

Josephine Lee
Artistic Director, Chicago Children's Choir

Founded in 1956, the Chicago Children's Choir is a multiracial, multicultural choral music education organization, shaping the future by making a difference in the lives of children and youth through musical excellence.

“Under her watch, the Choir has grown to become one of the nation’s finest ...giving kids from the metropolitan area a chance to represent what is best about Chicago.” – John von Rhein, *Chicago Tribune*

“Music is more than notes on a page. Through our breadth of repertoire, these children are learning diverse social codes and through their voices are able to bring cultures together. Chicago Children's Choir helps our singers become cultural diplomats and world citizens in our global society.” – Josephine Lee, Artistic Director

Born in Chicago, Josephine Lee is a classically trained pianist, conductor, arranger and producer. Appointed in 1999, Ms. Lee is the youngest Artistic Director in the history of Chicago Children's Choir. Under her direction, the Choir has toured nationally and internationally, received a Chicago/Midwest Emmy Award for the 2008 documentary *Songs on the Road to Freedom*, and has been featured in nationally broadcast television and radio performances. In 2010, Ms. Lee was invited to join The Chicago Network, a premier organization of diverse, professional women who have reached the highest echelons of business, the arts, government, the professions and academia. In 2009, she led the Choir in concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC with Denyce Graves and Sweet Honey In The Rock, honoring the 70th Anniversary of Marian Anderson’s historic concert at that site. In 2008, Ms. Lee received the 3Arts Artist Award and in 2006 was named “Chicagoan of the Year in the Arts” by *Chicago Tribune*. Most recently, Ms. Lee directed and produced the new Chicago Children's Choir studio recording, *Holiday Harmony*.

In June 2002 Chorus America named Ms. Lee the first Robert Shaw Conducting Fellow, which honors the great conductor’s legacy in the choral arts by supporting the professional development of outstanding, emerging conductors who will exemplify the highest standards of choral performance. In 2007, Ms. Lee was honored as a Distinguished Musician by The Union League Club of Chicago and in 1995 received the Union League Civic & Arts Foundation award in piano performance. Ms. Lee has conducted and performed concerts and master classes throughout the United States, Argentina, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Uruguay. More than a choral conductor, Ms. Lee has also conducted the Chicago, Lyric Opera, Grant Park and Oregon symphony orchestras.

In addition to working with choral and symphonic repertoire, Ms. Lee introduces the Choir’s singers to opera, theater and dance. In collaboration with Lookingglass Theatre Company and Natya Dance Theatre, Ms. Lee co-created the epic work of musical theater, *Sita Ram*, nominated for three 2006 Jeff Equity Awards. In May 2007, Ms. Lee music directed the cultural programming featuring Chicago Children's Choir surrounding the Dalai Lama’s public talk at Millennium Park. In observance of Sept. 11, 2001, Chicago Children’s Choir collaborated with Steppenwolf Theatre Company for *Citizens of the World*, presented by the City of Chicago, featuring Steppenwolf ensemble members for a live broadcast by Chicago Public Radio, 91.5FM on Sept. 11, 2006. Additionally in 2006-2007, Ms. Lee music directed the soundtrack recording and critically acclaimed performances of the groundbreaking work *Underground Movements*, created by Frank Chaves and Evan Solot for River North Chicago Dance Company and Chicago Children's Choir.

Ms. Lee received her Bachelor’s degree in piano performance at DePaul University studying with Dmitry Paperno, as well as a Master’s degree in conducting from Northwestern University. Ms. Lee currently resides in Chicago with her husband Kevin McConkey and children Bennet and Emerson.

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