

# ESSENTIAL VOICES USA

## Judith Clurman, Music Director and Conductor

462 words

Judith Clurman's **Essential Voices USA (EVUSA)** is one of New York's preeminent choral ensembles. EVUSA performs in many of the city's iconic venues and events, and records and premieres works by America's finest composers and lyricists. The ensemble is comprised of a talented roster of seasoned professionals and auditioned volunteers, dynamically fitted to the unique needs of each project.

The chorus held a month-long residency at National Public Radio, performed for many years with The New York Pops in its Carnegie Hall subscription series, performed on NBC's July 4<sup>th</sup> Macy's *Fireworks Spectacular* and at the Rockefeller Center Tree Lighting, performed at Lincoln Center, and participated in President Obama's Inaugural activities. On July 4, 2022, they performed *Washington Women*, the choral cycle they commissioned, on the National Public Radio Tiny Desk Concerts. They have recently performed in educational programs in the New York City schools.

EVUSA has produced *The Composer Speaks* at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music, a series of musical performances complemented by panel discussions with composers and lyricists. The chorus premiered works and collaborated with composers and arrangers Samuel Adler, Milton Babbitt, Jason Robert Brown, David Chase, Josh Clayton, Shawn Crouch, Bill Cutter, Michael Gilbertson, Marvin Hamlisch, Rupert Holmes, Sheldon Harnick, Jake Heggie, Jennifer Higdon, Nora Kroll-Rosenbaum, Perre Jalbert, Katie Jenkins, Andrew Lippa, Paul Moravec, Nico Muhly, Stephen Schwartz, David Shire, Howard Shore, Roberto Sierra, Mark Sirett, James Sizemore, Georgia Stitt, and Jonathan Tunick.

They have recorded with opera and musical theater luminaries, including Jamie Barton, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Ron Raines, and Kelli O'Hara. Their recordings include *America at Heart*, *Celebrating the American Spirit*, *Appalachian Stories*, *Cherished Moments: Songs of the Jewish Spirit*, *Devotion*, *Holiday Harmonies: Songs of Christmas*, *Cradle Hymn*, *May You Heal*, *Season of Light: Songs of Thanksgiving*, *Christmas*, *Chanukah*, *New Year*, *Rejoice! Honoring the Jewish Spirit*, *Remember-Revere-Rejoice*, *Washington Women*, *Winter Harmonies*, and *Words Matter*.

The group's educational program, Project Youth Chorus, has provided select high school students the opportunity to sing with the chorus on recordings and in concerts at Carnegie Hall. They recorded Howard Shore's work *Peace*, for the composer's *Palace Among Ruins* recording, at the Washington National Cathedral, with the St. Albans School for Boys and National Cathedral School for Girls. They participated in anti-bullying workshops with choruses in NYC, where they studied the piece *Testimony* by Stephen Schwartz and sang the NY Premiere of the Chase/Clurman *Washington Women* with students at the Celia Cruz High School for Music in the Bronx.

During the 2023-2024 EVUSA will release their *Christmas Joy* recording, return to Carnegie Hall, perform community concerts, record newly commissioned music, and collaborate in workshops and performances with high schools. Their recording of *Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah* will be heard at the Indianapolis' Art Museum – Newfields holiday light show.

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