

The Broadway Symphony
Seattle Chamber Singers

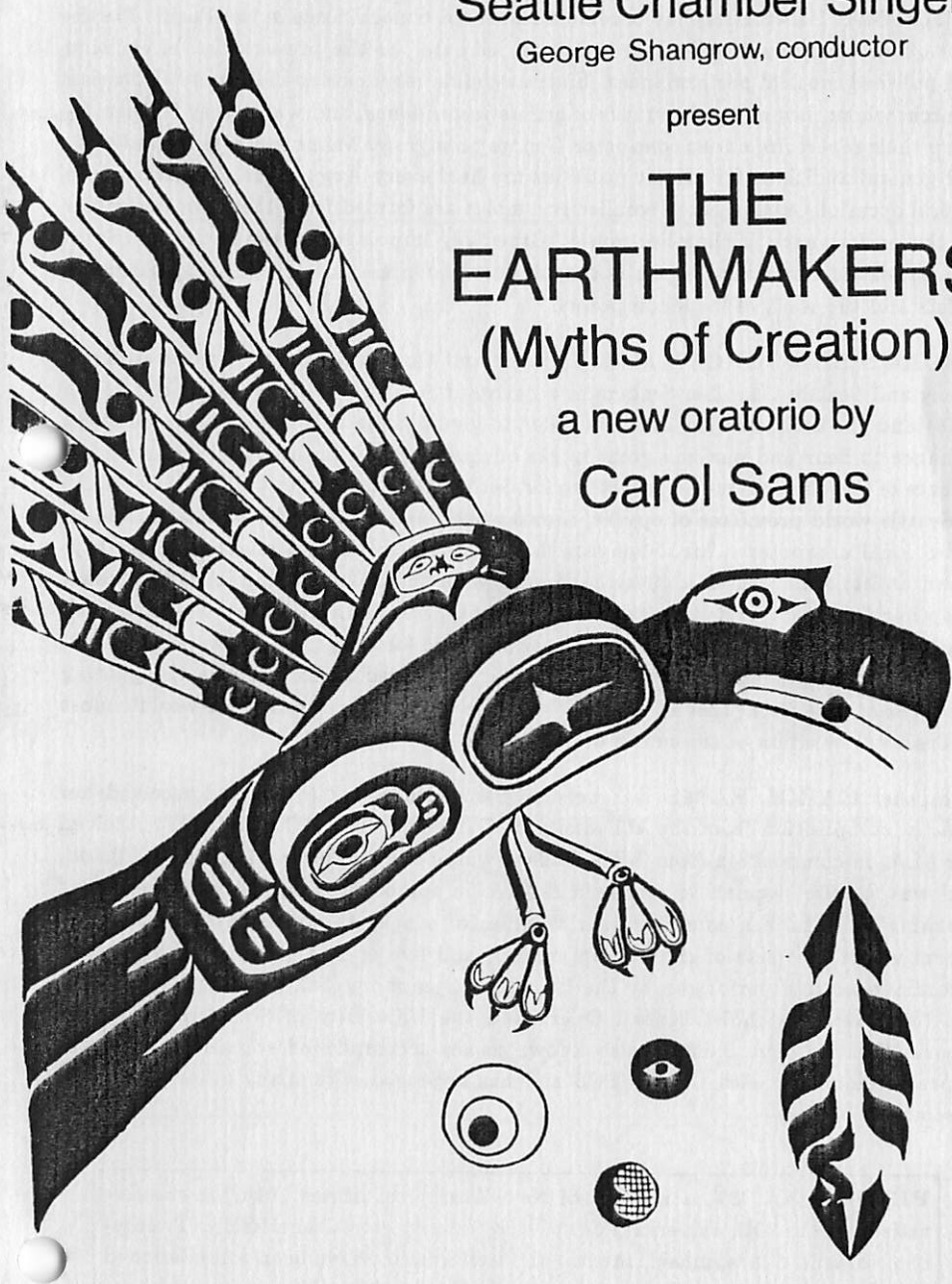
George Shangrow, conductor

present

THE
EARTHMAKERS
(Myths of Creation)

a new oratorio by

Carol Sams



PERFORMA87
A FESTIVAL OF NEW WORKS

The collaboration of the **BROADWAY SYMPHONY** and the **SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS** has become a respected musical force in the Pacific Northwest. This company of volunteer artists is dedicated to the presentation of exciting and polished musical performances. Each ensemble rehearses at University Unitarian Church, where they enjoy the status of artists-in-residence, and where they further develop their repertoire under conductor George Shangrow. Membership is by audition, and general auditions for vacant positions are held every August and September. On several occasions each season, smaller ensembles are formed from the main ensembles for the performance of chamber music. Especially important to the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers is the support and presentation of local performing artists and the work of local composers.

GEORGE SHANGROW, Music Director and Conductor of the Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers, is a native of Seattle who founded the chorus (in 1968) and the orchestra (in 1978) in order to give Seattle area artists and audiences a chance to hear and perform great works of music. In addition to acclaimed performances of the classical music repertoire for both chorus and orchestra, he has brought to Seattle world premieres of operas, choral works, and symphonies by Seattle's most gifted local composers. Mr. Shangrow has toured Europe as a conductor and keyboard artist; appeared as a guest conductor with the Seattle Symphony, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, and East Texas University Opera; and lectures frequently for the Seattle Opera and Symphony. As Director of Music for University Unitarian Church, Mr. Shangrow is a leader in the performance of sacred music, and as the guiding producer of The Bach Year in Seattle (1985) he brought to our city the world's most extensive celebration of the music of J. S. Bach.

Composer **CAROL SAMS** was born in Sacramento, California and received her B.A. in composition from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She received her M.A. in composition from Mills College where she studied with Darius Milhaud, and was the first woman to receive a D.M.A. in composition from the University of Washington. She has compiled four volumes of songs, numerous instrumental and choral works, two sets of choral mini-operas, and five operas. Her works have been commissioned and performed by the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers, the Northwest Boychoir, Juneau Opera and the University of Southern California Opera Theatre. Dr. Sams is also known as an accomplished soprano soloist; she appears frequently with the BS/SCS and has appeared with many other Northwest ensembles.

PERFORMA '87, a Festival of New Works, celebrates both the creative artist and the 20th anniversary of the King County Arts Commission. Twenty-one works in dance, music, theatre and performance have been commissioned by the KCAC to be performed during the Fall of 1987. These new works are funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.
This performance is partially funded by the Seattle Arts Commission.

THE BROADWAY SYMPHONY
and the
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

with the

NORTHWEST BOYCHOIR
Joseph Crnko, conductor

present

THE EARTHMAKERS
(Myths of Creation)

by

Carol Sams

libretto compiled by

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

WORLD PREMIERE

SOLOISTS

Nathan Carson Soprano
Ann Ericson Soprano
Carol Sams Soprano
Sara Hedgpeth Mezzo soprano
Mira Frohnmayer Contralto
Paul Karaitis Tenor
Peter Kechley Baritone
Leon Lishner Bass

November 17, 1987

Meany Theatre

The Earth Makers

Notes by Carol Sams and Rebecca Parker

The Earth Makers begins and ends in darkness. The opening introductory section starts with the words "Sometimes at night.." and the work closes with the words of poet Galway Kinnell, "half my life belongs to the wild darkness." Wildness and darkness frame the oratorio as they frame the imagination of storytellers, adventurers, the curious, and the creative. Between the wild and the dark are a collection of mythic tales and poetry from diverse cultures, with the work of contemporary poets interspersed. The myths are panoramic—cosmic and objective, and the poems are close-ups—subjective, detailed, particular, intense. Each illumines the other.

The music does the same thing. Usually for the poems smaller orchestral groups are used, including one a cappella setting, in order to give an intimate feeling. For the myths, different compositional techniques are employed that mirror the essential character of each story.

The Father Raven story is improvisational in character—as if the storyteller were making it up as he goes along—and contains a story within a story. Likewise, the music is improvisational in style and contains a middle contrasting section framed by a bass solo. The God Who Laughed Seven Times story has seven contrasting, illustrative sections, each described differently by the music. The recurrent laugh is the element that holds them together. In this myth particularly the music is used to create sound pictures. Light is set as a tentative, curling sound in the high violins, lonely and delicate like some small thing in the dark cosmos. Water is set as ripples, as wave action, with an aleatoric chorus and woodwinds. When bitterness appears the images become much more subjective. Bitterness is pictured with tone colors—the dark sound of the male voices with baritone solo.

The third myth is the story of Naareau and it divides into two sections. In the first section Naareau creates a woman and a man. The creation of the woman, Nei Teakea, is set like a polynesian dance—graceful, tonal, and rhythmic. Na Atibu, the man, is described by a timpani solo. Their lying together creates Naareau the Younger. The father makes a toy for his son, which turns out to be the world. But in order for the son to play with it he has to open the world which is like a rock. Here the myth narrative is interrupted by a cappella chorus singing "Go inside a stone." Through the intimacy of the a cappella sound the discovery of a new world is compared with self-discovery. The final section of Naareau's myth introduces people into the world, and invites the audience to sing along.

The Big Bang theory and the Zuni Indian myth share several common elements. To show them as if they were the same ideas from different sides of the brain the Zuni myth is sung with wide, vocal leaps and an unstable tonality. In contrast, the Big Bang Theory is spoken in a pompous way by a stuffy university professor who becomes carried away by the poetry in his own concepts and begins to sing. These two stories are superimposed so that their similar images occur at the same time, and comment on each other.

The piece comes to a close with a final, intimate, personal invocation to those particular creative powers of darkness within all of us.

THE EARTHMAKERS

(Myths of Creation)

I. Prelude

A. Contralto. Sometimes at night, when I look up at all the stars in the sky, I wonder how it began, the sky, the stars, the sea...

B. Tenor and Bass. Sometimes at night when I look out, and see the lights in the sky, I wonder how it began, the earth, the stars, the sky, the whole wild universe crying out: Here am I!

C. Chorus: Here am I.

D. Boy Soprano: Sometimes at night, when I look out and see the lights in the sky, the moon and stars and the big tree outside my window, the wind blowing through its branches, the shadows moving on the walls and the floor, and the white clouds, and the moon, all these things, everything, I wonder, I wonder how...

II. Processional

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry.

-William Blake, excerpt from "The Tyger"

III. Orchestral Interlude

IV. Magic Words (Boychoir & Trombone & Strings)

In the very earliest time,
when both people and animals lived on earth,
a person could become an animal if he wanted to
and an animal could become a human being.
Sometimes they were people
and sometimes animals
and there was no difference.
All spoke the same language.
That was the time when words were like magic.
The human mind had mysterious powers.
A word spoken by chance
might have strange consequences.
It would suddenly come alive
and what people wanted to happen could happen —
all you had to do was say it.
Nobody can explain this:
That's the way it was.

-after Nalungiaq

IV. Orchestral Interlude

V. Father Raven

Bass Solo In the beginning was the Earth Maker, and he
was sitting in space.
When he came to consciousness,
he knew there was nothing elsewhere.
He did not know who he was, or how he
began,
But he breathed and had life.
Everything around him was in darkness,
he could see nothing.
His name was Father Raven.

Tenor Solo Father Raven went about and planted herbs and flowers.
From a flower there came a pod, and as he looked, it opened, and from the pod, there
came a human being, beautiful and completely grown.

Mezzo Solo And the Raven was so bewildered, that he threw his bird
mask off, and became a human being.

Soprano Solo He went laughing to the newborn man and said: Who are you
and where do you come from?

"I came out of this pod.
I did not want to lie there any more,
so I pushed with my feet and jumped out.
"Well well, you are an odd creature. I

myself planted this pod,

not knowing what would come out of it.
But the earth on which we walk
is not yet finished. Do you not feel
how it shakes?"

-based on an Eskimo story told
by
Apatac of the Noatak River

VI. Sunflower

What sower walked over earth,
which hands sowed
our inward seeds of fire?
They went out from his fists like rainbow curves
to frozen earth, young loam, hot sand,
they will sleep there
greedily, and drink up our lives
and explode it into pieces
for the sake of a sunflower that you haven't seen
or a thistle head or a chrysanthemum.

Let the young rain of tears come
Let the calm hands of grief come.
It's not all as evil as you think.

-Rolf Jacobsen, trans. by Robert Bly

VII. Orchestral Interlude

VIII. The Three Kingdoms of Nature

Tenor & Baritone & Audience:

While drinking, all at once I saw
Why nature's made of three realms.
Animals and people drink and love,
Each according to his urges.
The dolphin and eagle, the flea and the
dog,
Experience affection and use their
mouths.
So whatever can drink and love both,
Those in the first kingdom have their place.

Vegetation, then, makes up the second
realm.
That falls far short of the higher one.
Leaves have no love, but they can drink,
When the dripping clouds sink low.
The cedar drinks, the clover drinks,
The grapevine and the aloe tree.
So whatever drinks, but cannot love,
Those in the second kingdom belong.

The kingdom of stones makes up the third.
Diamonds we have, and also gravel.
Stones feel no thirst, no tender urges;
a stone grows without rain or love.
Well then whatever can neither drink nor
love
those in the third kingdom have their
place.
And, human, tell me, if you have neither
love nor wine—what are you? A stone.

-Gotthold Lessing/1753
adapted by Robert Bly from
the
translation of Alfred Basker-
ville

IX. God Laughed

And God laughed seven times. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! God laughed and from these seven laughs seven Gods sprang up which embraced the whole universe. Those were the first gods.

When God first laughed, light appeared, the god of the cosmos and of the fire. "Bessen berrihen, berio".

When God laughed for the second time, water appeared. The earth heard the sound and was moved, and was astonished and divided into three and the god of the abyss appeared.

Whose name is Eschakleo: you are the eternal Bethelee!

When god tried to laugh for the third time, bitterness came up in his heart, whose name was Hermes. Through bitterness, the whole universe could finally be seen.

And When God Laughed for the fourth time, nobody knows what happened.

Then god laughed for the fifth time and while he was laughing he became sad, and Fate, whose name was Moira appeared, holding the scales of Justice in her hand. So you see Justice comes from a place between laughter and sadness.

When the god laughed for the sixth time, he was terribly pleased and Chronos appeared with his scepter, the god of power. And God said to him that he should have the glory and the light.

When God laughed for the seventh time, drawing breath, and while he was laughing he cried, and thus the soul was born.

-Hellenistic Egyptian Myth

X. The Clay Jug

Inside this clay jug there are canyons and pine mountains,
And the maker of canyons and pine mountains!
All seven oceans are inside, and hundreds of millions of stars.
The acid that tests gold is there, and the one who judges jewels.
And the music from the strings that no one touches, and the
source of all water.

If you want the truth, I will tell you the truth:
Friend, listen: the God whom I love is inside.

-Kabir, version by Robert Bly

XI All Hallows

Even now this landscape is assembling.
The hills darken. The oxen
sleep in their blue yoke,

the fields having been
picked clean, the sheaves
bound evenly and piled at the roadside
among cinquefoil, as the toothed moon rises:

This is the barrenness of
of harvest or pestilence.
And the wife leaning out the window
with her hand extended, as in payment,
and the seeds
distinct, gold, calling
Come here
Come here, little one

And the soul creeps out of the tree.

-Louise Gluck

XII. Naareau

Naareau the elder was the first of all. Not a man, not a beast, not a fish, not a thing was before him. He could not sleep, for there was no sleep, he could not eat, there was no hunger. Long he sad, and there was only he, there was only Naareau sitting in the void.

Then Naareau said in his heart "I will make a woman." And behold, a woman grew out of the void: Nei Teakea.

Then Naareau said, "I will make a man." And a man grew out of his thigh: Na Atibu, the Rock. And Na Atibu lay with Nei Teakea. Behold their child, even Naareau the younger.

Then Naareau the elder spoke unto his son: "I will make thee a thing in the midst of the void for to work on."

Within the void, the thing was fashioned. And it was called darkness and the cleaving. The sky and earth were both within it, clinging together in the void, and darkness was between them.

Naareau the younger walked on the side of the sky that lay on the land. The sky was rock, and lay against the land. He knelt on the sky and began to tap it with his fingers, "Open sir rock, Open Sir stone." It is open!

-Melanesian story as told by an old man
on an island in the New Hebrides

XIII. Stone

Go inside a stone.
That would be my way.
Let somebody else become a dove
Or gnash with a tiger's tooth.
I am happy to be a stone.

From the outside the stone is a riddle:
No one knows how to answer it.

Yet within, it must be cool and quiet
Even though a cow steps on it full weight,
Even though a child throws it in a river;
The stone sinks, slow, unperturbed
To the river bottom
Where the fishes come to knock on it
And listen.

I have seen sparks fly out
When two stones are rubbed,
So perhaps it is not dark inside after all;
Perhaps there is a moon shining
From somewhere, as though behind a
hill—
Just enough light to make out
The strange writings, the star-charts
On the inner walls.

-Charles Simic

XIV. Naareau (continuation)

And at the third striking the sky opened under his fingers and he looked down into the hollow place. And Naareau heard the sound of snoring in the darkness. And Naareau heard the sound of breathing in the darkness. And he stood up. He rubbed his fingertips together. And behold, out of them came a bat, the first creature: Tiku tiku tuomouma.

And he sent the bat into the cave to see what was there. Then the bat said, "I see people lying in the darkness. They don't move, they don't speak, they are all asleep."

Then Naareau said, "It is the company of fools! Tell me their names, Land on their foreheads in the darkness and tell me their names."

Uka the blower
Nabawe the sweeper
Karitoro the roller up
Kotekateka the sitter
Kotei the stander

And Naareau sang,

There is never a ghost, nor a land, nor a man

There is only the breed of the first mother.

And the first father.

There is only the first naming of names, and the first

Lying together in the void.

There is only the first lying together of Na Atibu and NeiTeakea. And we are flung down in the waters of the western sea.

-Melanesian story

XV. The Great Sea

The great sea
has sent me adrift,
It moves me as the weed in a great river,
Earth and the great weather move me
Have carried me away,
And move my inward parts with joy.

-Eskimo Woman Shaman,
quoted by Rasmussen

XVIII. Zuni Myth

In the beginning of things Awonawilona was alone.

There was nothing beside him in the whole space of time

Everywhere there was black darkness and void.

Then Awonawilona conceived in himself a thought.

The thought took shape and got out into space.

And through this it stepped out into the void, into outer space.

And from them, came nebulae of growth and mist, full of the power of
growth.

After the mist and nebulae came up, Awonawilona changed himself
through his knowledge into another shape and became the
sun, who is our father, and who enlightens everything and fills everything with
light.

And the nebulae condensed, sank down, and became water and thus the
sea came into existence.

-North American Zuni Indian

Big Bang Theory

The Big Bang Theory tells us about a creationary explosion from which
matter came into being and continued to expand and dissipate—a fireball racing
outward in all directions at incredible speeds. At first it wasn't even matter; it was
pure radiation, energy, in which matter formed as a contamination in the way that
ice will suffocate a pond in a severe winter.

Summer ended for the original farmlands and vineyards of light,
and in almost all areas of the cosmos they withered and died. But their seeds
became the loom of a new cosmos. Intrinsic forces—gravitation, and within that,
electromagnetism, and within that intra-atomic nuclear forces—combined and still
combine giving shape to a present order of things we call the universe.

As the primeval nebula swirled tumbling through space, its fabric tore apart, radiated, and condensed anew. Tatters collected around cores, and from the cores gravitation reached out; whirlpools of starry tincture swept up the matter from space around them until they were all that was left, fiery beacons in a cold winter desert, only the thinnest of radioactive veils to settle over the rest of time and space.

-from *The Night Sky* by Richard Grossinger

Middle of the Way

I leave my eyes open,
I lie here and forget our life,
All I see is we float out
Into the emptiness, among the great stars,
On this little vessel without lights.

I know that I love the day,
The sun on the mountain, the Pacific
Shiny and accomplishing itself in breakers,
But I know I live half alive in the world,
I know half my life belongs to the wild darkness.

-Galway Kinnell, concluding stanzas

Acknowledgments

The poems used in *The Earth Makers* can all be found in *News of the Universe: Poems of Twofold Consciousness*, chosen and introduced by Robert Bly (Sierra Club Books, 1980).

The myths are from various native peoples and ancient texts and are adapted here from versions included in *Creation Myths*, by Marie-Louise Von Franz (Spring Publications, 1972). Sir Arthur Grimble records the Naareau story in his book *A Pattern of Islands* (London, 1952). The Father Raven story is reported by Knud Rasmussen in *Die Gabe Des Adlers* (*The Eagle's Gift*), translated by Isobel Hutchinson.

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SOLOISTS

ANN ERICKSON is a well known music educator and singer in the Seattle area. She has been guest soloist for the Seattle Chamber Singers, the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, and is soloist at the University Unitarian Church. She has been associate conductor with the San Francisco Boys Choir and the Northwest Boychoir, and a member of the faculties of Western Washington University and of Seattle Central Community College. She is presently a music specialist for the Seattle Public Schools where, for the fourth year, she will be producing an original opera composed especially for the very young by tonight's composer, Carol Sams.

SARA HEDGPETH graduated with a degree in Drama from California State College, Stanislaus, and received her musical training at the University of Washington, where she was active in the Opera Theatre department. She has been a featured soloist with the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the Seattle Area Lutheran Chorale. Ms. Hedgpeth is entering her third season with Northwest Opera in Schools, Etc. and will be portraying the Mother in Hansel and Gretel in this year's performances. Ms. Hedgpeth combines her busy performing schedule with her job as Business Manager for the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers.

MIRA FROHNMAYER studied at the Frankfurt Hochschule and in Berlin, West Germany. She received music degrees from the University of Oregon and New England Conservatory in Boston. Ms. Frohnmayer has premiered works at the American Society of University Composers' and the American Guild of Organists' National Conventions. She has won critical acclaim from the press in the United States and Europe for her solo performances in numerous oratorios, festivals, and recital appearances. Ms. Frohnmayer has recorded works with Daniel Pinkham and Helmuth Rilling. Presently she is chairman of vocal studies at Pacific Lutheran University.

PAUL KARAITIS has performed with notable success throughout the Pacific Northwest in operatic and concert repertoires, singing everything from Abraham in Britten's *Abraham and Isaac* at St. James Cathedral to Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* for the Eugene (Oregon) Opera and Normanno in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Seattle Opera. Originally from Los Angeles, Paul makes his home in Seattle, where he is a regular soloist at St. James Cathedral and at Temple Beth Am Synagogue.

PETER KECHLEY has been a featured soloist with the Seattle Chamber Singers for over fifteen years, and has done solo work for several Seattle area churches and synagogues. Peter's operatic credits include performances in the world premieres of operas by Carol Sams and Huntley Beyer and extensive work with the University of Washington Opera Theatre, as well as being a preview artist for the Seattle Opera. He also played an instrumental role in the BS/SCS' *BACH YEAR* (1985), having programmed all of the Cantata Sundays and performed as a soloist in many of the cantatas and major works.

LEON LISHNER has sung with most of the major symphony orchestras in this country and under many of the world's most distinguished conductors. He has been acclaimed for his "extraordinary versatility", his "beautiful, clear, rich, and resonant" voice, and his dramatic skill. He studied at the Julliard Graduate School, and while there made his first professional appearance. In the forty years since, he has appeared on most of the world's leading operatic stages and has appeared in some 85 roles. He has appeared in numerous television productions, and has recorded for RCA Victor, Columbia, Decca, and Vanguard. In 1979 he retired from the University of Washington where he had taught for several years.

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George Shangrow, conductor

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C. Jane Lund
Suzi Means
Susan Miller
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Nancy Shasteen
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THE BROADWAY SYMPHONY/SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

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George Shangrow, conductor

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BASS

David Couch, *principal*
Allan Goldman
Josephine Hansen
Jay Wilson

The Broadway Symphony has the policy of regular rotation for orchestral seating: therefore our personnel are listed alphabetically in each section.

FLUTE

Claudia Cooper, *principal*
Janeen Shigley

PICCOLO/THIRD FLUTE

Laura Werner

OBOE

Huntley Beyer
M. Shannon Hill, *principal*

ENGLISH HORN

David Barnes

CLARINET

Kathleen Boone
Gary Oules, *principal*

BASS CLARINET

Jerome Vinikow

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Gary Oules

BASSOON

Daniel Hershman
William Schink, *principal*

HORN

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William Hunnicutt
Cynthia Jefferson, *principal*
Beverly Southwell

TRUMPET

Matthew Dalton, *principal*
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