

The Wisconsin Chamber Choir Presents
“Reflections of the Heart”
Saturday, December 8, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church
1904 Winnebago Street, Madison, WI

Concert Details

Now in its ninth season, the Wisconsin Chamber Choir presents its first concert of the 2007-08 season on Saturday, December 8th, 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1904 Winnebago Street. The Wisconsin Chamber Choir will be joined by the Edgewood College Madrigal Singers in a unique program that represents the joyous, the contemplative, the reflective, and profound reflections of the heart. Advanced tickets are available at Ward Brodt Music, Little Luxuries, and Orange Tree Imports, or by calling 273-4609. Prices are \$10 advance and \$12 at the door, general admission and \$5 and \$7 for students. Wisconsin Chamber Choir’s Artistic Director candidate, Dr. Joseph Testa, Associate Professor at Edgewood College, conducts the choir. More information can be found at www.wisconsinchamberchoir.org.

About the Works

“Reflections of the Heart,” begins as the *joyous* spirit is heard initially in the work of the early-Baroque composer, J. P. Sweelinck’s *Cantate Domino*, scored for *SSATB*. This gives way to *contemplative* wonder, evident in *O admirabile commercium* by the late-Renaissance composer, Jacob Handl. Here, influences of Venetian polychoral techniques are highlighted as the musical fabric continues an exciting alternation of rich *SSAA* and *TTBB* timbres.

The *contemplative* words of the late-Medieval church leader, Pope Innocents III, in *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, are placed into relief in the vibrant and exciting harmonic palette of Scandinavian composer, Knut Nystedt. The prayer’s constant call and yearning for the Spirit of God sets the tone for the next two works on the program whose texts are deeply *reflective and profound*. The late-American composer, Robert Kreutz, chose the poignant poetry of the mystic, Thomas Merton -- *For my brother: reported missing in action*. The text speaks as vividly to us today as it did to Merton’s audience of 1943.

Having just encountered Merton’s text on the tragedies of war, the choir turns to the *profound* yet simplistic words of *Island in Space*. This work, by Kirke Mechem, is a compilation of two texts – one by former astronaut, Russell Schweickart, looking back at an earth devoid of visible boundaries; the other portion of text, “...to see ourselves as riders on the earth together...” is that of poet, Archibald MacLeish

WCC rounds off the first half of their concert with Charles Villiers Stanford’s *Beati quorum via* – a late-Romantic work whose text seems all at once *profound, contemplative* and *joyous*.

Offering a lighter and more festive fare, the choir returns after intermission to open with William Walton’s *What Cheer*. Hugo Distler’s *Sing with Joy, Glad Voices Lift* incorporates a familiar seasonal melody for this next work on the program; yet the listener will note unique phrasing which is the hallmark of this composer’s style. The latter is then juxtaposed with the warm and sensuous harmonic style of the French composer, Pierre Villette, in the work *Hymne à la Vierge*.

To round out this portion of the concert the choir turns to two Spanish-texted works: a *Villancico* (Christmas Carol) from Argentina, and a *Merengue* (a dance) from the Dominican Republic. And last but not least, the concert closes with *Deck The Hall*, arranged by John Rutter. Don’t miss this concert!