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Renaissance City Choir Announces Ambitious Plans For 20th Anniversary Season

(Pittsburgh, PA) The Renaissance City Choirs, Pittsburgh's only choir comprised of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered and supportive individuals has announced extensive plans to celebrate their 20th anniversary season, which will span the 2004-2005 artistic year. The organization, made up of the Renaissance City Men's Choir and the Renaissance City Women's Choir, will be presenting three major performances, as well as a number of special events.

Over the past six years, the organization has made incredible artistic, organizational and financial strides. The choir has successfully completed the development of a three-year strategic plan, secured the expertise and tenure of board members, and implemented successful development efforts that have attracted the attention of corporate entities, foundations and government organizations. On the artistic side, accomplishments include live broadcasting of the holiday concert on WQED-FM in 2002 and 2003, the release of the Renaissance City Men's Choir's holiday compact disc, and the development of strong relationships with other local arts organizations.

Highlights of the upcoming 20th anniversary season include:

- The world premiere of a newly-commissioned, major choral work for men's and women's voices by the renowned choral composer, James Mulholland. The piece is based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay, and it's world premiere will take place on July 24, 2004 in Montreal, Canada to an audience of over 2,800 gathered for the GALA International Choral Festival. Financial underwriting for the commission work was received from the Pittsburgh Foundation and the Small Arts Initiative of the Heinz Endowments.
- The Pittsburgh premiere of the Mulholland work on Saturday, December 11, 2004 at the Renaissance City Choirs 20th Holiday Concert, which will be broadcast live on WQED.FM. In addition to the Pittsburgh premiere of the commissioned work, Pittsburgh's own jazz legend, Etta Cox, will be featured as the special guest artist at the holiday concert.
- Professional recording of the commissioned choral work on Renaissance City Choir's first-ever disc, featuring both the men's and women's choirs. The recording will take place in January of 2005.

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- The annual Valentine's Dance will be held at the Grand Hall at the Priory on February 12, 2005. The event will be highlighted by the presentation of the second annual Renaissance Award, given to a member of the Pittsburgh community who has provided outstanding support to the choir and its mission.
- A professional development workshop by Dr. Andre Thomas, world-renowned conductor, composer and arranger, will be held for the singing members of RCC on February 25, 26, and 27, 2005. This workshop is the latest in a series of initiatives to build the choir's musicality and technical skills.
- The Twentieth Anniversary Concert of the Renaissance City Men's Choir will be presented in the spring of 2005. The performance will be a retrospective featuring a multimedia visual presentation of the choir's history, as well as the premiere of a newly commissioned piece for men's voices.
- The first-ever Southwest Pennsylvania tour by the Renaissance City Women, in celebration of their 10th Anniversary as a choir, will be undertaken in the spring of 2005. Specific performance dates, venues and times will be announced at a later date.
- The premiere of a collaborative project between the Dance Alloy and the Renaissance City Women's Choir will be presented in the spring of 2005. This marks the first cooperative venture between the two groups
- The Choir's annual Cabaret Concert, showcasing the talents of individual performers within the men's and women's groups will be staged in October 2005. Performance dates and venue information will be announced later this year.

Comprised of approximately 70 individuals from the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, the Renaissance City Choirs perform at numerous venues throughout the year, including the annual Pride Week festivities. Committed to making change through the power of music, the group is a member of GALA and Chorus America, two of the nation's leading choral music advocacy organizations.

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