



**DATELINE: April 18, 2023**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DA CAMERA SINGERS PRESENTS CRAIG HELLA JOHNSON'S ORATORIO  
"CONSIDERING MATTHEW SHEPARD" ON MAY 21 IN GREENFIELD**

Da Camera Singers, the adult chamber choir located in the Pioneer Valley, will present the Western Massachusetts premiere of Craig Hella Johnson's oratorio *Considering Matthew Shepard* on May 21 at 4 PM in the auditorium at Greenfield High School, 21 Barr Ave, Greenfield, MA.

*Considering Matthew Shepard* tells the story of a gay college student, who was kidnapped, robbed, beaten, and brutally murdered in 1998, in Laramie, Wyoming, where he attended the University of Wyoming. His murder and the ensuing trial was captured by Moises Kaufmann and the Tectonic Theatre Company in *The Laramie Project*, and its sequel.

*Considering Matthew Shepard* is a three-part fusion oratorio. Johnson set the piece to wide range of poetic and soulful texts by poets including Hildegard of Bingen; Lesléa Newman, the internationally renowned author who is based in Western Massachusetts, Michael Dennis Browne, Craig Hella Johnson, William Blake and Rumi, as well as passages from Matt's personal journal, interviews and writings from his parents Judy and Dennis Shepard, and newspaper reports. The oratorio is set for choir, an eight piece orchestra and soloists, directed by Sheila Heffernon.

Considering Matthew Shepard debuted at #4 on Billboard's Traditional Classical Chart after Harmonia Mundi released the 2-CD Set recording in mid-September, 2016.

According to Heffernon, "Through the music, the poetry and the narration, Johnson takes the listener on a journey of anger and despair to forgiveness, hope and love. In this twenty-fifth year anniversary of the murder of Matthew Shepard, Da Camera Singers presents this performance in order to keep telling his story, to remind us all that love can prevail".

Assisting Da Camera in telling Matthew Shepard's story will be guest narrators Mark Auerbach, Metta Dael, Jill Kaufman, Bill Newman and Stan Rosenberg, and soloists Isabella DerHerdt and Lachlan Miller. Lesléa Newman will introduce the program.

No tickets are required, but donations will be accepted at the performance, to benefit DaCamera and the Matthew Shepard Foundation.

For further details on Da Camera visit: [dacamerasingers.org](http://dacamerasingers.org) or on Facebook at Da Camera Singers. This program has been supported by a generous grant from the Mass Cultural Council.



Da Camera Singers Present the Western Mass Premiere of

# Considering Matthew Shepard

by Craig Hella Johnson

Introduction by Lesléa Newman

Guest Narrators: Mark Auerbach, Metta Dael, Jill Kaufman, Bill Newman, and Stanley Rosenberg

**May 21, 2023 at 4:00pm**

**Greenfield High School**

**21 Barr Ave, Greenfield, MA**

**Open to all, Free**

Generously supported by



This work celebrates Matt's life, explores the events of his murder in 1998, and asks us to consider how we can rid the world of homophobia and hate crimes. Donations collected at the door will be shared with the Matthew Shepard Foundation

(\*Please note this work contains mature content and includes a homophobic slur)

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Photos available on request.