

VICTORIA *Children's Choir*

Teodora Georgieva – Artistic Director and Concert Choir Director



Teodora Georgieva is a passionate music educator who deeply believes in the transformative power of music. Her interest in choral singing started with the rich tradition of Russian Orthodox music while she studied for her Bachelor of Music Education in Krasnodar, Russia. In her native Bulgaria, Teodora furthered her education at the National Music Academy of Bulgaria. While studying Musicology at the Faculty of Music Theory and Composition, she was required to take an Introduction to Conducting course and it was there that her heart was forever captured by the harmony of human voices. After graduating with a Master's degree in Choral Conducting and Musicology, Teodora was invited to conduct the chorus of the International Danube Opera, a European touring company.

Following her move to Canada in 2000, she embraced the thriving choral scene of Toronto by accepting conducting positions with the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus, High Park Choirs of Toronto, Riverdale Youth Singers and St. Michael's Choir School. These are years she remembers fondly for the creative fire and excitement of learning new ways of leadership, and also for the opportunity to bring to life many new choral works written by outstanding Canadian composers such as John Govedas, Alexandre Rapoport, Errol Gay and David Hatfield.

Since 2009, Teodora has been living and conducting in Victoria. She has taught various music courses with Continuing Studies at the University of Victoria, the Canadian College of Performing Arts and Lester B. Pearson College. She has over ten years of experience conducting various divisions of the Victoria Children's Choir.

David Stratkauskas - Concert Choir Collaborative Artist



David Stratkauskas is a native of Vancouver, where he completed his MA in Music Theory at the University of British Columbia, working under the notable theorist, Dr. William Benjamin. During and after his university studies, he was active as an organist and choir director, collaborative pianist and accompanist (working with such choirs as the Surrey Children's Choir and the Vancouver Bach Children's Choir), a jazz pianist, and a conductor of new music, appearing in festivals such as Sonic Boom. In 2003, inspired by his particular love for organ and choral music, David moved to London, where he was organist at St Michael's Battersea and St Mary Stoke Newington. Several of his choristers from St Michael's went on to organ and choral scholarships at Cambridge colleges. In London he also worked as a choral conductor, jazz pianist, and teacher.

David returned to Canada in 2010 to take the position of Organist at the Church of Saint John the Divine, Victoria, where he has helped build a vibrant music programme with several choirs and a thriving Choral and Organ Scholarship programme, performing works from the sacred choral canon, but also championing new music, such as works by Michael Finnissy, Jonathan Harvey, and Kimberley Farris-Manning. David has directed the St John's Chamber Singers and the Victoria Baroque Players in numerous performances of great Baroque works, including many of Bach's cantatas and motets, Handel's Dixit Dominus, Durufle's Requiem, and Bach's St. John Passion. He has also worked with the Victoria Children's Choir since 2011, including directing the Concert Choir in 2014-15, with whom he toured Holland, marking the 70th anniversary of the liberation of that country from Nazi occupation. He is currently the director of the choir's intermediate Recital Choir division.

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As an organ recitalist, he has played concerts in Vancouver, London (UK), and Victoria, including on the Summer Organ Series at Christ Church Cathedral, which featured pieces by Canadian composers Tony Genge and Jocelyn Morlock (the latter, *Premonition*, commissioned in 2012 for David by Hugh Davidson). David is married to Soile Stratkauskas, a baroque flutist and the Artistic Director and founder of the Victoria Baroque.

Jody Onuma – Recital Choir Director



Jody Onuma earned a Bachelor of Music with a major in Education from the University of Victoria and a Master of Educational Technology degree from UBC. She is an elementary music specialist at Campus View Elementary in Victoria. She holds an ARCT in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music, as well as Grade 10 standing in violin. In 2000, she was a violinist in the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. From 2001-2007, Jody taught in Japan and despite language barriers, found that music truly is a universal language. During that time, she performed in the Obihiro Orchestra, Tsukuba Science City Orchestra, Freude Orchestra and many smaller ensembles.

She has conducted school choirs in Victoria since 2007. Her choirs have had the honour of performing at special events such as Canada's 150th Birthday New Year's Eve celebration in the Inner Harbour, and with children's singers Fred Penner and Will Stroet. Over the years, her musical groups have received numerous awards including three top prizes in the national CBC

Music Challenge and first prize in the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia's "Sing Me a Song" competition. She is absolutely thrilled to be part of the Victoria Children's Choir.

Mame Goehner – Prelude Choir Director



Mame Helise Goehner, a lyrical soprano, has been performing and studying music since the age of six. Studying under the expertise of Opera Nuova's founder Kim Mattice Wanat and Canada's top baritone Peter Barcza, she has won several major scholarships and festivals throughout Canada and Europe.

Mame is currently the President of Choir Alberta and owns and runs two thriving music schools in Victoria, BC and Calgary, AB. She is highly sought after to do workshops, masterclasses and adjudicating across Alberta and British Columbia. Not only was Mame ranked Alberta's top Musical Theatre performer in 2001, her students are also ranked at the top, receiving Provincial Festival placements and Gold Awards from the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Mame Goehner was a prominent figure on many stages in Alberta until she made her move to Vancouver where, studying at the University of British Columbia, she completed her BMus and MMus under the tutelage of Bruce Pullan and Nancy Hermiston. Mame was the lead soprano at West Point Grey United Church, and a lead member of the UBC Opera Ensemble. She has toured throughout Europe, sang for the Queen of England and has showcased many private recitals and performances in Canada. Mame has produced and directed multiple productions across Alberta and British Columbia, including several productions for Victoria's Saltwater Theatre Company. Mame is experienced in lieder, opera, 20th Century art song, musical theatre, pop and jazz. Her ability to combine these genres in her performances and teaching technique is unique and sought after. When not singing and teaching, she can be found camping and surfing with her husband and two children.



Backgrounder

Currently in its 19th season, the Victoria Children's Choir is one of the top choral and music organizations in the City and is highly respected for its consistently professional level of performing music throughout the concert season.

Under the instruction of an expert team, the Victoria Children's Choir offers outstanding music education each year to more than 115 youth throughout Greater Victoria. Great emphasis is given to delivering programs in a unique, supportive and happy social environment, enabling each young singer to develop their skills to the best of their ability. As a testament to its reputation and skill, the Choir is regularly invited to collaborate with renowned international and local musicians, including the Victoria Symphony, Pacific Opera Victoria, The Tenors, Fretwork, and the Pacific Baroque Festival.