

Coastal Sound Music Academy
Media Background Kit
(Registration for Sept. 2007–June 2008)



Oh, the Places You'll Go!

It's that time of year again: parents and kids are looking over extracurricular activities and deciding what to explore this school year. Kids just wanna have fun. Parents want that, too, but they also want their young ones to build important life skills.

Choir is often overlooked. Forget any stereotyped ideas of stuffy churches and stodgy conductors—in today's community choirs, kids play! They also learn fun songs, perform for audiences, and go on cool trips. They learn teamwork, self-discipline, patience, confidence, self-esteem, and respect for others. And music builds both sides of their brains, while bringing history, geography, and culture to life.

Are you looking for back-to-school, human interest stories? Do you like promoting community arts? Do you want to help a local non-profit with fall registration?

Check out these story ideas:

- Six Coastal Sound alumni tell how years of choir helped them learn skills they still use daily in their professional and personal lives.
- Two Coastal Sound patrons—mezzo soprano Judith Forst and musical theatre star Leon Bibb—talk about why they support music education for children.
- A former Coastal Sound parent explains how a diagnosis of cancer spurred him to write Coastal Sound's Music Excellence Fund into his will.

Fall registration is happening now. Rehearsals begin the first week of school. Help parents and kids get informed about what they could be doing this year. For more information, visit www.coastalsoundmusic.com.

To arrange photo ops, videotaping, or interviews, contact Dan Mattinson at 604-465-4976 or info@coastalsoundmusic.com.



Music for your Whole Life

Coastal Sound Alumni:

How Their Years in Choir are Helping Them Reach Their Goals

Greg Morrissey: Archaeologist, SFU Graduate Student

At age 26, says Greg Morrissey, "I still put my 15 years in choir on every resume." Now working on his Master's degree in archaeology and planning to complete his PhD and teach at the post-secondary level; and having travelled to Asia, Europe, and the Arctic; Morrissey says that, in choir, he learned about working with others, and with a multitude of strong personalities. "Choir gave me the faith to be centre stage and not get nervous, yet at the same time blend with a group; to stand up for what I thought was right, yet deal with authority constructively." He continues to tell prospective employers about his time with choir because, he says, "it tells people that I'm a real team player, that I have an appreciation for the arts, and that I have the will to stick to something I've committed to."



Michelle Peters Communications, BC Cancer Agency

From singing solo in Westminster Abbey to coordinating public information during forest fires, and most recently to her current position with the BC Cancer Agency, Michelle Peters (on left) says her years with Coastal Sound built many of the skills she now uses. "I'm not afraid to address a group of people, whether a small meeting or six levels of government," she says. And then there was working together across cultural and linguistic barriers. "At festivals we'd work with singers from maybe 16 different cultures, all speaking different languages, to achieve a common goal."

Peters, 24, now sings with Coastal Sound Adult Choir. "I've taken singing lessons," she says, "but choral music is different. Because of the harmonies, it works the same part of the brain that does math and puzzles; it keeps the brain firing on all cylinders."

Scott Perrie Actor and Musician

The year Scott Perrie joined Coastal Sound, choir members took part in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. "That gave me a glimpse of the thrill of being onstage," says Perrie. "When people ask about my education, I say I was in choir for nine years before I tell them about the two-year theatre program at Capilano College." Now 24, Perrie recently completed shooting for a new TV series called *Psych*, plays with rock/folk/jazz band Redgy Blackout (myspace.com), and reports good sales on his first solo CD. In the future, he's considering travel and going to UBC for more music education, perhaps in composing and conducting. The thought of conducting an orchestra, he says, "is really cool."



Music for your Whole Life

"Choir gave me the faith to be centre stage, yet at the same time blend with a group; to stand up for what I thought was right, yet deal with authority constructively," says Greg Morrissey.



George Chung
SFU Science Student

George Chung has experienced Coastal Sound in a different way than most. He began accompanying some of the training choirs in 1998, and later joined the Youth Choir. From this unique perspective, he notes that "the goals of music education change over the years. For young kids, it's about having fun and making friends, and gradually tackling more difficult music. For the adults, it's a social experience, an escape from the rat race." A talented pianist and violinist, Chung's career path is scientific research, but his music background is useful because the two vastly different fields require a similar mindset and discipline. Singing is particularly empowering because, he says, "it takes years to learn the piano or the violin, but all people can make music by singing."

Dena Javadi
UBC Science Student, Multiple Scholarship Recipient

For Dena Javadi, singing with Coastal Sound has been as much about culture as Culture. Arriving in Canada from Iran in 1998, she joined Coastal Sound to immerse herself in Canadian life. Her best memories are of the international festivals. "I was amazed to see how such culturally diverse groups could come together for one passion—music." On completing high school, Javadi was awarded an impressive array of scholarships, including the Premier's Excellence Award, Miller Thompson Award, Youth in Action Award, Governor General's Medal, Hugh M. Brock National Scholarship, and the President's Award. Now studying sciences at UBC, Javadi says, "the communication, presentation, and leadership skills that Coastal Sound helped me develop continue to play an important role in my life."



Adam Carabine
Pianist, Douglas College Student

For Adam Carabine, 19, the future is wide open, and his 13 years with Coastal Sound played a role in that. After a few years in choir, he became an accompanist. He now plays piano at Sultri's Restaurant in Port Moody. Though he plays several instruments, Carabine says, "singing in a choir is different. When I'm in my living room with a guitar on my lap, I'm the only one there. With a choir, from day one, you are not only learning how to use and control your voice, you are listening to everyone around you—patience is part of the process." Now a Douglas College student, Carabine counts patience among the many skills he learned at Coastal Sound that will take him wherever he chooses to go.



Music for your Whole Life

Patrons of the Arts

Why Support Music Education? Ask a Musician (or Two)!

An Interview with Mezzo Soprano, Judith Forst

Coastal Sound: Why is music education important for children today?

Judith Forst: So much of children's time today is spent alone. Computers, TV, video games—they're all solitary activities, they don't provide children with opportunities to share time with others. Yes, there are sports, but not every child is athletic. Music provides choices equally to children who aren't athletic, and who are.

CS: What music education did you have?

JF: I took singing lessons. For a while, I concentrated on piano. Then I sang in the high school choir and did a musical theatre piece. There were no choirs here at that time, other than church. When I was ready for university, I did some aptitude tests and the results included literature, law, and music. They had a new music school at UBC. My mother wasn't crazy about the idea but she said, "You do what you have to do." I think it turned out okay. The pay wasn't great at first, but it got better.

CS: What skills did you learn that serve you well now as a professional musician?

JF: Perseverance, a study ethic, responsibility. We didn't have a lot of money, so if I got lessons, I had to practice. No practice, no lessons. I learned to always do the best I could.

CS: What skills do you think children learn in choir that will serve them in adult life?

JF: Well, my children were never going to be musicians, but I think their lives as children of a professional musician taught them a lot of the same things. They learned how to be an audience, and to appreciate music, and how not to be overwhelmed by meeting people from all stations in life. Even the very young children in choir get a lot of this. And as they move through the levels, they get more and more of it. I think lessons like these serve them throughout life, no matter what they choose to do.

CS: What do you enjoy about your periodic performances at Coastal Sound concerts?

JF: Being with young people—not only hearing them perform, but hearing them talk about what's important to them. The questions they ask are very wise. And I like that it's important to them how they present themselves—they want to put on a good show.

CS: Why would you encourage parents to consider Coastal Sound for their children?

JF: [It] brings kids skills they'll use for the rest of their lives. It requires family involvement, but that's part of what's important about it. It's vital for kids to have their families involved in their lives, and choir is a way to make that happen.

To speak with Judith Forst, contact Dan Mattinson at 604-469-5973 or email info@coastalsoundmusic.com.



Music for your Whole Life

Michelle Peters says her years with Coastal Sound built many of the skills she now uses in her work. "I'm not afraid to address a group of people, whether a small meeting or six levels of government."

Coastal Sound Welcomes New Patron, Leon Bibb

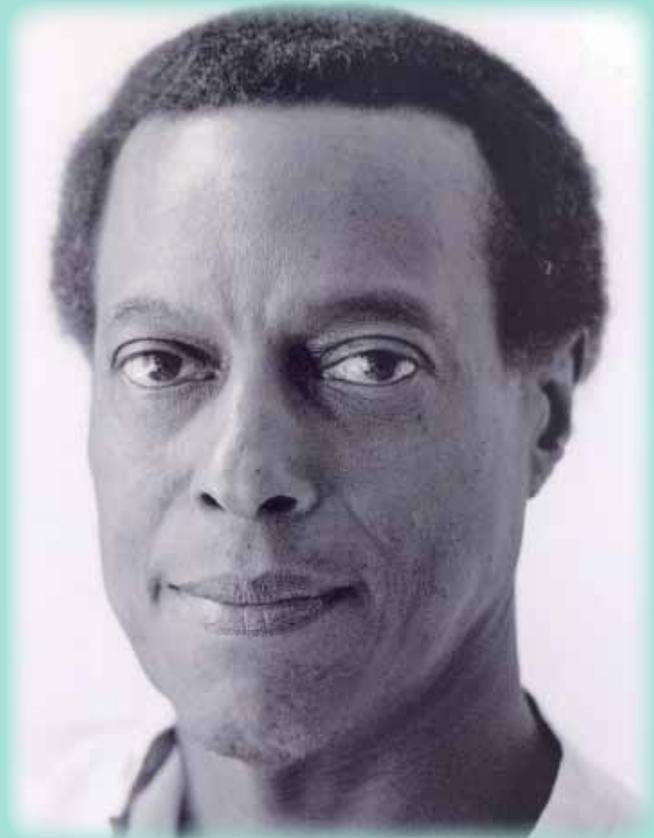
Coastal Sound Music Academy is very pleased to welcome Vancouver music legend Leon Bibb as its latest patron. Bibb joins internationally renowned mezzo soprano Judith Forst in this capacity. Like Forst, he will express his patronage not only by lending his name to the Academy, but by conducting clinics and workshops for Coastal Sound singers of all ages, and performing as a guest artist at concerts.

Bibb has led as interesting a life as an activist opposing racism as he has in the arts. Born in 1922 in Louisville, Kentucky, he is a descendent of Henry Bibb, a slave who escaped to Ontario and edited the first black Canadian newspaper.

Young Leon began to sing at the age of five when his beloved Aunt Addie taught him his first spiritual. As a young man, he served in Europe in World War II.

After the war, Bibb arrived in New York City and began a decades-long, successful career as a Broadway performer, appearing in musicals ranging from *Annie Get Your Gun* to *Finian's Rainbow*, and *Lost in the Stars* to *Carnival*. He also sang at the first Newport Folk Festival, marched for civil rights with Martin Luther King Jr., and sang with Joan Baez and Harry Belafonte at now-historic demonstrations in Alabama.

After visiting Vancouver as an opening act for Bill Cosby in 1968, Bibb fell in love with the city and moved his family here. A well-loved Vancouver performer, he appeared in *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well* and *Living in Paris* with Ruth Nicol and Ann Mortifee; presented his gospel musical *One More Stop on the Freedom Train* at Expo 86; and spearheaded A Step Ahead Foundation, which provides anti-racist school performances across BC.



Well into his eighties, Leon Bibb is still going strong. Along with his son Eric, a gifted musician in his own right, Bibb recently released *Praising Peace*, a tribute to black American lawyer, actor, and singer Paul Robeson, who has been Bibb's friend and mentor for many years.

To hear song clips, go to artistdirect.com. For a complete Leon Bibb discography, visit www.wirz.de/music/bibblfrm.htm.

For more information on Leon Bibb, please contact 604-469-5973, email info@coastalsoundmusic.com, or visit www.coastalsoundmusic.com.



Music for your Whole Life

Coastal Sound's Music Excellence Fund: Supporting Youth to Fulfill their Potential through Music

As a young family man running his own business, Gordon McClure* didn't always have a lot of money. Occasionally, though, he benefitted from the generosity of others.

For example, when his eight-year-old son asked to join Coastal Sound Children's Choir, McClure said yes. But over the next dozen years, as the boy moved from Children's to Youth to Chamber Choir, the McClures couldn't always pay. "It was never a problem," he recalls. "Coastal Sound always made it possible."

In McClure's life, giving and receiving has been a circle that began before he was born and will continue after he dies. So it came naturally to him that, when his circumstances improved, he would share his good fortune with many worthy causes, Coastal Sound among them.



"My children, now grown, are well taken care of," he says, "but many youth in the community are not." He has lent a hand to these young people in the past and continues to do so by supporting Coastal Sound's Excellence in Music Fund.

A few years back, McClure learned he had cancer. Among his responses to this news was ensuring that his charitable work would continue after his death, with the Coastal Sound Excellence in Music Fund among the recipients of his generosity.

Giving, receiving, and giving again: Coastal Sound's founders and supporters believe that, through music, it can be an endless circle.

For information on Coastal Sound Music Academy's Music Excellence Fund, call 604-469-5973, email info@coastalsoundmusic.com, or visit www.coastalsoundmusic.com.

(*This real donor has asked to remain anonymous.)



Music for your Whole Life

Background: Coastal Sound Music Academy and Coastal Sound International Choral Festival



Coastal Sound's Family of Choirs includes:

- Sources, an introduction to songplay for preschoolers.
- Novisingers, for girls ages 6 and up.
- Boychoir, for boys ages 6 and up.
- Girlchoir, for girls ages 8 and up.
- Children's Choir, for boys and girls ages 10 and up.
- Youth Choir, for young singers with changed voices.
- Adult Choir, a non-auditioned community choir for singers aged 18 to 80-plus.

For information on how to register for a Coastal Sound choir, call 604-469-5973, email info@coastalsoundmusic.com, or visit www.coastalsoundmusic.com.

In the late 1980s, Coquitlam teacher Donna Otto had a vision that the school district honour choir she was conducting could be more.

Out of that vision grew a children's choir. As those children grew, they needed a youth choir. Eventually, Otto added some training choirs. Some parents thought it looked like so much fun that they asked for, and got, an adult choir. Finally, Otto created an introductory music program for preschoolers.

As a new millennium began, Otto had another vision, this time for a biennial, non-competitive, international festival for children's and youth choirs. In just a few years, Coastal Sound International Choral Festival has grown from hosting a handful of choirs to welcoming a host choirs and guest artists from across the country and around the world.



Music for your Whole Life

Coastal Sound Music Academy

Music Fact: Learning music strengthens both sides of the brain, which is why music students tend to do well in both math (left brain) and languages (right brain).

“When people ask about my education, I say I was in choir for nine years before I tell them about the two-year theatre program at Capilano College,” says Scott Perrie.

Singing Fact: Singing requires proper breathing, which straightens posture, builds heart, lung, and immune function, reduces stress, depression, and pain, and increases energy.

The goals of music education change with age, says George Chung. “For young kids, it’s about having fun and making friends. For adults, it’s a social experience, an escape from the rat race.”

Singing Fact: Like a muscle, the singing voice can be developed. We can’t all be Ben Hepner or Dianna Krall, but singing can help all of us do better at everything else we do.

For more information on choral singing, Coastal Sound Music Academy, or registration for this year, visit www.coastalsoundmusic.com. To arrange an interview or photo opportunity, or film a rehearsal, contact Dan Mattinson at 604-469-5973 or info@coastalsoundmusic.com.

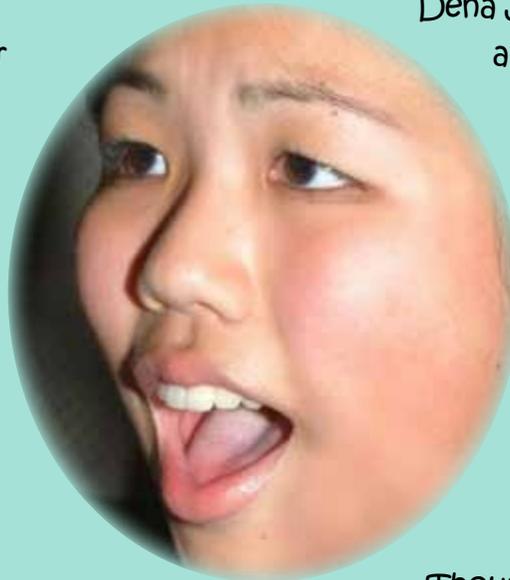
Choir Fact: Choral singing improves attitude and builds confidence. Shy children come out of their shells, while stressed-out adults learn to relax and enjoy friends again.

Dena Javadi’s best memories of choir are the international festivals. “I was amazed to see how such culturally diverse groups could come together for one passion—music.”

Coastal Sound Fact: Coastal Sound Music Academy is unique in BC in offering top-notch music instruction continuously from preschool through retirement.

Though he plays several instruments, Adam Carabine says that singing in a choir is different. “From day one, you are not only learning how to use and control your voice, you are listening to everyone around you—patience is part of the process.”

Coastal Sound Choir Fact: Through its Music Excellence Fund, Coastal Sound offers bursaries and scholarships for children with the desire and motivation to sing, but not the means.



Music for your Whole Life