

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a young woman I found myself on a Bucks County farm in Pennsylvania with a family that often sang together around the dinner table. My own family never sang together, and the sound of those voices stirred something deep within me, a longing to sing with others, freely, informally, without judgment.

And why not: This is how people sang for most of human history. In many cultures they still do. I wondered why, in North America, so many of us missed out on that marvelous, enveloping habit of informally singing together. After more than a century of recorded music, millions of us are mere consumers of other people singing.

Perhaps we have been persuaded that we can't sing.

The current revival of communal singing is giving the lie to that notion. This revival has been nurtured by artists like Pete Seeger, Annie Patterson, Peter Blood, and many others. When we sing with other people, we feel a sense of belonging. Our spirits are nourished, our hearts are lightened. Singing seems to satisfy an itch that springs from deep inside our soul. Making this film convinced me that we are wired to sing. All of us are singers.

Polly Wells



Director Polly Wells in Philadelphia
Photo credit: Susan Snipes-Wells