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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the 2004-2005 season of the Madison Youth Choirs! This afternoon, you will hear seven different ensembles sing an incredible range of music. You will hear Scottish folk songs, South African freedom songs, two different settings of the Missa Brevis text, Quaker songs, songs in Hebrew, French, and German, art songs, and pop songs. To begin and end the concert you will hear singers from our entire program, first with a song from the Yoruba people of Nigeria, and last with a gospel-influenced song from the United States.

Throughout the concert, you will hear groups singing in unison; entire choirs of fifty or more singers will sing together in one united sound! This was a challenge for each choir this semester. It is amazing how complicated and satisfying singing in one part can be. (Of course, you will hear music with a different type of complexity as well). Our theme for our study this semester was "United in Song". We worked on an art project together at retreats and rehearsal (which you can see hanging in the lobby), we discussed the meaning of "unity", we sang in unison, but most of all, we took one step closer to being truly one organization.

Please join us in singing the praises of our major sponsors who made this concert possible, including the Wisconsin Arts Board, Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission, Overture Foundation, Madison CitiARTS Commission, and our program advertisers. We would also like to thank our singers, volunteers, parents, and donors for their invaluable support of the Madison Youth Choirs throughout the year. But most of all, thank you for supporting our newly unified organization and our young singers by attending our winter concert. We hope you enjoy "United in Song".

Mike Ross
Artistic Director



Emily Gruenewald
Executive Director



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UNITED IN SONG

Sunday, January 23rd, 2005, 3:00 p.m.

I. THE MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS

Ise Oluwa

After Sweet Honey in the Rock

Translation: God's work will never be destroyed

From the Yoruba people of Nigeria, this song of power and love combines the talents of all of our singers. It is presented here in an arrangement adapted from a Sweet Honey in the Rock recording.

II. RAGAZZI

Mike Ross, conductor

Martha Fischer, piano

The Vagabond (from *Songs of Travel*)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Along with Sir Edward Elgar and Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams was one of the composers most responsible for the reemergence of British classical music in the twentieth century. A notable contributor in virtually every field of composition, his *Songs of Travel*, written between 1901 and 1904, represent his first major foray into song writing. Drawn from a volume of Robert Louis Stevenson poems of the same name, the cycle offers a rather different take on the "wayfarer cycle." *The Vagabond*, the first song in the cycle, introduces the traveler, with heavy chords in the piano depicting a rough journey through the English countryside. (Notes by Ahmed Ismail.)

Finnan Haddie

Vijay Singh

Matt Langlois, Nate Woods, Nathaniel Lutes, James Fassbender, solos
Stephanie Jutt, flute

From Singh's *Celtic Songs*, this Scottish-inspired song tells the story of a young Findon fisherman and his quest for Maddie's hand in marriage. Unfortunately, Finnan Haddie (a traditional Scottish smoked fish recipe) intervenes.



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Stand By Me

Ben E. King
arranged by Randal Swiggum

Aman Alem, Trace Johnson, James Hansen, solos
Kate Mielke, violin

Shortly after leaving the famous gospel-soul group *The Drifters*, Ben E. King began his solo career with this hit. Rock and roll song-writing stalwarts Lieber and Stoller “sweetened up” Ben E. King’s song (based on a 1955 gospel song of the same name) with strings and Stoller’s infectious bass-line. It is presented in an arrangement by former Madison Children’s Choir Artistic Director Randy Swiggum with a violin part from the original recording.

III. CON GIOIA

Heather Thorpe, conductor
William Whitney, piano

Halleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona

South African Freedom Song

Sung in Sotho and English

Translation: *Halleluya! We sing your praises
All our hearts are filled with gladness
Christ the Lord to us said:
I am wine, I am bread
Give to all who thirst and hunger*

Freedom songs of South Africa gave liberating joy as people struggled for justice, equality and peace during Apartheid. This song is borrowed from a people who were poor and oppressed. We hope to gain a deeper understanding of this joyful message, of its fervor, of its liberating power, and strive to make this song our own.

Ah, Poor Bird/*Beaux Yeux*

Traditional

Dan Brielmaier, oboe; Stephanie Jutt, flute

Arranged by Betty Bertaux

Sung in French and English

Translation: *Beautiful eyes, beautiful eyes,
Since I have first admired you
I have not been more happy.*

This setting of two wistful canons is simple, familiar to some, and sounds haunting

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PROGRAM NOTES

when sung in this arrangement. The challenge of the piece is to not only to sing these two canons together but over a complimentary twentieth century accompaniment. The singer's ear is also strengthened as the piece oscillates between minor to major, creating a toggling effect between the two tonalities until the final minor resolution.

Let Beauty Awake (from *Songs of Travel*) Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Songs of Travel are based on the poetry of Robert Louis Stevenson and deal with a vagabond lamenting about his lost loves. The first publication of this music was in 1960, two years after the death of the composer. The delay in publication was a direct result of the composer's refusal to release the last section of the composition. The song cycle showcases the composer's ability to blend beautiful melodies, interesting and sometimes unexpected harmonies, and folk-like qualities into an appropriate accompaniment to the poetry. There is a mournful, yet uplifting, quality to the music, which can only be achieved by a composer with outstanding musicianship and sensitivity.

Here's to Song Allister MacGillivray
arranged by Lydia Adams
Abigail Taylor, Stephanie Frank and Kelly Tauschek, soloists

Although not a folk melody, *Here's to Song* has the heart and spirit of a Nova Scotia folksong. This piece is a tribute to the friendships, musical experiences, and creation of "unity" Con Gioia has created together.

IV. BRITTEN

Mike Ross, conductor
William Whitney, piano
Dan Briemaier, oboe
Kolin Wlaker, Kyle Connors, John Paul Carey, sopranos

Missa Brevis Imant Raminsh (1943-)
I. Kyrie
III. Sanctus-Benedictus
IV. Agnus Dei

This piece, commissioned by the Indianapolis Children's Choir (Henry Leck, Music Director) premiered in January 1990. Imant Raminsh was born in Latvia but immigrated to Canada soon after. This work opens with a theme based on an ascending

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minor triad, a theme that continues in the final movement, the *Agnus Dei*. The middle movement opens with lilting parallel triads and moves into a fugal melismatic section.

V. BOYCHOIR

Jamie Pitt, conductor
William Whitney, piano

Laudamus Te (From Gloria)

Antonio Vivaldi (1669-1741)
edited by Mason Martins

Translation: *We praise thee. We bless thee. We worship thee. We glorify thee.*

One of Vivaldi's most beloved works, (along with *The Four Seasons*) the *Gloria* was written for the *Ospedia della Pieta*, a Venetian girls' orphanage where Vivaldi was a music instructor. This duet, full of imitative vocal lines, is connected throughout by a recurring instrumental refrain.

How Can I Keep From Singing?

Quaker Song
arranged by Ginger B. Littleton

"The Quakers, also known as Friends, are a non-violent, peace-loving religious group. They have spawned several well-known songs, of which the most beloved is this one. This tune is based on a pentatonic scale consisting of five tones. The text is powerful, with a sense of internal strength and hope pervading throughout. It reflects one of the main purposes in life, to rise above the problems and sorrows of this earth and find an inner calm and peacefulness. No matter how uncertain life is, there is a constant 'song' throughout, if only we seek to hear it and to 'sing' it. It echoes through our soul and gives us purpose in life." (Notes by arranger Ginger B. Littleton.)

Poor Man Lazarus

Spiritual
arranged by Jester Hairston

This spiritual is based on the parable of Lazarus, a beggar who was spurned in life by a rich man. The time came when Lazarus died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him in vain, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."

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INTERMISSION

VI. CHORALIERS

Lisa Kjentvet, conductor
William Whitney, piano

O, Desayo

Angolan Folk Song
arranged by Elliot Z. Levine

O, Desayo is a traditional greeting and farewell song of Angola. The lyrics are a mixture of Bantu, Portuguese and English. The Portuguese *menina* actually means little girl but since variation and free interpretation are part of this musical tradition, during rehearsal we often substituted names until everyone was properly greeted. Like most traditional African songs, this one has a syncopated rhythm.

An die Musik

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Sung in German

Translation: *Oh sacred art, how oft in hours blighted,
While into life's untamed cycle hurled,
Hast thou my heart to warm love reignited
To transport me into a better world!
So often has a sigh from thy harp drifted,
A chord from thee, holy and full of bliss,
A glimpse of better times from heaven lifted.*

Schubert's *An die Musik* is a well-crafted art song which has allowed the singers to explore the characteristics of the Romantic style. The beautiful melody sets a poetic text that conveys the power of music to change our lives. Performing this piece is our way of saying thanks for the music.

Hine Ma Tov

Allan E. Naplan

Sung in Hebrew

Translation: *Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in peace.*

Allan Naplan's original setting of this well-known Hebrew text is written in the traditional Klezmer style. It incorporates a lively syncopated bounce feeling as well as

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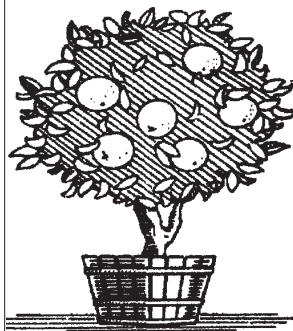
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PROGRAM NOTES

a structured progression between major and minor modes. *Hine Ma Tov*, sung in Hebrew, and the mass choir piece *Unity*, sung in English, are both based on Psalm 133:1. The meaning of the text is universal and easily translated into any language, culture, or religion.

VII. CANTILENA

Lisa Kjentvet, conductor
William Whitney, piano

Gabi, Gabi

South African Freedom Song
arranged by Henry Leck

Thanks to a strong vocal tradition, the children of South Africa learn to sing unaccompanied harmony at a very early age. Although we often think drums should accompany African music, this piece is usually sung a cappella. The singers learned Gabi, Gabi entirely by rote. The text is translated as "Come, let us join together and form a movement."

Ich Folge Dir Gleichfalls

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Sung in German

Translation: *I follow you with eager footsteps and will not forsake you, my light and my life. Show me the way, urge me on, ask me to go with you always.*

Stephanie Jutt, flute

Ich Folge Dir Gleichfalls is an aria from Bach's St. John Passion. Some of the most beautiful repertoire for children comes from the solo material of major choral works. Although it is sung in unison, this piece is very challenging and has given us the opportunity to work on a lyric legato style and flexibility.

Dirait-on

Morton Lauridsen (1943)

Sung in French

Translation: *Abandon surrounding abandon, tenderness touching tenderness...
Your oneness endlessly caresses itself, so they say;
self-caressing through its own clear reflection.
Thus you invented the theme of Narcissus fulfilled.*

PROGRAM NOTES

Dirait-on is the third and final piece in Lauridsen's cycle *Les Chansons des Roses*. It was composed as a tuneful folksong and weaves together two melodic ideas first presented in the preceding movements. The text was written by one of the greatest lyric poets of modern Germany, Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926). In addition to his vast output of German poetry, Rilke wrote nearly 400 poems in French. The composer writes, "His French poems on roses struck me as especially charming, filled with gorgeous lyricism, deftly crafted and elegant in their imagery. These exquisite poems are primarily light, joyous and playful and the musical settings are designed to enhance these characteristics and capture their delicate beauty and sensuousness."

Yo le Canto Todo El Dia

David L. Brunner

Sung in Spanish

Translation: *So I am moving with my heart,
So I am leaving with a drum,
I sing to you all day long with affection and joy,
So I am leaving with a drum with affection and emotion.*

This song is characterized by infectious rhythms and playful melodies that capture the vitality of Venezuelan music. An original setting of a text honoring the South American Patron Saint of Drumming, it speaks of our oneness with music and the power of music to express our emotions.

VIII. CANTABILE

Mike Ross, conductor
Martha Fischer, piano

Sure on this Shining Night

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Barber set James Agee's text to this haunting melody in 1961. Barber was an American composer who often confounded critics by utilizing traditional musical labels and avoiding the 20th century atonal (Schoenberg) vs. tonal (Stravinsky) fight. Composer of the popular Adagio for Strings (arranged from the second movement of his String Quartet in B major), his music has an incredible melodic sense, which set him apart from many of his contemporaries.

Missa Brevis

Stephen Hatfield (1956-)

- I. Kyrie
- II. Gloria

Lara Young, Soprano
III. Sanctus

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♫ MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS

Iv. Agnus Dei

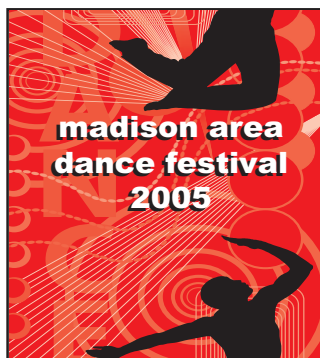
It was the intent of Canadian composer Stephen Hatfield to write a *Missa Brevis* where “each movement would incorporate folk melodies from a different country.” Here, melodies are “unraveled, spliced together, and persuaded to modulate”. Each movement is based on a different folk melody or melodies: The *Kyrie* with its Scottish burial song, the *Gloria* and its Norwegian cattle call and folk song based on the story of a Medieval maiden luring the mountain king from his high perch(!), the *Sanctus* with its street music of the high Andes, and the *Agnus Dei* with its yodeling song from the Isongo people of Central Africa.

IX. THE MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS

Unity

Moone/Wahington
arranged by Daniel M. Cason II

With a universal text from Psalm 133:1, this gospel-style song, written by Gloraine Moone, and transcribed by gospel musician Daniel Cason, served as the cornerstone of our study this semester. The message mirrors our new, united organization: her, 220+ singers join for a truly unified finale.



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Ella Beckman
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Sophia Canon
Emma Cibula
Willa Cullen
Anna Farkas
Emma Farley
Victoria Fischer
Madeline Franz-Bawden
Eden Girma
Allison Gothard
Malia Hansen
Hannah Hippen
Elizabeth Kaiser
Mina Kim
Alix Klinzing
Katie Koza
Elizabeth Larget
Samara Lerner
Laura Meeker
Savanna Murphy
Taylor Nibbe
Meredith Pointer
Elizabeth Potter
Anusha Ramaswami
Ivy Sanderfoot
Erika Shepard
Elizabeth Snellings
Rachel Timmerman
Shelby Wagner
Bridget Walker
Brooke Wallace
Samantha Webster
Kate Wellenstein
Angela Yu

Con Gioia

Rachel Aune
Abigail Cahill
Maggie Cahill
Katherine Canon
Lily Cornwell
Olivia Crary
Tarah Crary
Alexandra Endres
Stephanie Frank
Maria Fuschino
Anna Greenwald
Laurel Hamers
Jessie Hausch
Natalie Hinahara
Jacqueline Hirschey
Jordan Kahle
Sarah Kretschmann
Allison Kubek
Frida Leiulfsrud
Molly Meyer
Reana Mitchell
Anna Naden
Claire Pointer
Hannah Postel
Danica Reinicke
Kaya Rosenthal
Julia Rowe
Molly Shmerler
Elan Simpson
Kelly Tauschek
Abigail Taylor
Caitlin Timmins
Monica Trevino
Victoria Troxler
Jessica Wopinski
Kelsey Yudice

Cantilena

Aarushi Agni
Alison Best
Kaitlyn Boss

MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS MEMBERS

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Cantabile

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Aubrey Chamberlain
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Allegra Denton
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Lara Young

MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS MEMBERS

Ragazzi

Aman Alem
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Aaron Coleman
Aaron Dettmann
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Billy Foley
Erik Freer
James Hansen
Jeff Hirschey
Trace Leighton Johnson
Art Kohl-Riggs
Matthew Langlois
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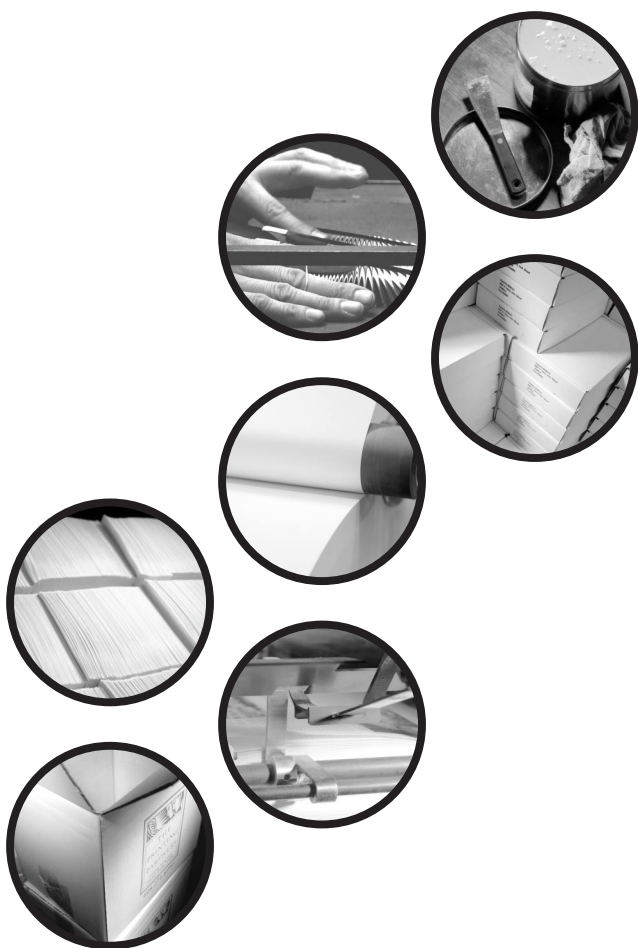
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BIOGRAPHIES

Music Staff

Lisa Kjentvet, Cantilena and Choraliers Conductor

Lisa conducted the Capriccio Choir of Madison Children's Choir (MCC) for 3 years, served as artistic director of MCC for 2 years, and served as co-artistic director of the Madison Youth Choirs during its first season, 2003-04. This year, she conducts the Cantilena and Choraliers choirs. She holds a Bachelor's degree in General and Choral Music Education from UW-Madison. As a teacher, Lisa has served as choral director at Kettle Moraine Middle School and Madison's Memorial High School, among other Madison schools, and has worked with community groups such as Children's Theater of Madison and Madison Theater Guild, as well as maintaining a private studio as a piano and voice instructor. Lisa has sung professionally with the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus and as a freelance musician.

Jamie Pitt, Boychoir Conductor

With a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from UW-Madison, Ms. Pitt currently teaches vocal and general music at James Madison Memorial High School. She has also directed youth choirs at Bashford United Methodist Church and Bethel Lutheran Church, and has taught at the UW-Madison Summer Music Clinic. Ms. Pitt has sung with the Wisconsin Singers and UW Madrigal Singers, and has performed in and directed various musical theater productions in the Madison area.

Michael (Mike) Ross, Artistic Director and Conductor of Cantabile, Ragazzi, and Britten.

Michael Ross is the first full-time Artistic Director of the Madison Youth Choirs. He has previously been Music Department Chair and Vocal Music Teacher at Madison West High School. Michael was the Tallis (training choir) instructor for the former Madison Boychoir for ten years. He has both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Education from UW-Madison, where he studied with Robert Fountain, Beverly Taylor, and Anthony Barresi. Michael has also taught at the UW-Madison Summer Music Clinic, conducted the University Chorus at UW-Madison, and led the former Basso Continuo choir of the Madison Boychoir. He has extensive accompanying and music directing experience, including having been accompanist for both the Madison Boychoir and Madison Children's Choir, department accompanist for the UW-Madison choral program, and music director for several UW-Madison Summer Theatre productions. Michael has been active in state music organizations, having been the choral chair for the Wisconsin Music Educators Association, accompanist for the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association's Next Direction conference, and both section leader and accompanist for various WSMA and WCDA State Honors Choirs. Michael is a member of the Voice Care Network, and has twice been named to "Who's Who Among America's Teachers".

BIOGRAPHIES

Heather Thorpe, Con Gioia Conductor

A graduate of UW-Madison, Heather Thorpe is Choral Director and Cultural Arts Activities Chair at Badger Ridge Middle School in Verona. In addition, she directs two children's choirs and a High School youth choir, and is a featured singer and soloist at the First Unitarian Society of Madison. She is a member of ACDA, MENC, VoiceCare Network, WMEA's Comprehensive Musicianship Through Performance Committee, and has served as WCDA Exhibits Chair and with the College Fair Chair of NextDirection: The National Conference for High School Students Considering Careers in Choral Music. Ms. Thorpe has been a guest conductor, clinician and teacher at many honors festivals, workshops and camps throughout Wisconsin, and in October 2000, was recognized as an outstanding teacher in a Teaching Music Magazine article entitled "A Standing Ovation for Music Teachers."

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Staff

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Jamie Pitt, *conductor*

Mike Ross, *artistic director, conductor*

Heather Thorpe, *conductor*

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