

Just me and you and you and me, And you and me and a cacophony of angels,
All taking turns at singing tunes. - Blink



A Christmas with Soul

Karl Paulnack, Director of the Music Division at Boston University, had this advice for his students: "If we were a medical school, and you were here as a med student practicing appendectomies, you'd take your work very seriously because you would imagine that some night at 2 am someone is going to waltz into your emergency room and you're going to have to save their life. Well, my friends, some day at 8 pm someone is going to walk into your concert hall and bring you a mind that is confused, a heart that is overwhelmed, a soul that is weary. Whether they go out whole again will depend partly on how well you do your craft."



Not that good music is only for the confused, the overwhelmed or the weary!

Multiple studies link music study to academic achievement. Many high achievers say that music

opened up pathways to creative thinking. Their experiences suggest that music training sharpens other qualities: Collaboration. The ability to listen. A way of thinking that weaves together disparate ideas. The power to focus on the present and the future simultaneously.

Music can be a powerful social weapon. During the 1989 Tianamen Square demonstrations, Chinese student organizer Feng Congde tells how Beethoven's 9th Symphony became an expression of hope, solidarity and defiance, with its key line, *Alle Menschen werden Bruder*, or "all men will be brothers."

As Feng recalls, he and several protesters borrowed car batteries from supporters who lived in neighborhoods near Tiananmen Square and cobbled together a makeshift sound system. When the authorities broadcast droning speeches of Li Peng and other Chinese government officials,

Feng pulled out a cassette tape of the Ninth and defiantly blared it back.

On Christmas Day, just six weeks after the Berlin Wall came down, Leonard Bernstein led a celebratory performance of the Ninth at the Schauspielhaus, near the site of the demolished wall in East Berlin. It involved musicians from the former East and West Germany, plus Great Britain, France, Russia and the United States.

At many levels, music adds another dimension to our lives.

The other important ingredient for a happy life is laughter. If you want to start the day well, search for "children laughing" on the web and take your pick. Laughter is infectious!



According to the Mayo Clinic, "Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh.

Humour lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others,

and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert.

What better way to celebrate Christmas than an afternoon of good music, fun and laughter?

Anyone who has worked with Francine Bell will tell you that having fun, for her, is mandatory. Terence Koo is always full of surprises – being a jazz musician he doesn't always stick to the rules, it's about improvisation, and there is always a better way of doing it, even at the last minute.

And because it's Christmas, you'll have the opportunity to join with us in some of the traditional songs.

Join us at 2pm in the Great Hall on December 6 for a concert that will kick off the festive season in the best possible way!

CHRISTMAS with **Soul**

An uplifting & entertaining celebration of the Season

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY CHOIR WITH
Francine Bell & Terence Koo

Choir conducted by Christopher Allan
We'd love you to join us!

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NEWCASTLE
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CHOIR
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SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER 2PM

THE GREAT HALL UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
Adults \$25 Concession \$20 Students \$15 **FREE PARKING**
Tickets available at MacLean's Booksellers Hamilton,
Music Solutions Warners Bay (cash only), online
www.stickytickets.com.au/27123, or by phoning 4954 8781

www.newcastleuniversitychoir.com



Cacophony is edited by Peter McCloy on behalf of the Newcastle University Choir, who do not necessarily share the views of the editor. To contribute or to communicate, email us at newsletter@newcastleuniversitychoir.com

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