
PRESS RELEASE

BIG APPLE PERFORMING ARTS



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BROADWAY POWERHOUSE, EDEN ESPINOSA TO PERFORM AT HARMONY, A GALA BENEFITING NEW YORK CITY GAY MEN'S CHORUS AND YOUTH PRIDE CHORUS

The gala will feature

- *live and silent auctions*
- *Performances by Eden Espinosa*
- *The Arts in Action Award presented to James "JbDubs" Whiteside and Dan "Milk" Donigan*
- *The Gary Miller Award presented to Jay Wegman*

Harmony will be held at Current, Pier 59; tickets are on sale now

- *6:00pm – registration, cocktail hour & silent auction*
- *7:30pm – dinner, live auction, entertainment, raffle & award ceremony*

NEW YORK, January 18, 2018 – Big Apple Performing Arts, the home of New York City Gay Men's Chorus and Youth Pride Chorus, today announced that Broadway powerhouse, **Eden Espinosa**, will perform live at their ninth annual *HARMONY* gala fundraiser on **February 14** at Current, Pier 59. More than just a fundraiser, *HARMONY* is a celebration of the power of music to bring people together. What better day to celebrate than the Feast of St. Valentine to cozy up with someone special – or find that perfect someone you've been hoping to spot? Think roses and champagne, romantic ballads and passionate love songs: love is love in all its many glorious guises. Complete with a special Sweetheart Table for Two offering for couples to celebrate their love while supporting the great work of NYCGMC and YPC.

The **Arts in Action Award** for 2018 will be presented to James "JbDubs" Whiteside, Principal Dancer, American Ballet Theatre and Dan "Milk" Donigan, Figure Skater and Drag Performer. With James' magnificent dancing, the Dairy Queens, and their alter-egos as Milk and JbDubs, together they embody a core belief of NYCGMC: that truly inspiring art requires a deep examination of the truth, as painful or wonderful as it may be. It is for these reasons that we honor James and Milk with our annual Arts in Action Award for inspiring change through art. Now in its third year, past recipients have been Lisa Kron and Jerry Mitchell.

The **Gary Miller Award** for 2018 will be presented to **Jay Wegman**, Senior Director, NYU Skirball Center for the Performing Arts. Jay's work at Abrons Arts Center and now at NYU Skirball Center for the Performing Arts encompasses championing LGBTQ+ artists at all stages of their careers. Jay has emboldened audiences and artists to be fearless champions for love, equality, and acceptance, using the arts as crucial and effective opposition to hatred and bigotry. It is for these reasons that we honor Jay with our annual Gary Miller Award for substantial contribution to the NYC queer community and the arts.

"Through amazing performances, charity work, school programs, and championing LGBTQ rights, NYCGMC and YPC are changing lives for the better—just as we've done for nearly 40 years," said **Damian Kington, Chair of Big Apple Performing Arts**. "*HARMONY* is our most important fundraising event of the year. Not only do we raise money for this amazing organization, we also get to celebrate those who are making a huge impact in our community and in LGBTQ arts"

Tickets for *HARMONY* are now on sale at nycgmc.org and all proceeds go toward NYCGMC and YPC. Tickets start at \$395, including a Sweetheart Table option for two for \$1,500 and tables that range from \$5,000 - \$10,000. Auction items are available for view and bidding [here](#).

HARMONY 2018's host committee is made up of James D. Matte & J. Christopher Beck, Kevin Sterns & Check Skowron, Dominic Paolillo & Itai Eithan Shamir, Damian Kington, and Skie Ocasio.

HARMONY 2018's corporate sponsors are JetBlue, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Luxury Attaché, and Town Residential.

About Eden Espinosa

Eden Espinosa is most recognized for her critically acclaimed portrayal of Elphaba in "Wicked" on Broadway and in both Los Angeles and San Francisco. Ms. Espinosa originated the title character in "Brooklyn the Musical", played Flora in "Flora the Red Menace," and Maureen in the closing company of "Rent". Eden also originated the role of Sadie Thompson, "Rain", at the Old Globe Theater. She portrayed Eva Peron in TPAC and Studio Tenn's production of "Evita". Last year she toured Denmark and London playing Emma Borden in "Lizzie". Most recently, she played Mary Flynn to rave reviews in Maria Freidmans productions of "Merrily We Roll Along" at the Huntington Theatre in Boston. Her television appearances include shows such as Law and Order, Ugly Betty, and Elementary. Voiceover credits include Cassandra in the Disney show Tangled the Series, Robot Chicken, MAD TV, Elena of Avalor, and Titan Maximum Eden's debut album, Look Around, is available at all online retail outlets, and her second album will be released in 2018. Twitter [@edenespinosa](#) Instagram [@edenespinosa](#)

About the New York City Gay Men's Chorus

New York City Gay Men's Chorus is a world-class, world-renowned New York institution and a pioneering voice for the LGBTQ community. NYCGMC is comprised of more than 250 talented singers of various ages, backgrounds, and experiences. Together, we produce a vibrant sound and energy that audiences can feel and connect with. Through the power of this sound, and our spectacular performances, we are fearless champions for love, equality, and acceptance. Founded in 1980, NYCGMC has formed a strong bond with devoted followers and continues to make lasting connections with new and diverse audiences. We sing in every style from classical to pop, Broadway to gospel, and from cultures all over the world. As artists, we listen to the changing world around us and transform what we hear into music. We sing to challenge perceptions of the LGBTQ community, to combat fear and hatred, encourage compassion and human connection, and to thrill with the superb quality of our sound. Through our music, audiences mourn losses, cheer victories, find unconditional acceptance, and celebrate life. We perform in a variety of settings, including special, private, and corporate events, concerts, television appearances, festivals, Broadway/theatre productions, conferences, weddings, parties, fundraisers, and community events. nycgmc.org

About the Youth Pride Chorus

New York City's Youth Pride Chorus harnesses the power of the performing arts to engage lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and straight young people ages 13-22 as agents of change. YPC fights homophobia, bullying, and all forms of hate by boldly asserting—through music—the joy, diversity, strength, and pride of today's youth. YPC singers discover their own power by empowering others in schools, online, and in the broader community through electrifying, high caliber singing and performances. youthpridechorus.org

About Big Apple Performing Arts

Big Apple Performing Arts is the non-profit management company for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus and Youth Pride Chorus. With over thirty years of history, innovative programs, and service to the LGBTQ community, Big Apple Performing Arts is renowned for producing legendary performances, commissioning new works, and taking a leading role in the movement for social justice. From Carnegie Hall to City Hall, from the AIDS crisis to the struggle for marriage equality, as well as today's gender and identity politics, the choruses of BAPA have been leaders and activists in the New York City community since 1980.

Here are links for more information on the following:

[NYCGMC](#)