



Great Grants and Initiatives

Grantor: **Bonfils-Stanton Foundation**

Grantee or Initiative: **Colorado Children's Chorale**

Amount: **\$60,000** Period of Grant Award: **2006-2008**

The Bonfils-Stanton Foundation partnered with the Colorado Children's Chorale to commission *A Stream of Voices*, a unique musical featuring music written for children and performed by a cast of children in the leading roles. The project teamed local children with a renowned opera librettist and Academy Award- winning composer to create, refine and premier this new work for a national audience of patrons and critics.

A Stream of Voices is the musical story of a group of children who go fishing one day, learn that the fish in their favorite stream are dying, and work together to make changes in themselves and the adults in their lives. Musically, this dynamic production featured music ranging from beautiful ballads to raucous rap, and demonstrated the power of young voices joining together to make a difference.

"They're so disciplined. I gave them tough things to do – I have them singing in Chinese, in Italian. And, of course, all that acting and moving around. But they're used to that. It didn't take us long to understand that whatever we asked these kids to do, they could do it." Gene Scheer, Librettist, "A Stream of Voices"

Creating this musical gave urban youth a shared understanding of environmental and global issues and what it takes to make positive community change. It enriched the field of children's music by adding repertory that features choreography of interest to boys as well as girls, and helped to position the Denver-based Colorado Children's Chorale as a national leader in the field of children's choral music.

The creative process also demonstrated the collaborative spirit of Denver's vibrant art community. Many of Denver's premier performing arts organizations, including Central City Opera, Opera Colorado, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and Colorado Ballet, contributed generously their costumes, sets, talent and wisdom.

The rich creative process introduced talented young singers, from a broad range of neighborhoods and backgrounds, to the real-life challenges of teamwork, collaboration, scheduling, budgets and deadlines.

"Our seventy young performers have been living the invaluable lessons of collaboration and teamwork, both on and off the state. I know that they will carry these lessons into their futures, enriching the community wherever life happens to take them." Debbie DeSantis, Artistic Director, Colorado Children's Chorale.