

# News to Note

Summer 2003

Betty Bertaux, Artistic Director

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## CCM Enrolling New Students

Children's Chorus of Maryland is now offering interested students a free introductory class where parents and students can observe and experience the unique CCM educational methods and classroom techniques first hand.

CCM students and audiences come from Baltimore City, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Howard and Harford Counties. "Just as our students develop and mature into fine musicians," said **Dr. Betty Bertaux**, Artistic Director of the Chorus, "they evolve into capable young men and women. Their lives are enriched by the music education they receive at CCM."

CCM and Dr. Bertaux are highly regarded in the music education field. Most recently, students returned from a successful concert at Carnegie Hall where they were invited to participate in the [Ninth] Annual American Children's Chorale "because of the quality and high level of musicianship demonstrated by your chorus and the exceptional recommendations by your colleagues."

Previously, the Chorus competed against 210 choruses and won the right to appear at Carnegie Hall as the "Honored Chorus" in 1998. The organization was part of the *Vivat St. Petersburg Festival* at the Meyerhoff in Baltimore in March, 2003 where they performed with *Galaktika*, a world renowned treble voice choir from St. Petersburg. Last Fall, the Chorus appeared in Washington, DC and on television (broadcast worldwide) to honor fallen firefighters.

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## CCM Goes to Carnegie Hall

MPT ARTWORKS This Week

As Featured on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003

**Rebecca Lancaster** and **Caitlyn Nuger**, two members of the Children's Chorus of Maryland, joined ArtWorks This Week to discuss their performance in Carnegie Hall. On Sunday, June 29, 2003, the Children's Chorus of Maryland participated in the Eighth Annual North American Children's Chorale at Carnegie Hall in New York City. They were joined by four other outstanding choruses selected throughout North America for this gala performance. Appearance in this program was by invitation only.

Maryland's "official Children's Chorus of Maryland" was founded in 1976 by composer, conductor, and choral instructor, Dr. Betty Bertaux. Because of her vision, the Children's Chorus of Maryland has become one of the most prestigious and highly regarded schools of music and performing arts. Through the program, children gain the tools of musical self-expression and strengthen their mental, academic, emotional and physical skills.

For additional performance information, call 410-494-1480.

*Reprinted with permission from ArtWorks, June, 2003.*

## Towson U. Selects CCM

The Towson University Department of Electronic Media selected Children's Chorus of Maryland for a video project that was completed in May, 2003. "We are looking forward to producing your proposal," said **Dr. Stacey O. Irwin**, "The chorus was selected from among 12 proposals to be produced during the Spring of 2003 semester."

CCM will make the new video available to parents of children considering the advantages of a music education. "Children with formal music training demonstrate improvements in memory, reading, concentration, mathematics and problem solving," said **Ramona Galey**, Executive Director of CCM. "Children are taught to read music at the age of six and our new video captures examples of classroom exercises as well as excerpts from actual performances." Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the video can call Ms. Galey at 410-494-1480.

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## CCM Rocks New York

"They were incredible," said Ramona Galey, Executive Director of Children's Chorus of Maryland. "Many people in the audience thought they were the best part of the concert." She was describing the enthusiastic response received by CCM and other choristers at Carnegie Hall on Sunday, June 29, 2003. A full house stood and gave the Ninth Annual Children's Chorale chorus a standing ovation at the end of their performance.

The young people were on a whirlwind tour of New York, going to a Broadway show, sightseeing in Chinatown and having dinner in Little Italy. On a night cruise around the Statue of Liberty with other choristers from Montana, Louisiana, Florida and California, they had their own deck and a DJ for dancing. And, compliments of **Marilyn Herd** of St. Timothy Lutheran Church, they went to the Stardust Diner for ice cream where the waiters and waitresses sing while they deliver trays of food.

Carrying two CCM signs, they walked over to the Today Show and were invited in to sing during the weather forecast. "They had a great time," said Ms. Galey.

For many of the young people, it was their first trip to New York City and they made the most of every minute of their time. They came back to Maryland with a load of memories that will last a lifetime, and they all had a perfectly wonderful time.

# Singing - Rewards & New York

Excerpts fr. *Baltimore Sun* article by Marissa Lowman, June 27, 2003

Betty Bertaux rapped her baton against the music stand. "Where's your good singing posture?" she asked. Eighteen girls, who moments ago were squirming in their seats - some whispering, some giggling - quickly straightened their spines.

On Sunday, the girls, members of the Children's Chorus of Maryland, will perform at Carnegie Hall. As one of five groups invited to participate in the Eighth Annual North American Children's Chorale, they'll sing selections from Vivaldi's *Magnificat* and Vigeland's *Three Shaker Songs*, among others.

Early last week, as the chorus began to rehearse in St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Timonium, it was clear that not everyone was entirely focused on singing. Who could blame them? For some of the girls, who ages range from 10 to 16, this will be a first trip to New York City. And when not performing, the chorus plans to visit Times Square, attend the Broadway show, *Mamma Mia!* and take a night cruise around Manhattan. "I think it's awesome because I've never been to New York City before," said **Ashley Goeller**, a 10<sup>th</sup>-grader from Fallston High.

Bertaux, who composes choral music in addition to directing the group, founded the Children's Chorus in 1976 because she "wanted to give her son and the more talented children in Baltimore County a more enriching musical experience."

Now 90 children from first through 11<sup>th</sup> grades participate in three co-ed choirs divided by age and talent. The choirs have performed with celebrities such as John Lithgow and have participated in a master class taught by Bobby McFerrin. "It is such a musical high for me to work with such beautiful voices," Bertaux said.

Drawn from throughout Maryland, many choir members also play musical instruments, dance or act. **Amanda Walsh**, an eighth-grader at Ridgely Middle School, is a soccer-, basketball- and lacrosse-playing clarinetist. **Mirielle Burgoyne**, a home schooled ninth grader who next year will be attending Carver Center for the Arts, loves dance - from ballet to hip-hop.

And **Ira Lyon**, who spoke no English 2½ years ago when she moved to Annapolis from Siberia, models, acts and is recording a hip-hop album. "I'm proud to say I'm in this choir because it is such a good chorus," said Lyon.

But back to rehearsal. First Bertaux coached the girls through scales and trills. Then she urged them to show their "sunshine face," a stretching exercise in which they opened their mouths wide, as though about to gobble a huge sandwich.

"What song do you want to rehearse first?" the director asked. "Can You Hear," an English song by **Jim Papoulis**, was the nearly unanimous choice. Carver High ninth-grader **Rebecca Lachance** began with a soft, soothing solo. As she sang, **Lisa Diver** and **Meryem Ahmadian** stood in front of the choir, hand-signing the lyrics, their sweeping arm movements almost perfectly synchronized. "I find signing such a beautiful thing. I have always thought of helping people," Lisa, a 10<sup>th</sup>-grader at Roland Park Country School, said later.

After a 15-minute break for subs and soda, the girls stood at the front of the church and ran through the performance again. This time, though, there was no joking or giggling. "It never ceases to amaze me that they're legitimate musicians in small bodies," said Bertaux.

# The Graduating Class

By Alan Christian of *Diverse Dimensions*

Four choristers will graduate from Children's Chorus of Maryland this year: Mirielle Burgoyne, Ashley Goeller, Rebecca Lancaster and Caitlyn Nuger. After years of studying and performing they will leave the program with some great memories, including a standing ovation at their last performance in Carnegie Hall.

Ashley is not going to stop here. "I want to be a singer and perform all over the world," she said. "I know I can do it." Ms. Goeller will record a demo CD in July and give it to a record company that has been talking to her father. If they like what they hear, Ashley will be offered a professional contract. "It will be Hip Hop," she said. "I am really excited."

Ashley was in the first grade when her music teacher asked her to stay after school. "I thought I was in trouble," she said, but the teacher just wanted her to take home some papers related to CCM. "We learn college level music," she said. "I also have a lot of cool friends. Everyone there is a friend. It's not like high school where there are cliques."

Looking back on her years at CCM, Caitlyn was full of praise. "It definitely helped a lot," she said. As a result of her musical education, she is in band and she is involved in dance. Ms. Nuger has established friendships that she expects to last a lifetime. And she remembers that they performed "everywhere." "It has been a great musical experience," Caitlyn said. "I see music from a different perspective and it is definitely a lot of fun." When asked if she would recommend CCM to another person, she said, "Definitely!"

Rebecca has been in the program for 5 years. Her aunt was teaching music in a private school and told Rebecca to apply. "It really challenges me," she said. "It was really nice to have a program where I could learn music theory." Ms. Lancaster is not certain what she will do with her life, but her plan is to take "at least" a minor in music in college. As far as teaching is concerned, she said, "I would definitely keep that in mind."

"I think it (CCM) is a very good program," said Rebecca. "You can also become friends with people you wouldn't normally be friends with. You see them in a different light where everybody enjoys music."

The trip to Carnegie Hall was Mirielle's first trip to New York City. She went to a Broadway show and came away with stars in her eyes. "I thought I would like to do that," she said. "It's something I really started thinking about." She isn't certain what the future will bring, but she loves to sing and dance, and music is a big part of her life.

"My mom is a singer," Mirielle said, "and my dad is a violinist with the symphony. I used to sing all the time. It's really kind of funny. I was 4 years old in a restaurant singing 'Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer' when CCM's director came over and told my parents they should send me to the school."

Ms. Burgoyne's best memories include being selected for the opera *Tosca* with the Annapolis Opera Company. "They were really great singers," she said. She also remembers the tribute to the fallen firefighters last year that was broadcast worldwide on C-Span. More than 20,000 people had packed the MCI Center and there were TV cameras and dignitaries everywhere. "I was a little nervous," Mirielle said.

Mirielle, Ashley, Rebecca and Caitlyn are graduating from the program, but they will keep the sounds of music from CCM in their hearts for the rest of their lives.

# Support the Children's Chorus of Maryland Scholarship Fund

Dear Friend:

This past year Children's Chorus of Maryland (CCM) awarded over 25 scholarships to talented youngsters who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a quality music education. Tamara\* is one of our scholarship recipients. One of 9 children in a family of modest means who at one time were homeless, she has blossomed as a musical talent. Tamara has 4 siblings with major medical problems, and she has some learning difficulties. When she joined CCM in the third grade, Tamara was not able to read at all. After one year with CCM, Tamara was reading books cover to cover - at and above her grade level! Her father credits CCM with her astounding academic growth. In addition, this talented student has overcome other limitations. Her self-esteem has skyrocketed and she is filled with pride and confidence. Both Tamara and her family are delighted with her incredible achievements, and are grateful to CCM for the scholarship award that has made such a wonderful difference in their lives.

More children like Tamara need your help to receive the advantages offered by Children's Chorus of Maryland. CCM empowers musical children and promotes the fine art of music by providing children with tools of self-expression through choral music education and performances.

Children's Chorus of Maryland believes that music communicates the essence of the human spirit. We believe that what is best about us has been recorded in our musical heritage, and in teaching this language to children, we are passing on an important part of the human experience to future generations. Your financial contributions will have an impact on those future generations.

Please join us as we reach out to give talented children like Tamara the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and joy of music! Your tax deductible contributions will go directly to help deserving students become part of Maryland's premier Children's Chorus. *Thank You!*

*\* Name changed to protect confidentiality.*

Please send completed form to-  
Children's Chorus of Maryland  
100 E. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 202  
Towson, MD 21286  
Phone: 410-494-1480  
Website: [www.ccmsings.org](http://www.ccmsings.org)

I am pleased to contribute to the Children's Chorus of Maryland's Scholarship Fund, which helps talented children. Please accept my tax deductible contribution made payable to Children's Chorus of Maryland.

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*CCM 2003 Graduating Class – see article inside!*

Thanks to our Corporate Sponsor:

## Why Children's Chorus?

Children's Chorus of Maryland empowers musical children and promotes the fine art of music. "We believe that music communicates the essence of the human spirit," said Dr. Bertaux. "What is best about us has been recorded in our musical heritage, and in teaching this language to children, we are passing on an essential part of the human experience to future generations."

CCM alumni are young men and women who have mastered the skills of personal and collaborative commitment; discipline, dedication to both short and long term goals, and respect for peers and teachers. These qualities enrich their lives and communities as they reach adulthood and carve out their places in the world.

"Any parent or grandparent wanting to give a gift of lasting value to a child should give priority to a quality music education," said Dr. Bertaux. "We have seen so many children improve dramatically in their schoolwork, as well as in other areas."



Find Out How **YOUR CHILD**  
Can Join the  
**Children's Chorus of  
Maryland Music School**  
for Fall Semester, 2003

CCM has performed at the White House, on national television, at the Meyerhoff, at Carnegie Hall, in Canada and before many other appreciative audiences throughout the United States.

Give your child the gift of a music education from one of the foremost children's music schools in the United States. Attend a free class and see how music can enrich the life of your child.

**Contact: 410-494-1480**