



PO BOX 277 ~ OLD CHELSEA STATION
NEW YORK NY 10113-0277

CONTACT: KLAY-JAMES ENOS
212-260-1796
KENOS@CHELSEAOPERA.COM
WWW.CHELSEAOPERA.ORG

Chelsea Opera and Kindred Spirits present
What Are We Doing to Our World?

[What Are We Doing to Our World](#) features a cast of singers, dancers, actors, and instrumentalists in a musical celebration of creation and creativity. Featuring music written by [Anne Phillips](#) in diverse musical styles from Choral to Gospel, Latin and Jazz interspersed with dance and stirring passages from influential thinkers: Chief Seattle, John Muir, Madeline L'Engle, and Mark Twain that inspire sustainable environmental awareness and paradigm shift. This production is a timely and spiritual meditation on climate change that effects all communities of the world. The theatrical musical piece is both a celebration of creation and a concerned statement about the future of our environment. The performance is produced by [Chelsea Opera](#) (co-founded by Leonarda Priore and Lynne Hayden-Findlay) with the jazz producing company Kindred Spirits; composed, written and arranged by Anne Phillips. There will be one performance only on Saturday, July 28th at 7:00pm at Christ and St. Stephen's Church (120 West 69th Street, between Broadway and Columbus) NYC. Tickets: Preferred seats: \$35 in advance/\$45 at the door (limited supply). General admission: \$30 in advance/\$40 at the door, Seniors general admission: \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door, students/children (any section): \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door. Visit <http://www.chelseaopera.org/season.html> for more information or call 212-260-1796.

The night will start off with the title song, sung by Emily Gu Siegel, who will be familiar to *Bending Towards the Light ... A Jazz Nativity* audiences as the talented young singer of that production's title number. What follows are a series of songs and inspirational quotes from writers that contemplate the mysteries and wonders of creation. Dancers will preside over the stage, performing the "Waltz of Infinite Love," leading into a spoken passage from a Mark Twain story. A quotation by Robert Ferrar Capon text heralds the beginning of the Capon-inspired "The City That Arises on the Road." A duet reprise of "What Are We Doing to Our World" signals a turn towards the impact of mankind on the environment through pollution and deforestation, alongside words from Chief Seattle about caring for the Earth. A pair of rousing gospel songs and a latin-influenced number round out the performance with a burst of energy and dance representing the diversity of peoples inhabiting the globe. The closing song is a setting of a Phoebe Newman poem, "Why Faith Abides," sung by a choir of voices with a gospel coda. The evening of song and dance will be accentuated by a live band featuring piano, guitar, bass, woodwinds and percussion. The production is composed by Anne Phillips, with stage direction by Beth Ann Kennedy.

5/3/18

Anne Phillips' career has covered almost every area of the music business. In addition to recording several solo albums, from the classic [*Born To Be Blue*](#), to her most recent release, [*Ballet Time*](#) on which she sings with such old friends as Dave Brubeck and Marian McPartland, she has worked as a singer, choral arranger and conductor with many of the music world's leading artists and is widely known in the industry as the writer/arranger/producer of many national commercials. Through her not-for-profit organization, **Kindred Spirits**, her **Children's Jazz Choirs** have been instrumental in introducing inner-city children to the Great American Songbook. Phillips composed and arranged *Bending Towards the Light ... A Jazz Nativity*, which, since its inception in 1985, has been staged throughout the country and in New York City venues such as Birdland, Lincoln Center, and Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, among others. *A Jazz Nativity* has been staged for three years at Christ and St. Stephen's Church in a co-production of Chelsea Opera and Kindred Spirits, and two years in a special Chelsea Opera presentation in Utica, NY.

In the classical arena, Ms. Phillips' ten-minute opera *Tempo Fuori del Tempo* was presented at Weill Recital Hall as a part of an evening of Opera Shorts, another short opera *Plots* was performed at Opera America in a concert by the opera company Aviva Players and her Easter Cantata, *Sing, For The Lord Has Risen*, was presented in concert by the Remarkable Theater Brigade at Jan Hus Church. Her song cycle *An Alaskan Trilogy*, a setting of three poems by Alaskan poet, Phoebe Newman, was performed at the CUNY Graduate Center in collaboration with the National Association of Teachers of Singing. More of her songs were recorded by soprano Monica Harte on the classical label MSR Records. Several of her compositions were featured by Chelsea Opera on a song concert, *Musical Portraits*, in 2014. A program of Phillips' short operas, *That "Certain Age"* was produced by Chelsea Opera in 2017.

Chelsea Opera is a professional company presenting fully staged operas with chamber orchestra. The company provides a nationally recognized venue for professional singers to advance their careers while making opera affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of the community. The fine acoustics of the space provide excellent hearing, and its intimacy allows the audience to feel involved in the opera's story. Of Chelsea Opera's sustainability, Anthony Tommasini of [The New York Times](#) noted in June 2009: "With American opera companies large and small struggling financially and a few going under, [Chelsea Opera is] a patch of encouraging news..." Following its production of Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* last year celebrating the opera's 60th anniversary, writer Jon Sobel declared that Chelsea Opera "certainly ranks as one of the country's preeminent 'small' opera companies."

Formed in 2004 by singers, Lynne Hayden-Findlay and Leonarda Priore, Chelsea Opera was launched with an all-volunteer production of *Suor Angelica*. Initially, Ms. Priore and Ms. Hayden-

Findlay had only intended to produce this one opera. However, artist and audience response was so compelling that they agreed to move forward, incorporating the company and obtaining their IRS non-profit designation in a record eight days. They have since produced an extensive range of standard repertory and contemporary operas, garnering critical acclaim at each outing. Despite its size, Chelsea Opera is the recipient of two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts – Artworks program, most recently for its production of Tom Cipullo’s *Glory Denied*.

Chelsea Opera has received funding from The Barbara Bell Cumming Foundation, The Tow Foundation, The Amphion Foundation, the H.O. Peet Foundation, the NYU Community Fund, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In-kind support has been provided by JetBlue Airways, the official airline of Chelsea Opera.

For further information, visit www.chelseaopera.org or write to kenos@chelseaopera.org

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