

Saturday, December 21, 2024, 5pm
Zellerbach Hall

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus

Holiday Spectacular 2024

Chris Verdugo, *Chief Executive Officer*
Jacob Stensberg, *Artistic Director and Conductor*

FEATURED SOLOISTS

“H-O-H-O-H-O”

Minerva System, Miss Dragathon 2024

“I’ll Be Home”

Victor Jiao + Tye Roman

“Don’t Take It For Granted”

Sean Fenton

“Ocho Kandelikas”

Diego Smith + Jesse Cortez

“San Francisco Christmas”

Vinney Lê

“12 Days of Christmas”

Brandon Jenkins

“Christmas Dance”

Mike Devlin

“Celine Navidad”

Pete Rodway, Jonathan Jones, + Justin Nool

FEATURED MUSICIANS

SFGMC BAND

Danny Sullivan, *piano*

Juan Carreon, *drums*

Aaron Shaul, *bass*

Matt Wrobel, *guitar*

Ken Brill, *synthesizer*

Cory Tiffin, *clarinet and saxophone*

Marvin McFadden, *trumpet 1*

John Trombetta, *trumpet 2*

Jamie Dubberly, *trombone*

VOCAL & SPECIALTY ENSEMBLES

HomoPhonics

Mitch Galli, *Founder and Music Director*

Drew Haven, *Assistant Music Director*

Jeff Becker
Mike Devlin
Sean Fenton
Ryan Fox-Lee
Christopher Grant

Alex Halbritter
Mattee G. Hastings
Brandon Jenkins
Jonathan Jones
Vinney Lê

Justin Nool
Lucas Poliak
Thomas Reeder
Juan Pablo Rico
Ernesto Tovar

The Lollipop Guild

Paul Saccone, *Music Director*

Nick Harper, *Administrative Assistant*

Luke Willis, *Choreographer*

Rylan Ayers
Rick Betita
Benjamin C. Brown
Eric Chau
Doug Curran
David A. Díaz
Gilberto J. Esqueda
Ray Fletcher
Josh Frazier

Michael Friedman
Scout Heath
Rob Jaques
James Lange
Michael Lepage
Eric Mata
Butch Merideth
Mark Nivet

Israel Salgado
Ayden Shupe
Luke Siegle
Joseph Sigman
Sean Shelton
Jeff Sinclair
Nicholas Slater
Sup Suh
Matvey Zelyev

ASL INTERPRETER

Dane K. Lentz

SPECIALTY DANCERS

Tyler Armer
Andrew Caldwell
Sherwin Camacho
Nathaniel Cleveland
Sean Conner
Jesse Cortez
Justin Duhe

Roy Eikelberry
Jason Foster
Raymond Mark Gonzales
Christopher Grant
Dave Hayes Mocchi
Nick Heinzen
Antoine Ho
Brandon Jenkins

Eric Mata
Emerito A. Pacleb Jr.
Lucas Poliak
Ayden Shupe
Jeff Sinclair
Ernesto Tovar
Jeremy Waldorph



PROGRAM

“Let It Snow”

Music and Lyrics by Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn
As performed by Michael Bublé
Arranged by Dave Volpe

“Holiday Road”

Written by Lindsey Buckingham
Arranged by Sharon Udoh

“Silver Bells”

Words and Music by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans
Arranged by Kevin Robison

“A Winter’s Breath”

Music and Poetry by Daniel Hughes

“H-O-H-O-H-O”

Music by Kayleigh Amstutz and Daniel Nigro
Parody Lyrics by Jennifer Lucy Cook
Arranged by Jennifer Lucy Cook

“Somewhere In My Memory”

Performed by The Lollipop Guild

Music by John Williams

Words by Leslie Bricusse

Arranged by Mark Hayes

“Wrap Me Up”

Performed by The Lollipop Guild

Music and Lyrics by Jimmy Fallon, Meghan Trainor, Sean Douglas, and Gian Stone

Arranged by Nicolas Perez

“Underneath The Tree”

Music and Lyrics by Kelly Clarkson and Greg Kurstin

Arranged by Christopher D. Littlefield

“I’ll Be Home”

“I’ll Be Home For Christmas”

Music by Walter Kent

Lyrics by J. Kimball Gannon and Buck Ram

“I’ll Be Home”

Music and Lyrics by Meghan Trainor

Arranged by Steve Huffines

“Don’t Take It For Granted”

Music by Holly Near and Jan Martinelli

Words by Joseph Shapiro and Amy Cook

Based on the word of Cleve Jones

Arranged by J. David Moore

“Ocho Kandelikas”

Music and Lyrics by Flory Jagoda

As performed by Idina Menzel

Arranged by Dave Volpe

“Winter Wonderland”

Music by Felix Bernard

Lyrics by Richard Bernhard Smith

Arranged by Saunder Choi

“San Francisco Christmas”

Performed by HomoPhonics

Music by Dan Ponce

Adapted Lyrics by Kyle Fowler



“12 Days of Christmas”
Performed by HomoPhonics
Arranged by Richard Gregory and Ken Purchase

“Cold Moon”
Music and Lyrics by Nicholas Ryan Kelly

“Silent Night”
Music by Franz Xaver Gruber
Arranged by Danny Sullivan

“Christmas Dance”
Music and Lyrics by Darren Criss
Arranged by Dave Volpe

“Celine Navidad”
Parody Lyrics by Samuel Lundquist and Mitch GGalli
Arranged by Paul Saccone and Dave Volpe (“My Heart Will Go On”)

*This program will be performed without intermission
and last approximately 90 minutes.*

Hello, and Happy Holidays! Welcome to our second annual performance of *Holiday Spectacular* at Cal Performances! We are beyond thrilled to celebrate this magical season with you, our beloved audience, in an unforgettable night of music, joy, and togetherness. This event marks a time when we come together to reflect, celebrate, and renew the spirit of community that is at the heart of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus.

Tonight, we are reminded of the incredible power of music to bring us closer and uplift us. As you look around, know that this joyful gathering at UC Berkeley is made possible by people like you—people who champion the arts, support LGBTQ+ voices, and believe in the transformative power of music. Your support allows our singers to bring forward not only their talents but also their authentic selves. Each performance is an opportunity to inspire, comfort, and

unite, and it's your generosity that sustains our mission and helps us reach new hearts each year.

In a year when the arts continue to face challenges, your presence here tonight carries extra meaning. By being here, you are a part of preserving a rich legacy of musical expression and social change. Your support ensures that the Bay Area continues to be a beacon of artistic freedom, creativity, and acceptance.

Thank you for sharing this beautiful tradition with us, for celebrating diversity, and for making our work possible. It is our sincere wish that tonight's performance brings light, laughter, and warmth into your hearts and homes this season.

With gratitude and all our best wishes,

—Chris Verdugo, *CEO*
Jacob Stensberg, *Artistic Director*
& *Conductor*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus

Mission:

To lead by creating extraordinary music and experiences that build community, inspire activism, and foster compassion at home and around the world.

Vision:

We envision a world inspired and unified by the music we create.

Values:

We believe in the transformative power of music to heal, to enlighten and to foster unity. We embrace the life affirming changes we create within and beyond our chorus community. We evolve society's views toward LGBTQ people through our commitment to excellence. We honor all who came before us and whose sacrifices made it possible for us to raise our voices.



Chris Verdugo
Chief Executive
Officer

Chris Verdugo (he/him) is honored to be the first CEO of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. His introduction to the gay choral movement came at the early age of 18, when he joined the Gay Men's Chorus of South Florida. Three years later, he became Artistic Director of Paragon Productions, choreographing, directing, and producing theatrical productions for cruise lines and hotels throughout the world. In 1999, he combined his event production background with his fundraising skills, working with the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis and Miami Beach's Winter Party Music Festival, and on the board of directors for the South Beach Gay Men's Chorus.

Upon moving to Los Angeles in 2003, Verdugo began to focus on LGBT and social justice issues, working with various non-profits including the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Equality California, Human Rights Campaign, and GLAAD, and producing Queer Lounge at Sundance for four years.

He joined the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles in 2006 as a singer and five years later was named Executive Director. Under Verdugo, the chorus built an international reputation for musical excellence, doubled its budget, experienced a massive expansion incorporating education programs in Los Angeles' high schools, and launched a national music tour entitled, "It Gets Better!"

He joined the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in 2016 as Executive Director and in 2022 was appointed Chief Executive Officer. In addition to his duties with the chorus, he oversees the Chan National Queer Arts Center, the nation's first Queer Arts Center.

Verdugo is a proud member of the Recording Academy and serves as a Senior Advisor to Source Journeys, the leading LGBTQ luxury travel company.



**Jacob Stensberg
Artistic Director
and Conductor**

Jacob Stensberg (he/him) is thrilled to be ushering in his third season as Artistic Director and Conductor of the

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus and the Chan National Queer Arts Center. Prior to his appointment with SFGMC, he was Assistant Director for Purdue Musical Organizations at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

In addition to his work at Purdue, Stensberg enjoyed working with Butler University (Indianapolis) choirs and orchestras,

the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, the Circle City Chamber Choir, the Booth Tarkington Civic Theater, Zach&Zack Productions, BOBDIREX, the Eclectic Pond Theatre Company, and the Civic Theater of Lafayette.

Stensberg's inaugural season with the San Francisco Gay Men's chorus included record-setting *Holiday Spectacular* and *Disney PRIDE in Concert* concerts, and his debut conducting the San Francisco Symphony in partnership with the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus this past July on *Hello Yellow Brick Road*.

Stensberg received his formal and formative training from Dr. Kristina Boerger at Carroll University in Waukesha, Wisconsin, where he earned a bachelor's degree in music education. He earned his master's degree in conducting from Butler University, where he studied with Dr. Eric Stark.



**Wil Wright
Director of
Operations
and Production**

Wil Wright (he/him) is the Director of Operations and Production for the San Francisco Gay Men's

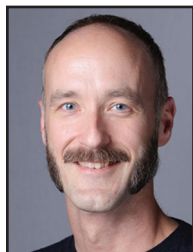
Chorus and Chan National Queer Arts Center. His career with SFGMC began in 2012 as a volunteer stage manager and he has continued to grow with the organization. Prior to SFGMC, he worked for Feinstein's at the Nikko and BroadwaySF. Wright originally fell in love with technical theater and theater arts administration in Atlanta (GA), working as both a stage manager for Dad's Garage Theatre and as the box office manager for the Center for Puppetry Arts. He lives in San Francisco with his partner and their two French bulldogs. They spend much of their time attending live performances locally, on Broadway, and abroad.



Mitch Galli
Associate Director
of Music Education
and Outreach

Mitch Galli (he/him) is a conductor, arranger, lyricist, educator, singer, and pianist. Originally from Wil-

liamstown, MA, he holds a bachelor's degree in music from St. Lawrence University and a master's in urban education, administration, and policy from Loyola Marymount University. Galli moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 2012 as a corps member with Teach for America. He taught high school mathematics and music for four years in Oakland and middle school music in San Francisco for one year. Galli joined SFGMC in January 2015. He founded Homophonics, the chorus' *a cappella* ensemble in August 2015, and continues to direct the group. Galli is also director of the chorus' educational outreach program, RHYTHM: Reaching Youth Through Music, which was established in February 2018. He has conducted SFGMC in performances across the country including at Park City, UT, Outfest Film Festival in Los Angeles, and Charleston and Greenville, South Carolina.



Danny Sullivan
Principal
Accompanist and
Music Supervisor

Originally from Bellingham (WA), Danny Sullivan earned his bachelor's degree in music from Berklee

College of Music, with a concentration in piano performance and pedagogy. Prior to joining SFGMC in 2023, he was on the music faculty and the staff pianist at San Francisco Ballet School, and a pianist at Pacific Northwest Ballet, Boston Ballet, and the Boston Conservatory. He continues to accompany classes at Smuin Ballet, ODC, SFDanceworks, and the San Francisco Ballet School, where he developed and taught a music class for dancers. Sullivan's has directed the music and/or played keyboard for dozens of musical theater, cabaret, and opera productions, ranging from national tours to local productions in Boston, Seattle, San Francisco. Favorite productions include *An American In Paris*, *Hello Dolly*, *Shrek*, *The Color Purple*, *Into The Woods*, and *Chicago*. He performs annually during the San Francisco Botanical Garden's *Flower Piano*, and his orchestrations can be heard at a SFGMC performance near you. Sullivan has found SFGMC's mission of creating change through music to be incredibly inspiring and necessary work, and is thrilled to be a part of it!

STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

SFGMC Staff + Contractors

Jacob Stensberg, *Artistic Director*
 Christopher Verdugo, *Chief Executive Officer*
 Wil Wright, *Director of Operations and Production*
 Sarah Cohan, *Director of Development*
 Richard Lonsdorf, *Director of Programming*
 Mitch Galli, *Associate Director of Music Education and Outreach*
 Tony Taylor, *Rental and Sales Administrator*
 Holis Buentempo, *Facilities Manager*
 Molly Sender, *Corporate and Institutional Giving Manager*
 Richard Claar, *Database and Development Associate*
 Danny Sullivan, *Principal Accompanist and Music Supervisor*
 Crystal Watts, *Production Associate*
 Andrew Barrett, *Marketing Consultant*
 Scott Walton, *Publicist*
 BPM Creative Labs, *Promotional Artwork*
 Marco Ponce de Leon, *Season Graphic Design*
 Lisa Marie “Phoenix” Jackson, *Marketing Project Manager*
 Joe Bissell, *Social Media Manager*

Production

Wil Wright, *Production Manager*
 Crystal Watts, *Stage Manager*
 Keith Pepper, Gary Richards, Sunny Shergill, *Assistant Stage Managers*
 Steve Valdez, *Choreographer*
 Michael Tate, *Dance Captain*
 Nathan Cates, *Chorus Wardrobe Assistant*
 Sal Baglieri, Andrew Caldwell, Sherwin Camacho, *Chorus Logistics Coordinators*

Leadership

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 Soundcloud: [soundcloud.com/sfgmc](https://www.soundcloud.com/sfgmc)

CHORUS ROSTER

SAN FRANCISCO GAY MEN'S CHORUS

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Randy Acosta
Tyler Armer
W. Fran Astorga
Jack Avery
Alex Bien
Derek Blechinger
Charles Bruce
Andrew Caldwell
^Sherwin Camacho
Ron Carranza
Vincent Chiang
Nathaniel Cleveland
Julian Francis Clift
Sean Conner
Alex Cook
Jesse Cortez
Anú Harrison Crenshaw
Mike Devlin
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^Gilberto J. Esqueda
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Andrew Gagnon
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Xander Gonzalez
Drew Hardy
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^Brandon Jenkins
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Vinney Lé
James Machado
Andrew Marsh
Aaron McRae
Jason Melehani
Mark Mezak
Yulee Newsome
Michael Nguyen
Mark Nivet
*Justin Nool
Tim Pavek
Juan Pablo Rico
Sean Shelton
^Ayden Shupe
*Luke Siegle
Jeff Sinclair
Sup Suh
Oky Sulistio
Walker Weatherly
Fei Zhao

TENOR 2

^Brian Abascal
Richard Adamson
Randy Ady
Manuel Raguro Apolonio
Sergio Aquino
Sal Baglieri
Jeff Becker
Sam Brondfield
Benjamin C. Brown
^Steve Burton

Chuck Calixto
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Bruce Carpenter
Nathan Cates
Timothy Cavanaugh
Justin Donahue
Justin Duhe
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Mark Forrer
Jason Foster
Kyle Fowler
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Earl Friedberg
Steve Garber
^Brad Gibson
Michael Giles
Marc Greene
Jared M. Hansen
Nick Harper
Tim Heidal
Antoine Ho
Don Howerton
Michael Imprescia
Clint Johnson
Justin Kim
Andrew Kwan
*Randy Laroche
Steve Luppino
Daniel Macri
Angelo Martinez
Eric Mata
Erik Mebust
Duran Mishler
Paul Moo
Nico Oppen
J.R. Parish
Justin Pearson
Christian Petrangelo
Lucas Poliak
Joseph Pritchard
Ethan Roberts
Jonathan Rosa
Will Rubin
Thomas Scott
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Timothy Sherlock
Chris Stevenson
Ken Sutha
*Billy Tang
^Michael Tate
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Evan Vaughan
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Randy White
Jess Williams-Gamboa

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^Drew Haven
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Peter Kokoszka
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Oxford Lewis
Craig Matthews
Ray McCabe
Butch Merideth
*Rob Mitchell
^Case Nafziger
Kyle Nishkian
Jason Nunan
Chris Padula
Curtis Ponzi
Quinton Ramirez
Tye Roman
J. Max Rosen
Robert Rufo
Israel Salgado
DC Sands
Jonathan Searle
Nicholas Slater
Diego Smith
Christian Stathopoulos
John Stiehler
Adam Tatarsky
Jordan Tauber-Marshall
Remy Todd
Ernesto Tovar
Jeremy Waldorpe
Ben White
David John Wilson
Mark Wise
Todd Yetter
Peter Young

BASS

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Vaughn Mouton
Jason Murray
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^Paul Saccone
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^Section Leader