

Rainbow Chorus Waterloo Wellington presents:

# songs that go like this

**Alison MacNeill**

Artistic Director

**Chris Fischer**

Collaborative Pianist

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

at 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm

**Harcourt Memorial United Church**

87 Dean Avenue, Guelph, Ontario

Heartfelt thanks to all our treasured individual donors as well as special support from

**Stantec** and **Harcourt Memorial United Church**

## programme

land acknowledgment: Jason Earl

### **The Song that Goes Like This**

Eric Idle, John du Prez; arr. Mac Huff

Once in every show there comes a song like this,  
It starts out soft and low and ends up with a kiss.  
Oh, where is the song that goes like this.  
Where is it? Where? Where?

A sentimental song that casts a magic spell.  
They all will hum along...we'll overact as well.  
Oh this is the song that goes like this.  
Yes, it is! Yes, it is! Yes, it is! Yes, it is!

Now we can go straight into the middle eight,  
A bridge that is too far for me.



Please celebrate with us as we present the opening concert of the 30th anniversary season of the Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo Wellington. We will sing songs that make you laugh, cry and everything in between.

Songs that ...well, go like this.

## Song for a Winter's Night

Gordon Lightfoot; arr. Michael Hanawalt, Justine Sansafar

The lamp is burning low upon my tabletop, the snow is softly falling.  
The air is still in the silence of my room, I hear your voice softly calling.  
If I could only have you near to breathe a sigh or two,  
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love on this winter's night with you.

The smoke is rising from the shadow overhead, my glass is almost empty.  
I read again between the lines upon each page the words of love you sent me.  
If I could know within my heart that you were lonely too,  
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love on this winter's night with you.

The fire is dying, my lamp is growing dim, the shades of night are lifting.  
Morning light steals across my windowpane where webs of snow are drifting.  
If I could only have you near to breathe a sigh or two,  
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love on this winter's night with you,  
and to be once again with you.

**spoken words:** Laura Kinzel & James Lockhart

### Laura

What religion or reason could drive someone to forsake their lover?

### James

In the late 1980s, the AIDS epidemic was raging in Britain. The gay community was blamed for this terrifying new disease, and it became much more dangerous to be queer.

### Laura

Princess Diana made headlines shaking hands with AIDS patients, in a

public display of support -- but still, misinformation and fear were spread everywhere -- in the media and in the halls of government. In 1988, laws were passed to prohibit the so-called “promotion of homosexuality in schools”.

### James

Andy Bell was one of the first openly gay pop singers to sing about queer romance - in a time when so many felt alone and unsafe.

When “A Little Respect” won the top British pop music award, he kissed Boy George on the lips – a first for live TV – saying later, it was in protest against those laws.

### Laura

He liked to introduce the song on stage, by saying, “When I was a little girl, I asked my Mummy, ‘Can I be gay when I grow up?’ She replied, ‘Yes, if you show a little respect.’”

## A Little Respect

Vince Clarke & Andy Bell; arr. Ed Aldcroft

Kez Vicario-Robinson, soloist

That you give me no soul.

I try to discover a little something to make me sweeter.

Oh baby refrain from breaking my heart.

I’m so in love with you, I’ll be forever blue.

That you give me no reason, why you’re making me work so hard.

That you give me no soul.

I hear you calling. Oh baby please, give a little respect to me.

Don’t you give me no soul.

And if I should falter, would you open your arms out to me?

We can make love not war and live with peace in our hearts.

I’m so in love with you. I’ll be forever blue.

Tell me what religion or reason, would drive [someone] to forsake [their] lover?

Don’t you tell me no soul.

I hear you calling. Oh baby please, give a little respect to me.

spoken words: Matt Hunter-Tribe

## Matt

Amidst the rocky terrain of self-discovery, I consider myself lucky.

Born into a family actively invested in emotional wellbeing and education of mind, I was never forced to fill shoes that weren't my own. There was no expectation to become someone other than myself and there was no mold into which to grow.

They cared that I knew how to treat people with respect, not that I preferred pants over dresses, or that I traded my dolls for Lego on a frequent basis. They seemed quite content with the achievements of the day if all of us made it to bedtime, every appendage still attached. This devotion with learning to exist meant I was behind in learning to survive when the safeguards of the family stead grew too small to house me and I was inevitably thrust into the wilds of society. A fate we all must face at one turn or another.

It was loud and big and terrifying. I had once thought learning to spell would be the worst enemy I would ever have to face, English being a beast to master, but now I had to contend with learning to belong, for I didn't. I didn't match what society had carved out for me so long ago: I wasn't small, demure, or obedient — my parents could certainly attest to that. I was strong and broad, and... wrong.

Out here, beyond the murmurs of assurance, I felt isolated, grotesque, and desperate. Despite being loved fiercely by those closest to me, I could not feel at peace, I could not feel settled, and I did whatever I could to avoid detection and prosecution, for I feared scorn. I played a part I felt necessary for my survival, and I wore the shoes to match that role; beautiful, beautiful shoes. Shoes that, despite my willing them, would never fit. I still felt obligated to hobble about in them and play this part I was supposedly born into. That stories I'd read and scenes I'd watch play out before my eyes told me I did not have a choice in. I learned to hate what I was and mourned the fact I could not be what I should.

I played my character diligently. I loved my shoes, and I was miserable. But I was also lucky, for being born into a family imbued with love, I had inadvertently surrounded myself with delightful humans who already knew the truth and were just waiting for me to catch up. Humans who knew my worth was more than my gender and saw me as nothing less than beautiful.

# How Could Anyone

Libby Roderick; arr. Mac Huff

Matt Hunter-Tribe, soloist

How could anyone ever tell you; you were anything less than beautiful?

How could anyone ever tell you; you were less than whole?

How could anyone fail to notice that your loving is a miracle?

How deeply you're connected to my soul.

**spoken words:** Alison MacNeill *with quotes from choristers*

## Alison

This anti-apartheid song, according to the song writer, was deeply influenced by his life growing up as a gay youth of colour in the 50s and 60s of London, England. It is a joyful song with a gentle warning: don't stand in our way, for our spirits are unstoppable. And we're just going to do it anyway.

## Darby

"I was kicked out of Bible college for being a lesbian, but I persevered and found a community that accepts and supports me."

## Laura

"When my partner (James) came out as transgender 18 years into our relationship some friends said I could no longer identify as being a lesbian, because now I'm in a 'straight presenting marriage'...still a lesbian and on 27 years of that beautiful Queer marriage."

## Bonnie

"I was told by my doctor, that she would not refer me to have a baby through artificial insemination, because she didn't believe same-sex couples should raise children. I got a different doctor who did refer me! Have 3 beautiful children, ages 16, 18 and 20 now."

## Dave

"I was told by a professor not to pursue working in private practice with the 2SLGBTQIA communities, as there weren't enough clients. I not only opened the

Rainbow Therapist business, but also Out on the Shelf, a queer library and community centre.”

### **Margie**

“When I came out to my parents in the 90s, they told me not to come out to anyone else, especially people on campus, since I was working as a Don (or RA) in the residence. I ignored their advice, and then became a support person for queer and questioning students! The follow-up story is that I joined this chorus in 2000, after my mom had passed away. The Rainbow Chorus normalized being queer, and our concerts were instrumental helping my dad accept me for who I am.”

### **Ren**

“She said, ‘guys won’t want to date you if you wear men’s clothes all the time’, but I did it anyway (eventually) and now am a trans-masc nonbinary spouse, married to a most incredible man, raising our magnificent kiddo together.”

### **Wendy**

“I was told by some family members that I shouldn’t be proud to have a trans granddaughter, and that I shouldn’t talk about it. Well, I am VERY proud, and I talk about it. So, I did it anyway.”

### **Geoff**

“I was politely told by a priest that I would go to hell if I chose to date men. So I found a religious community that supported me instead!”

### **Kadin**

“I was once told in a bus station washroom, that I was in the wrong one, and to get out. I calmly informed the person that I was in fact, in the right washroom – and ‘did my business anyway.’”

### **Katrina**

“They told me I couldn’t dance in a dress; they told me I had to dance like a boy. But I didn’t listen, and I wore the most beautiful wedding gown, and danced through the night.”

## Something Inside So Strong

Labi Siffre; arr. Jonathan Wikeley

Judy Steers, percussion

Neo Flocker, 'rap' performer

Tegan Frey, 'rap' writer

The higher you build your barriers the taller I become.  
The further you take my rights away the faster I will run.  
You can deny me, you can decide to turn your face away.  
No matter 'cos there's somethin' inside so strong.  
I know that I can make it, though you're doing me wrong, so wrong.  
You thought that my pride was gone, oh no, there's something inside so strong.

The more you refuse to hear my voice (away, away), the louder I will sing.  
You hide behind the walls of [ignorance] (away, away), your lies will come tumbling.  
Deny my place in time, you [take away what's] mine, my light will shine so brightly.  
Oh, 'cos there's somethin' inside so strong.

I know that I can make it, though you're doing me wrong, so wrong.  
You thought that my pride was gone, oh no, there's somethin' inside so strong.

### Neo – written by Tegan

People with hate in their hearts try to erase us.  
They make laws to deny us.  
Use violence to break us.  
But – no matter how much they try to keep us down,  
We will take our rightful place in the sun,  
Standing together with pride and saying:

We're gonna do it anyway, we're gonna do it anyway,  
We're gonna do it anyway, we're gonna do it anyway.  
Something inside so strong. (Woah, woah, woah.)  
I know that I can make it, though you're doing me wrong, so wrong.  
You thought that my pride was gone. There's something inside so strong.



spoken words: Valerie Walker

### Valerie

I'd like to call our 50-50 raffle ticket sellers up to the front.

Back by popular demand, we're having a 50-50 raffle. Tickets are:

\$2 for 1 ticket

\$5 for 3 tickets

\$20 for 15 tickets

If you have cash, any of these beautiful folks can help you. If you'd like to use credit or debit, please see Crystal. Don't be shy. You can wave your money in the air and they'll come to you.

We'll tally up the kitty and draw the winning ticket during the second half of the show.

Enjoy a brief intermission, and we'll see you after the break for more great music with the Rainbow Chorus!

## intermission

### Seasons of Love

Jonathan Larson, arr. Roger Emerson

Mel Soares, David Tilley, soloists

Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes,  
Five hundred twenty five thousand moments so dear.  
Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes;  
How do you measure, measure a year?

In daylights, in sunsets, in midnights, in cups of coffee;  
In inches, in miles, in laughter, in strife?  
In five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes;  
how do you measure a year in the life?

How about love? How about love? Measure in love,  
Seasons of love. Seasons of love.

Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes,  
Five hundred twenty five thousand journeys to plan.  
Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes;  
How do you measure the life of a woman or a man?

In truth that she larned or in times that he cried,  
In bridges he burned or the way that she died.  
It's time now to sing out though the story never ends,  
Let's celebrate, remember a year in the life of friends.

Remember the love. Remember the love. Measure in love.  
Seasons of love. Seasons of love.

**spoken words:** Alison MacNeill & Vanessa Russell

### **Alison**

Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes.... a year, measured in time. 12 months, 365 days, throw in an extra day every so often in a leap year. One trip around the sun; seasons roll by, the moon waxes and wanes. But how do we really measure the value of a year in the life? Through moments of transformation, self-discovery, leaps of faith. Tears shared. Pain and healing. Music, togetherness, laughter. New connections, new community. Learning. Laughing. Love. How do you measure yours?

### **Vanessa**

How do I measure mine? Well, length, width, and height measure three dimensions. But a year in a life? For my life anyway, time is the essential unit that rockets me into the fourth dimension. Einstein told us as much. Yet it is only in this precious moment in the here and now that I am truly present to take those leaps of faith toward transformation and self-discovery. It is only when I am present: that I can reach for my beloved Patty to kitchen-dance regardless of our dinner prep; that I can scoop up our sweet ancient puppy to massage her hind legs that are giving her trouble these days; that I can share my experience of strength and hope with other addicts in recovery to heal myself as we heal each other; And, that I can be part of this beautiful chorus making this music that thrums deep in my chest as my heart

flutters in the best possible way. It is being present to this moment that I choose to measure in love.

## Winter Song

Sara Bareilles, Ingrid Michaelson; arr. Mac Huff

Ukeleles

David Tilley, Megan Rowe Cudney, Kayla

Maiolo, Lennon Sykes, David Ingram

Tone bars

Terrilyn Ouillette, Em McQuay, Terry Hamilton, Oriana Abrahamse, Judy Steers, JJ Jupp

Small ensemble

Jasmine Jordan, Laura Kinzel, Sarah Corbett, Colleen Lichti, Tammy te Winkel, Maureen Anderson

This is my winter song to you. The storm is coming soon, it rolls in from the sea.  
My voice, a beacon in the night. My words will be your light, to carry you to me.  
Is love alive? Is love alive? Is love...

They say that things just cannot grow beneath the winter snow, or so I have been told.  
They say we're buried far, just like a distant star, I simply cannot hold.  
Is love alive? Is love alive? Is love alive?

This is my winter song. December never felt so wrong,  
'cause you're not where you belong: inside my arms.

I still believe in summer days. The seasons always change; and life will find a way.  
I'll be your harvester of light and send it out tonight so we can start again.  
Is love alive? Is love alive? Is love alive?

spoken words: Chris Fischer

### Chris

It was a beautiful summer day in 2018. Alison MacNeill invited me out to lunch and asked me something that would change the direction of my life: she had just become the Artistic Director of the Rainbow Chorus, and needed a “partner in crime”, a.k.a. a collaborative pianist. I excitedly agreed, not knowing that I was about to be adopted into an incredible extended family. I had always thought of

myself as “just” an ally of the queer community, even though by then I was already on my journey toward coming out as nonbinary, intersex, asexual, and aromantic.

The next few years brought with them many changes, including a separation, a global pandemic, a cancer diagnosis, a stem cell transplant, a broken wrist, and then a move to a new job in a new city. So much to go through, so often alone.

All along, I was supported by these loving, generous, big-hearted folx, who sang Christmas carols to me from under my balcony and brought me food when I could barely get off the couch, and no one could visit during lockdown.

In short, the love of the queer community was a life-saver. I’m so grateful to my chosen family – the family I never knew I needed – for helping me to embrace my true self. Thank you Rainbow Chorus!

## Chosen Family

Rina Sawayama, arr. Simon Pearson

Tell me your story and I’ll tell you mine  
I’m all ears. Take your time we got all night.  
Show me the rivers crossed, the mountain scaled  
Show me who made you walk all the way here.  
Settle down put your bags down you’re alright now

We don’t need to be related to relate  
We don’t need to share genes or a surname  
You are my chosen, chosen family  
So what if we don’t look the same  
We’ve been going through the same thing  
You are, you are my chosen, chosen family.

Hand me a pen and I’ll rewrite your pain,  
When you’re ready, we’ll turn the page together.  
Come to the table, it’s time we celebrate,  
Who you were, who you are, we’re one and the same.

I chose you I chose you, you chose me you chose me, you’re my chosen  
We’re alright now.

### spoken words

Maude & Katrina Stephany;

Earlla Vickers & Dave Vervoort

Q: Why don't pirates shower before they walk the plank?

A: Because they'll just wash up on shore later.

Q: How do pirates know that they are pirates?

A: They think...therefore they ARRRR!!

Q: What's a pirate's favourite letter?

A: An "Arrrrrr"

Q: Why did the pirate go on holiday?

A: To get some Arrrr and Arrrr

Q: Why does it take pirates so long to learn the alphabet?

A: Because they can spend years at C.

Q: What lies at the bottom of the ocean and twitches?

A: A nervous wreck.

Q: How much did the pirate pay for his peg and hook?

A: An arm and a leg.

## Pirate Song

Tim Y. Jones

A pirate sang a song to me.  
He sang of life upon the sea.  
He sang to me with gravelled tones.  
He sang to me of Billy Bones.  
Pirates, make me happy.

A pirate sang a song to me.  
He had no leg below his knee.  
He sang the song the best he could.  
His tongue was also made of wood.  
For romance, find a pirate.

Ahr.

My pirate comes from Tripoli.  
My pirate curses saltily.  
My pirate is not snooty.  
My pirate shakes his booty.  
My pirate swabs the deck like no one else can swab the deck.

My pirate sang a song to me.	Yo ho!
His face was of barnacle.	Land lubber Sea lubber dog scurvy yo ho
He told me that my parrot stank.	Port side aft side other side yo ho
And so I made him walk the plank.	Yar har yee hee

Arrr...

**spoken words:** Judy Steers

Thanking sponsors, donors, audience, Gerry Neufeld on tech, Alison and Chris etc.

## Your Song

Elton John, Bernie Taupin; arr. Mac Huff

It's a little bit funny this feeling inside,  
I'm not one of those who can easily hide.  
I don't have much money but if I did,  
I'd buy a big house where we both could live.

If I was a sculptor, but then again no,  
Or someone who makes potions in a travelin' show.  
I know it's not much but it's the best I can do.  
My gift is my song and this one's for you.

And you can tell everybody, this is your song.  
It may be quite simple but now that it's done.  
I hope you don't mind, that I put down in words,  
How wonderful life is while you're in the world.

I sat on the roof and kicked off the moss,  
Well a few of the verses, well they've got me quite cross.  
But the sun's been quite kind while I wrote this song.  
It's for people like you, that keep it turned on.

So excuse me forgetting but these things I do.  
You see I've forgotten if they're green or they're blue.  
Anyway, the thing is what I really mean,  
Yours are the sweetest eyes I've ever seen.

spoken words: Sarah Brown

### Sarah

Thanks so much for sharing this musical time with us! Thanks for giving us a little respect and seasons of love. We hope you feel deeply connected to something inside so strong and to your chosen family. As we venture into this winter's night with you, we can lean on each other because a little bit of love goes a long, long way. At the risk of going on and on and on, listen now for our beacon in the night as we, one more time, share the gift of our song. This one's for you. Arr!

## A Little Bit of Love

Graham Kendrick; arr. Craig McLeish

A little bit of love goes a long long way,  
A little love, a little love.  
A little bit of love and I'm on my way,  
A little love, a little love.  
A long way but we'll get there together,  
A long way but we'll get there soon,  
Along the way we can lean on each other,  
A little love goes a long long way.

A little bit of love and the sun comes shining,  
A little bit of kindness and someone's smiling,  
A long way but we'll get there together,  
A long way but we'll get there soon,  
Along the way we can lean on each other,  
A little love goes a long long way.

Little drops of rain can trickle down into a puddle  
Then the puddles get together making streams that make a river,  
The rivers fill the valleys with a roaring and a rushing  
Then the little drops of rain have made a wide, wide ocean!

A long way but we'll get there together,  
A long way but we'll get there soon,  
Along the way we can lean on each other,  
A little love goes a long, long way.

## biographies

### **Alison MacNeill**

Artistic Director

**Alison MacNeill** (she/her) was named Artistic Director of the Rainbow Chorus in 2018. Her deep connection with the choir, spanning 15 seasons as collaborative pianist, made her the ideal choice to spearhead its 25th anniversary celebrations, which culminated in a sold-out performance at the River Run Centre.

This past May 2023, she was thrilled to lead the choir in an inspiring performance at the Unison Choral Festival in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and she looks forward to an exciting 30th anniversary season for the chorus this year.

In the vibrant musical landscape of Guelph, Alison's dedication to performance and community engagement is evident. She is Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministry at Harcourt United Church, and leads two local community choirs, the Village Singers and the Lightshine Singers. She has been for many years the collaborative pianist for the Guelph Chamber Choir and is featured on several of their recordings. She collaborates with area musicians whenever she can, believing in the power of music to transform lives and bring people together. Her work resonates with emotion, joy, precision, and her deep-rooted love for music and community.

### **Chris Fischer**

Collaborative Pianist

**Chris Fischer** (they/them) joined the Rainbow Chorus as collaborative pianist (and sometimes tenor) in 2018. They are well known to local audiences as a tenor soloist, organist and conductor. Chris is the Minister of Music at First-St. Andrew's United Church,



London, Ontario (an affirming congregation), and has been a teacher of voice and piano for more than 30 years.

Chris was the tenor section leader of the Guelph Chamber Choir for 14 seasons and has been a member of the professional Juno- and Grammy-nominated Elora Singers since 2012.

## Board of Directors

**Judy Steers**, Chair

**Cheryl Murton**, Secretary

**Bobbie Belfry**, Community Outreach & Production

**Crystal Chilvers**, Treasurer

**Jasmine Jordan**, Chorus Connections

**Ken McRory**, Promotion

**Sarah Brown**, Member at Large

**Valerie Walker**, Fundraising

## Rainbow Chorus Members

### sopranos

Anna Vallentin

Crystal Chilvers

Em McQuay

Emily Rutledge

Erin McCarthy

Heather Zwart

Holly Hu

Janet Doner

Jessie Armstrong

JJ (Jennifer) Jupp

Kaitlin Venneri

Katrina Stephany

Kali Jhirad

Laura Grise

Lindsay Ly

Lisa Litt

Lynn Woodford

Maria DeCiccio

Maureen Anderson

Megan Rowe

Meghan Kelly

Monica Chamberlain

Nicola Capindale

Shannon Barnes

Soo Ji Yoon

Tammy te Winkel

Tegan Frid

Terry Hamilton

### altos

Amanda Pauw-Klapwyk

Amelia Vicario

Bonnie DePaul

Carlee Gracey Gellner

Carly Robinson

Carys Camani

Cheryl Murton

Colleen Lichti

Darby Kent

Earlla Vickers

Jala Vicario

Jasmine Jordan

Liane Cheshire

Judy Steers

Kayla Maiolo

Leah Sprague

Laura Kinzel

Lisa Farlow

Lisette Machan  
Margie Johnson  
Maude Stephany  
Meech Kratky  
Mel (Melody) Soares  
Oriana Abrahamse  
Ren Dunollie  
Sarah Brown  
Sarah Lawson-Canning  
Sarah Corbett  
Sarah Cressman  
Terrilyn Ouellette  
Valerie Walker  
Wendy Doornbos-Pauw

### tenors

Bobbie Belfry

Dave Vervoort  
Denny Culbert  
Fort Hui  
Jason Earl  
Justin Hong  
Kadin Wyer  
Kez Vicario-Robinson  
Kim Ryan  
Lennon Sykes  
Lexi Kratky  
Louise Harnett  
Maggie Coulter  
Neo Flocker  
Nico Hanna  
Ron Collins  
Tim Cunningham  
Vanessa Russell

### basses

Adam Davies  
André Langdon  
Chris Chihrin  
David Ingard  
David Tilley  
Geoffrey Metz  
Gregory Walsh  
James Lockhart  
Jaye Crawford  
Ken McRory  
Marshall Bowman  
Matthew Hunter-Tribe  
Tanner Coutts

## want to join us?

The **Rainbow Chorus** is a welcoming family and community. All vocal sections and experience levels are welcome. RCWW offers reduced fees or payment plans for anyone who needs them.

Spring session begins on

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 6:45 pm**

## please support us!

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to donate to the Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo Wellington and make a difference in the lives of local 2SLGBTQIA+ musicians.

To learn more about the chorus, please visit our website at [rainbowchorus.ca](http://rainbowchorus.ca)