

L O S A N G E L E S

MASTER CHORALE

Los Angeles Master Chorale's Oratorio Project 2022: Van Nuys High School Students Write and Compose New Song Cycle, *Imagine a City*



Friday, May 20, 2022

Van Nuys High School Auditorium

Two free performances open to the public at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

LOS ANGELES (May 11, 2022) – Los Angeles Master Chorale's Oratorio Project, now in its 11th year, immerses high school students in a collaborative process to write a large, complex choral work. Students delve into history and culturally rich subjects in order to find an epic story to tell through music. The Master Chorale's 2022 Oratorio Project culminates in the premiere of a new song cycle, *Imagine a City*, on Friday, May 20, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. at Van Nuys High School Auditorium. *Imagine a City* was created by 50 Van Nuys High School students who used their collective imagination to write the words and melodies for seven original songs about utopian cities.



Like the hopeful theme of utopia, the students from Van Nuys High School embraced choir, music and the creative process to find solace, connection and community during challenging pandemic time. The program started in fall 2021 with all of the students attending a retreat where they got to know each other and learn about the oratorio genre, song cycles, and more. After two years of pandemic struggles and remote learning, the students were once again able to collaborate in person under the guidance of Master Chorale professional teaching artists Alice Kirwan Murray, singer, Kelci Hahn, singer, Brett Paesel, lyricist, and Saunder Choi, composer, to share ideas, gain music knowledge, and sharpen their collaborative skills in a safe creative space.

The inspiration for each of the songs will be told by the students in a brief presentation of dramatic spoken word, followed by the performances.

Song titles:

Sactus (Holy City)
 Lealta (Brotherly Love)
 Moo Moo Meadows (Green City)
 Curse of the Wealthy (City of Palaces)
 Golden Lion (Lion City)
 Phoenix Rising (Phoenix City)
 Chaos (Sin City)

The Master Chorale's Oratorio Project continued throughout the pandemic period with the digital release of *Naia: The Spirit of Hoyo Negro*, an oratorio about the discovery of 13,000-year-old ice age skeleton, which premiered in May 2021. The Oratorio Project, a Voices Within program, is made possible by generous support from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Edward A. and Ai O. Shay Family Foundation, The Rose Hills Foundation, Cheryl Petersen and Roger Lustberg, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors / Kathryn Barger, Walter and Holly Thomson Foundation, Carolyn L. Miller, William H. Hannon Foundation, John and Beverly Stauffer Foundation, Lon V. Smith Foundation, Employees Community Fund of Boeing California, and the Sidney Stern Memorial Trust.

AT A GLANCE:

Imagine a City

An original song cycle by Van Nuys High School students created for the Los Angeles Master Chorale's Oratorio Project. Performed by Van Nuys High School students.

Friday, May 20, 2022



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6535 Cedros Ave, Van Nuys, CA 91411
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