Holidays a cappella

Friday, Dec. 6, 8:00 pm
Wentz Concert Hall
171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville

Saturday, Dec. 7, 8:00 pm
Nichols Concert Hall
1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston

Friday, Dec. 13, 8:00 pm
Fourth Presbyterian Church, Buchanan Chapel, 115 E Delaware Pl., Chicago

Saturday, Dec. 14, 8:00 pm
Church of the Holy Spirit
400 E. Westminster Ave., Lake Forest

Sunday, Dec. 8, 3:00 pm
St. Clement Church
642 W Deming Pl., Chicago

Sunday, Dec. 15, 7:30 pm
Pilgrim Congregational Church
460 Lake St., Oak Park

Chicago a cappella

Megan Bell, Soprano
Kathryn Kamp, Soprano
Cari Plachy, Soprano
Chelsea Lyons, Mezzo-soprano
Emily Price, Mezzo-soprano

Ace Gangoso, Tenor
Garrett Johannsen, Tenor
Ryan Cox, Bass
Woo Chan (Chaz) Lee, Bass
John Orduña, Bass

Programmer and Music Director
Paul Nicholson

Founder and Artistic Director
Jonathan Miller

Executive Director
Matt Greenberg

Chicago a cappella is supported by The MacArthur Funds for Arts & Culture at the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation; the Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development; The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; the Illinois Arts Council Agency; a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; and the Oak Park Area Arts Council, in partnership with the Village of Oak Park and the National Endowment for the Arts.
SAVE THE DATE
for Chicago a cappella’s Gala concert

A Tribute to
Jonathan Miller

Saturday, May 16, 2020
Venue West
221 N. Paulina St., Chicago, IL

Information: chicagoacappella.org or (773) 281-7820
PROGRAM

Dominus dixit ad me .................................................................................................................Chant
Noe, Noe! .................................................................................................................................Jean Mouton
Three Pieces for Chanukah .................................................................................................Robert Applebaum
  Oh, Chanukah/Y’mei Hachanukah
  Maoz Tzur
  Funky Dreidl
Noel Canon .....................................................................................................................Steven Sametz
Quelle est cette odeur agréable? ...............................................................................Traditional, arr. David Willcocks
Nigh Bethlehem................................................................................................................Alfred Burt
Al Hanisim ................................................................................................................Joshua Fishbein
Ikh bin a kleyner dreidl .......................................................Mikhl Gelbart, arr. Mark Zuckerman
Silent Night ................................................................................................................Franz Gruber, arr. Malcolm Sargent

INTERMISSION

Winter Welcome ...........................................................................................................Patrick Sinozich
Carol of the Bells ..................................................................................................Mykola Leontovych, arr. Paul Langford
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas ........................................Hugh Martin, arr. Robert Convery
Jingle a cappella ....................................................................................................James Pierpont, arr. James Clemens
Miracle ................................................................................................................Matisyahu, arr. Patrick Sinozich
That’s Christmas to Me ...............................................................Scott Hoying and Kevin Oluwole Olusola,
  arr. Katy and Penny Clark

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the ushers. Unauthorized photography or sound recording of any kind are strictly prohibited. Smoking is prohibited in all venues. Outside food and beverage are not permitted in the audience seating area. Thank you for your cooperation.
“Because they happen every year, it’s possible to become bored with the holidays. (A person can hear “Winter Wonderland” too many times.)” So wrote David Remnick in *The New Yorker* in 2018. As a church musician I can attest to the very real possibility of hearing or playing *O Little Town of Bethlehem* one too many times. But the truth is, the season brings with it some ineffable quality that continually surprises. In this 27th season of Chicago *a cappella* I hope you find joy and renewal in these melodies, ancient and modern, and that in some way you are surprised at what you hear.

—Paul Nicholson, Programmer and Music Director

NOTES ON THE MUSIC BY PAUL NICHOLSON

Plainchant, Mode 2: *Dominus dixit ad me*

A long time ago, in a monastery far, far away…you take your place in the silent, freezing chapel, up front near the altar so as to avoid the draft from the door. It is dark outside; sunrise is at least six hours away. A few candles are burning here and there in the niches, side altars, and on the great altar. Your neighbors from the village crowd around you, standing, shuffling, bundled against the cold. If there was more light you could see your breath. And then it begins; a single voice intones – *dixit Dominus ad me* – and as the procession begins, the monks, singing their solemn introit, enter into the first day of Christmas, the birth of Jesus.

| Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genuite. | The Lord said to me: You are my son, today I have begotten you. |
| Quare fremuerunt gentes, et populi meditati sunt inania? | Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? |
| Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. | Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. |
| Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen | As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen; |

— Psalm 2:1–2, 7–8, Traditional Liturgical Text

**Noe, Noe!**

Jean Mouton (c. 1459–1522)

Joyful, exuberant, rhythmic, nuanced. This is one for the books, being something of a miracle that it not only survived the centuries but was included in several contemporary publications at a time when anything printed had a short shelf-life. Mouton knew what he was doing as a composer, giving his ideas a lilt and graceful gesture. Bonus: when next you find yourself at trivia night, and are asked, “What successful Renaissance composer was also a priest and an apostolic notary?”, you will exclaim, “Jean Mouton, of course!”

| Noe, noe, noe, psallite noe. | Noel, noel, noel, sing noel. |
| Hierusalem, gaude et laetare, quia hodie natus est Salvator mundi. | Jerusalem, rejoice and be glad, for today is born the Savior of the world. |
| Noe, noe, noe, jacet in praesepio, fulget in caelo. | Noel, noel, noel, he lies in a manger, he shines forth in heaven. |
Three Pieces for Chanukah
Robert Applebaum (b. 1941)

1. Oh Chanukah / Y’mei Hachanukah

Robert Applebaum comments: Many will be more familiar with the first line in English reading, “Oh Chanukah, oh Chanukah, come light the menorah.” Technically, the menorah is different from the candelabrum used for Chanukah. The correct term for Chanukah candelabrum is “chanukiah” as reflected in the words of this setting.

Chanukah, Oh, Chanukah, come light the chanukiah, retelling the victory of Judas Maccabeus. And so we gather ’round the table to share in a treat, sevonim to play with, levivot to eat. And while we play, the candles are burning low. One for each night, they shed a sweet light to remind us of days long ago.

Y’mei hachanukah:
chanukat mikdasheinu.
B’gil u’simcha m’malim libeinu.
Lailah vayom s’vivonei nisu;
sufganiyot nochal bam larov.
Hairu, hadliku neirot Chanukah rabim.
Al hanisim, v’al haniflaot
asher cho’lu Maccabim.

— Text based on words from Y’ney Hachanukah, from The Songs We Sing, edited by Harry CooperSmith, published by the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education in 1950. © Copyright 1950 by United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education. Used by permission of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Text adaptation by Robert Applebaum; used by permission of ECS Publishing Group.

2. Maoz Tzur

A sturdy melody, not unlike chant, masterfully treated with subtle text painting. The distinctive opening phrase with descending then ascending fourths, first sung by the men, then passed back and forth between the sections, rhythmically varied, now with augmentation, now in diminution, rising and falling, arriving in a house of prayer, complete, quietly confident, the last word heard in a rich, vibrant, B-flat major.

Ma’oz Tzur Yeshu’ati, lekha naeh leshabe’ah.
Tikon beit tefilati, vesham toda nezabe’ah.
Le’et takhin matbe’ah mitzar hamnabe’ah.
Az egmor beshir mizmor hanukat hamizbe’ah.
— Traditional Hebrew folk song

Noel, noel, noel, lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Noel, noel, noel, who is this King of Glory?
The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory. Noel, noel, noel.

— Psalm 23:9-10, Traditional Liturgical Text
3. Funky Dreidl / I Had a Little Dreidl
In his preface, Bob writes: The four faces of the dreidl are inscribed with the Hebrew letters nun, gimmel, heh, and shin. In the game, each represents a particular gambling term related to Yiddish words – Nun = nischt = nothing, i.e. take nothing; Gimmel = gantz = all, i.e. take all; Heh = halb = half, i.e. take half; Shin = shtel = put in, i.e. put two objects into the pot. However, the letters have been reinterpreted in the context of the holiday as “Neis gadol hayah sham” or a “great miracle happened here.” What was the miracle? Historically, Chanukah marks the successful revolt of Judah the Maccabee against the Hellenistic Syrian occupation forces around 165 B.C.E. and the subsequent rededication of the Temple. A story associated with this rededication is that there was only enough sacramental oil to burn for a day, but that miraculously, it lasted eight days. Some, however, would suggest that the Maccabean victory over the Syrians was miracle enough!

For the record: “Oh Chanukah / Y’mei Hachanukah” and “Funky Dreidl” appear on Chicago a cappella’s CD Holidays a cappella LIVE.

Noel Canon
Medieval carol, arr. Steven Sametz (b. 1954)
If I was a stickler for terminology, I would feel compelled to point out that strictly speaking, a canon has each entering voice or instrument performing the exact material of the previous voice or instrument; in other words, everyone keeps moving on to new material. Unlike a round where every voice or instrument simply keeps repeating their line until the end. Today if you follow any one of the men as they sing, you will (with shock & dismay?) realize they are repeating the same line, over and over, layer upon layer. Thus, it is not only appropriate, but accurate to say this is a round. Of course, I would only mention this if I was a stickler for terminology, which I am not.

Noel! Sing we Noel,
both all and some.
Out of your sleep awake,
for God, mankind,
now hath He take
all of a maiden
without any make.
Noel! sing we Noel!
— Medieval carol

Quelle est cette odeur agréable? (Whence is that goodly fragrance?)
I never studied a lick of French in school. Growing up in a Lutheran pastor’s household, it was the German high road or nothing for this kid from Iowa. But I remember how utterly entrancing the language of this carol was to me, and how my limited (and pejorative) understanding of the word ‘odor’ was turned on its head. Willcocks’ setting originally began with an organ introduction, so this evening the singers double as both keyboard and choir.
NOTES ON THE MUSIC BY PAUL NICHOLSON cont.

Quelle est cette odeur agréable, Bergers, qui ravit tous nos sens ?
S’exhale-t-il rien de semblable
Au milieu des fleurs du printemps ?
Quelle est cette odeur agréable
Bergers, qui ravit tous nos sens ?

A Bethléem, dans une crèche
Il vient de vous naître un Sauveur
Allons, que rien ne vous empêche
D’adorer votre rédempteur
A Bethléem, dans une crèche,

Dieu tout puissant, gloire éternelle
Vous soit rendue jusqu’aux cieux.
Que la paix soit universelle
Que la grâce a bonde en tous lieux.
Dieu tout puissant, gloire éternelle
Vous soit rendue jusqu’aux cieux

— Traditional French Carol

Whence is that goodly fragrance flowing,
Stealing our senses all away?
Never the like did come a-blowing,
Shepherds, from flow’ry fields in May.
Whence is that goodly fragrance flowing,
Stealing our senses all away?

Bethlehem, there in manger lying,
Find your Redeemer, haste away!
Run ye with eager footsteps hieing,
Worship the Saviour born today.
Bethlehem, there in manger lying,

Praise to the Lord of all creation,
Glory to God the fount of grace;
May peace abide in every nation,
Good will in all of every race.
Praise to the Lord of all creation,
Glory to God the fount of grace.

— Translation by A.B.Ramsay & David Willcocks, Reprinted with permission of The Master and Fellows, Magdalene College, Cambridge

Nigh Bethlehem
Alfred Burt (1920-1954)

Something I did not know until writing these notes is that, outside of his family circle, Burt heard only one of his carols (Come, Dear Children) performed in public during his lifetime. My introduction to Nigh Bethlehem (composed in 1942) was through the album Christmas by The Singers Unlimited, released in 1972. It is charming in its simplicity and equally direct in its message of hope and joy.

Al Hanisim (For the Miracles)
Joshua Fishbein (b. 1984)

A second liturgical text on this program (the first being the Plainchant sung at the beginning), this prayer of thanksgiving relates to the stories of Chanukah and Purim. It is delightful to hear this setting; a strong, declamatory, C-minor gesture listing miracles, redemption, mighty deeds, and saving acts; then a repetition of these four now in F-major, legato and leisurely; then a grandiose return to the four in C-minor, and now, only at the end, a hushed, pianissimo for the words “bayamim hahem baz’mân hazeh” – in those days at this season.

Al hanisim, v’al hapurkàn
v’al hamilchamôt, she-asita la-avotèinu
v’imotèinu
bayamim hahèm baz’màn hazèh
— Jewish liturgy for Chanukah

[We thank you] for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds, for the saving acts for the wars, which You waged for our forefathers and foremothers in those days at this season

— Translation by Joshua Fishbein,
Reprinted with Permission
I am a Little Dreydl (Ikh bin a kleyner dreidl)
Mikhil Gelbart (1889-1962), arr. by Mark Zuckerman

I can’t help but think the twirling, sixteenth-note figure heard throughout is an allusion to the spinning, teetering dreydl as it moves about the game. A perfect foil to the oom-pah of the bass, these two figures provide a playful backdrop to the traditional melody.

ikh bin a kleyner dreidl, gemakht bin kih fun blay,
kumt, lomir ale shpiln in drewdl, eyns, tsvey, dray.
un ikh hob lib tsu tantsn, zikh dreyen in a rod;
kumt, lomir ale dreydl karahod.
— Text and translation by Ben Aaron,
Reprinted with Permission

I am a little dreydl, I’m fashioned out of clay.
I’m made to go a spinning, Come, everybody play!
I like to go a dancing, whenever I’ve the chance.
So, let’s all dance a dreydl circle dance!

For the record: “I am a Little Dreydl” appears on Chicago a cappella’s CD Holidays a cappella LIVE.

Silent Night
Franz Gruber (1787-1863), arr. Malcolm Sargent

When one programs one must always grapple with the question of endings: go out with a bang or a sigh? In my youth I was much more prone to the bang-effect. Now, I have mellowed a bit and am comfortable with the less-is-more approach. Sargent’s harmonies wrap around the melody, cloud-like, enfolding and peaceful.

Silent night, holy night
‘round thy head a radiant light.
Lovely boy with golden hair,
parents guard thee with tender care.
Sleep, thou darling one, sleep.
Silent night, holy night
wise men see a star so bright
“Hallelujah,” angels sing;
shepherds hear and glad tidings bring.
Christ the Savior is here.

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, O blessed sight.
On thy lips a sweet smile of love,
sent to earth from the heaven above.
Christ the Savior is here.
— Text attributed to Malcom Sargent, Public Domain
Winter Welcome
Patrick Sinozich

Patrick’s office is across the hall from mine at St. Clement Church, and as we are both inclined to leave the door ajar, a great deal of cross-pollination occurs. Not too long ago, while we were solving all the problems of the world, I mentioned my quest for a second-half opener for Holidays a cappella, something high-octane and brisk. Patrick said he had just the ticket and proceeded to pull out of his hat the Winter Welcome you are about to enjoy. The piece was originally composed for the Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus, which he directed for 18 years, and Patrick has created a new mixed-voice version especially for these performances. I am still uncertain where (or if) the basses are finding a place to breathe.

Hey ho! Look at the snow! It’s fun to be together!
Fee fie! Look up in the sky! We love the winter weather!
Ding dong sing a silly song, come on and join the choir.
Fa la la la, sing out your heart’s desire.

North wind blowing, snowball throwing,
stamp your feet, shake off the cold.
Cookies baking, children waking, ’tis the fav’rite time for young and old.

Bells are ringing, jing-a-ling-ing,
Everywhere snow’s on the ground.
Glasses fogging, eggs a nogging,
raise a cup, good wishes all around!
Winter welcome now!

Merry making, fine fruitcaking,
happy faces all abound.
Carol singing, present bringing,
“happy season” wishes all around!

Now the sun is setting, the day is done.
The people gather into their homes.
The sound of singing, the roar of fire
drives out the darkness and the cold.
Now the earth is sleeping beneath the chill.
The winter comes to renew its vow.
The year is dying, but still we sing
to cast all sorrow fast away.

We greet the season with open arms,
and unafraid to this time belong.
We welcome winter within our hearts,
and raise our voices in this song:

Candles glowing, mistletoeing,
ornaments on trees are hung.
Sidewalk salting, heaven exalting,
children catching snowflakes on their tongue
— Patrick Sinozich, Reprinted with Permission
Carol of the Bells
Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921), arr. Paul Langford

Paul indicates at the top page of his score: quarter-note = 185. That’s 185 beats per minute. (Most commercial *Billboard* songs range between 118 – 122 bpm.) So, it’s safe to say these bells are ringing wildly, with Paul’s creative handling of the ostinato folk-tune…

In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells –
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.
— Edgar Allan Poe, “The Bells”

Hark how the bells, sweet silver bells, all seem to say, throw cares away
Christmas is here, bringing good cheer, to young and old, meek and the bold,
Ding dong ding dong that is their song with joyful ring all caroling
One seems to hear words of good cheer from everywhere filling the air
Oh how they pound, raising the sound, o’er hill and dale, telling their tale,
Gaily they ring while people sing songs of good cheer, Christmas is here,
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas,
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas,
On on they send, on without end, their joyful tone to every home
Dong Ding dong ding...dong! Bong!
— Peter J. Wilhousky, Reprinted with permission

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
Hugh Martin (1914 – 2011) arr. by Robert Convery

It’s a good thing Judy Garland weighed in about the original lyrics, criticizing the less-than-hopeful feelings Hugh Martin penned for the movie *Meet Me in St. Louis*. One example from the original: “It may be your last / Next year we may all be living in the past” was rewritten to: “Let your heart be light / Next year all our troubles will be out of sight.” In 1957 Frank Sinatra also asked for a revision of “Until then we’ll have to muddle through somehow.” The new line arrived “Hang a shining star upon the highest bough.” Who can even imagine the song now without the beloved words we know?

For the record: “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” appears on Chicago *a cappella*’s CD *Holidays a cappella* LIVE.

Jingle a cappella
James Pierpont (1822-1893), arr. James Clemens

If you need a little Christmas (Oratorio), this is the closest thing to a Bach-fix you’re going to get today. James Clemens lovingly disassembles *Jingle Bells*, pouring it into an 18th century fugal mold, with the harmonic idioms of mid-20th century jazz, and baked in a hot oven swinging at 7/8. Voilá! Dessert is served.
Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh,
Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.
Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
Through the fields we go
Laughing all the way.
Bells on bob-tail ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to ride and sing
A sleighing song tonight.
— James S. Pierpont

For the record: “Jingle a cappella” appears on Chicago a cappella’s CD Christmas a cappella.

Miracle
Matisyahu (b. 1979), arr. Patrick Sinozich
A contemporary twist on the miracle of Chanukah by Matisyahu, distilled further by Patrick in this “Tempo di Hanukkah” anthem. If you haven’t seen the music video, go to YouTube and search for “Matisyahu Miracle.”

That’s Christmas to Me
Scott Hoying and Kevin Oluwole Olusola, arr. Katy & Penny Clark
It may be surprising (but true) to say the young teach the old. My youngest nephew, Isaiah, gave his uncle Paul a Christmas playlist several years ago and on it was a group call Pentatonix. Up until that time, Uncle Paul was unaware of the group. The rest, they say, is history, and thanks to Isaiah, we close this Holidays a cappella concert with this heart-warming hymn to family and belonging.

THANKS
Naperville Chorus
Patrick Godon, Church of the Holy Spirit
Patrick Sinozich
And special thanks to The Saints, Volunteers for the Performing Arts, for providing our house staff. For information visit www.saintschicago.org or call 773-529-5510.
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- Place music education within reach for even more students in Chicago
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To help us with this challenge, use the donation envelope in your program or donate online at chicagoacappella.org/support

Thank you for your generous support!
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Still working on your holiday shopping? Visit the lobby at intermission or after the concert to peruse our selection of merchandise, including gift certificates, reusable water bottles, tote bags, mugs, ear buds, and CD's.

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Christmas a cappella
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We celebrate the colorful and dynamic music of Mexico in this vibrant new program. Baroque masterworks, familiar melodies, and stunning contemporary pieces by Mexican composers will shine a light on this wide and varied musical world. We'll include new works commissioned from our ¡Cantaré! Chicago composers-in-residence, including beautiful songs by Rodrigo Cadet, Novelli Jurado, and Julio Morales. A special performance takes place at the spectacular National Museum of Mexican Art in Pilsen.

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<td>Chicago</td>
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<td>Naperville</td>
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### Swing, Swing, Swing

Travel back to the age of zoot suits and the Lindy hop, as our singers take on the irresistible rhythms and sentimental ballads of the 1930s and 40s. You’ll hear great songs by Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, and more, in exciting new arrangements made just for us. Take a “Sentimental Journey” and join us for some “Stompin’ at the Savoy”!

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<td>Lincoln Hall</td>
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Youth Choral Festival

The Youth Choral Festival is a day of workshops, rehearsals, discussion, and mentoring for area high school ensembles. The students work with Chicago a cappella’s professional directors and singers and perform for each other. The ninth annual Youth Choral Festival will be held on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at Rockefeller Chapel in Chicago.

¡Cantaré! Chicago

Entering its fourth year, ¡Cantaré! Chicago is an educational program that combines Mexican heritage with choral singing. Esteemed Mexican composer Julio Morales will work throughout the school year with high schools and elementary schools in Chicago. Julio will compose new music for each school, and the schools will all come together—along with Chicago a cappella—for a free performance on Friday, May 1, 2020 at 7:00 PM at Chicago’s glorious Rockefeller Chapel. ¡Cantaré! Chicago is a partner program of VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

To learn more or to find out how your school can participate, contact Education Outreach Coordinator Matt McNabb at mmcnabb@chicagoacappella.org. Or learn more at chicagoacappella.org/outreach.

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We’re Hiring!

Chicago a cappella is looking for interns to assist with marketing, concert production and general operations. Interns have the opportunity to see from the inside how a small nonprofit arts organization is run and get to interact with staff, board, volunteers, vendors, patrons, and artists. Visit us in the lobby or email info@chicagoacappella.org for more details.
ABOUT CHICAGO A CAPPELLA

Founded in 1993 by artistic director Jonathan Miller, Chicago a cappella presents an annual series of concerts, performs on tour and in special engagements, creates recordings and broadcasts, and produces educational programs, all with an ensemble of the area's finest professional singers. The group is heard frequently on radio, including appearances on Performance Today and BBC's The Choir, and the ensemble's own syndicated special A Chanukah Celebration with Chicago a cappella. Chicago a cappella has recorded nine CDs, including releases on the Centaur, Cedille, and Gothic labels, and has commissioned new works from acclaimed composers including Chen Yi, Rollo Dilworth, Tania León, and Joseph Jennings. The ensemble has performed on tour in 13 American states and in Mexico and has made appearances at The Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Humanities Festival, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

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Programmer and Music Director **Paul Nicholson** is a distinguished Chicago conductor, vocal coach, composer, accompanist and singer. In 2010 he was appointed Director of Music for Saint Clement Parish in Lincoln Park. He served on the faculty of DePaul University as Associate Conductor of the University Singers as well as principal accompanist. Paul served on the staff of the Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus and has been accompanist to the faculty of Roosevelt University, Lake Forest College, Concordia University, Columbia College, and the Chicago Studio for Professional Singing. Mr. Nicholson has conducted such prestigious groups as the William Ferris Chorale, His Majesties Clerkes, the Scholars of Cambrai, and the Schola Cantorum of St Peter's in the Loop. He has sung with the Chicago Symphony and Grant Park choruses under Leonard Slatkin, James Levine, James Conlon, Sir George Solti and Robert Shaw. His vocal and instrumental compositions have been recorded on the Cedille, Imaginary Road, and Polygram labels, and he has appeared both at the keyboard and as a singer on Live from Studio One on WFMT. Mr. Nicholson has appeared as guest keyboard artist with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, the Newberry Consort, Haymarket Opera Company, Apollo Chorus, and Baroque Band.
Megan Bell, soprano, works regularly with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Grant Park Music Festival Chorus, and Chicago a cappella. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and her Master of Music degree from Bowling Green State University. Ms. Bell is an award winner and member of The Musicians Club of Women. She loves to perform recitals, especially chamber music recitals with her father, Richard Bell, a cellist in Kansas City. She also sings weekly as the soloist for the First Church of Christian Scientists in Barrington. Ms. Bell lives in Elgin, with her husband and two young children. She is the Leader of Fox Valley Attachment Parenting International, and an active member of Traditional Nutrition, and GIFT Homeschool Coop.

Ryan Cox has been a professional member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus and Grant Park Choruses since 2003. He was the baritone soloist in William Schuman’s A Free Song for Grant Park Music Festival’s “Pulitzer Project,” recorded by the Cedille label. He sang Schubert lieder on the CSO Chamber Music Series and has been featured on the Music Now series, singing the Chicago premiere of Mason Bates’ Sirens. He made his debut with the Chicago Ensemble singing Fauré’s La bonne chanson. Other solo appearances include Haydn’s Lord Nelson Mass, Handel’s Messiah, the Fauré, Brahms and Mozart Requiems, Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, and several Bach cantatas. Operatic roles include Guglielmo in Così fan tutte, the Count in La Nozze di Figaro and the title role in Gianni Schicchi. As a boy soprano, Ryan was the soloist in Bernstein’s Chichester Psalms with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson-Thomas. A graduate of Millikin University, Ryan is the music director at First Congregational Church in LaGrange, Illinois.

From the stages of Chicago’s Pritzker Pavilion and Chicago Shakespeare Theater to Frank Lloyd Wright’s concert hall at Taliesen and Muddy River Opera Company in Southern Illinois, soprano Kathryn Kamp has created a career spanning oratorio, opera, operetta and music theater. Her performance of John Corigliano’s Fern Hill with the Grant Park Music Festival was described both “meltingly sung” and “beautifully sung.” Her Despina (Così fan Tutte) was “…a display of immense charm and humor…she bounced about the stage with a lightness and relish that seemed the incarnation of mischievous delight…a fine soprano voice.” Other credits include Kathie (The Student Prince), many Gilbert and Sullivan ingenues, and Sondheim’s Egerman (Muddy River Opera) and Mrs. Segstrom (Chicago Shakespeare Theater). Concert performances include a staged version of Bach’s Coffee Cantata, Mabel and Yum-Yum (Pirates of Penzance and Mikado) at the Grant Park Music Festival, and more Messiahs than she can count. However, no experience tops that of being a member of Chicago a cappella.

Tenor Ace Gangoso is originally from Little Rock, Arkansas. He studied Music Education at the University of Central Arkansas and later earned his M.M. in Voice Performance from Northwestern University. In addition to Chicago a cappella, he sings with several local ensembles including the Chicago Symphony Chorus and the Schola Cantorum Cathedralis at Holy Name.
Cathedral. He also appears as a soloist on recordings with the Chicago Galant Masters Project. Aside from singing, his other musical passions include conducting, teaching, and playing piano. He has a background in gospel music, having accompanied and directed church choirs and ensembles in his hometown and in the Chicago area.

Tenor Garrett Johannsen is proud to be singing in his eighth season with Chicago a cappella! He is originally from Schiller Park, Illinois and now resides in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood. His career performance highlights include multiple international tours with Chamber Opera Chicago performing Jane Austen’s Persuasion, Carmina Burana at Carnegie Hall with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and being a featured singer in a Nederlander Centennial medley performance for one of Broadway in Chicago’s Summer Concerts at Jay Pritzker Pavilion. He has performed with the Lyric Opera, Chicago Symphony and Grant Park Choruses as well as chamber choirs, Bella Voce and The William Ferris Chorale. He recently appeared in the chorus of Jake Heggie’s Moby-Dick with Chicago Opera Theater. Garrett is a member of the Actors’ Equity Association and the American Guild of Musical Artists. Follow Garrett at www.garrettjohannsen.com.

Woo Chan (Chaz) Lee is a Korea-born and U.S.-educated bass-baritone. He is a proud resident of Hyde Park, where he is also pursuing a graduate degree in Music History at the University of Chicago. When not enjoying a pint with friends or strolling around Promontory Point with his wife Chloe, he splits his time between writing, teaching, organizing for his graduate employee union (#YesGSU), and singing with various ensembles in the Chicago area.

Mezzo-soprano Chelsea Lyons is thrilled to return for her third season with Chicago a cappella. In addition to her work with CAC, Chelsea sings with the Grant Park Chorus and Music of the Baroque and is a section leader at Glencoe Union Church. Outside of Chicago, Chelsea sings with the two-time Grammy-winning new music ensemble The Crossing and can be heard on their albums Sound from the Bench (Hearne), Canticles of the Holy Wind (J. L. Adams), and If There Were Water (Minakakis/Brown). This season, Chelsea will make her debut with Chicago Opera Theater Chorus in their double bill of Rachmaninoff’s Aleko and Joby Talbot’s Everest. As a concert soloist, Chelsea has performed with Pacific Chorale in Orange County, CA, Chicago’s own Spektral Quartet, the Callipygian Players, the South Loop Symphony, and the Green Lake Music Festival. A California native, Chelsea holds a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from California State University, Fullerton, and a Master of Music in Voice & Opera from Northwestern University. She has studied voice with Janet Smith, James Toland, W. Stephen Smith, and Karen Brunssen. When she isn’t rehearsing or performing, Chelsea enjoys cooking, playing games, traveling, and exploring the city with her girlfriend, Janie.

Omaha native John Orduña is thrilled to be making is debut with Chicago a cappella. He has been a member of the Grant Park Chorus for five seasons. He has also
Soprano Cari Plachy is a highly respected singer in Chicago. She has been seen throughout the Midwest with Opera for the Young, DuPage Opera Theater, Light Opera Works, and Bowen Park Opera. Favorite roles include Mabel (Pirates of Penzance), Yum-Yum (The Mikado), Gretel (Hansel and Gretel), and Rosina (The Barber of Seville). She is proud to be kicking off her 12th season with Chicago a cappella and 15th season with the Chicago Symphony Chorus. She was a featured soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Beyond the Score Concert, Things Our Fathers Loved and as Ancilla in Bach’s St. John Passion. The Chicago Sun Times described her solo in Bruckner’s Psalm 150 with the CSO as “sparkling.” Cari received her Bachelor’s degree in music education from DePaul University. Since then, she has been working with the Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, bringing music to children all over Chicago. In addition to her work in Chicago, Cari runs a home studio teaching Musikgarten classes to babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Mezzo-soprano Emily Price is a graduate of Northwestern University and enjoys performing in opera, choral and musical theater productions. In addition to Chicago a cappella, she sings with the Lyric Opera, Grant Park Music Festival Chorus and Chicago Symphony Chorus. Internationally, she has performed in over 35 countries as a soloist with the Voices of Bahá International Choir in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Vienna Konzerthaus, and the National Theaters of Spain, Catalonia, and India. She has also performed with the Czech National Symphony, Budapest Symphony Orchestra, and the Warsaw Philharmonic. Favorite theater productions include the premiere of RESPECT! A Musical Journey of Women (Cuillo Center/CCPA) and Rona in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Drury Lane Watertower). She can be heard on a number of recordings, including The Voices of Bahá at Carnegie Hall, RESPECT! The Original Cast Album, and a solo album entitled Songs of the Nightingale with the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Jonathan Miller has been the leader of Chicago a cappella’s artistic team since its inception in 1993. He is the group’s original low bass and music director. His work with CAC has been recognized with the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal from Chorus America. A passionate communicator about the power of choral music, Jonathan is also Artistic Director & CEO of Encore Illinois, which provides choral-music education and
performance opportunities to older adults age 55 and up. He directs five daytime Encore Chorales and manages the Encore organization, which currently serves more than 300 singers in 7 non-auditioned choirs throughout the city and suburbs. He and his wife Sandy also lead the Good Memories Chorale, a new Encore program for people with early-stage memory loss and their care partners, singing together. Jonathan grew up in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood and experienced Rev. Christopher Moore's unusually potent programming magic during ten years with the Chicago Children's Choir. After studying mathematics at the University of Chicago, Jonathan earned his doctorate in historical musicology at UNC-Chapel Hill. He started composing in 1998; his publishers include Hinshaw, Walton, and Hal Leonard. His choral works have been sung around the world and at major American venues including St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Pentagon. His ongoing series of Wacky Christmas Carols continues to mix words and tunes in new combinations. His “Shehecheyanu” was featured at the 2018 meeting of the American Conference of Cantors. A leader in Jewish choral music, Jonathan manages the Max Janowski catalogue, serves as high-holiday cantor at Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Hyde Park, and has lectured at the North American Jewish Choral Festival. In 2017 he did original research in Poland for Chicago a cappella’s February 2019 Polish Splendor program and served as faculty for the China (Qiandongnan) International Folk Song Choral Festival and IFMC World Voices Conference in Kaili, China. A former board member of Chorus America, Jonathan is an enthusiastic auctioneer for charity events. He enjoys travel, cooking, and learning new languages and is crazy about his wife, family, friends, and dogs.

A founding ensemble member of Chicago a cappella, Matthew Greenberg has led the organization as Executive Director for more than two decades. Under his leadership, Chicago a cappella has grown from a founder-based startup to a well-recognized and highly respected arts organization with broad community support, robust educational outreach programs, a loyal audience base, a strategic plan, and a solid infrastructure. He is a champion of consistent branding and a high level of professionalism in all areas of operations, and he has guided Chicago a cappella to be regarded as a leader among organizations in the Chicago choral community. Among his key accomplishments include successful gala fundraisers, the establishment of two cash reserves, a multi-year pledge program, and marketing campaigns which have increased the ensemble’s subscription base and overall audiences. Matt has led workshops for Chorus America and the Arts and Business Council of Chicago and has served as a panelist for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs granting programs. He received his degree in music/business from DePauw University, worked at the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and performed with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale prior to launching his career in Chicago. As a professional singer, Matt’s credits include musical theater, solo, and choral work, notably with the Chicago Symphony Chorus and Grant Park Chorus, both of which he performed with for over 20 years.
Chicago *a cappella* is a creative enterprise devoted to furthering the art of singing together without instruments. Founded in 1993, our classical vocal ensemble of professional singers moves the heart and spirit with fun, innovative concerts. Through our Chicago-area subscription series, guest appearances both locally and on tour, CD recordings and broadcast appearances, and educational and community outreach programming, we strive to enrich lives through music.

**DONATE**

Make a gift today! Ticket sales cover only a portion of our costs. In fact, as a nonprofit organization, our single largest source of revenue is the generosity of individual donors like you! Your tax-deductible gift supports our educational and artistic work and allows it to thrive and grow. Join our family of supporters by donating in the lobby, or online at chicagoacappella.org/support.

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**BOARD SERVICE**

Our Board members are passionate individuals committed to guiding Chicago *a cappella* to its next stage of success. Each brings a unique skill, professional expertise, and personal and professional network, and all are deeply supportive of our mission. To learn more contact Matt Greenberg at mgreenberg@chicagoacappella.org.

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For more information contact Matt Greenberg at (773) 281-7820 or visit chicagoacappella.org/support.
We offer our deep gratitude to our contributors who made gifts to the Chicago a cappella since July 1, 2018. We regret that we are unable to list the many thoughtful contributors who made gifts under $50. If this list contains an error, please accept our apologies and kindly let us know so that we may correct it.

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Lock Chicago
Lollapalooza
Lou Malnati’s
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Magnolia Bakery
Martha Miller
Jennifer Marling
James Massie
Phyllis and Michael Mitzen
Morton Arboretum
Music Box Theater
Music of the Baroque
Music Theatre Works
Northlight Theatre
Oak Park Festival Theatre
David Perlman
Porchlight Theatre
Pritzker Military Museum & Library
Raven Theatre
Ravinia Festival
Remy Bumppo Theatre
Rivers Casino
RJ Grunts Restaurant
Ruth Page Center for the Arts
Salon Glow
Sanders Fine Portraits
Second City
Shiraleah, LLC
Sky Chapel
Steep Theatre
Maria T. Suarez
Stephen Shaw
Summer House Santa Monica
Teddie Kossof
The Violet Hour
Theater Wit
Timeline Theatre
University of Chicago Presents
Victory Gardens Theatre
William Ferris Chorale
William T. Wilson
Wndr Museum
Writer’s Theatre