

ESSENTIAL VOICES USA

Judith Clurman, Music Director and Conductor

511 words

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

EVUSA 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 4th 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 public 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 numerous composers, arrangers, and lyricists, including Milton Babbitt, Jason Robert Brown, David Chase, Josh Clayton, Shawn Crouch, Marvin Hamlisch, Rupert Holmes, Sheldon Harnick, Jake Heggie, Jennifer Higdon, Nora Kroll-Rosenbaum, Robert and Victoria Sirota, Pierre Jalbert, Paul Moravec, Nico Muhly, Stephen Schwartz, Howard Shore, and Georgia Stitt.

EVUSA has 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*, *Christmas Joy*, *Appalachian Stories*, *Cherished Moments: Songs of the Jewish Spirit*, *Devotion*, *Holiday Harmonies: Songs of Christmas*, *Holiday Joy*, *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 recent concert seasons, EVUSA released its *Christmas Joy* and *Holiday Joy* recordings, performed at Carnegie Hall, presented community sing-alongs, and recorded newly commissioned music at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music. Its recording of *Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of Chanukah* has been featured for the past three seasons in the holiday light show at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields. During the 2026–2027 season, EVUSA will return to Carnegie Hall, present its community sing-along *Welcome Christmas!* at St. Malachy's in New York City, release a forthcoming album devoted to the classical works of composer Trude Rittmann, and perform in a program honoring her life and music.

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219 words

Judith Clurman's **Essential Voices USA** (EVUSA) is one of New York's leading choral ensembles, dedicated to performing, recording, and premiering works by America's finest composers and lyricists. Comprised of professional singers and auditioned volunteers, EVUSA is a flexible ensemble that brings together exceptional voices for a wide range of artistic projects. EVUSA has performed at many of New York's most iconic venues, including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and has appeared on national broadcasts and major cultural events, including NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts, NBC's Macy's Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular, and President Obama's Inaugural activities. The ensemble has commissioned and premiered new works, presented *The Composer Speaks* - a series celebrating contemporary creators - and collaborated with leading composers, lyricists, and performers. EVUSA's recordings include *Washington Women*, *Christmas Joy*, *Holiday Joy*, *Words Matter*, and other albums celebrating American music, cultural heritage, and the power of the ensemble voice. Through Project Youth Chorus, the ensemble provides young singers with opportunities to perform, record, and engage with professional musicians. Recent seasons have included Carnegie Hall performances, community sing-alongs, and new recordings at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music. In the 2026–2027 season, EVUSA will return to Carnegie Hall, release a new album featuring the classical works of composer Trude Rittmann, and present a concert honoring her remarkable life and music.

07/26