

In Collaboration with



**School of Music & Theater and University Studies**



**Materials Compiled by:**

Coty Raven Morris  
Assistant Professor of Choir, Music Education, and Social Justice  
coty2@pdx.edu

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School of Music & Theater and University Studies

BEING HUMAN



# Program Reel

A YouTube video player thumbnail for 'Being Human Together Fall 2023 Reel'. The thumbnail includes a profile picture of a person with glasses, the video title, a 'Share' button, and a red play button icon. Below the video player, there are logos for 'street roots', 'First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)', and 'HOMEpdx loving people face-to-face'. At the bottom, it says 'Materials Compiled by: Coty Raven Morris, Assistant Professor of Choir, Music Education, and Social Justice, coty2@pdx.edu'. There is also a 'Watch on YouTube' button at the bottom left of the thumbnail.

## You can also visit

# [www.beinghumantgether.net/about](http://www.beinghumantgether.net/about)

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[coty2@pdx.edu](mailto:coty2@pdx.edu)



## Introduction

The Gregory K. and Mary Chomenko Hinckley Professor of Choir, Music Education & Social Justice Endowment was established in 2020 through a generous contribution by Gregory and Mary Chomenko Hinckley. This brand-new, one-of-a-kind position focuses on choral instruction and preparing future music educators inside the classroom, while lifting up marginalized communities through music outside the classroom. Given the urgent need for racial justice, rising houselessness and many inequities in the community, this position was conceived by Ethan Sperry, Barre Stoll Professor & Director of Choral Activities. In keeping with the University's motto, "Let knowledge serve the city", the School of Music & Theater moved to formally create this new position to help build a more equitable Portland and promote healing through the power of singing by combining rigorous musical study with community outreach initiatives.

Coty Raven Morris joined Portland State University in 2021 as the first Visiting Assistant Professor to hold this position. Morris was previously the Director of Choirs at Crosby High School in the Houston area and served as the Outreach Choir Director at the Michigan State University Community Music School. Morris graduated from Texas State University- San Marcos where she studied with Drs. Lynn Brinckmeyer, Jonathan Babcock, and Joey Martin. She received her Masters of Music in Choral Conducting from Michigan State University in spring 2020 under Drs. David Rayl, Jonathan Reed, and Sandra Snow. Morris is a sought-after clinician and artist across the country and has recently served as the Clinician and Headliner for Florida American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), Montana ACDA, and the Northwest National Music Education Conference. She is also the founder of Being Human Together, a budding music education community striving to normalize difficult topics in the choir world through conversation and connection. BHT seeks to discuss traditionally taboo topics like mental health, systemic oppression, diversity, and inclusivity.



*Coty Raven Morris*

Her most recent acknowledgments include being a nominee for the Portland State University George C Hoffman Faculty award as well as a Semi-finalist for the 2023 Music Educators Grammy! Morris personally knows the power that music education can have on a young person's life, and what the transformative joy of choral singing can do for those experiencing trauma. Her own turbulent childhood and adolescence was marked by the loss of her mother and grandmother as a young girl, which led her to uproot from her hometown of New Orleans to live with extended family in Austin, Texas. Morris found her calling through her high school choir, which inspired her to pursue her undergraduate degree in music education at Texas State University and teach in public schools in Texas. It's these experiences, both personal and professional, that provide Morris with the perspective and credentials to forge a path for this exciting and impactful new professorship at PSU.

This report provides a summary of the program origins, initiatives, and offers a preview into what is planned for the 2023-2024 school year.





PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

# CHOIRS



*YOU BELONG HERE.*

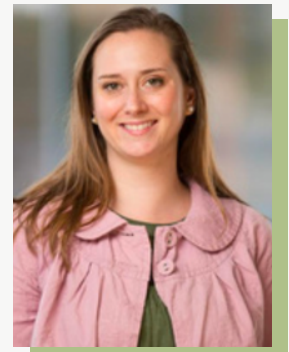
## Faculty



**Ethan Sperry**  
Director of Choral Activities

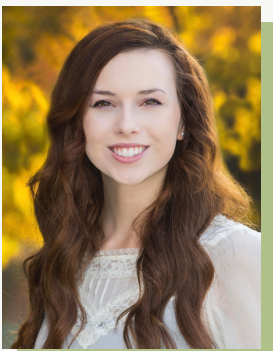


**Coty Raven Morris**  
Assistant Professor of Music Education  
and Social Justice



**Sherry Alves**  
Professor of Jazz Voice

## Graduate Teaching Assistants



**Kimi Gubler**



**Molly Kerns**



**Ian Timmons**



**Peter Leopold Freeman**



# Social Justice: Let Knowledge Serve the City

## The Choir for Houseless Communities Initiative



*PSU student volunteers perform at Portland Homeless Family Solutions*

The Choir for Houseless Communities is a pilot project led by Morris to bring music education to organizations serving vulnerable populations in the Greater Portland area, including First Christian Church, Portland Homeless Family Solutions, Mt. Scott Alternative High School, Mt. Hood Elementary School Headstart, Westmoreland Union Manor, and Street Roots. Over the course of the past year, Morris has spent her time plotting the structure of programming and PSU music student involvement, as well as establishing connections throughout the community in organizations supporting target populations. This groundwork laid over the past year has culminated in commitments from several organizations to participate in four to six “Community Sings” events in Fall 2022 and a

community festival in Spring 2023.

The “Community Sings” will receive support from PSU student volunteers and the PSU Vocal Area coordinator during the fall 2022 term. Starting in winter 2023, a new one-credit course, “Social Justice Lab Choir,” will be offered through the School of Music & Theater and University Studies, and will be complemented by the Culturally Responsive Teaching Course in the School of Education. The course is based on fundamental music literacy with a goal to focus on volunteer initiatives (such as the Spring 2023 community festival), and music for future “Community Sings”.

The planned “Community Sings” program will allow students to create fellowship through music by teaching community members how to sing specific choral pieces by rote over the course of a few weeks. Student volunteers and community members will came together for a public group performance of the rehearsed music in December 2022. The vision for this performance was to invite the community to celebrate the end of the year with a multitude of cultures, and there are plans to involve other performance groups including Aurora, a semi-professional women’s choir; Bravo Youth Orchestra; and PSU’s Rose and Thorn choirs, two of the university’s auditioned choirs.

Additional programming scheduled for fall 2022 includes:

- **Collaboration with Street Roots**—Street Roots is a nonprofit media organization intertwined with the lives of people experiencing homelessness and poverty. This program will serve as the staple ensemble connecting Portland State Choirs and the houseless population. Morris will be leading workshops and rehearsals at their facility. These individuals will also participate in the December 2023 performance and co-host a festival in June 2025.
- **Collaboration with the Maybelle Center**—This program integrates the arts into the everyday lives of older adults by fostering the creation of choirs in assisted living communities and

senior centers. Morris will be leading a workshop with seniors served by the Maybelle Center. These individuals participated in the Fall 2022 "Believe" concert and will also participate in the December 2023 performance. They will also headline the Street Roots festival in Spring 2023.

An important component of this program involves engaging houseless members creatively with music, while also connecting them with social services and resources. These music outreach initiatives overall not only seek to create a broader sense of healing and possibility for the Portland houseless community, but will also offer students the opportunity to truly enact the university motto, "Let Knowledge Serve the City."

### **Concert Series and Community Sings:**

The planned "Community Sings" will allow students to create fellowship through music by learning a selection of songs by rote, joined by piano, percussion, and a company of voices with no preparation needed! Our goal is that through our community sings, participants will foster relationships with others through song.

- **Believe** - In this concert experience developed through a season of giving, grieving and growing, the PSU Social Justice Choirs under the direction of Coty Raven Morris present an evening of holiday and cultural selections, with guest performances by the Maybelle Community Singers, PSU Choirs, Bravo Youth Orchestra and more.
- **We Are the Music Makers** - The Portland State University Choirs, Community Chorus and guest artists present a mix of classical greats and pop hits, with a community sing, in celebration of "Music in Our Schools" month.
- **YOUNison** - "In YOUNison" is presented by CODA (Cultivating Opportunities, Discovering Artistry). Join us for an evening of community building and inspiration while enjoying performances by PSU's University Choirs, Community Chorus, Combined Rose and Thorns, and Guest Artists.

### **Music Education Bridge Program**

In this Bridge Program, PSU students will lead elementary through high school-aged students through rehearsals and leadership programs while attaining experience in the field of education. Ensembles in this collaboration include, but are not limited to, Friends of the Children-Portland, Bravo Youth Orchestra, and Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir.

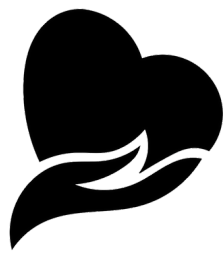
### **Being Human Together Youth Summit**

The Portland State Choir Social Justice Initiative and University Studies collaborate for the first BHT Youth Summit! This day conference hosted in Lincoln Hall will bring together Portland area high school students and PSU music students for a collaborative learning experience. Portland State music students will lead workshops, social activities, and serve as an audience for the high school student music presentations. Featuring performances from Portland State ensembles and a Community sing, the day is sure to be rewarding for all!

**PSU Choir Concert Dates can be found on the last page.**



# BEING HUMAN



# Together SINGS!



## BHT Three Pillars

### -Community Sings-

an interactive program that allows participants to build fellowship by singing along side community members. This interactive experience allows all to buy in at their window of comfortability with no preparation or previous experience necessary.

### -A Choir for Houseless Communities-

this project led brings music education to organizations serving vulnerable populations in the Greater Portland area, including (but not limited to) First Christian Church, Portland Homeless Family Solutions, Mt. Scott Alternative High School, Westmoreland Union Manor, and Street Roots.

### -Collaboration with Portland State-

The BHT Youth initiative uses music education resources to empower young people through wellness and leadership workshops. By being creative with the learning space, budding educators and young people experience learning while building character development in creative mediums.

-YOUTH-  
-NEIGHBORS-  
-COMMUNITY-





*Community*



## **A Community in Song is a Community Connected**

The Portland State University Choirs have expanded their Social Justice Initiative to include community members in action during concert performances. The objective being accessibly artistry, the practice of community making and vulnerability, as well as promotion of initiatives. The "Community Sings" will receive support from PSU student volunteers and the PSU Vocal Area coordinator during the Future plans include a new one-credit course, "Social Justice Lab Choir," will be offered through the School of Music & Theater and University Studies, and will be complemented by the Culturally Responsive Teaching Course in the School of Education. The course is based on fundamental music literacy with a goal to focus on volunteer initiatives (such as the Spring 2025 community festival), and music for future "Community Sings".

In Collaboration with





**CODA:**  
***Cultivating Opportunities,  
 Discovering Artistry***

The Supper and Sing events are the first collaboration between community entities and PSU SOMT to create a space for community and music making specifically for the Houseless population of Downtown Portland. DATES TO COME!

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The Phoenix gala is the first of its kind! With a combined effort of Portland, State University, Choirs, open house, Street Roots, the RACC council, and other local organizations, houseless creatives will be given a space to not only showcase their gifts but also participate in a black-tie event to support their continued creativity and our local initiatives to help our neighbors in need. There will be live music, a dance floor, henna, an auction, and much more!

*The Phoenix Gala*



*Tuxs, Chucks  
 Crowns and Gowns*

Friday, March 8, 2024  
 4:00 PM - 8:00PM

**OpenHAUS**  
 5020 NE Martin Luther King BLVD  
 Portland, Or. 97211

*After Party to Follow*







Professor Morris teaching at the first BHT Youth Summit in Lincoln Hall. May 31, 2023

### Meet Prof. Morris!

Coty Raven Morris (she/her) is the Professor of Choir, Music Education, and Social Justice at PSU. The Founder of BHT, she is a huge fan of DJing, Boxing, and random classroom sing-a-longs and improv sessions. You can reach out to her about Choir, BHT, or fellowship over coffee at [coty2@pdx.edu](mailto:coty2@pdx.edu)



### What is Being Human Together?

Being Human Together (BHT) is a community rooted in music education striving to normalize difficult topics in our field through conversation and connection. We seek to discuss traditionally taboo topics like mental health, systemic oppression, diversity, and inclusivity.

The research of BHT is now based out of Portland State University where Coty serves as the Assistant Professor of Choir, Music Education, and Social Justice. The three Pillars of BHT are Youth, Neighbors, and Community. BHT aims to share scholarship and resources to members of the Portland community and beyond. Learn more at [www.beinghumantogogether.net](http://www.beinghumantogogether.net)



### Meet Peter!

Peter Freeman (he/him) is a first year Choral Graduate Student at Portland State University. He can often be spotted in fashionable sweaters and other Fall attire. Peter is enthusiastic about bringing his community choir experience and other gifts to Being Human Together and the Portland State community! You can email him at [petefree@pdx.edu](mailto:petefree@pdx.edu)



# Lean into the Dissonance...

HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US!



10/23/23 - Peter Freeman, PSU Choral Grad Student rehearsing the New Street Riots Choir (name pending)

## Monday, November 6th - Phoenix community jam 2

meet outside of Street Roots (Merchant Hotel)

11:00 AM - Noon

## BHT Artist Jam

12:30 PM - 12:45 PM, LH 37

## Monday, Nov. 13th - Oregon Community Foundation

Fundraiser and performance, 4:00 - 6:00 PM

## Monday, Nov. 20th - Phoenix community jam 2

11:00 AM - Noon

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY CHOIRS PRESENT

AT THE

FOUNDATION

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 7:30pm

PDX.EDU/MUSIC-THEATER

@BHT\_101  
@PSUCHOIRS

## WHAT'S NEW?

### PHOENIX GALA

The Phoenix Gala is a collaboration between the PSU Choir Social Justice initiatives, OpenHAUS, and Street Roots. This black-tie event fundraiser will feature a red carpet, dj, live painting henna, and performances by the PSU Social Justice Choir and our neighbors at Street Roots .

Save the Date: March 8, 2024

4:00 - 8:00 PM!

### WE NEED YOU!

Play and instrument or sing? Want to sing with low stakes but a high reward? We are looking for volunteers to be a core group of musicians to perform with our Neighbors at Street Roots as well as at a fundraising event for our initiatives! **You can find the dates to the left.**

Interested?

Sign-up [here](https://beinghumantogether.net/) or go to [beinghumantogether.net!](https://beinghumantogether.net/)

### WELLNESS CHECK

How was your spirit? Starting off a new year can be both exciting and overwhelming. Though it sounds cliché, speaking these words out loud allow us to realize that the feeling is temporary and tangible, and that there are things that we can put into practice to help us with routine! If you are questioning what resources are available to you, please speak with a professor or advisor! Remember, you are not alone!- CRM

# WHICH CHOIR IS RIGHT FOR ME? THERE IS A CHOIR FOR EVERYONE.

## CHAMBER CHOIR



The internationally acclaimed PSU Chamber Choir is the premier choral ensemble at Portland State University. Comprised of 40 talented singers, the Chamber Choir performs music at the

highest level of choral artistry. Participation in the Chamber Choir is open to all PSU students, regardless of major, but requires a considerable amount of skill and previous choral experience as well as a commitment to hard work and musical excellence. The Chamber Choir is conducted by Ethan Sperry.

The Chamber Choir rehearses Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 2:00-3:30 PM. The Chamber Choir holds auditions each spring for the following school year. We are sorry that there are no more openings at this time. Please look for auditions in May 2024.

## UNIVERSITY CHOIR



The University Choir is open to all members of the PSU community, regardless of prior musical experience. With its focus on the musical education of its members, the University Choir performs

a wide range of choral music from all style periods. This ensemble is an ideal place for voice and music education majors beginning university-level study, music majors who are new to singing, non-music majors with choral experience, or those wishing to explore their voice for the first time.

University Choir rehearses Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4:00- 5:50 PM and performs once per term! The Wednesday ensemble is conducted by Kimi Gubler, Peter Leopold Freeman, and Coty Raven Morris, and the Thursday ensemble by Molly Kerns, Ian Timmons, and Coty Raven Morris. No audition is required for either section. It is possible to enroll in both sections.

## ROSE & THORN CHOIR

Rose Choir is an advanced tenor/bass choir and Thorn Choir is an advanced soprano/alto choir. Both are select ensembles comprised of PSU students of all majors. These choirs are high-level musical ensembles ideal for voice and music education majors, music majors who are new to singing, or non-music majors with choral experience.



Rose Choir and Thorn Choir are conducted by Coty Raven Morris, Kimi Gubler, and Molly Kerns.

Both choirs rehearse Tuesdays & Thursdays from 2:00-3:50 PM and perform 2-4 times per term. These two choirs will combine frequently to perform mixed choral literature as well as treble and bass music.

## PSU VOCAL COLLECTIVE

The PSU Vocal Collective is an auditioned vocal jazz ensemble that performs a wide variety of contemporary repertoire including jazz, pop, rock, gospel and more. Made up of 8-12 voices and rhythm section, the Collective explores music with complex harmony and vocal textures. In addition to campus performances, this group performs regionally at local jazz clubs, festivals, sporting events, and schools. PSU Vocal Collective rehearses Tuesday and Thursday from 4:00-5:30.

## COMMUNITY CHORUS

The Community Chorus is Portland State's newest choir, open to all PSU faculty, staff and alumni who are dedicated to the art of ensemble singing. Its mission is to provide a place for all Portland State employees and alumni to continue singing during the work day. The choir meets to sing great literature including classical, sacred, spiritual, folk, and popular music.

The Community Chorus rehearses Tuesdays & Thursdays from 12:00- 12:50 PM and performs once per term.



@BHT\_101

@PSUCHOIRS

**2024**

BEING HUMAN



**Together**

**YOUTH SUMMIT**

**MAY 16, 2024**

**9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

**LINCOLN HALL**

**Portland State University**

In Collaboration with



**Portland State**  
UNIVERSITY

**University Studies and the School of Music &  
Theater**

@BHT\_101

@PSUCHOIRS



Portland State Choirs and Oregon Inquiry in collaboration present the first BHT Youth Summit!

**Who:** Portland State University music students, Oregon Inquiry and University Studies, Portland area high school students and music students

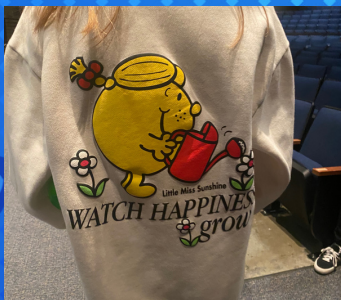
**What:** workshops, social activities, poster presentations, Community Sing, & Portland State ensemble performances!

**MAY 16, 2024**  
**9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**  
**LINCOLN HALL**  
**Portland State University**



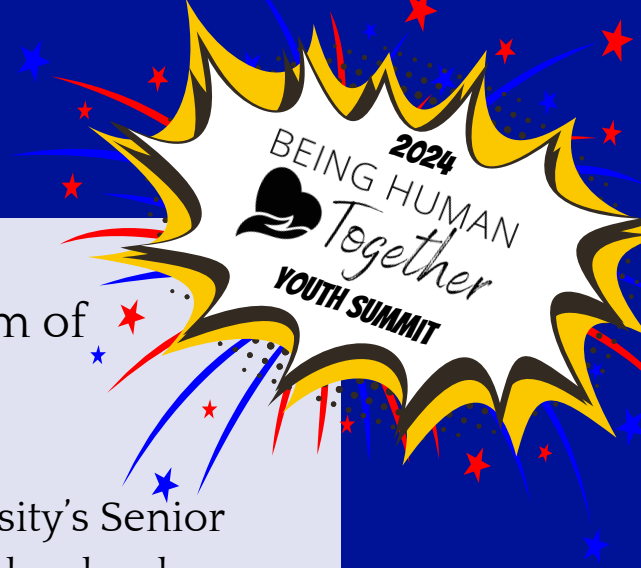


The Portland State Choir Social Justice Initiative and University Studies collaborate for the first BHT Youth Summit! This day conference hosted in Lincoln Hall will bring together Portland area high school students and PSU music students for a collaborative learning experience. Portland State music students will lead workshops, social activities, and serve as an audience for the high school student music presentations. Featuring performances from Portland State ensembles and a Community sing, the day is sure to be rewarding for all!



## Oregon Inquiry

High School dual credit program of  
University Studies



Building on the success of Portland State University's Senior Inquiry dual-credit program at Portland area high schools, **Oregon Inquiry** is designed for high school seniors. Taught by college professors, this 15-credit College course is an opportunity for students to develop competency and confidence with academic identity and successfully launch into college and lifelong learning. Students undertake hands-on, interdisciplinary learning in theme-based courses.

In 2022-23, our partners include Multnomah Educational Service District TRIO Program at Helensview School, and Latino Network's Escalera program at Parkrose High School.

### How can music change the world?

This year, Oregon Inquiry students have been learning with the theme "Power and Imagination." They have spent five weeks exploring the relationship of music to movements of social change.

The posters they are showing present learning about topics that range from the Chicano Movement to the Umbrella Movement, and reflect the interests and curiosities of these emerging researchers.





Winter Term

Monday, 1/8

Summit Registration Opens

Monday, 2/12

Engagement Event

\*Friday, 3/1

CONCERT 2: BUILD AGAIN

Spring Term

Monday, 4/8

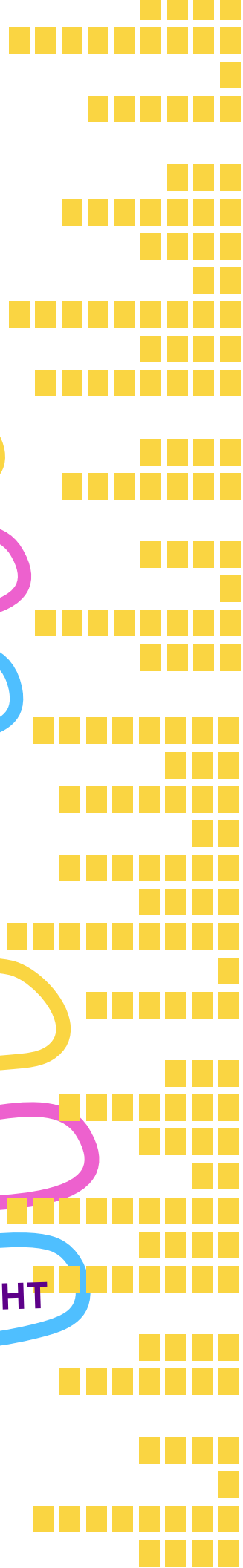
Engagement Event

Wednesday, 5/16

Youth Summit

\*Friday, 5/31

FINAL CONCERT: INTO THE LIGHT



**HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?  
ATTEND THE FIRST MEETING OF EACH COURSE.**



## AUDITION PROCESS

**For University Choir and Community Chorus:**  
Attend the information session on the first day of class - no audition is required.

**For Rose Choir & Thorn Choir:**

1. Sign-up for an audition time here and complete the audition form [here](#).
2. Show up to Prof Morris' office (Lincoln Hall 243D) at your audition time. Make sure to give yourself time to find her office.

If the times provided, do not work with your schedule, email Professor Morris at [coty2@pdx.edu](mailto:coty2@pdx.edu) or attend the information session.

**For the audition:**

3. The audition will be short (5-10 minutes) and will test your voice, ear, and sight-reading abilities.
4. You should prepare a short song or part of a song (approx. 60 seconds long) that you can sing by yourself with no piano or backing track. The song can be Classical, Music Theater, Folk or Pop Music.

If you have further questions, please contact Ethan at [ethansperry@gmail.com](mailto:ethansperry@gmail.com) or Coty at [coty2@pdx.edu](mailto:coty2@pdx.edu).  
See you in choir!

## CHAMBER CHOIR

Unfortunately there are no openings for this year's Chamber Choir. Please look for auditions in May 2024.

## ROSE & THORN CHOIR

Tuesday, Sept. 26th, 2:00 PM in Cramer 453.

## UNIVERSITY CHOIR

Wednesday, Sept. 27 or Thursday, Sept. 28,  
4:00 PM in Cramer 453.

## PSU VOCAL COLLECTIVE

Auditions occur at the start of the term. Contact Sherry Alves for more information - [alves4@pdx.edu](mailto:alves4@pdx.edu)

## COMMUNITY CHORUS

Tuesday, Sept. 26th, 12:05 PM in Cramer 453.



# CHOIRS

# 2023-24 SEASON

## FROM THE DUST

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL  
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10, 7:30pm  
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12, 4:00pm

## AT THE FOUNDATION

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
FRIDAY DECEMBER 1, 7:30pm

## GOLDEN

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
FRIDAY MARCH 1, 7:30pm  
SUNDAY MARCH 3, 4:00pm

## BUILD AGAIN

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
MONDAY MARCH 4, 7:30pm

## RISING

ST PHILIP NERI CHURCH  
FRIDAY MAY 3, 7:30pm

## A NEW DAWN

VIKING PAVILLION  
SUNDAY MAY 19, 4:00pm

## INTO THE LIGHT

FIRST UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
FRIDAY MAY 31, 7:30pm

### Performances at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall

#### Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*

Thorn Choir with the Oregon Symphony  
November 18, 7:30pm  
November 19, 2:00pm  
November 20, 7:30pm

#### Handel's *Messiah*


Chamber Choir with the Oregon Symphony  
December 2, 7:30pm  
December 3, 7:30pm  
December 4, 7:30pm

#### Beethoven's *Symphony #9*

PSU Choirs with the Oregon Symphony  
December 30, 7:30pm  
December 31, 7:30pm

#### Mozart's *Requiem*

Chamber Choir with Oregon Symphony  
April 6, 7:30pm  
April 7, 2:00pm  
April 8, 7:30pm

 @psuchoirs  
@PSU\_SOMT

 Portland State  
University Choirs

 [pdx.edu/music-theater/](http://pdx.edu/music-theater/)



Portland  
State  
UNIVERSITY

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## School of Music & Theater and University Studies



### ***CONNECT WITH US***

**Coty Raven Morris**

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Professor of Choir, Music Education,  
and Social Justice

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[Being Human Together](#)

**Sarah Dougher**

Oregon Inquiry Coordinator

[sed@pdx.edu](mailto:sed@pdx.edu)

[University Studies Website](#)

**Peter Freeman**

Graduate Teaching Assistant

[petefree@pdx.edu](mailto:petefree@pdx.edu)

### ***LEARN MORE BELOW!***

**Being Human Together: Bringing  
Wellness to Portland**

Wednesday, October 25, 2023,  
12:00 noon | The Arlington Club

**Being Human Together Program**

Fall Dean's Council Meeting

Friday, October 27, 2023,

10:30 AM | Lincoln Hall 326

**Intersectional Communities**

[The Arts at the Vanguard of Change](#)  
[speaker series](#)

Tuesday, May 14, 2024,

12:00 noon | Lincoln Hall 121

**Materials Compiled by:**

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