

Did you find it difficult to get in the holiday mood last year?

Overwhelmed by the preparations? The travel? The shopping? The in-laws?

If so, The Ardensingers would like to invite you to our first ever:

Arden Pre~Holiday Madness Warmup Show!

Grab a drink, sit back, and relax as actors and musicians from the Ardensingers take you on a musical and theatrical journey to rediscover why we put ourselves through this craziness each year.

Get psyched for the season!

November 22~24 2024

Auditions: Wednesday May 15, Tuesday May 21 (7-10pm) Saturday May 25 (1-4pm) at Gild Hall

Audition selections need to be “performance ready” for vocal solo and instrumental acts and tied in some way to the theme of love. An accompanist will be provided. Auditioners will provide their own sheet music for use by the accompanist. People wishing to perform with the chorus simply need to communicate their interest at the time of their audition and do a few quick vocal exercises with the audition committee to determine which voice part is best.

This project would not require the extensive rehearsal run needed for a fully staged show. The idea would be to have the chorus meet 7-8 times to learn their numbers while the soloists would get together the weekend before the show (Nov 15-17) to run through everything and get a feel for how the evening will flow. Rehearsals would be on Tuesdays from 7-9:30 and Sundays from 1-4pm.

The Concept: (Love is the theme)

The lights lower on the hall with the fireplace burning. A choir, musician, actor, or poet delivers a performance about love from the stage. After the audience applauds our protagonist (a disaffected, cynical citizen of our current age) steps out to berate the whole notion of celebrating love in a world wracked with as much hatred and turmoil as we are currently experiencing. The frustration is palpable. Out steps a man in Dickensian garb. It’s Scrooge, or rather the ghost of Scrooge. He informs our protagonist that he is here to pay forward the change of heart granted to him nearly two hundred years ago by an earlier generation of ghosts. Our protagonist is very resistant as the pair slowly makes their way from the stage, along the side of the hall, past the fireplace, to the back all the while listening to different dramatic and musical takes on the many facets of love people experience throughout their lives. Feeling very conflicted, but still defiantly resistant, our protagonist announces that she needs a drink. She retires to the bar and invites the rest of the audience to join her for intermission.

Intermission: A giant notepad is set up by the bar titled “How has love affected you?” or “Where have you seen love in your life?” Our protagonist encourages the audience to add their experiences as an audience participation piece. This interaction could be used as a catalyst for the change that occurs after intermission.

After intermission our protagonist and Scrooge take up their journey at the back of the hall and start working their way forward towards the stage. A change of heart can be seen and heard in our protagonist as the intensity of the cynicism subsides and a recognition begins to emerge. It is the recognition that yes, there is a lot of ugliness, hatred, and evil in this world. But there is also beauty, love, and kindness too. The choice we all must make when we wake up each day is deciding where we will choose to fix our gaze. Will our energies be spent hardening and numbing ourselves to the varying grotesqueries of our existence? Or can we, without being naïve or overly sentimental, summon the courage to see the good in our lives and embrace it? Our protagonist chooses the latter and, with all the evening’s performers in tow, sends the audience off with a closing number celebrating the presence of love (in all of its wonderful forms) in our lives.

The Proposal:

Members of The Ardensingers will have an opportunity to perform repertoire they are passionate about that may, *or may not*, come from the traditions their guild typically presents. The unifying element will be that all selections will focus on some aspect of love. This will be a salon style performance utilizing the entire hall with performances occurring on the stage, along the wall, at the fireplace (with a fire burning), and the back of the hall. Seating will be similar to what the Scholars Guild uses to allow the audience to view more of the hall. This is intended as a “feel good” experience for the audience in advance of the holiday season.

The Structure:

Plus or minus 16 performances spread over two acts. 1:30-1:45 in total length not including intermission. The exact order will be determined after auditions are complete.

4 monologues, short scenes, sonnets, or other dramatic readings

5-6 solo or small ensemble vocal works

5-6 solo or small ensemble instrumental works

5-6 choral works ***(We really want to feature the chorus in this fall’s performance. We will be performing a mix of pop, jazz, show tunes, and classical pieces.)***