

HOLIDAY CONCERT 2025

MODERN MEN *Cool Yule*

DR. STAN HILL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
KURT JORDAN PRINCIPAL ACCOMPANIST
featuring The Desert Winds Freedom Band

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 | 7 PM
& SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 | 3 PM

PALM SPRINGS PLAZA THEATRE

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WELCOME!



Happy Holidays to all you “hep cats”! Hot Jazz is the theme for our 2025 winter concert Cool Yule, and what better way to celebrate the holidays in the desert than with a cool, jazzy, swingin’ performance. Our brothers and sisters in the Desert Winds Freedom Jazz Band provide the perfect soundtrack for our vocals, infusing the program with the rhythmic energy it deserves. We are so fortunate to have this partnership with excellent musicians who share our love of music and our vision of community involvement, diversity, and inclusion.

The historic Plaza Theatre is the perfect venue for Cool Yule. Modern Men is absolutely delighted to be the “ensemble in residence” and part of the inaugural month of performances at the Plaza. Although the change in venue has encountered a few bumps along the way, we offer our sincere thanks to the staff of the Plaza and of Oak View Group for making the transition as smooth as possible.

The history of jazz starts long before the construction of the Plaza Theatre. Jazz has been a part of the American Songbook since the late 1800s, when it spread from the clubs of New Orleans to Chicago and beyond. One of the early pioneers was Tony Jackson, who, along with Jelly Roll Morton, helped bring jazz into public view. Tony Jackson, an African American pianist, composer, and singer, lived as an openly gay man in New Orleans and later in Chicago. This was during the late 1800s into the early 1900s, when being gay was scorned and mostly kept in the closet. Subsequent gay musicians like Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Billy Strayhorn, and Cole Porter—along with many others—propelled jazz into the mainstream consciousness. We are fortunate that we no longer need to live in the closet. We continue to be visible and to speak up. We continue to cherish our friends and neighbors in the Coachella Valley—all the while celebrating with “jazz hands”! Modern Men keeps up its involvement with community organizations in the area, providing volunteers for the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD) Foundation’s annual event One Night Out – Paris and help for the Palm Springs Pride celebrations. We have recently joined the PSUSD Foundation’s “Shoes for Students” campaign to provide brand-new shoes to any student in need. Caring for the community and for each other is a core value of the Modern Men family of singers, board members, and staff. Thanks to your ongoing support, our family continues to grow and share our gift of song.

From the Modern Men family to yours, have a safe, warm, and joyous holiday season!

Greg Chrzczon
Board President

FROM THE PODIUM

Having the opportunity to sing for you in the newly refurbished Plaza Theater is a tribute not only to the management who reached out to include community organizations in the first showings of the opening, but also to sing for you in such a storied venue is, in itself, historic. Back in 1936, there were no Gay Men's Choruses; they didn't start until the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus was founded in 1978. And yet, here we are, singing our hearts out for you once more.

And, by combining with Dean McDowell's famed Desert Winds Jazz Band, the walls of the Plaza Theater will once again reverberate with the jazzy tunes of the 30s and 40s, just as they did back then. More than ever, we want to imbue your experience with those toe-tapping rhythms, which could not be more appropriately heard than in a 1930s theater.

As always, our Holiday Wish is that you and yours enjoy all the love, warmth, and community that surrounds you, and our hope is that our music will rekindle the same deeply felt Holiday memories you had once upon a time. And, because we believe that nothing can spark a feeling, a memory, or an emotion better than music, let our songs be the catalyst of your reverie and take you to your happy place.

But none of this could have been done without your steadfast support. The men of the chorus are sincerely and profoundly appreciative of your making it possible for all of us to perform for you. Ten short years ago, we were 26 souls singing our hearts out for barely 200 of you. And, as the song goes, just look at us now!

All because of you. You are the reason we have a chorus. You are the reason we are in the chorus. You are Why We Sing.



Dr. Stan Hill, PhD

Artistic Director

Modern Men: Coachella Valley Men's Chorus

OUR MISSION

ModernMen: Coachella Valley Men's Chorus promotes harmony through outstanding performances, entertains, empowers our audiences, and embraces diversity through community outreach.



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ABOUT MODERN MEN



Modern Men Chorus is the largest LGBTQ+ chorus in Palm Springs and the surrounding Coachella Valley area, with +140 active performers during the 2025 holiday season. As the Palm Springs Plaza Theatre's official Ensemble-in-Residence, the chorus embraces diversity and strives to produce artistic excellence. Modern Men Chorus sets the standard of community engagement as the region's largest Pride volunteer group and has been the official performance chorus for the Coachella Valley Firebirds' annual Pride Night. Modern Men Chorus also proudly recognizes and shares the stage with fellow GALAChoruses in the region—A Cabbello, Coachella Acappella, and the Palm Springs Gay Men's Chorus—celebrating a vibrant and diverse choral community.



modernmen.org

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MODERN MEN COACHELLA

Dr. Stan Hill ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Kurt Jordan PRINCIPAL ACCOMPANIST

Bart Stottlemire
David Warren
Rich Winnie

TENOR 1

Brent Aronowitz
James Beck
Tom Burtch
John Corr
LT Cousineau
Eddie Felix
Zach Herries
Jeffrey Hillard
Franklin Joens
Andrew Kuula
Mike Lukschu
Paul MacKey
Darin MacLeod
Rich Meyers
Richard Miller
Keith Mottola
+Van L. Neel
Matthew Netto
Dan Tempas
Paul Trombley
*Nathan Truesdell
Brandon Vara
Jared Watson
Larry Wray

TENOR 2

Matt Browning
Christopher Burns
Jeffrey Cipic
Ron Claussen

Chris Cochran
#Michael Cohen
Jon De Freitas
Michael Dillon
#Andrew Dorph
Kirk A. Dow
Richard Elander
Mark Evans
Mark Fearnow
#Ken Forney
David Frazier
Alan Frith-Smith
#Gregg Glaviano
Dustin Hawkins
Ron Hendon
David Hubbard
Stephen Jaeger
*Stan Jaskot
Marty Kiefer
Danny Kopelson
Gregory Marks
Mel McElree
David McFadden
Tobin McLane
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VALLEY MEN'S CHORUS

John Rathgeb
Brian Reed
Paul S. Sherman
Paul H. Stein
Nicholas Tancredi
J. Stegar Thompson
Mark Troy
Raul Valenzuela
David Vianello
Matthew Walker
Steven White
John W. Wirtanen
Matt Woodruff
Sergio L. Yang

BASS

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Greg Brown
Steve Carson
Dennis Chase
Greg Chrzczon
Chris Congdon
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Jerry Lee
Harold Lewis
Duffy Lucas
#Frank Mallalieu
Bob Mensel
#Keith Montgomery
Joel Mugge
Robert Ortega
Stephen Owens
Rich Pedine
Jeff Pluth
George F. Rockel
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Cory Sager

#John Sagos
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+ Section Leader
Leave of Absence

Modern
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MEN'S
CHORUS
Men

BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. Stan Hill ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Since joining Modern Men as Artistic Director in August 2016, and in his 56th year conducting, Dr. Stan Hill brings to Coachella Valley audiences his witty, humanistic and iconoclastic approach to choral music and conducting. Well known in choral circles nationally, Stan served for 11 years as Artistic Director of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus and then for 12 years as Artistic Director of Minnesota's Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus before moving to Palm Springs in 2012.

A dynamic conductor, arranger, clinician and vocal coach, Stan's career spans the entire spectrum of elementary, secondary, university, church and community choruses. He has conducted every configuration of vocal ensemble and chorus with every combination of instrumentation from small ensembles to full symphony orchestras.

Dr. Hill has commissioned and premiered some of the most successful music in the gay men's chorus repertoire, including *NakedMan*, *Exile*, *ExtrABBAganza*, *Misbehavin'!*, *Metamorphosis*, *Through a Glass, Darkly*, *The Kushner Trilogy*, *MOMENTum* and many others. He has produced 13 CDs, several videos, and has written countless arrangements for men's choruses. In 2012, Hill was honored with the Gay and Lesbian Association (GALA) of Choruses' highest accolade: *The Lifetime Achievement Award* and the *GALA Legacy Award*. In July 2016 Stan conducted the 20th Anniversary performance of *NakedMan* with over 350 singers and full orchestra for the opening blockbuster concert of the GALA conference in Denver. In October 2016 Stan was recognized by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus (SFGMC) with the honorific *Conductor Laureate* for the work he did to make SFGMC the extraordinary ensemble it is today, and for his tireless efforts for the chorus and community during the worst days of the AIDS pandemic. Stan is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), and was on the voice faculty of California State University, Fullerton for four years. He is published in the 1986 edition of the NATS Journal. As a Choral Artistic Director, he brings a unique perspective on vocal pedagogy to his chorus rehearsals and assists singers with vocal problems.

A native of Southern California, Stan earned his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music, both in conducting, from California State University, Fullerton, where he studied under noted choral directors Harold Decker and David Thorsen. He earned his PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, completing his dissertation on Laryngeal Physiology.



Kurt Jordan PRINCIPAL ACCOMPANIST

Kurt developed an intense interest in learning the piano after having seen *The Phantom of the Opera* with his parents at age 10. He studied under the guidance of Joann Algier throughout middle and high school, during which time he discovered a love of music using multiple pianos. This passion was further explored at Azusa Pacific University while studying with Dr. Robert Sage. Kurt performed several recitals of material he arranged for two and three pianos,

the recordings of which have received radio play in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Boston, Austin and Beirut. In 2009, Kurt had the honor of performing the West Coast premiere of Alvin Curran's 7.5 hour long piano song cycle, *Inner Cities 1-13*, as well as the U.S. premiere of movement 14 at *Burning Man* in 2013. Kurt graduated from Azusa Pacific University in 2010 with a BA in Music Theory and Composition. Kurt has composed several large-scale works for piano solo, a song cycle for piano and soprano and most recently, a piano sonata.



Tom McGillis SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER

Tom McGillis is an American Sign Language interpreter, providing services to the deaf community of the Coachella Valley in a wide variety of settings: arts and culture, academic, medical, conferences, meetings, social gatherings, and other events. Tom's career in American Sign Language interpretation, with a focus on interpreting artistic performances, spans more than 40 years.

He is the founder and principal of Stage Hands, LLC, a referral agency for interpreters for arts and cultural events. This season marks Tom's seventh as American Sign Language interpreter for Modern Men. From 1988 until 2016, he served as the principal American Sign Language interpreter for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus. His local theater credits include *Mr. Parker* (Dezarts Performs), *Next to Normal* (CV Rep), *The Mouse Trap*, *Nunsense Amen*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, and *The Last Five Years* (Desert Theater Works), and *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Those Musclebound Cowboys of Snake Pit Gulch* (Desert Rose Playhouse). His prior theatrical interpreting credits include *Forever Plaid* at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, NJ, *The Christmas Revels* at Symphony Space in New York City, and several productions at the Very Special Arts Theater Company and the George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, NJ. Tom has also voice interpreted signed performances, including *Progress* at the Hudson Guild Theater and Handstone Productions' *Anna and Danilo*, both in New York City. Tom studied artistic interpreting at the Juilliard School and is a graduate of the interpreter training program at the New York Society for the Deaf, both in New York City. He has presented workshops for the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses on issues in interpreting choral performances. Tom holds a Master's in Business Administration degree from Baruch College of the City University of New York. In addition to Interpreting and advocacy on behalf of the deaf community, he has had a long career in human resources, serving most recently as Vice President of Human Resources for an international marketing research company. A New Jersey native, he lived in New York City for more than 30 years before moving to Palm Springs with his husband, Donald Gardenier (MM Baritone), in 2016.

BIOGRAPHIES



Ron Wheeler PRODUCER

Ron has been involved in singing, acting and production since he was a child. He started in the world of theater as a child in productions for Junior University in San Bernardino performing in *The Wizard of Oz* and *Pinocchio*. As a teenager he became involved with San Bernardino Civic Light Opera learning from professionals in the back of the house as well as front of house. As an adult he has played many leading roles such as Harry Roat in *Wait Until Dark*, Garry Lejeune in

Noises Off, Jed in *Fifth of July*, Charlie Brown in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man*, the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*, Angie in *Gypsy* as well as credits for choreography and direction in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Gypsy*. Ron was previously the producer for the Palm Springs Gay Men's Chorus as well as Harmonic Voices. He has been the producer for Modern Men since 2016.

MODERN MEN Cool Yule

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COOL YULE HOLIDAY

ACT ONE

Boogie Woogie Santa Claus _____ Words and Music by Rene

Everybody's Waitin' for the Man with the Bag _____ Dudley Brooks, Harold Stanley, & Irving Taylor

Hot Hanukkah _____ Traditional
Soloists: SATURDAY Paul Sherman; SUNDAY Alan Frith-Smith

Merry Everything _____ Words and Music by Ernie Lijoi, arranged by Paul Saccone
Soloists: SATURDAY - Paul McKey; SUNDAY - Darin MacLeod

I Want a Burly Lumberjack for Christmas _____ Words and music by John Rox

Love Turns Winter to Spring _____ Words and music by Matt Denis & Frank Killduff

Little Jack Frost, Get Lost! _____ Words and music by Seger Ellis & Al Stillman
Soloists: SATURDAY - Rick Pedine; SUNDAY - Keith Montgomery

A Cool Christmas _____ Arranged by Alan Shorter

Winter Wonderland Soloists: SATURDAY - Paul Kowal; SUNDAY - Chuck Bowers

Christmas Eve in My Hometown Soloists: SATURDAY - Jim Gnaster; SUNDAY -
Vinny Cousineau

No Place Like Home for the Holidays Soloists: Saturday - Van Neel; Sunday -

INTERMISSION

CONCERT 2025

ACT TWO

The Merriest _____ Words and music by A. Miller & C. Pearce

Because It's Christmas _____ Words and Music by Barry Manilow, Sussman & Feldman, arr. by Timothy DePrey
Soloists: SATURDAY - Valerian Ruminski; SUNDAY - Steger Thompson

I Want You for Christmas _____ Sam Stept, Charles Tobias & Ned Washington

Davey Dinkle _____ Words and Music by Rick Crom, arr. by Steve Milloy
Narrators: SATURDAY - Mark Evans; SUNDAY - LT Cousineau
Judge: SATURDAY & SUNDAY - Mark Ziemann

Jing-a-Ling, Jing-a-Ling _____ Leroy Anderson

Christmas Kisses _____ Joseph Kruger & Henrietta Gilden

Let It Ring, Let It Swing, Let It Snow _____ - Arranged by Mac Huff

Marshmallow World Soloists: SATURDAY - John Corr; SUNDAY - Jeffrey Hilliard

Frosty the Snowman Soloist: SATURDAY & SUNDAY - Zach Herries

Cool Yule _____ Words and music by Steve Allen

Why We Sing _____ Greg Gilpin
*Arrangements by Patrick Sinozich and Gordon Bazsal

MUSICIANS

Kurt Jordan: Piano

Desert Winds Jazz Band

Alto Sax 1: Gary Bollard

Alto Sax 2: Yvonne Bluto

Tenor Sax: Jay Anderson

Trumpet 1: Steve Reints

Trumpet 2: Todd Parker

Trombone 1: Brian Bergstrom

Trombone 2: Jesse Klingbeil

Bass: Eric Walters

Percussion: Jim Bock

LUMBERJACK PERFORMERS

Lumberjack #1: Paul Cady

Lumberjack #2: Jeff Hilliard

Twink #1: Nathan Truesdell

Twink #2: Jared Watson

JING-A-LING DANCERS

Santa: Matthew Walker

Single Elf: Keith Mootola

Mingle Elf: Frank Caccioli

Prancer: John Corr

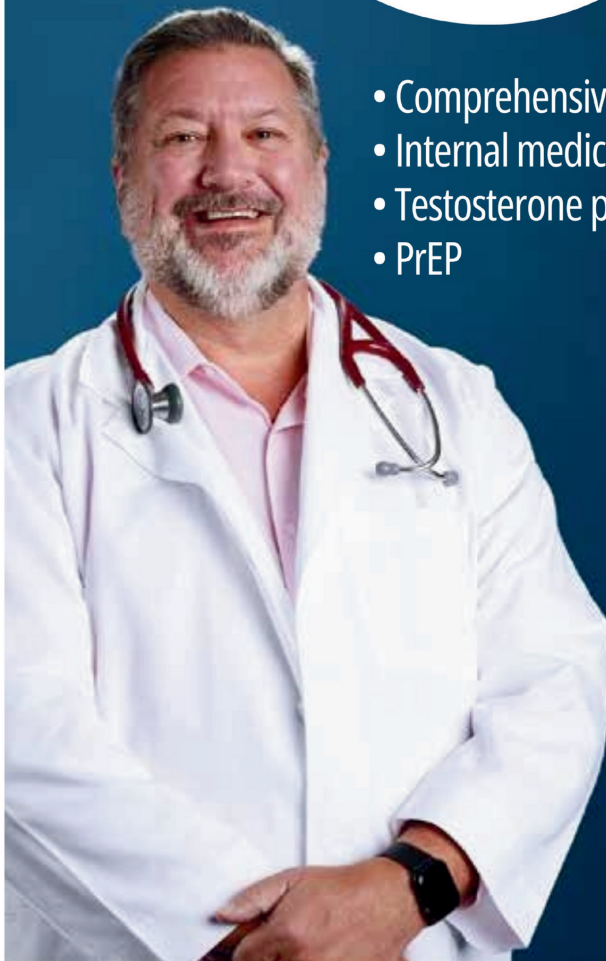
Dancer: Vinny Cousineau

Comet: Darin McLeod

Cupid: Jimmy Ashmore

Acknowledgements:

Judith Fabris for the gift of a Yamaha piano for rehearsals.
Dean McDowell for his excellent preparation of the Jazz Band
Matthew Lawton for photography
Dining with the Davids for videography



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DEAN McDOWELL | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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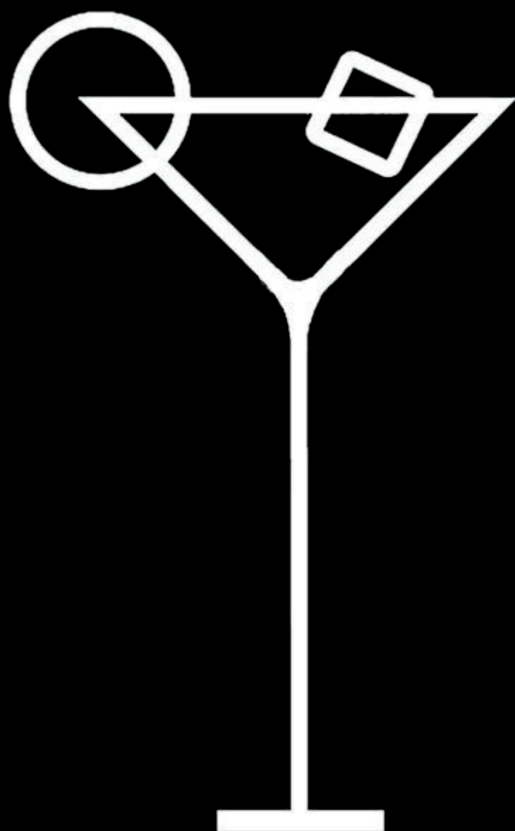
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**Congratulations to Modern Men Chorus on
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SONG DEDICATIONS

Boogie Woogie Santa Claus

In loving memory of Ray Lozoya:
Husband, Father, Friend and Family.

– Steve Carson

Hot Hanukkah

To Drew: Wishing you eight nights of light and love and that you will be filled with happiness and peace.

– Bill Ciffairy

In loving memory of my grandfather, Benjamin Sherman – who gifted me his singing voice and, through his courage to come to America, gave our family a brighter future.

– Paul Sherman

Merry Everything

No matter how you greet your friends, new and old, during this holiday season “Merry Everything” pretty much sums up all you need to say. Neil and I do wish this sentiment to cover all occasions you happen to celebrate at the end of this year and begin 2026.

– Tom Burtch

Dedicated to Ernie Limon, who passed away unexpectedly in February 2025. Ernie was a major voice of the LGBTQ+ music scene, and a multitalented performer and playwright. Thanks for the opportunity to remember him and his wonderful and touching song.

– Dennis Chase

A Cool Christmas

For my Family and Friends who keep me grounded, lifted, and loved.

– Bart Stottlemeyer

Because It's Christmas

To Alden and Linda Esping, for 60 years of love, support and unqualified encouragement.

– Dr. Stan Hill, PhD

I Want You for Christmas

To Ray: There's nothing else on my list! See you under the mistletoe ☺

– Michael Mendelow

Christmas Kisses

WTS: I give you kisses, one, then two, soft echoes of the love I knew. Three and four they linger, stay, like whispers warm that never stray. Each kiss a promise, sweet and true, my world begins and ends with you.

– TJB

To my husband, Sheldon: Christmas with you is always very special. I love your love of Christmas, and I wouldn't want things any other way. No present under the tree could bring me as much joy as having you in my life. Merry Christmas, honey! 143

– Daryl Bergeron

Why We Sing

In memory of John and Elizabeth Carson.

– Steve Carson

To Rosie Vacano, for years of support, love and breakfasts at Spencer's.

– Dr. Stan Hill, PhD

PLEASE SUPPORT US

YOU are why we sing!

Support Modern Men with a Donation

Thank you for supporting us by attending our show! The combination of ticket sales, member dues and the support of donors allow us to generate the funds required for our beloved chorus to continue performing for our community in the Coachella Valley. As with many non-profit arts organizations, we continue to feel the pressure of increasing costs for all of the items in our budget.

Your generosity helps us meet the day-to-day needs of the chorus, while also allowing us to plan for our continued growth. As we enter our eleventh year, we continue to promote harmony through outstanding performances, entertaining and empowering our audiences, and embracing diversity through our community outreach.

Whether you are a first-time donor, or a long-term supporter, your gift will directly impact our ability to deliver on the mission of Modern Men.

To make a donation online, use the QR code or go to www.modernmen.org/support-us.



Donations can also be made by mail:

Modern Men, 611 S. Palm Canyon Dr., Suite 7058, Palm Springs, CA 92264

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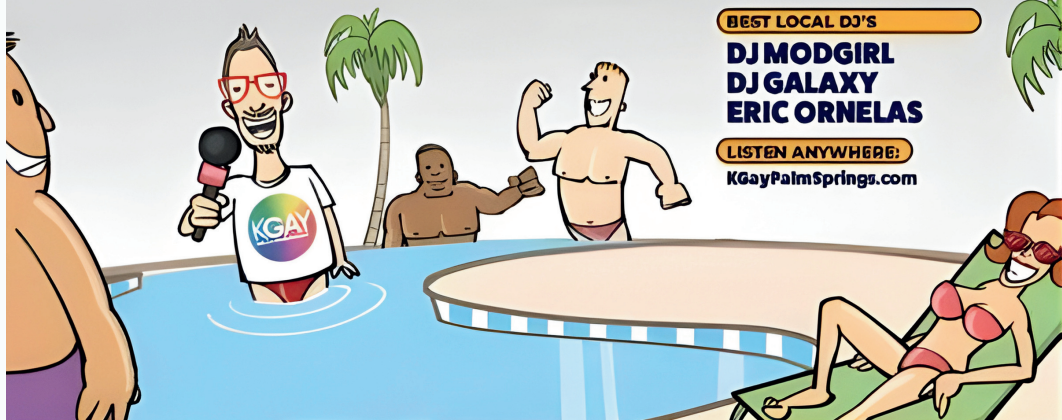
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experienced -it is
truly remarkable!'*

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James Beck
Modern Men Chorus
& Hope Church Member





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As a nonprofit volunteer organization, the Desert Hospital Auxiliary serves the patients and visitors of Desert Regional Medical Center and the citizens of our community by providing funds for various community programs and student scholarships.

Betty Hale Gift Shop

The Auxiliary receives most of its income from the Betty Hale Gift Shop located in the hospital lobby. These funds support the Auxiliary's service mission.

The Gift Shop is open every day. Monday thru Friday 9am to 8pm; Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm.

www.drmcauxiliary.org

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PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer - Ron Wheeler
Rehearsal Accompanist - Kurt Jordan
ASL Interpreter - Tom McGillis
Lighting Design - Peter B. Kostrobala
Sound Design - Plaza Theatre
Choreography - Keith Mootola
Costumes - Kirk Dow
Projections Design - TrueLocal Media
Projections Operator - Joe Vignali
Spotlight Operator - Chad Barth
Stage Manager - Kevin Leggett
Plaza Technical Director - Mariah Pryor
Graphic Design/Program - TrueLocal Media
Marketing Committee - Alexei Barnes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greg Chrzczon - BOARD PRESIDENT
Dennis Chase - VICE PRESIDENT
Mitchell Laks - TREASURER
Bill Ciffairy - SECRETARY
Alexei Barnes - MARKETING CHAIR
Chris Burns - DEVELOPMENT CO-CHAIR
Chris Cochran - CARE COMMITTEE CHAIR
Roger Hunt - MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
Stephen Owens - DIRECTOR
George Rockel - DIRECTOR
Nathan Truesdell - DEVELOPMENT CO-CHAIR

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Modern Men is a proud member of GALA Choruses. GALA Choruses was incorporated in 1983 and leads the GLBTQ+ choral movement by cultivating the artistic development of 10,000 singers from more than 180 member choruses located throughout North America, Europe, South America, Africa and Australia.

IN MEMORIAM

Mark Austin
William "Bill" Bordonaro
Bruce Chartier
Mark Cohen
Simeon Den
Robert Espindola

Dave Gooding
Scott Griffen
Art Healey
Jefferson Hills
Chris Holombe
Rusty Kaplan

Thompson Lange
Randy W. Lerner
Robert Litvak
Chester McLemore
Vance Reger
Heath Richard

Michael Scacco
Robert Seeley
Daisy Van Heerd
Chuck Wilhelm
Burton York

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The kindness and generosity of so many make the success of MODERN MEN possible.

Our sincere appreciation to:

United Methodist Church of Palm Springs:

-Jane Voigts, Pastor

-Pamela Hill, Office & Campus Coordinator

The Palm Springs Plaza Theatre & Foundation.

John Bolton for his vision and commitment to the Palm Springs arts community.

Butch Zein, ASL coach.

Mitch Laks, Steve Carson, Roger Hunt, and Peter Kostrobala for securing and managing our February and March all-day rehearsals at the Four Seasons Clubhouse in Palm Springs.

Matthew Lawton, photographer.

5TH SECTION VOLUNTEERS

Ricky Man
Seng Singnolay
Robert McCormack
Bob Jaworski
Thomas Steenson

THANK YOU!

SPRING CONCERT 2026



PRESENTED BY



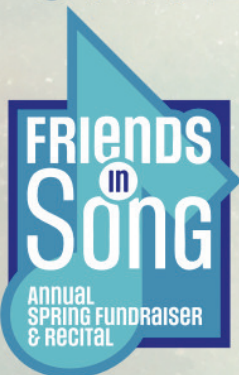
Modern Men Chorus Spring Concert: *Sing Out!* APRIL 17, 18, & 19, 2026

Leaning on their signature sound, *Sing Out!* will showcase some of the most beautiful music ever written. From Ennio Morricone's *Gabriel's Oboe* to several rare but stunningly beautiful musicals like *The Secret Garden*, *Birds of Paradise* and *Ragtime*. Music that will move and thrill you as only Modern Men Chorus can, but with visuals that will inspire awe and wonder. Thrill to a male/male pas de deux set to rapturous music accompanied by a stunning string quartet. Music hot off the presses from some of the leading University and Community Choruses in the Country will leave you breathless. Come celebrate community, the beauty of music, and the wonder of the human voice.

Tickets available at modernmen.org, plazatheatrepalmsprings.com, theatre box office, theatre phone at 760-593-5738, or Ticketmaster 800-653-8000.



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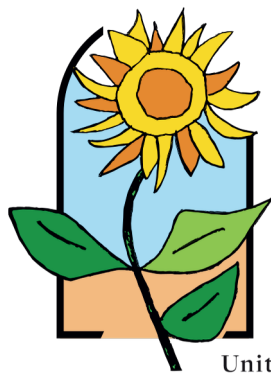


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New members at rehearsal

Modern Men

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AUDITIONS



TENORS NEEDED

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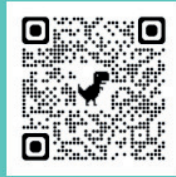
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As I stand on stage tonight with my brothers in MODERN MEN, those words ring truer than ever.

On behalf of myself and the entire team at Beck Development, we congratulate Artistic Director Dr. Stan Hill for building a strong foundation that MODERN MEN can continue to stand and build on for years to come!

-James Beck

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We pledge our unwavering support to the LGBTQIA+ community through grants, sponsorships and scholarships with the intent to lift up the queer community and bolster critically needed services and organizations. Furthermore, we are committed to providing a safe space for all who visit Acrisure Arena for a concert, to cheer on our Coachella Valley Firebirds or skate on the ice at the Berger Foundation Iceplex.

All are welcome here.



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