

Wisconsin Connections: A Program of Great Music from Six Centuries featuring sacred music by Franz Schubert, Anton Bruckner, Orlando di Lasso, and J. S. Bach's virtuoso motet, *Lobet den Herrn*; music in praise of nature by Stephen Chatman; spicy choral arrangements from Latin America; and the world premiere of *We're All Here* (revised version) by Wisconsin native Daron Hagen.

Director's Note

As Interim Director of the Wisconsin Chamber Choir, I decided to select repertoire from a variety of different eras to give the choir an idea of how I work in different styles, and for me to see how they respond. At the same time, I wanted to choose music that would build upon the choir's strengths, notably their extensive experience with Bach's music and contemporary American composers. Finally, given the choir's name, it seemed apropos to program pieces that had some sort of connection to Wisconsin.

During the nineteenth century, Wisconsin was settled by German-speaking immigrants who treasured music of composers such as **Schubert, Bruckner, and Bach**. This heritage is reflected in the WCC's own history which has featured performances of major Bach works such as the *B-Minor Mass* and *Christmas Oratorio*. In addition to performing ensembles such as the WCC, Wisconsin's strong musical traditions include music publishers such as A-R Editions in Middleton, the most significant American publisher of early music in scholarly editions. A-R has recently undertaken the first-ever complete edition of Renaissance composer **Orlando di Lasso's** motets (over 500 pieces collected into 21 volumes). In recognition of this particular "Wisconsin connection," our concert opens with two of Lasso's most awe-inspiring motets, *Timor et tremor (Fear and Trembling)* and *Surgens Jesus (Jesus, Rising from the Dead)*.

The second half of our concert features music by contemporary U.S. and Latin American composers. **Daron Hagen** was born in Milwaukee and now works as a freelance composer based in New York, but he retains close ties to Wisconsin where many of his works have been premiered, including *Shining Brow*, his opera on the life of Frank Lloyd Wright. Hagen's choral work, *We're All Here*, was originally a joint commission by his alma mater, Brookfield Central High School, and the Milwaukee-based new music ensemble, Present Music. In late 2007 Hagen made a new arrangement of the work for chorus and piano especially for the WCC. The work sets three poems in English: *Pied Beauty* by Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Autumn Leaves* by Robert Frost, and *We're All Here* by James Fenimore Cooper. According to Hagen, the work is dedicated "to the memory of victims of the AIDS epidemic, 1980-present; however, it is also a tribute to those who have survived."

Stephen Chatman grew up in Madison, and now lives in Vancouver, BC. The three works by Chatman on our program—*Prairie Lullaby*, *Sunset*, and *Chickadee*—reflect the composer's love of nature. Finally, **Latin Americans** reflect the newest wave of immigration to Wisconsin. We will close our concert with two selections by contemporary composers from Argentina and Cuba. The last work, *El Guayaboso (The Liar)* is a rhythmic tour de force in the form of a rumba (the Cuban national dance) arranged for voices.