



RAGAZZI BOYS CHORUS PRESENTS

# Beyond the Stars

*Livestreamed virtual concert for the holidays*

4pm PST Sunday, December 13, 2020

REDWOOD CITY, CA (24 November 2020) —Ragazzi Boys Chorus will lift their voices with festive songs of the holiday season, as well as works that honor endurance and optimism, with a livestreamed virtual concert *Beyond the Stars*. Led by Artistic and Executive Director **Kent Jue**, the innovative Silicon Valley chorus will utilize groundbreaking technology to stream the concert to audiences at home, with choristers performing in real-time from their homes. A spritely concert of treasured seasonal gems as well as timely songs of hope and resiliency, *Beyond the Stars* will stream at **4pm PST Sunday, December 13, 2020**. A suggested donation of \$25 per viewer is encouraged to support the world-renowned Ragazzi Boys Chorus, which has cancelled all its in-person concerts and tours during the pandemic. For information or to reserve streaming access the public may visit **Ragazzi.org** or call **650-342-8785**.

With repertoire that not only spotlights the holiday season and winter months but also explores themes of endurance and optimism in the face of adversity, *Beyond the Stars* will include a wide variety of songs performed live, a feat made possible by Ragazzi Virtual Studio. Among the lively non-traditional works offered during the live digital concert, Ragazzi's Young Men's Ensemble will delight audiences with a performance of *Da Coconut Nut*, composed by Filipino National Artist Ryan Cayabyab – a whimsical piece that extolls the values of each part of the coconut palm tree. Ragazzi's Choral Scholars will sing *No Time*, arranged by Susan Brumfield, a resplendent camp meeting song invoking unity. Ragazzi's Concert Group and Choral Scholars will lift their voices in a rendition of Jacob Narverud's *Ad Astra*. This energetic and hopeful piece is sung in both English and Latin, with the Latin text translating to "To the stars through difficulties, look upward, move forward, leave all cares behind." Ragazzi's Concert Group will perform *Hold Fast to Dreams*, arranged by Susan LaBarr and based on Langston Hughes's poem

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of encouragement and resiliency. Ragazzi’s Young Men’s Ensemble, Concert Group, and Choral Scholars will then join together to sing *Silent Night/ Night of Silence*, arranged by John Ferguson. This stunning piece for the holidays pairs the classic hymn *Silent Night* with Daniel Kantor’s modern counterpart *Night of Silence*, exploring a wintry world of darkness that is waiting in anticipation for light.

During this thrilling performance, the acclaimed boys chorus will also debut pre-recorded virtual chorus videos. Ragazzi’s Concert Group and Young Men’s Ensemble will release a recording of Leon Dubinsky’s *We Rise Again*. Originally written about a 1980s economic crisis in Nova Scotia, this anthem of hope and resilience remains timely in 2020 during the uncertainties of the pandemic. Ragazzi’s Concert Group and Choral Scholars will perform Eric Whitacre’s *Seal Lullaby*, a tender work inspired by Rudyard Kipling’s “White Seal” that portrays the reassurance of a mother to her baby. Ragazzi’s Avanti Choir will perform *Niño Precioso*, a traditional Nicaraguan folk song arranged. Originally a lullaby, this upbeat arrangement by Rosephanye Powell envisions children celebrating about the birth of a newborn baby. Ragazzi’s Premiere and Primary ensembles will sing David and Jean Perry’s “Winter Perry,” celebrating the joy of the holiday season.

Pivoting to fully-online rehearsals during the pandemic, Ragazzi’s virtual program has fostered both individual vocal development and collaboration—the choristers have worked from home toward the goal of performing *Beyond the Stars*. To enable virtual rehearsals, Ragazzi has employed advanced technology that allows choristers to learn and record their parts. The acclaimed chorus has also implemented a remote rehearsal console called Ragazzi Virtual Studio, which improves audio quality and reduces the latency (delay time) inherent in live video streaming platforms to a point where singers can harmonize in real-time over common Internet connections. Pilot tested by Ragazzi choristers, this groundbreaking technology was developed by the JackTrip Foundation, which was launched by Ragazzi parent and software engineer and Ragazzi parent Mike Dickey in collaboration with Chris Chafe and Stanford University’s Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics. Using Ragazzi Virtual Studio this Fall, Ragazzi held a virtual rehearsal with more than 80 choristers singing together live from the comfort of home—likely the largest remote real-time choir to date.

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Peninsula-based **Ragazzi Boys Chorus** is one of the San Francisco Bay Area’s premiere music and performance organizations for boys. Last year, more than 250 boys from over 100 schools in 30+ Bay Area communities participated in the program. Ragazzi means “boys” in Italian and is the term used in opera to refer to children’s voices. Ragazzi has performed with the San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, Opera San Jose, West Bay Opera, Symphony Silicon Valley, Masterworks Chorale, and the Stanford University Symphonic Chorus among others. The group has toured throughout the United States and internationally. Ragazzi was honored for its contribution to the San Francisco Symphony’s triple Grammy Award-winning recording of Stravinsky’s *Perséphone*, and has five CDs available: *A Holiday Collection*, *Canciones de Alabanza*, *Magnificat: My Spirit Rejoices*, *Splendors of the Italian Baroque*, and *I Dream A World*.

### For Calendar Editors:

**WHAT:** Ragazzi Boys Chorus will lift their voices with festive songs of the holiday season, as well as works that honor endurance and optimism, with a livestreamed virtual concert *Beyond the Stars*. The innovative Silicon Valley chorus will utilize groundbreaking technology to stream the concert to audiences at home, with choristers performing in real-time from their homes. *Beyond the Stars* features a mixture of treasured holiday gems as well as timely songs of hope and resiliency

**LIVESTREAM:** 4pm PST Sunday, December 13, 2020

**WHERE:** Patrons who purchase a ticket to the event will be emailed a link to stream the program live at home on their computer, SmartTV, or other device.

**TICKETS:** Suggested donation of \$25 per viewer to support Ragazzi Boys Chorus.

**INFO:** For information or to order tickets visit **Ragazzi.org**

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**MEDIA:** High resolution photos of **Ragazzi Boys Chorus** can be downloaded from:  
<http://cbpr.co/press/BeyondTheStars/>

**PRESS:** Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.  
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