards and recognitions received, including the Missouri Arts Award and the Organization Equality Award from the Human Rights Campaign. For booking information, to join the DisAbility Project or attend a rehearsal, call: (314) 534-1454 / www.disabilityproject.com

Acknowledgements

CHARIS gratefully acknowledges the help of the following persons in the preparation of this concert, as well as the generosity of the Regional Arts Council.

Performance Committee: Candice Freeman, Chair

Kim Powlishta, Sharon Spurlock, Pat Henry, Dina Young,
R.E. Dix, Aric Henson

Stage Manager: Tracy Utz

Lights/Sound: Kaelin Love, Dan Butler

Choreography: Julie Lynch

Set Designer: R.E. Dix

Scriptwriter: Dina Young

Public Relations: Linda Clark, Sharon Opp

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Weisman, Carolyn Stahlhut, Lesa Hall, Sheila Muhlbaier



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When it comes to your job, are you fired up or burned out?
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How do you feel about Mondays?

- a. I look forward to Monday morning.
- b. I dread Monday mornings and look forward to weekends.

Do you watch the clock?

- a. When I'm at work, time flies by.
- b. I seem to watch the clock and most days it drags by slowly.

Feel like taking a gamble?

- a. I am not really a big "gambler."
- b. I find myself buying lottery tickets more lately and daydreaming about winning and quitting my job.

How's your health?

- a. I am in good health, generally speaking.
- b. I am having lots of small, unexplainable physical ailments and pains.

How's your boss?

- a. I know my boss always supports me.
- b. I really wonder what my boss says when someone speaks badly of my performance.

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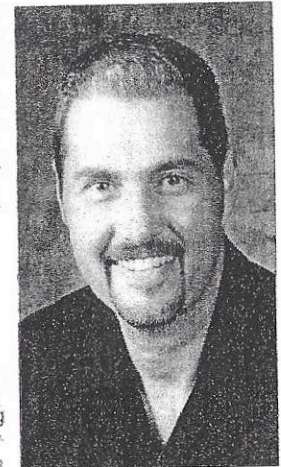
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Concert Etiquette

As a courtesy to the performers and audience members we ask that you silence all electronic devices such as cellular phones, pagers, and digital watches before the concert begins.

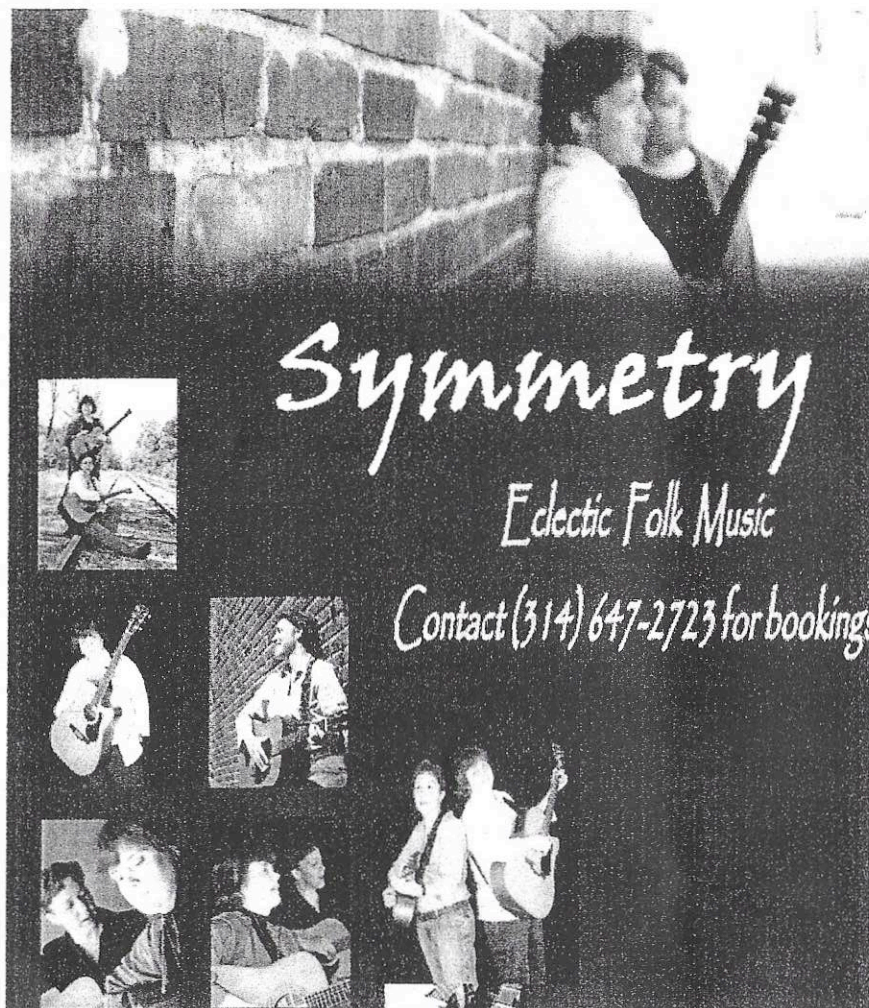
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Enjoy the concert and thank you for your support of CHARIS!

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Symmetry

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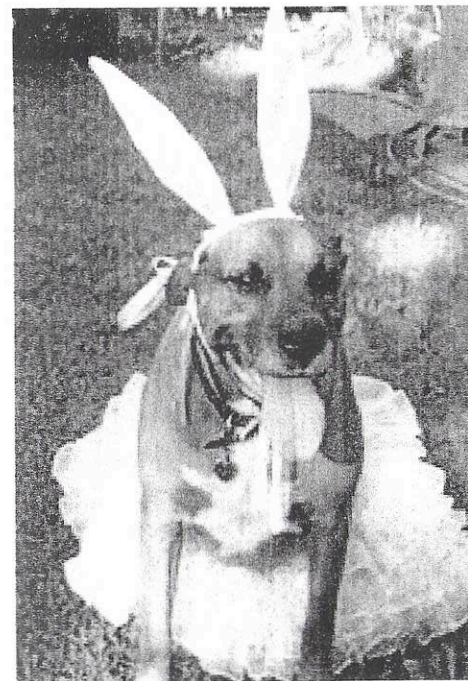
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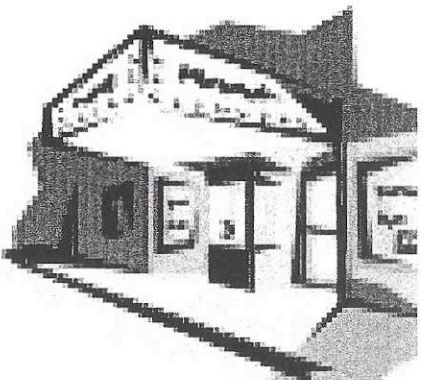
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CHARIS’ “Broadway” cabaret, that is. You’ll definitely want to mark your calendars for our spring concert, on April 22 & 23, 2006 at the Shrewsbury Community Center. CHARIS will perform Broadway favorites, in a cabaret-style show, that will have you singing along as you relive the great standards from the Great White Way!

If you’d like to sing *onstage* with CHARIS, we’d love to have you join us! Rehearsals begin Tuesday, January 10, 2006 at 7 pm. Please call 664-9340 for more information.



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