

# Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

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*celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country*

## *Rainbow Chorus Events (1995- )*

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**NARRATION**  
**“TWO FIRES BURNING”**  
**May 8, 2010**

**RBC            HARRIETT TUBMAN (3:40)**

**RBC changes formation after Harriett**

**CL**            Hello everybody! It's great to see you all here this evening, both new and familiar faces alike! And are you ever in for a fantastic show. Tonight you will be treated to the sound and spectacle of not just one but two fantastic choirs – the Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo-Wellington, and our special guests from Toronto, Singing OUT!

The piece you just heard was “Harriett Tubman”. Harriett was a leader of the Underground Railroad that lead black slaves from the Southern States to freedom in the North during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The song celebrates a woman who was never afraid to defy injustice and the oppressive forces that surrounded her, so that she and so many others could one day live as equal members of society.

The Rainbow Chorus will continue tonight's performance with Shenandoah, a simple yet beautiful song of longing and nostalgia, which one could imagine being sung by a road-weary traveler far from the home they love. This will be followed by Josef Rheinberger's “Evening Song”, a soaring harmony arranged by our own chorus member, **Les Smith**, which welcomes the listener home to a place of comfort and rest as the setting sun turns the sky to gold.

**RBC            SHENANDOAH (3:25)**

**RBC            EVENING SONG (2:45)**

**BOB            Have Les take a bow**

**RBC changes formation after Evening Song**

**RBC            FIRE FIRE (2:38)**

**RBC changes formation after Fire Fire**

**CL** Fire, Fire My Heart! What better words to describe the excitement and passion that love can ignite in each of us, be it love for another person, family, friends, a community, a place or a cause.

2010 marks the 15th anniversary of the Rainbow Chorus. For fifteen years we have been singing together to celebrate the diversity of our community, and we're showing no signs of slowing down. At over 40-members strong, we are proud to be one of the largest Canadian LGBT choirs **not** from a major metropolitan centre!

**CL** Later this month, both choirs performing tonight will be "taking the show on the road" all the way to Winnipeg, Manitoba for the 2010 Canadian Unison Choral Festival, with the same repertoires you are hearing tonight. In addition to the music, the Unison festival is about friendship, companionship, community, and fun. And no doubt, on at least one, two, or more likely every night, there will be a party. And to get this party started, with a number that became an instant hit with our audience when we first performed it in our tie-dye shirts during our spring concert last year, here is "Jersey Boys!"

*apl -> move podium & chair*

**RBC JERSEY BOYS (8:20)**

- RBC LEAVES THE STAGE USING BOTH OUTSIDE AISLES.
- SO! ENTERS FROM MIDDLE AISLE.

**(INTRODUCTION OF SINGING OUT)**

*Friends in song.*

**CL** Now we're very pleased to introduce our special musical guests this evening, our ~~cherister brothers and sisters~~ from the longest-standing LGBT chorus in Toronto. Since 1992, this chorus's focus has been "Pride, Music and Belonging," and their specialty is musical variety in style, tradition and mood. Please give a warm welcome to narrator Michael Bennett and Singing OUT!

*Christine leaves stage for SO set*

- SO** SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY ( 2:31)
- SO** DIRAIT-ON (2:55)
- SO** YOU RAISE ME UP (4:05)
- SO** BIG BUTCH WOMAN (3:42)
- SO** THE FUNDAMENTAL ( 2:31)
- SO** SHOOTING STAR (2:51)
- SO** RISE UP, MY LOVE, MY FAIR ONE (1:46)
- SO** A PLACE WHERE I BELONG (4:30)

*traveling from Toronto to*

**CL** Once again, our thanks to Singing OUT! for ~~sharing~~ <sup>the</sup> their musical talent with us this evening ~~and traveling here from Toronto.~~ Before we break for intermission, we'd like to introduce you to ~~our~~ <sup>the</sup> chairperson of the Rainbow Chorus Board of Directors, Marg Perchaluk.

**INTERMISSION (20 min)**

**SECOND HALF**

**CL** Tonight, the Rainbow Chorus is thrilled to bring you the debut of our first-ever commissioned piece, which was premiered just last week at our performance in Toronto. This piece was made possible by a grant from the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation and GALA Choruses, which is the International association of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender choral movement.

The composer of the music is the internationally-acclaimed Canadian composer and conductor, Mark Sirett. His previous compositions have been performed by some of Canada's leading ensembles including the National Youth Choir of Canada, Toronto Children's Chorus, ~~the Amabile Youth Singers~~, the Elora Festival Singers, ~~the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir~~, and now, of course, the Rainbow Chorus. Although Mark could not join us this evening, he asked that we pass on his ~~sincere~~ best wishes to all the members of the Rainbow Chorus; his appreciation to our conductor, Bob, the Board, and our choristers for the honour of this commission; and his appreciation to Van for his most beautiful words. He also wished to say, "***The poetry and your singing of these words are indeed the source of any musical inspiration.***"

As Mark mentions, the poignant lyrics of this piece were written by our very own chorus member, **Van Waffle** and are reprinted in your program. Penned back in 2006, but inspired by the 2004 GALA choral festival in Montreal, which took place soon after same-sex marriage was first legalized in Ontario, Quebec and BC, Van said he was "***moved by the exuberance that explodes when people are free to demonstrate their love as they choose.***" The poem began with the thought, "***All I want is freedom to love to the best of my understanding.***" Love can be a powerful force of transformation in our lives, and it must not be hidden away. This song tells the story of two hearts. Two hearts afire for one another, and the unquenchable, immeasurable and irrepressible power of love they share.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is "Starlight".

**RBC** **STARLIGHT (3:44)**

*Van bow*

**CL** And now we are once again pleased to welcome Singing OUT! onto the stage to join us for the last four pieces of tonight's program.

**SO! ENTERS FROM BOTH SIDES & MIDDLE**

**RBC & SO** **I AIN'T AFRAID (6:05)**

CL That was I Ain't Afraid by Holly Near, featuring soloists from both the Rainbow Chorus and Singing Out.

CL Our next piece was written by one of Canada's pre-eminent singer/songwriters, Gordon Lightfoot. Recently a friend of the Rainbow Chorus, Brier Sanderson, asked what Gordon's thoughts were when he wrote this song. He said, **"Believe it or not, it was written in Cleveland during a midsummer thunderstorm. I was in an apartment that had been lent to me for the week while I was playing at a place called La Cave. Pouring rain, the middle of the summer, Cleveland, and I wrote this. Go figure."** And so, with no apologies for doing so on a ~~warm~~ spring evening in May, we present "Song for a Winter's Night".

RBC & SO SONG FOR A WINTER'S NIGHT (3:53)

*although a Spring evening reminiscent of another season*

CL Another of Canada's acclaimed songwriters is Leonard Cohen, who wrote our next piece, "Hallelujah". This has been recorded by many singers in addition to ~~Me~~ Cohen and you may recognize it as the song K.D. Lang sang at the Opening Ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. ~~Me~~ Cohen once said *"I wish I were one of those people who wrote songs quickly. But I'm not. So it takes me a great deal of time to find out what the song is."* With regards to writing Hallelujah, Cohen also said *he had hundred(s) of verses written and didn't know how to end it.*

Tonight, our collective of 100 voices present just a few of those hundreds of verses from Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah."

RBC & SO HALLELUJAH (2:42)

CL The final song for tonight, which I'm sure many of you will recognize, Let There Be Love, was written by Amy Sky and Steve MacKinnon. And as much as you may crave an encore, unfortunately we won't be able to due to the logistics of coordinating 100 voices, so this really will be our last song! Following this, please join us downstairs in the gymnasium for some refreshments, and of course, for the remainder of our silent auction! On behalf of the Rainbow Chorus and Singing OUT! thank you all once again for your gracious and generous support this evening and all year long, and we look forward to seeing you at our next concert.

RBC & SO LET THERE BE LOVE