



## **AIDS Quilt Songbook kickoff party at Hydrate**

Chicago, IL - Hydrate Chicago will host the kickoff fund-raiser and cocktail party for Chicago AIDS Quilt Songbook, from 8 to 11 p.m. on Saturday Oct. 11. This is a chance to meet the composers and performers.

From 8 to 10 p.m., there will be a complimentary hosted bar with Stolli vodka, Bud Light and Red Bull, plus an hors d'oeuvres buffet presented by Halsted's Bar and Grill.

There is a \$10 suggested donation. All proceeds raised at the event will go to support the production and publicity costs for the Dec. 1 Chicago AIDS Quilt Songbook concert benefiting Season of Concern presented by Chicago Opera Vanguard at the Court Theatre.

The first day of December has customarily been designated as "A Day Without Art." However, the concert tradition of The AIDS Quilt Songbook was started in 1992 by the late baritone William Parker, himself a 1993 casualty of AIDS-related illness, for which he invited composers to add a "song panel" to a quilt of remembrance commemorating those infected or affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis. Unfortunately, in recent years, the idea of presenting these concerts has largely fallen by the wayside.

In the face of this still prevalent epidemic, Chicago Opera Vanguard has asked a number of Chicago-based or associated composers, including Augusta Read Thomas and playwright Lisa Dilman to create new songs as a continuation of this important artistic legacy. The final works will be presented in a one-night-only concert on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1, at the Court Theatre in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood.

Season of Concern is the Chicagoland theatre community's fund-raising effort, providing compassionate care to those in our community who are experiencing the effects of catastrophic illness. This effort supports the fight against HIV and AIDS by contributing to programs that provide direct care (personal financial support, housing care, meals, medications, legal assistance and other services) to members of the Chicago and Midwestern theatre community; and by addressing emergency needs expressed by theatre community members in their struggles against other life-threatening illnesses. For more information on Season of Concern, visit [www.seasonofconcern.org](http://www.seasonofconcern.org).

Chicago Opera Vanguard is Chicago's newest, hippest opera company dedicated to exploring the delicate balance needed between performance, music, words, design and technology in order to make a truly transformative experience. COV is committed to creating accessible and exciting theatrical experiences by producing new works, giving a second voice to important or overlooked modern pieces, and completely re imagining the standard repertoire. For more information, visit [www.ChicagoVanguard.org](http://www.ChicagoVanguard.org)

The first two incarnations of this project, The AIDS Quilt Songbook and Heartbeats: New Songs from Minnesota for the AIDS Quilt Songbook, both from 1992, featured a number of today's most respected composers, writers and performers, including William Bolcom, Craig Carnahan, Chris DeBlasio, Melvin Dixon, Ethyl Eichelberger, Eve Ensler, Ricky Ian Gordon, John Harbison, Lee Hoiby, Aaron Jay Kernis, Libby Larsen, John Musto, Kurt Ollmann, Ned Rorem, William Sharp, Sanford Sylvan and Donald Wheelock.

A recording of The AIDS Quilt Songbook is available on Harmonium Mundi, and another of Heartbeats on the Innova label. The AIDS Quilt Songbook is still in print in an edition by Boosey & Hawkes.