

A Greeting from Gwyneth Walker

Dear Friends,

I would like to welcome you to our “Celebration of the Music Makers” Festival, and to Chandler Music Hall. This is a very exciting and happy time for me, for it is an occasion to join together with many of my musical friends—from far and near—as we celebrate birthdays (my 60th, Chandler Music Hall’s 100th), the beautiful Vermont landscape during foliage season, our mutual love of music and the bonds of friendship we have formed over the years.

As I look back over my own musical journey, I realize that musical activities (participating in singing groups, writing arrangements, composing new works and collaborating with performers) have been the source of my friendships, my joy, my income (!) and my faith. Regardless of the vicissitudes of life in general, the music was always there. And it seemed to have the strength to carry me through times of sorrow, to be more present (or perhaps more interesting to me) than any obstacles. Indeed, music has brought many moments of warmth and laughter.

When asked about my life’s path as a composer, I have often answered: “Well, no one ever managed to stop me from composing!” True enough. I have been creating music since the age of two. However, the truth is that you, those of you here at this Festival, have encouraged me, supported me, believed in me, humored me and inspired me all along the way. Thank you.

And now, LET US SING!

—Gwyneth Walker

Chandler History

Legend has it that the idea of a music hall and a library for Randolph originated around 1900 in a conversation between Albert B. Chandler and R. J. Kimball, longtime friends and summer residents of Randolph. “You build a library, Kimball, and I’ll build a music hall.” After opening in 1907, for about a quarter of a century, Chandler Music Hall was a busy place, under the management of local arts promoter Edgar Salisbury. Plays, concerts, lectures, silent films, operas, political meetings, and school events made it a real treasure for the town. But the cumulative impact of the 1927 flood, the stock market crash and Great Depression, World War II, and the advent of home entertainment such as radio and TV combined to turn the hall into an echo chamber of memories.

Visionary community members rescued the facility in the late ’60s and their dedicated work on the building, tireless fundraising efforts, and creative programming breathed new life into the hall. In 1977, under the leadership of Martha Ostlund, the Friends of Chandler Music Hall became the nonprofit Albert B. Chandler Cultural Foundation, with the perpetual missions of bringing cultural events and arts to the community once again and raising funds for the building’s care. Today Chandler Center for the Arts is a thriving community-based arts organization with a year-round series of performances, art exhibits and educational opportunities in Chandler Music Hall and Gallery. This year we celebrate the centennial of an extraordinary community resource with a rich history.

THE CONCERTS ON OCTOBER 13TH ARE FUNDED BY
THE FRIENDS OF THE MUSIC OF GWYNETH WALKER, A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.

THE CHORAL FESTIVAL ON OCTOBER 14TH IS PRESENTED WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT
FROM THE VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL, THE VERMONT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION,
NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS, THE MAX SEATON CHARITABLE TRUST,
AND THE MASCOMA SAVINGS BANK FOUNDATION.

Saturday, October 13, 3 PM

Vocal Recital

Gestalt at Sixty (2007) (World Premiere)

text by May Sarton

other selections: "Sleep, Little Bird"* "While in the Roaster"* "Bones, Be Good!"*

[*from the Walker-Eklof Duo CD, "Scattering Dark and Bright"]

Denise Walker, Narrator, Soprano Estrid Eklof, Piano

Mother Earth: Songs of a Strong Woman (2007) (World Premiere)

on poems of Alice Walker and Langston Hughes

1. "A Woman is Not a Potted Plant"
2. "We Have a Beautiful Mother"
3. "Mother to Son"

Handfuls of Love! – Shaker Songs (2007) (World Premiere)

Marjorie Drysdale, Soprano Maria Lamson, Mezzo Soprano Marta Borgstrom, Piano

Program Notes

Gestalt at Sixty is a dramatization, for narrator and piano, of the poem by May Sarton. The composer has selected this poem due to her affinity with the expression. Both the composer and poet are artists who live and work in solitude in rural New England. Many of the moods and sentiments are shared. In solitude, the imagination flourishes, and the landscape comes to life. The trees "groan." The mountains become a friend. Solitude "exposes the nerve." There are moments of panic, times of loneliness. Yet the spirit survives—strong, renewable, fertile like the flowers in a well-worked garden. The writer lives in her imagination, never alone, always moving towards a new freedom. "As I approach sixty, I turn my face towards the sea. I shall go where the tides replace time, where my world will open to a new horizon. There are no farewells."

Mother Earth – Songs of a Strong Woman are musical settings of poetry by Alice Walker and Langston Hughes, two very notable African-American poets of the 20th century. "A Woman is not a Potted Plant" speaks to the struggles of women to break out of the confines of prescribed, 'decorative' molds, into the freedom of 'wilderness unbounded.' A particularly charming adjective, 'espaliere,' is used to describe the woman as a plant, trained to grow upon a trellis. Not!

"We Have a Beautiful Mother" is a love song to mother earth. And, with the mother theme brought to the fore, the last song presents the well-known, powerful Langston Hughes's poem, "Mother to Son." The mother (voice) is indeed a strong woman, one who has persevered and is still climbing, still surviving. 'Well, son I'll tell you, life for me ain't been no crystal stair.'

Handfuls of Love! is a medley of Shaker songs, spanning a range of characteristics often associated with Shaker repertoire. The opening "More Love!" is celebratory, in a bouncing 6/8 meter suggestive of Shaker dancing tunes. This leads into "Brilliant Gem," a reflective and ecstatic song, soaring into higher voice ranges while singing of the 'souls who shine . . . far brighter than the sun'. A return to the 6/8 meter heralds the arrival of "Love by the Handful," a children's song. 'Here's love by the handful, here's love by the ball. Here's love for the elders, and love for you all.' The astute listener might hear patterns suggestive of bouncing balls as countermotives to the melody. The medley then returns to "More Love" for the ending.

Saturday, October 13, 4 PM

Michelle Areyzaga (Soprano) and Jamie Shaak (Piano)

*Though Love Be a Day** (1979)

poems by E. E. Cummings and Gwyneth Walker

“thy fingers make early flowers”

“lily has a rose”

“after all white horses are in bed”

“maggie and millie and mollie and may”

“Still”

*Semplice** (1983)

*Mornings Innocent** (1993)

poems by May Swenson

“Women Should be Pedestals”

“Mornings Innocent”

“In Autumn”

“I Will Be Earth”

*Rhythms from the North Country** (1987)

*The Sun is Love** (2002)

poems by J̄elaluddin Rumi (translated by Coleman Barks)

“Circling the Sun”

“Quietness”

“Flirtation: Light and Wine and Pomegranate Flowers”

“The Sunrise Ruby”

“Dualities: insomnias, meetings, mirrors, stones”

“The Waterbird”

[*from the Areyzaga-Shaak CD, “The Sun is Love” (Proteus label)]

Program Notes:

Though Love Be a Day is Gwyneth Walker’s first song cycle. These songs were composed and premiered while Dr. Walker was on the faculty of the Oberlin College Conservatory. Semplice is an expression of the Italian influence of Gwyneth Walker’s composition teacher, Arnold Franchetti. Mornings Innocent are musical settings of poetry by 20th-century American poet May Swenson, a poet known for her variety of moods ranging from humor to passion. Rhythms from the North Country (composed in Braintree, Vermont) is intended for the agile pianist, or someone who imagines her piano to be a bongo drum!

The poetry of J̄elaluddin Rumi (1207–1273) is seamless. Some poems are lengthy, with images spinning out into many directions. Other poems are fragments, joining together to offer varying views of love. And thus, *The Sun is Love* is a flowing set of love songs intended to be presented as a whole. These songs were commissioned by pianist Jamie Shaak as a wedding gift for her husband, Mark Ragan. Although the couple lives in Chicago, they traveled to Randolph, Vermont, to be married near the composer of their wedding music. [!] They were married in Bethany Church, by Pastor Kathy Eddy! The songs from *The Sun is Love* were premiered at their wedding on September 28, 2002.

Saturday, October 13, 7 PM

Buffalo Gals and other songs for Clarinet and Piano (2005)

1. “Buffalo Gals!”
2. “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier”
3. “Frankie and Johnny”

Mary Ellen Miller, Clarinet

Maureen Burford, Piano

Program Notes

These folksong arrangements were created as concert presentations of familiar songs and ballads. Classical forms and techniques, especially with an emphasis on theme and variations constructions, are applied to the various verses of the songs. Delight is taken in exploring and dramatizing this material.

“Buffalo Gals!” is the most straightforward of the three movements. The theme is stated by the clarinet at the onset. Then follows an “embroidered” version of the theme, in triplets. An interlude is inserted, followed by the theme in augmentation (twice as slowly) in the piano, with the clarinet running up and down the scales in rapid counterpoint. A clarinet cadenza leads to the ending. The mood is joyful throughout.

“Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier” is a dramatic treatment of the original song. After the first two verses (“Here I sit on Buttermilk Hill . . . and “I’d sell my flax, I’d sell my wheel, to buy my love a sword of steel”), a contrasting section is inserted, marked “to evoke the sounds of war, a military drum.” This section grows in dynamics and tempo to a climax, followed by a peaceful duet between clarinet and piano, perhaps as mother and son sing to each other from afar. The military sounds recur, the music grows in intensity and then fades into a quiet lament.

Humor takes its turn in the melodramatic treatment of “Frankie and Johnnie,” a ballad about a woman and her man who “done her wrong!” Each of the many verses of this song is presented in a different guise—

1. introducing the characters;
2. Frankie and Johnnie are out walking;
3. Johnnie has on his new suit (the piano is marked “proudly prancing”);
4. Frankie fears that Johnnie is “doing her wrong” (marked “anguished”);
5. they quarrel;
6. Frankie laments the fight with Johnnie;
7. Frankie and Johnnie reconcile and walk off together joyfully (and Frankie is proud that she stood up for herself!).

Saturday, October 13, 8 PM

Trio Tulsa: Maureen O'Boyle – Violin Diane Bucchianeri – Cello Anna Norberg – Piano

*New World Dances** (1992)

“Up Tempo”

“Slow Dance”

“Soft Shoe”

“Rapid Fire”

*Craftsbury Trio** (1990)

“Up-Country Toccata”

“The Lark in the Morning”

“You Can Buy it at the General Store”

“Craftsbury Common”

intermission

*Vigil** (1991)

*A Vision of Hills** (2002)

[* from the Trio Tulsa CD “A Vision of Hills” (Centaur label)]

The New World Dances were commissioned by the New World Ensemble, West Hartford, Connecticut in 1992. This is music in the American style, written in the language of jazz, rock-n-roll and (American) folk music, expressing perhaps the raw energy and openness associated with the “new continent.” These movements (“Up Tempo”, “Slow Dance”, “Soft Shoe”, “Rapid Fire”) are not specifically intended as dance music. Rather, they are inspired by American dance music and then evolve into commentaries upon this idiom.

The Craftsbury Trio was commissioned by the Craftsbury Chamber Players in Craftsbury, Vermont. Thus, each of the four movements of this work was inspired by the town of Craftsbury. The “Up-Country Toccata” is a lively movement, with simple and sparse harmonies, perhaps reflective of the open landscape surrounding the town. “The Lark in the Morning” is a musical “birdcall,” with mournful melody and many trills. At the end, the bird flies away, and one hears tapping sounds suggestive of fluttering wings. The Craftsbury General Store, where one can purchase anything from imported wine to fishing tackle, is the subject of “You Can Buy it at the General Store.” One can find a little of everything in the store . . . or in this movement! The village green is a peaceful place which seems to be unchanged over the centuries. “Craftsbury Common” is an elegy to this quiet, haunting beauty.

The opening theme and title of Vigil were formed during a late night drive on a deserted country road. The feeling arose of people caring for and protecting others—keeping vigil at night. Vigil is through-composed, expanding upon one theme (initially presented by the violin), appearing in a variety of guises. Although the work may be heard in three sections (slow–fast–slow), it is essentially one extended movement. The intent is to allow the them to unfold, seemingly of its own accord.

Jointly commissioned by the Bartholdy Ensemble of Montpelier and Trio Tulsa, A Vision of Hills is a one-movement musical exploration of the traditional Irish hymn tune, “Be Thou My Vision.” This has always been one of the composer’s favorite melodies. The reference to hills comes from the view of the hilly Vermont countryside as seen from the composer’s studio. This landscape infuses the music.

Sunday, October 14, 4 PM

Choral Festival

The Flying Trapeze – then and now (2007)

[commissioned by Chandler Center for the Arts]

1. “Ta Ra Ra Boom Der E”
2. “The Man on the Flying Trapeze”
3. “Bill Bailey, Won’t You Please Come Home?”
4. “In the Good Old Summertime/Good Night Ladies”

Ken’s Barbershop Quartet: Harvey Porter and Dickey Drysdale, Tenors

Tom Schersten and Charlie McMeekin, Baritones

The Heritage Brass Quintet: Charles Gasque and Tom Allen - trumpets

Lydia Busler-Blais - horn James Bennett - trombone Robert E. Eliason - tuba

How Can I Keep From Singing! (1995)

[commissioned by the Thetford Chamber Singers]

Now Let Us Sing! (2004)

[commissioned by the Colchester Community Chorus]

The Thetford Chamber Singers – Valerie Miller, Music Director

Maureen Burford, pianist

The Colchester Community Chorus – Carol Reichard, Music Director

Frank Whitcomb, pianist

with the Heritage Brass Quintet and Dov Schiller, Percussion

The Spirit of Women* (2000–2002)

1. “So Many Angels!”
2. “Walk That Valley”
3. “Never Sit Down!”

Feminine Tone Chorus – Maricel Lucero Keniston, Music Director

Bella Voce Women’s Chorus – Dr. Dawn O. Willis, Music Director

Cantabile – Charles Houmard, Music Director

Let Evening Come* (2001)

poem by Jane Kenyon

Gifts from the Sea* (2004)

from the book by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Bella Voce Women’s Chorus, with Shirley Smith and Xiudan Lin, pianists

[* from the Bella Voce CD, “Now Let Us Sing!”]

Sounding Joy! (1985)
based on the fugal tune by Justin Morgan

A Mule Named Sal from RIVER SONGS (1996)

Sounding Joy Chorus – Marjorie Drysdale, Music Director, Marta Borgstrom, accompanist

intermission

I Thank You God* (1998)

Songs for Women's Voices* (1993)

1. "Women Should be Pedestals"
2. "Mornings Innocent"
3. "The Name is Changeless"
4. "Love is a Rain of Diamonds"
5. "In Autumn"
6. "I Will Be Earth"

Crossing the Bar* (2003)

Dr. Dawn O. Willis, conductor

Shirley Smith, pianist

Marjorie Drysdale, conductor

Marta Borgstrom, pianist

Denise Walker, reader

[* from the Bella Voce CD, "Now Let Us Sing!"]

The assembled women's choruses:

*Bella Voce Women's Chorus, The Women of Sounding Joy, The Feminine Tone, Ladies Night Out,
the Concord (MA) Women's Chorus, Cantabile, friends and visitors*

Long Ago Lady (1986)

arrangement of the Jon Gailmor song

New Millennium Suite (2000)

1. "Sinner Man"
2. "Peace, I Ask of Thee, O River"
3. "Down by the Riverside"

Every Life Shall be a Song (2007)

(composed especially to celebrate the Centennial of Chandler Music Hall: 1907–2007)

Piero Bonamico, conductor
Tim Guiles, pianist
The Heritage Brass Quintet with Dov Schiller, percussion

The assembled SATB choruses:

The Randolph Singers, Sounding Joy, Mad River Chorale, Randolph Union High School Chorus, Colchester Community Chorus, Thetford Chamber Singers, members of the Women's Choruses, friends and visitors

Lyrics for Every Life Shall be a Song

These things shall be.

A loftier race than e'er the world has known shall rise
with flame of freedom in our souls and light of knowledge in our eyes.

These things shall be:

We will be gentle, brave and strong to speak no word of war, but dare
all that may plant our kinship firm on earth and fire and sea and air.

These things shall be:

Nation with nation, land with land, unarmed may live as comrades free.
In every heart and brain shall throb the pulse of our sweet unity.

New arts shall bloom of loftier mold, and mightier music fill the skies.

And every life shall be a song, when all the earth is paradise.

New arts shall bloom, and mightier music fill the skies.

When every life shall be a song, then all the earth is paradise.

Every Life Shall Be a Song is a celebration of life, unity, and music—a setting of a text by the 19th-century British author John Addington Symonds (1840–1893). This work was written in celebration of an important anniversary in the composer's home community of Randolph, Vermont. The Victorian-style Chandler Music Hall was originally built in 1907, in the midst of the heyday of such cultural building projects. By the end of the 1920s, however, the hall had fallen into disrepair and was no longer in use. In 1978, The Albert B. Chandler Cultural Foundation was formed to renovate the hall and turn it into a thriving arts and performance center for Vermont. It has remained as such to the present day, serving each year as the home for a variety of cultural events—with a particular focus on classical music. Many of Gwyneth Walker's compositions have been performed in Chandler Music Hall over the years.

The text of the work summarizes the artistic message and goals of the Chandler Cultural Foundation stating that “New arts shall bloom of loftier mold, and mightier music fill the skies, and every life shall be a song. . . . When every life shall be a song, then all the earth is paradise.”

The participating choruses:

Bella Voce Women's Chorus (Burlington, VT) – Dr. Dawn O. Willis, Music Director

Cantabile (Hanover, NH) – Charles Houmard, Music Director

Colchester Community Chorus (Colchester, VT) – Carol Reichard, Music Director

Concord Women's Chorus (Concord, MA) - Jane Ring Frank, Music Director

Feminine Tone (Perkinsville, VT) – Maricel Lucero Keniston, Music Director

Ladies Night Out (Rutland, VT) – Lucy Allen Tenenbaum, Music Director

Mad River Chorale (Waitsfield, VT) – Piero Bonamico, Music Director

Randolph Singers (Randolph, VT) – Piero Bonamico, Music Director

Randolph Union High School Chorus (Randolph, VT) – Jennifer Moore, Music Director

Sounding Joy (Randolph, VT) – Marjorie Drysdale, Music Director

Thetford Chamber Singers (Thetford, VT) - Valerie Miller, Music Director

Artist Bios

Voted Chicago's "Artist of the Year" for 2006, **Michelle Areyzaga** has appeared in a wide range of principal operatic roles. She has performed with many illustrious companies including Chicago Opera Theater, Lyric Opera of Chicago's "In the Neighborhoods," and the Chicago Cultural Center Opera. This season she continues touring in Bernstein on Broadway, makes her Weill Hall debut in "Amores Nuevos" with New York Festival of Song (Apr) and stars in a tribute to composer Gwyneth Walker. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Voice Performance with honors from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Ms Areyzaga's newest CD, *The Sun Is Love*, vocal music of Gwyneth Walker, is available on the Proteus label.

Soprano Michelle Areyzaga was first introduced to the music of Gwyneth Walker through her song cycle "Though Love Be A Day" while an undergraduate student studying at the Chicago College of Performing Arts with Maria Lagios. It was immediately clear that Gwyneth's music had a special way of connecting with audience members, and often they were quite moved. Michelle has continued to program the songs of Gwyneth Walker whenever possible, and she has had the privilege of introducing Gwyneth's music to new audiences, giving first performances at venues such as the Ravinia Festival and the Chicago Cultural Center. Together, Jamie Shaak (pianist) and Michelle have given many performances of Gwyneth's music across the United States, and in 2004 they realized their vision of recording *The Sun Is Love*. Currently, Ms. Walker and Ms. Areyzaga are preparing a new work for soprano and chamber orchestra. This is a dream come true for Michelle as she will soon hear the tender poetry of Gabriela Mistral set to the intensely beautiful music of Gwyneth Walker, and will have the joy of sharing it with the world!

* * * * *

Bella Voce Women's Chorus of Vermont was founded in March of 2004 by Dr. Dawn Willis and debuted their first full concert in May of that same year. The chorus, consisting of 40 auditioned singers, performs existing and newly-commissioned sacred and secular works for women's voices. The chorus includes singers from four counties throughout northern Vermont, many of whom also sing in a variety of school, church, and community choruses across the region. It has been an exciting three years for Bella Voce and one of the highlights has included several collaborations with Gwyneth Walker! The choir members have enjoyed getting to know Gwyneth and her music through working closely with her in rehearsals, performances and in the creation of Bella Voce's first recording, *Now Let Us Sing! – Choral Selections by Gwyneth Walker for Women's Voices*.

* * * * *

Marta Borgstrom, Sounding Joy! accompanist, is an accomplished musician who plays the piano, violin and harp. She has been a musical director and accompanist for many productions at Randolph's Chandler Music Hall. Marta has taught elementary school music for over thirty-five years, and has been a leader in establishing innovative music programs for school and community. She pioneered a before-school drumming program for at-risk students as well as after-school enrichment lessons in violin, and she established flourishing recorder and choral programs in the Randolph schools. She has composed many original songs for Randolph Elementary School events. Recently Borgstrom received Vermont's Alliance for Arts Education Recognition award from Governor Jim Douglas for her contributions to her community.

* * * * *

Maureen Burford is the Artistic Director of Revels North and the accompanist for the Thetford Chamber Singers. For a glorious period of time, she was a colleague of Mary Ellen Miller at the Community Music School of Springfield and Springfield Technical Community College, where they both taught music.

* * * * *

Founded in 2001, **Cantabile** is a selective women's chorus consisting of 21 women who have been singing together for many years. Serving the communities of the upper Connecticut River valley in New Hampshire and Vermont, Cantabile performs a challenging repertoire of classical pieces and seldom-performed compositions for women's voices . The membership has expertise in several languages, and we regularly perform in Latin, German, Spanish and French. Our name, Cantabile, is a musical term meaning "marked by a smooth, lyrical, flowing style." **Charles Houmard**, from Hartford, VT, is the founding Artistic Director of Cantabile (2001) and is in his fourth year as Music Department Chair at the Pomfret School in Pomfret, CT. He holds a Doctorate in Choral Conducting from the University of Texas at Austin. He obtained the Master's Degree

from Indiana University and his A.B. from Oberlin College. Dr. Houmard has held positions at Beloit College and at Dartmouth College, where he directed the Dartmouth Chamber Singers and worked with Handel Society Conductor Melinda O'Neal.

* * * * *

The Colchester Community Chorus was founded in 1985 by conductor, Carol Reichard. It performs two concerts a year in May and December and sings at Town events such as Tree Lighting ceremonies, Town Dedications (Burnham Library addition and Bandstand), and church anniversaries. A highlight of its career has been a singing tour of England where they were privileged to sing in Salisbury Cathedral, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, and Moot Hall in Colchester, England. It has also sung at Farmer's Night at the State Capitol in Montpelier. The chorus performs a full-ranging repertoire which proudly includes Gwyneth Walker's compositions: *Rejoice!*, *Long Ago Lady*, *White Horses*, *Cheek to Cheek* and *The Water is Wide*. In 2004, the Chorus commissioned Gwyneth to compose *Now Let Us Sing!* in memory of chorus member, Perrie Coope.

* * * * *

Concord Women's Chorus, directed by Jane Ring Frank, is an established women's chorus in Concord, MA that performs classical, contemporary, and newly-composed music with mastery and joy. Founded in 1960 as the Concord Madrigals, the chorus has grown from a small group of women who sang in each other's homes to a chorus of over 50 voices, performing several concerts each season. In 2005, seeking a name that more accurately reflected the chorus and the wide range of music performed, the Concord Madrigals became the Concord Women's Chorus. The chorus continues to perform a diverse repertoire and strives to promote women composers. CWC is eagerly anticipating their 50th Anniversary in the 2009–2010 season. www.concordwomenschorus.com

* * * * *

Marjorie Drysdale, soprano, has performed in opera, oratorio, musical theater and recital formats for 30 years. She directs the auditioned vocal ensemble, "Sounding Joy," which she founded in 1984. Marjorie was for many years a Vermont Arts Council Touring Artist and has been a regular soloist with the Vermont Mozart Festival. She is on the faculty at the Monteverdi Music School in Montpelier, and teaches voice, flute, and piano at her Randolph home studio. She also holds weekly rehearsals there for the Sounding Joy! Youth chorus.

For the last nine years, Marjorie has served as music director for the annual youth musical at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph, with Charles McMeekin, dramatic director and Kim Nowlan, choreographer. Marjorie lives in Randolph with her husband, M. Dickey Drysdale. They have two grown sons, Robin and Jamie.

* * * * *

The Feminine Tone is a woman's chorus based in Perkinsville, VT. The 40–women membership is a fusion of cultural backgrounds, occupations, and age, representing the full fabric of the Vermont and New Hampshire communities. Within the membership there are several mother and daughter pairs. Together with a small group of committed women, Director Maricel Lucero Keniston of Perkinsville created the chorus in 1997 with a vision to bring women together to share the gift of music with each other and with their communities. Cuban-born Maricel Lucero Keniston is well known throughout the Northeast as an award-winning soprano who has performed opera, concerts, and recitals throughout the Northeast region. The chorus' repertoire is an eclectic mix of challenging music from many cultures, styles and time periods. Works by Gwyneth Walker have been featured on many of the concerts during the past decade.

* * * * *

The Heritage Brass Quintet was formed for the 1990 Christmas Revels in Hanover, NH, and, except for 1991 and 2001, has continued to perform with the Revels each year. During the rest of the year the quintet plays in a variety of settings including outdoor park concerts, weddings, college commencements, and celebrations of all kinds. On most programs the quintet explores music from the American brass band and jazz eras as well as the standard quintet literature from Renaissance to Modern. Charles Gasque & Tom Allen - trumpets, Lydia Busler-Blais -horn, James Bennett - trombone, Robert E. Eliason - tuba

Ken's Barbershop Quartet was formed in 1991 when Tom Schersten looked for local Randolph men with whom to sing barbershop harmony, a craft that Tom had learned while being a member of the Burlington Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society for 8 years. Lead singer and editor of The Herald of Randolph, Dickey Drysdale, suggested the name for the group, since Ken's Barbershop is the only barbershop in town. Charlie McMeekin, a theatre director and English teacher at The Sharon Academy, sings bass, and Harvie Porter, Randolph Union High School math teacher and gardener extraordinaire, sings tenor. Tom, who consults to schools nationwide as a teacher trainer in K-8 mathematics, sings the baritone part.

Ken's Barbershop occasionally gets paid for its gigs, but more often the group is contributing to local benefits and celebrations, providing its religious repertoire to area churches, singing the National Anthem at Randolph basketball games, or performing Christmas carols (without invitation) at local businesses for merchants and shoppers during December.

* * * * *

Ladies' Night Out is a women's chorus from Rutland directed by Lucy Allen Tenenbaum. LNO started out in 1989 as a casual fun singing group whose initial purpose was to sing for nursing homes at holidays. After Lucy graduated from Skidmore College in 1999, she re-started the group as a more formal chorus, singing a variety of choral repertoire for women's voices. From the onset music by Gwyneth Walker was featured at nearly every concert. Since 2004 Gwyneth's song "How Can I Keep From Singing?" has been LNO's theme song. The personnel in the group change some every season, but the intent remains the same: singing music that's fun, enjoying time for women together, and offering as high a level of music as we can accomplish to the community. We perform a formal concert every May that usually includes Broadway and Traditional songs as well as classical repertoire, and have a smaller group singing at the Holidays at Rutland area independent/ assisted living facilities.

* * * * *

Mary Ellen Miller, clarinetist, teaches clarinet and shakuhachi at the Community Music School of Springfield, Massachusetts, where she is also the Director of Faculty and Students. In Mary Ellen's words, "I met Gwyneth Walker in the Spring of 1995. The Pioneer Valley Symphony of Greenfield, Massachusetts, was rehearsing *The Light of Three Mornings* for their April 1st Concert. I was immediately struck by the simple beauty of her music, as well as its humor. That was the beginning of over a decade of a professional friendship and numerous collaborations which I deeply cherish.

"Her music has been an integral part of the performances at the Community Music School of Springfield, featured at our annual Celebrate Women in Music Concert, faculty recitals, student recitals, and more recently in April of 2006 when Gwyneth spent the morning with us as a Composer in Residence. It was on that morning that I premiered *Buffalo Gals*. Her heart is as big as her ears. She has generously donated many pieces to CMSS over the years. Because of this we have a Gwyneth Walker Music Collection in our Music Library. I am infinitely grateful to Gwyneth for the gift of her music which sounds all of our Relations, two-legged, four-legged, winged and rooted. Gwyneth, on this occasion of your 60th birthday I wish you the light of all mornings!"

* * * * *

The Randolph Singers is a non-auditioned community chorus based in Randolph Vermont. It has been providing people from across Central Vermont an opportunity to sing since 1968 and is as strong today as ever before. As with any organization of such long standing the mission of the Randolph Singers has adapted to the evolution of the group itself, its community as a whole, and the large demographic shifts happening across the state of Vermont itself. Nevertheless, the core values of the organization have remained consistent: to provide an opportunity of any individual who has a love of singing to find both their voice, and a opportunity to share and develop that talent. No auditions are required, nor are any particular musical achievements, only a love of music and singing. This has provided the membership the opportunity for personal enjoyment and improvement of music and performance. Now, in its forth decade, the Singers is enriching the lives of yet another generation of musicians from across Central Vermont and providing new and exciting music to the Randolph community.

The Music Director of the Randolph Singers is **Piero Bonamico**. After completing his studies of piano, voice and conducting at the Eastman School of Music, Piero moved to Vermont where he was hired to teach piano at Vermont College and to conduct the Mad River Chorale. He has since conducted choral festivals and workshops, continues to work with the Mad River Chorale and was hired as conductor of both the Randolph Singers and the Barre Choraleers in 2003. He is very excited about the development of these two ensembles and what it predicts for the future.

In May of 2007, Piero brought both the *Randolph Singers* and the *Mad River Chorale* to Jamestown, VA, to sing at the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown Settlement. Music of Gwyneth Walker and Robert DeCormier was featured on the program. Go Vermont!

* * * * *

Pianist *Jamie Shaak* began performing Gwyneth Walker's music in 1995 for a live performance on Chicago's WFMT classical radio station with *Michelle Areyzaga*. She has continued programming solo and chamber works of Ms. Walker's ever year since. In 2002 when Ms. Shaak and her fiancé Mark Ragan were planning their wedding, they decided the best musical choice they could ever make would be to have songs of Gwyneth Walker sung for their ceremony. They dreamed one step higher and commissioned a new set of songs from Ms. Walker set to the text of the sufi Rumi. Michelle Areyzaga agreed to sing this song cycle *The Sun is Love* at the wedding and the journey became complete when the wedding was officiated by Pastor Kathy Eddy at Bethany United Church of Christ in Randolph, Vermont. It is a joy to have the opportunity to return to Randolph to celebrate the beautiful music of Gwyneth Walker. Jamie Shaak – www.jamieshaak.com – 773-968-6559

* * * * *

The singers of *Sounding Joy!* take their name from a fuguing tune by colonial composer and horse breeder Justin Morgan, who lived in Randolph in the late 1700s. His tune, "Sounding Joy," was rearranged in the 1980's by Gwyneth Walker and now serves as this chorus' theme song. Sounding Joy! first built its reputation through a series of festive madrigal dinners. Since that time, it has greatly expanded its musical offerings, singing music from seven centuries, with performances in both in standard and dramatic formats.

Sounding Joy! considers it a privilege to present the music of Gwyneth Walker. The singers have devoted no fewer than four concerts to works by Randolph-area composers, including Gwyneth Walker, Kathy Wonson Eddy and Erik Nielsen. The women of Sounding Joy! had the good fortune to sing Gwyneth's music at Carnegie Hall in November of 2005. It was an adventure they'll never forget!

The chorus has performed with the Montpelier Chamber Orchestra and the Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra, and also has collaborated with other Vermont choruses. Audiences consistently respond to the group's joy and playfulness as well as its musical sophistication. It is no wonder that Times-Argus critic Jim Lowe has pronounced Sounding Joy! "a gem among area choruses."

* * * * *

"*Trio Tulsa Debut Magnificent*" headlined the *Tulsa Tribune* in its review of Trio Tulsa's inaugural concert of January 30, 1987. *Trio Tulsa* is composed of University of Tulsa faculty members Maureen O'Boyle, violinist, Diane Bucchianeri, cellist, and Anna Norberg, pianist. As Artistic Ambassadors for the United States Information Agency, Trio Tulsa toured the Caribbean, Mexico, Guatemala, Chile, Eastern Africa, Mauritius, and the Persian Gulf. They have been hailed as a "Trio of extraordinary talent" and as "one of the foremost chamber groups of the United States."

Trio Tulsa's repertoire spans the entire piano trio literature, but special emphasis is given to works by women composers. Trio Tulsa's recordings include *A Vision of Hills – Chamber Music of Gwyneth Walker* (Centaur label), Manuel Ponce, Chamber Music (ASV-Koch label), and works by Bohuslav Martinu (Centaur label).

* * * * *

Founded in 1978 by Music director Valerie Miller, the *Thetford Chamber Singers* are now in their 30th concert season. Members range in age from 18 to 80, and hail from Thetford and nearby towns on both sides of the Connecticut River. Our repertoire covers a wide variety of musical periods and styles, from medieval to contemporary, and classical to folk. Programs are thematic, and often incorporate other art forms: poetry, visual arts, dance, and instrumental music, featuring the work and talents of local artists and musicians. We have commissioned three works from Gwyneth Walker, the first in 1987, soon after she arrived in the Upper Valley.

Valerie Miller has degrees in music and education from Smith College and Harvard University, and has been conducting and teaching in schools for over 30 years. Accompanist Maureen Burford (also featured on this program) has degrees in piano performance and education from Cornell University and the University of Massachusetts, and became the new artistic director of Revels North in 2006.

Denise Walker, Soprano and Narrator, is a native of New York and has degrees from Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts and Manhattan School of Music, New York. She is a member of the Voice Faculty at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. As an actor, Denise has performed in community and professional theaters in Connecticut, most recently appearing in Hartford Stage's production of OUR TOWN starring Hal Holbrook.

Estrid Eklof, Pianist, is Artistic Director of the Maxwell Shepherd Memorial Arts Fund Inc. and is an adjudicator for the National Guild of Piano Teachers. She maintains a private piano studio in Kensington, Connecticut.

The Walker-Eklof Duo has been performing together for over fifteen years. In 1997, they commissioned and premiered the song cycle *No Ordinary Woman!* (poetry by Pulitzer Prize nominee Lucille Clifton, music by Gwyneth Walker). This work was performed at the Sunken Gardens Poetry Festival in Farmington, CT, with Lucille Clifton reading her own poetry. Subsequently, with the help of a grant from Central Connecticut State University, the *Walker-Eklof Duo* produced their first CD, *Scattering Dark and Bright – song cycles and arias of Gwyneth Walker*.

[Denise Walker is married to Philip Walker, second cousin of Gwyneth Walker. To quote Gwyneth: "My cousin Phil had the good sense to marry a Soprano!"]