

# Beyond the Music: Keeping Singers Engaged

Daniel Arredondo and Amir Shirazi



# Introductions

**Daniel Arredondo**, he/him/his

- Artistic Director of Austin Gay Men's Chorus

**Amir Shirazi (Ash)**, they/them/theirs

- Artistic Director of Transpose PDX

# Workshop Agenda

1. Goals of Engagement
2. Questions for Choruses
3. Activities
  - a. Social
  - b. Organization-led
  - c. Music-related
4. Questions?

# Goals of Engagement

Engage your:

- **Singers** (connection, community, family)
- **Audience**
- **Volunteers**/support base
- **Employees**/leadership

How do they get to engage with the org and each other?

How can your org stay a part of their lives?

How can they connect/engage with you?

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3. What are the parts of your mission statement and operations that are not performance-based? How can you adapt or supplement these activities/values virtually?
4. Can you survey your chorus for interest/interests?
5. **How do you split up or spend your time during rehearsal? Break time? Designated social time?**

# Activities: Social

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3. **\*\*Secret Squish**

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# Activities: Social

## 4. Show and Tell (themed or not)

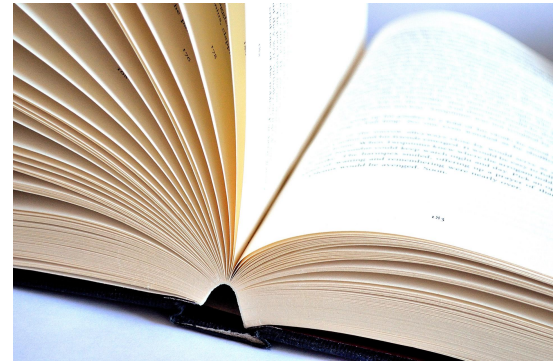
- Show, movie, or book
- Household item (mug)
- Beverage
- Story...lots of T to tell!



# Activities: Social

## 5. Book Club / Arts & Craft / Small Group Activity

- Co-chair group
- 6 - 12 people is a target number
- Social circles within larger choruses
- Time increment can change



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6. **Social Media Platforms**

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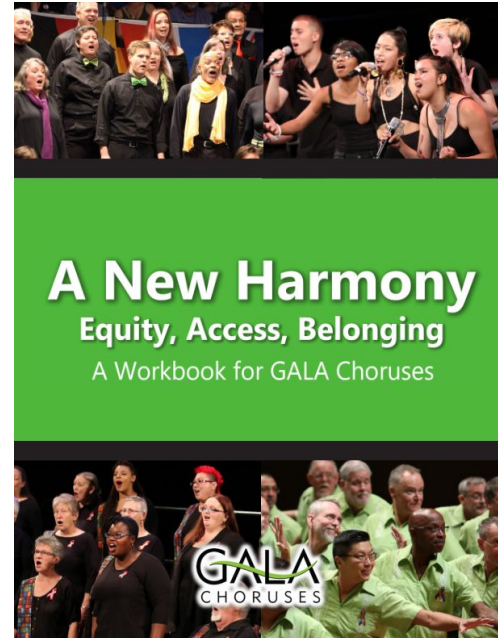
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4. Show and Tell (themed or not)
5. Book Club / Arts & Craft / Small Group Activity
6. Social Media Platforms
7. **Socialize with other choruses**

\*\*requires no/minimal preparation



# Activities: Organization-Led

1. DEI Guided Conversations  
(New Harmony sessions)



# Activities: Organization-Led

## 2. Workshops (singing health/technique/theory, etc.)

- Thai Partner Massage
- Alexander Technique
- "How to Audition"
- Mental Health Seminar



- Current Stressors
- Typical Psychological Responses
- Strategies While Social Distancing
  - Stimulus Control
  - Behavioral Activation
  - Being Social While Distant
  - Connecting With Nature
  - Building Body Trust
  - Expanding Virtual Activities
- Taking An Anti-Racist Approach
  - Dismantling Racial Oppression

# Activities: Organization-Led

## Singer Spotlight — Karl Logue

[Sherri Cline](#) | Posted on [October 17, 2020](#)

### 3. Member spotlights (newsletter, social media)



**Name:** Karl Logue

**Position in the chorus:** Associate Director / Principal Accompanist / Composer-in-Residence

**How long have you been with the chorus:** All 32 years. Fun fact: if you look at our articles of incorporation, you'll

# Activities: Organization-Led

4. Fireside chats with leadership  
(AD, ED, Board, etc.)



# Activities: Organization-Led

## 5. Inreach Process (Stemming from Chorus Buddy Program)

### **AGMC Inreach Process** (virtual contact during SARS-CoV-2 pandemic)

Purpose: Maintain regular personal contact with all AGMC participants to create community/family bond during virtual season. Regular contact will also create a higher return rate of participants when in-person singing resumes.

# Activities: Organization-Led

## 6. Virtual Chorus

Asking things from volunteers and Community



# Activities: Music-Related

1. Open mic/talent show
2. GlamaZoom TuesGays or any days!
3. \*\*Concert watch party (previous performances, collabs, etc.)
4. \*\*Choir karaoke
5. Sectionals for more tight-knit group focus
  - a. Training section leaders and facilitators
  - b. Incorporate social activities
6. Singing feedback sessions

\*\*requires no/minimal preparation

# Let's Work Together!

Fill out our [Google Form](#) by Nov 1st with:

**What activities has been successful for your chorus?**

We'll create one big resource of things you and your chorus can do!





# Questions?

Clarification on activities, ideas, challenges?





## WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT....

"We (all of us) are currently going through a collective traumatic experience. Trauma is often thought of as 'too much, too fast'...which is exactly what's happening. Of course you're exhausted. Of course you're afraid. Of course you're overwhelmed. Of course you're clinging to certainty in the midst of so much unknown. Of course you aren't as productive, feeling foggy, or wondering how you can possibly go through so many waves of emotions all in the same day. This all makes so much sense in the context of our circumstances. Be gentle with yourself. Have compassion for your process. Give yourself grace. You are good, no matter how you are managing this completely new experience."

-Lisa Olivera

