

presents

Carols and Lullabies

Saturday, December 13, 7:30 p.m.

First Unitarian Society

Atrium Auditorium

900 University Bay Dr., Madison, WI

Join the Wisconsin Chamber Choir for a holiday concert featuring beloved carols from around the world, representing European, Latin American, Native American, and African American traditions. The centerpiece of the program is *Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest* by American composer Conrad Susa, a cycle of ten carols sung in Spanish and Catalan. Guest musicians on harp, guitar, and marimba join the choir and soloists to evoke “a Southwestern piñata party for the new baby,” in the composer’s description.

Both the Southwestern carols and the remaining works on the program reflect the varied ethnic heritages of Wisconsin residents, past and present. Historical and contemporary composers from England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Mexico, Poland, and the US and Canada represent multiple waves of immigration to Wisconsin.

Some of North America’s original inhabitants speak through a pair of unique works. *Xicochi conetzintle* is an early 17th-century *villancico* with lyrics in Nahuatl, the main indigenous language of central Mexico. *Wyandot’s Realm* is a contemporary reinterpretation of the 17th-century *Huron Carol* by Indigenous Canadian composer Andrew Balfour, sung in Wendat, Ojibwe, and Latin.

Music from the African diaspora includes a moving rendition of *Silent Night* by Detroit-based gospel singer/songwriter Thomas Whitfield; a powerful setting of Longfellow’s poem, *Christmas Bells*, by British composer Roderick Williams; and the joyful concluding “Alleluia” from *Ballad of the Brown King* by Margaret Bonds with lyrics by Langston Hughes.

Tickets are \$25 for adults / \$5 students, available in advance from www.wisconsinchamberchoir.org or at the door. Discounted tickets are available for children, students, and patrons experiencing financial hardship.

Founded in 1998, the Wisconsin Chamber Choir has established a reputation for excellence in the performance of oratorios by Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Brahms; *a cappella* works from various centuries; and world premieres. WCC Artistic Director Robert Gehrenbeck, a Professor of Music at UW-Whitewater, has been hailed by critics for his vibrant and emotionally compelling interpretations of a wide variety of choral music. Under his leadership the WCC has presented major works with orchestra as well as innovative programs of rarely heard music by composers from a wide variety of eras, nationalities, and cultures.