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Acclaimed Chorus Takes Music Message of Diversity, Challenge and Joy on the Road across Georgia

— Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus Spring Concert Expands to State Tour with Performances in Macon, Savannah, Augusta and Athens Before Homecoming Concert in Atlanta

February 11, 2010 — The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus (AGMC) is proud to announce it is expanding its spring concert series to include performances in four cities across Georgia (Macon, Augusta, Savannah and Athens) before the AGMC's road leads back to Atlanta for homecoming concerts **March 26-27**. In the concert series presented by Macy's, "**The Road Leads Back: Georgia On Our Minds**", the 100-voice chorus will perform the wide range of musical styles for which it is well-known - from jazz to classical music, satire to spirituals, and love songs to Broadway show tunes.

"Our mission is to entertain, educate, and connect audiences and members through music that is distinguished for its creativity, diversity and artistic excellence, said Executive Director, Keith Fenton. "We have a responsibility to bring our positive message of diversity and inclusiveness not just to the people within the metro area, but to those from smaller communities who may be searching for affirmation. Not every area can sustain a large, professional community group such as the 100-member AGMC, and we're proud to 'take our show on the road' this spring."

"It's a very exciting time in the life of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus," Fenton added. "While the economy has certainly affected many nonprofit arts organizations, thanks to our season subscribers, generous donors and our impeccable singing membership- we are vibrant, alive and moving forward in the pursuit of our mission. I am so proud to be working with these exceptional men, and can't wait to take this moving and entertaining production on the road in March."

While the music is diverse, there's a common theme running through the concert, said Kevin Robison, now in his third year as the chorus' full-time artistic director. "Everyone is on an incredible and intriguing journey through life. Some of that journey of discovery is joyous, some of it spiritual, and some carries great sorrow," the artistic director noted. "But through the beauty of music, we can acknowledge and celebrate the knowledge we gain about ourselves – and each other – through that journey."

The first part of the concert program, "Journeys," includes highlights from the chorus' first two seasons under Robison's direction. Wagner's "Pilgrims Chorus," and selections from "Sinfonia Sacra" by Daniel Pinkham are rounded out with classics like "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother," Billy Strayhorn's "Take the A-Train," and the timeless "Georgia On My Mind."

Part two of the concert will feature highlights from the AGMC's critically acclaimed original production of "Shaken, Not Heard: Stories of Gay Men, Faith and Reconciliation" from last season. "The interest generated by this unique and powerful work far exceeded our expectations," Robison admitted. Since it's about each person's personal journey, a shortened version of this work fits perfectly within the theme of our concert tour."

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“The Road Leads Back” begins in Macon on Friday, March 19, when the chorus performs in Theatre Macon at 8 p.m. “Macon is a perfect example of one of the prime reasons I accepted the job with the Atlanta chorus,” Robison noted. “It has deep and vibrant roots in the heritage of music in this country. Home to such notables as Lena Horne, Otis Redding, Little Richard, Randy Crawford, violinist Robert McDuffie and more, it’s no wonder that Macon became the home of the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. And to perform in the intimate and historical old Ritz Theatre in downtown Macon will truly be a delight.”



The chorus bus travels the next day to Savannah, where the AGMC will present a 4 p.m. performance at Asbury Memorial United Methodist Church. The next day, the chorus presents a 3 p.m. concert at Augusta’s state-of-the-art Jabez Sanford Hardin Performing Arts Center. Following a few days back in Atlanta, the chorus presents its final spring tour concert at 8 p.m. Thursday, March 25 in Hugh Hodgson Concert Hall, part of The University of Georgia Performing Arts Center.

The chorus’ busy week culminates in three homecoming concerts Friday, March 26 at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 27, at 2:00 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Virginia Highland Church. “We are so proud to ‘come home’ to Virginia Highland Church, which has a noble history of standing up for equality – both racial and sexual orientation – and which was for a number of years the home of the AGMC,” Robison said.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Macon

Date: Friday, March 19 @ 8:00 PM

Venue: Theatre Macon, 438 Cherry Street, Macon, Georgia 31208

Ticket Price: \$20 – General Admission - Tickets available by calling Theatre Macon at (478) 746-9485

Savannah

Date: Saturday, March 20 @ 4:00 PM

Venue: Asbury Memorial United Methodist Church, 1008 Henry Street, Savannah, GA 31401

Ticket Price: \$20 – Tickets available by calling (404) 320-1030 or online at agmchorus.org

Augusta

Date: Sunday, March 21 @ 3:00 PM

Venue: Jabez Sanford Hardin Performing Arts Center, 720 N Belair Road, Evans, GA 30809

Ticket Price: \$25 – Tickets available by calling (404) 320-1030 or online at agmchorus.org

Athens

Date: Thursday, March 25 @ 8:00 PM

Venue: The University of Georgia Performing Arts Center, Athens, GA 30602

Ticket Price: \$15 – General Admission – Tickets available by calling (888) 289-8497

Atlanta

Date(s): Friday, March 26 @ 8:00 PM and Saturday, March 27 @ 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM

Venue: Virginia Highland Church, 743 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30306

Ticket Price: \$20-\$40 – Tickets available by calling (404) 320-1030 or online at agmchorus.org

ABOUT THE ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS

One of the world's longest-running all-male choruses, the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus has a well-earned reputation for musical leadership and excellence. Since its founding in 1981, the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus has been a voice for diversity and inclusiveness, presenting high-quality musical entertainment evidenced by the presentation of empowering performances throughout the Southeast.

Through the years, the AGMC's volunteer members have been privileged to share the stage with such notables as Leslie Jordan, former poet laureate Maya Angelou, The Atlanta Opera, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Ballet, Turtle Creek Chorale, the International Gay Men's Chorus of Paris, and many more. The AGMC and its select ensemble, Panache, have been proud to perform at benefits for victims of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, for charitable organizations such as the Elton John AIDS Foundation, the Metropolitan Atlanta Community Food Bank, and AIDS Athens, and for community service events such as First Night Atlanta, AIDS Walk Atlanta, the Human Rights Campaign Annual Dinner, and Toys for Tots.

The Chorus has frequently appeared at premier performing arts venues such as the Fox Theatre, Atlanta Symphony Hall, the Cathedral of St. Philip, the Robert Ferst Center for the Performing Arts, the Atlanta Civic Center, Emory University, Agnes Scott College, the Alliance Theatre and the world-class Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre.

The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. GCA also receives support from its partner agency, the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional corporate sponsors include Dan Lax Media, Metrotainment Cafes, IKEA, Integral HR, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

AND COMING THIS SUMMER...BEATLEMANIA

Just when you thought it couldn't get any better than *that*, mark your calendars now for "All You Need is Love: 50 Years of Beatlemania," July 9-10 at The Rialto at Georgia State University in Atlanta. It may seem impossible, but it's been half a century since the Fab Four changed musical styles forever. The AGMC is working from original Beatles scores to bring together an unforgettable night of pop/rock nostalgia, featuring hits such as *A Hard Day's Night*, *With a Little Help From My Friends*, John Lennon's *Imagine* and many more.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT AGMC AND THE UPCOMING SPRING CONCERT SERIES, PLEASE CALL THE ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS AT 404-432-0130 OR VISIT WWW.AGMCHORUS.ORG

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