



BEL CANTO
CHORUS

VOICES OF THE SOUL

March 16, 2025 | 3:00 PM
St. Monica Catholic Church
Whitefish Bay, WI

Join us for the Bel Canto Chorus
ANNUAL GALA AND AUCTION

Club Bel Canto

April 5, 2025

The Pfister Hotel's Rouge Room
424 E Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

for more
information,
including
ticket orders,
donations, &
underwriting



SCAN ME



Photos without flash
are welcome!



Please do not record
the concert!

www.belcanto.org





Jonathan Laabs, Artistic Director
Presents

Voices of the Soul

Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf
BWV 226

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Daniel Van Gelderen, cello; Simone Gheller, organ

Requiem

Herbert Howells
(1892-1983)

- I. Salvator mundi
- II. Psalm 23

Sandra Lash, soprano; Chelsea Betz, alto;
Jaymes Gayhart, tenor

- III. Requiem aeternam (1)
- IV. Psalm 121

Joel Rathmann, baritone; Jaymes Gayhart, tenor

- V. Requiem aeternam (2)
- VI. I heard a voice from heaven

Joel Rathmann, baritone; Rebecca Whitney, soprano

INTERMISSION

Requiem, opus 9

Maurice Duruflé
(1902-1986)

- I. Introit
- II. Kyrie eleison
- III. Offertory
- IV. Sanctus and Benedictus
- V. Pie Jesu
- VI. Agnus Dei
- VII. Lux aeterna
- VIII. Libera me
- IX. In paradisum

Joel Rathmann, baritone; Chelsea Betz, mezzo-soprano
Daniel Van Gelderen, cello; Simone Gheller, organ

Thank You to Our Sponsors

Concert Sponsor

This concert is sponsored in loving memory
of Willis (Bill) Sullivan, Jr., by his family.



Program Notes

Most, if not all, of **J.S. Bach's** motets were written as memorials to the recently departed, but only in the case of **Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf, BWV 226** is the actual occasion known. The motet was written for the funeral of St. Thomas School Rektor Johann Heinrich Ernesti, a colleague and dear friend of Bach's, held on October 20, 1729.

The opening two parts set text from the later part of Romans, chapter 8, a portion of scripture Bach also explored at length in his motet, *Jesu, meine Freude*. The Lutheran idea of death as a release from the pains and difficulties of life's suffering is more easily understood when considering the context and the frequency with which it was confronted: Bach himself buried more than 10 of his children.

The piece opens with feathery cascades of sixteenth notes on the word "Geist" that seem intended to surround the listener with the comfort and aid of the "Spirit." Writing for double choir, Bach uses the antiphonal possibilities to dramatic effect. The tentative and insecure quality of the second line of text, "for we know not what we should pray," is beautifully captured in the staggered entrances of each choir. As the text becomes more confident and affirming, the two choirs become less independent. In the final fugue, Bach dispenses with the double choir idea altogether, bringing the piece solidly down to earth for the first time. Bach's surviving instrumental parts do not include the closing chorale, the third verse of Martin Luther's Pentecost hymn, *Komm heiliger Geist, Herre Gott*. This suggests that the latter might have been performed at the graveside, where there would have been no instruments.

In 1935, **Herbert Howells's** son Michael died at the age of nine, a tragedy which inevitably cast an immense shadow over the composer's life. Until quite recently, it was thought that his *Requiem* was composed in response to Michael's death, but it is now known that Howells composed it in 1932 or 1933, originally intending it for the choir of King's College, Cambridge. For unknown reasons, Howells never sent the piece to King's College, and its existence remained unknown until its eventual publication in 1980, just three years before Howells's death. After the tragic events of 1935, Howells increasingly associated the *Requiem* with his lost son, and a few years later, when composing *Hymnus Paradisi*—a work specifically intended as Michael's memoria—he used substantial parts of the earlier *Requiem*, re-scoring it for soloists, large chorus, and orchestra.

Howells's *Requiem* diverged from the standard liturgy, but his was not the first to take liberties: Fauré and Duruflé removed portions of the "Day of Wrath" text, and before them, Brahms had gone even further in *Ein Deutsches Requiem* by using his own selection of texts taken from the Lutheran Bible and the Apocrypha. Though musically, Howells's *Requiem* could hardly be more different from the Brahms, there is a similar spirit at work in the composer's personal choice of devotional psalms and scriptural passages from both the Catholic and Anglican liturgies for the dead.

Howells's *Requiem* is written for unaccompanied chorus, which divides into double choir in places. There are six short movements which are organized in a carefully balanced structure. The two outer movements frame two settings of the Latin *Requiem aeternam* and two psalm-settings. Howells reserves his most complex music for the Latin movements, in which he uses polytonality, chord clusters, and the simultaneous presence of major and minor keys. In contrast, the psalm settings are simple and direct, the speech rhythms of the plain choral writing arising out of the textual inflections.

Program Notes (cont.)

Maurice Duruflé composed his exquisite and transcendent *Requiem, Opus 9*, in 1947, in the aftermath of the turbulence of World War II. Dedicated to the memory of his father who passed away in 1945, five months after the liberation of Paris, the *Requiem* is one of only fourteen works that were published in his lifetime.

Duruflé's lifelong connection to Gregorian chant profoundly influenced his composition. Having been trained in a Cathedral choir school for music from ages 10 to 16, he was immersed in plainsong traditions and modal harmonies, which remained central to his musical identity. He had been working on an organ suite based on themes from Gregorian chant when he received a commission from his publisher, Durand; he then used these sketches, which were based on quotations from the Mass for the Dead, as the source for the *Requiem*. Duruflé explained his approach to this integration of chant in his program notes:

My requiem is composed throughout on the Gregorian themes of the Mass for the Dead. Sometimes the musical text is completely respected, the orchestral part intervening merely to sustain or comment on it; sometimes I was simply inspired by it, or left it completely, for example, for certain developments suggested by the Latin text, notably in the "Domine Jesu Christe," the "Sanctus," and the "Liberia." In general, I have sought above all to enter into the characteristic style of the Gregorian themes. Therefore, I have done my best to reconcile, as far as possible, Gregorian rhythm as established by the Benedictines of Solesmes with the demands of modern meter.

The *Requiem* reflects not only Duruflé's musical training, but also his deep personal beliefs. Following Vatican II, when Gregorian chant was dismissed by some as outdated, Duruflé strongly defended its relevance. He wrote, "Gregorian chant, which seems to some to be a music linked to a dusty past, is in reality very young for us who realize that it has only been known in its original beauty for a short time."

Duruflé's *Requiem* carries heavy inspiration from Fauré's *Requiem*, composed some 60 years earlier, such as the use of the same key, the similar arrangement of solos, the exclusion of the "Dies irae" sequence, and the inclusion of the "Pie Jesu" motet and closing prayers from early Christian burial services. More significantly, it shares the same spirit. Instead of focusing on the more operatic, dramatic possibilities of the "Day of Wrath" texts explored by Mozart, Berlioz, and Verdi, Duruflé's *Requiem* resonates with forgiveness, consolation, and eternal light. Although the serenity of the quiet writing is punctuated in places by marcato ferocity and darkly shifting harmonies, Duruflé keeps returning to the promise of eternal peace. This is embodied in the word *requiem*, or rest, which both begins and ends the piece.

Duruflé summarized his thoughts on the work with this reflection in his program notes:

This Requiem is not an ethereal work which sings of detachment from earthly worries. It reflects, in the immutable form of the Christian prayer, the agony of man faced with the mystery of his ultimate end. It is often dramatic, or filled with resignation, or hope or terror, just as the words of the Scripture themselves, which are used in the liturgy. It tends to translate human feelings before their terrifying, inexplicable, or consoling destiny. "In Paradisum" [marks] the ultimate answer of Faith to all the questions by the flight of the soul to Paradise.

Program Text

Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf

J.S. Bach

1. Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf,
denn wir wissen nicht was wir beten sollen,
wie sich's gebühret;
sondern der Geist selbst
vertritt uns aufs beste,
mit unaussprechlichem Seufzen.

*The Spirit helps our weakness,
for we know not what we should pray,
nor how we ought to pray;
but the Spirit
pleads for us in the best possible way,
with inexpressible sighing.*

2. Der aber die Herzen forschet,
der weiß, was des Geistes Sinn sei;
denn er vertritt die Heiligen
nach dem, das Gott gefället.

*But he who searches our hearts
know the mind and thinking of the Spirit;
for the Spirit intercedes for the saints,
according to God's pleasure.*

3. Du heilige Brunst, süßer Trost,
Nun hilf uns, fröhlich und getrost
In deinem Dienst beständig bleiben,
Die Trübsal uns nicht abtreiben.
O Herr, durch dein Kraft uns bereit
Und stärk des Fleisches Blödigkeit,
Daß wir hie ritterlich ringen,
Durch Tod und Leben zu dir dringen.
Hallelujah.

*You holy fire, sweet consolation,
now help us, joyful and consoled,
to remain steadfast in your service;
let affliction not drive us away.
O Lord, prepare us by your power
and strengthen our feeble flesh,
so that we here may gallantly struggle
through death and life to reach you.
Hallelujah.*

Requiem

Herbert Howells

I. Salvator mundi

O Savior of the world,
Who by thy Cross
and thy precious Blood
hast redeemed us;
Save us and help us,
we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

III. Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture,
and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
He shall convert my soul and bring me forth
in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk in the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table for me
against them that trouble me.
Thou hast anointed my head with oil.
and my cup shall be full.
But thy loving kindness and mercy
shall follow me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

III. Requiem aeternam (1)

Requiem aeternam dona eis.
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.

*Rest eternal grant to them.
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.*

Program Text (cont.)

IV. Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord,
who hath made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved,
and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall
neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord himself is thy keeper;
he is thy defense upon thy right hand;

So that the sun shall not burn thee by day,
neither the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:
yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy
coming in,
from this time forth and for evermore.
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.

IV. Requiem aeternam (2)

Requiem aeternam dona eis.
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.

*Rest eternal grant to them.
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.*

VI. I heard a voice from heaven

I heard a voice from heaven,
saying unto me, Write:
From henceforth blessed are the dead
which die in the Lord:
Even so saith the Spirit,
For they rest from their labors.

Requiem

Maurice Duruflé

I. Introit

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

Te decet hymnus Deus in Sion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem,
exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.

*A hymn befits thee, O God in Zion.
and to thee a vow shall be fulfilled in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer,
for unto thee all flesh shall come.*

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

II. Kyrie

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy.*

III. Domine Jesu Christe

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum
de poenis inferni,
et de profundo lacu;

*Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
liberate the souls of all the faithful departed
from the pains of hell,
and from the deep pit;*

Libera eas de ore leonis,
ne absorbeat eas tartarus,
ne cadant in obscurum.

*Deliver them from the lion's mouth;
let not hell swallow them up,
let them not fall into darkness.*

Program Text (cont.)

III. Domine Jesu Christe, cont.

Sed signifer sanctus Michael
repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam,
quam olim Abrahae promisisti
et semini ejus.

Hostias et preces tibi, Domine
laudis offerimus,
tu suscipe pro animabus illis,
quarum hodie memoriam facimus;
fac eas, Domine
de morte transire ad vitam.

Quam olim Abrahae promisisti
et semini ejus.

IV. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

V. Pie Jesu

Pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem.

Requiem sempiternam.

VI. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.

Requiem sempiternam.

VII. Lux aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

VIII. Libera me

Libera me, Domine,
de morte aeterna,
in die illa tremenda,
quando coeli movendi sunt et terra,
dum veneris judicare
saeculum per ignem.

Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo,
dum discussio venerit,
atque ventura ira.

*But let Michael, the holy standard-bearer
bring them into the holy light,
which once you promised to Abraham
and to his seed.*

*Sacrifices and prayers of praise, O Lord
we offer to thee.
Receive them, Lord, on behalf of those souls
we commemorate this day.
Grant them, O Lord,
to pass from death unto life.*

*Which once you promised to Abraham
and to his seed.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Merciful Lord Jesus,
grant them rest.*

Rest everlasting.

*Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.*

Rest everlasting.

*May light eternal shine upon them, O Lord,
in the company of thy saints forever and ever,
for you are merciful.*

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

*Deliver me, O Lord,
from death eternal,
on that dreadful day:
when the heavens and the earth shall quake
when you come to judge
the world by fire.*

*I am seized by trembling, and I fear
until the judgment should come,
and also the coming wrath.*

Program Text (cont.)

VIII. Libera me, cont.

Dies illa, dies irae,
calamitatis et miseriae,
dies magna et amara valde,
dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*O that day, day of wrath,
day of calamity and misery,
momentous day, and exceedingly bitter,
when you come to judge the world by fire.*

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

IX. In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant te Angeli;
in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
et perducant te
in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.

Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,
et cum Lazaro quondam pauper,
aeternam habeas requiem.

*May the angels lead you into paradise;
May the Martyrs welcome you upon your
arrival
and lead you
into the holy city of Jerusalem.*

*May a choir of angels welcome you,
and, with poor Lazarus of old,
may you have eternal rest.*



MILWAUKEE CHAMBER CHOIR

**MSO Bach Week
Opening
Ceremony**

**Heritage:
Vaughan Williams's
Mass in G Minor**

Ryan Tani
Guest Conductor

Margaret Burk
Guest Conductor

March 17 | 2025 | 7PM
Bradley Symphony Center
212 W Wisconsin Ave
FREE! Reserve seats at mso.org

April 27 | 2025 | 4PM
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
2618 N Hackett
Freewill Offering at the door

mso MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
KEN SAUER MAJOR / MUSIC DIRECTOR

milwaukeechamberchoir.org

 

 MILWAUKEE CHAMBER CHOIR

Musicians

Bel Canto Chorus

Barbara Allbright	Kyle Kolberg *+	Kerry Saver +
Kelly Bartyczak	Erin Laabs *+	Kate Schmitt
Carol Bayne	James LaBelle *+	Patrick Schneider
Chelsea Betz *+	Lindsay Lamm *+	Brian J. Schwanz +
CarolAnne Bozosi	Michael LaPlant	Dean Sievert
Kate Braatz	Sandra Lash *+	Josh Sievert
Susan Brown *	Angela Lee	Barb Slagter
Abby Armstrong Check	Judy Zoelzer Levine	Delbert Slowik
Jason A. Clark *+	Noah Lindenberg	Binette Solomon
Heather Comiskey	Wendelin Lockett *+	Erin Stamm
Peter Craig	Katie Lott	Philip Starr
Rachel Dees	Seth Marquardt	Shannon Sweeney
Luella Dooley	Jonathan Marquardt +	Joline Thayer
Molly Farley	Kristin Marquardt	Tom Thiele
Thayer Fisher	Marilyn Mascitti *+	Fausta Urboniene
Carly Fitzgerald *	Colleen Miner	Irene Warner
Karri L. Fritz-Klaus	David Mohr *+	Jennifer Watson
Ellen Fulton	Jamie Murray	Nina Weid
Albrecht Gaub	Terri Neil	Mark W. Weller
Jaymes Gayhart *+	Katie Panciera	Kayla Wendlake
Amanda Jo Gonzalez	Alexandra Pieper +	Hazel Wheaton
Anthony Grant	Jacqueline Prater +	Rebecca Whitney *+
Lynn Gutoski	Alison Rada-Bayne +	Andrew Widder *+
Joe Hatchell	Stephen Ragatz	Natalie Wikstrom
Mitch Haycock	Annalisa Ragatz	Annie Williams
Keith Heidmann	Debbie Rakestraw	Josiah Winkel +
Dan Holzmilller	Lisa Rao	Rowan Winter
Kathleen Hughes *	Joel Rathmann *+	Evan Witz +
Ryan Kluba +	Jessica Rauh	
Morgan Knigge	Kristin Raymond	*denotes section leader
Emily Knutson *+	Hannah Redden	+Bach chorus



Biographies



Jonathan Laabs, Artistic Director

Jonathan Laabs is thrilled to continue the next chapter of the Bel Canto Chorus musical journey as its new Artistic Director. He has been an active conductor, clinician, performer, and music educator throughout the Midwest and beyond. He most recently held the position of Professor of Music and Music Division Chairman at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, where he conducted the College Chorale and Women's Choir and taught courses in conducting, choral literature, and aural theory.

Since 2011, he has served as Artistic Director and conductor of Canticum Novum, a Midwest-based chorus with performances centered around an annual intensive week-long retreat. In August of 2024, he was a guest conductor at the opening Festival Concert of the WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts held at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He has twice conducted the National High School Honors Choir at past conferences (2014, 2017). In 2018, he was one of 12 international conductors selected as a fellow at the Chorus America Conducting Academy in Fullerton, California, where he studied and conducted choral-orchestral works by Bernstein, Mendelssohn, and Mozart.

He holds a bachelor's degree from Martin Luther College and a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Simone Gheller, Collaborative Pianist

Dr. Simone Gheller was born in Padua, Italy in 1978. He received master's degrees in Piano (1999), Organ Performance & Organ Composition (1999), Music Education (2003), and Choral Music & Choral Conducting (2004). He also received a doctorate in Organ Performance and Organ Composition, magna cum laude (2006). He studied at the University of Vienna, and he received two "Medaille d'Or en Supérieur d'Interpretation" at the Conservatoire Supérieur des Music de Paris. Gheller also studied at Oberlin College, where he completed the Artist Diploma—a great distinction in music.



Currently, he is Music Director and Organist at St. Jerome Church in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. He is also the accompanist of the Waukesha Choral Union and the Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy.

Gheller has an extensive international performing history spanning the last 35 years, with concerts in prestigious locations. He has garnered many awards, including first prizes at several national and international organ competitions. He has recorded four CDs: *Fiori Musicali* by Girolamo Frescobaldi, *The Complete Choral Works with Organ* by Alessandro Scarlatti for the Tactus label, the *Orgelbüchlein* by J.S. Bach, and music by Liszt and Reubke for the OnClassical label.

Daniel Van Gelderen

Daniel J. Van Gelderen is a cellist, conductor, composer, and educator. He graduated in 2010 from Baptist College of Ministry with a double major in Bible and music, focusing on conducting and composing.



At 37, Van Gelderen has composed over 200 works across various genres, including symphony and string orchestra, concert band, choir, and brass ensemble. Notable works include *A Christmas Gloria* (2017), commissioned by the Bel Canto Chorus, and *A Remembrance* (2011). His compositions have been featured

on 16 professional recordings, many of which he produced, including works for vocal groups he founded and directs, such as the Baptist College of Ministry Concert Chorale. He also just completed co-composing the soundtrack for a 14-episode documentary.

Daniel has conducted and performed at prestigious events like the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. He serves as Artistic Director for Falls Baptist Music School and Baptist College of Ministry, leading their symphony orchestra and 100-voice choir. As a professor, he teaches music composition and conducting, aiming to develop character and leadership through music.

Daniel is married to Allyssa, and they have three children, with a fourth on the way. They live in Milwaukee, where they both serve on staff at Falls Baptist Church. In his spare time, Daniel enjoys spending time with his family, reading, and traveling the world.

Biographies



Chelsea Betz

Chelsea Betz, mezzo-soprano, holds a bachelor's of music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point and a master of music in Vocal Performance from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music. This Milwaukee-based pedagogue serves as teacher/owner of Chelsea Betz Studios located in Oconomowoc and Mequon, Wisconsin. This spring, Betz will be vocal directing Hamilton High School's production of *Once Upon a Mattress*.

In addition to her busy teaching schedule, Betz continues to enjoy a healthy performing career. Previous roles include Jade Boucher in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Cherubino and Marcellina in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Old Maid in Menotti's *Old Maid and the Thief*, and L'enfant in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilège*. As a concert artist, Betz's repertoire includes recent performances of Beethoven's *Mass in C Minor* (UW-Stevens Point Symphony Orchestra); Handel's *Messiah* and Vivaldi's *Gloria* (Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra); Meador's *Stabat Mater*, Kile Smith's *Canticle*, Rachmaninoff's *Vespers*, Tõnu Kõrvits' *Kreek's Notebook*, and Menotti's *Missa, O Pulchritudo* (Bel Canto Chorus of Milwaukee).

Last spring Betz developed a collaborative recital entitled *Transformations 2024: JOURNEYS*, an intimate, mixed media event creatively commemorating the tenacity of women, and the importance of prioritizing their health, wellness and dreams while raising awareness and funds for the After Breast Cancer Diagnosis organization. Betz continues to pursue activism through music.



Joel Rathmann

Baritone Joel Rathmann is a thriving, virtuosic performer and pedagogue in the Milwaukee Area.

In addition to various soloist and section leader spotlights with Bel Canto Chorus, Rathmann has been a featured soloist for a wide range of concert repertoire with the University of Wisconsin Choral Union, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Sacra Nova Chorale, Basilica of Saint Josaphat Choir, First United Methodist Church of

Madison, Saint Stephen's Lutheran Church of Monona, Congregation of Beth Israel Ner Tamid, Milwaukee Area Messiah Community Chorus and Orchestra. Rathmann has been featured in operatic and musical theatre productions with Cedar Rapids Opera and others; notable operatic and musical theatre roles include Notario in *Gianni Schicchi*, Colas in *Bastien und Bastienne*, Ben in *The Telephone*, Vicar in *Albert Herring*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, and Padre in *Man of La Mancha*.

Rathmann holds degrees in vocal performance from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He currently resides in Shorewood where he maintains a private voice studio, LR Voice Studio LLC. He is also an accomplished and passionate high school counselor at Audubon Technology & Communication Center High School.

Bel Canto Senior Singers FREE Spring Concerts

The Bel Canto Senior Singers choirs are open to choristers ages 55 and better of all abilities with a love of music. Conducted by Rebecca Renee Winnie, these choruses perform a wide variety of music from the Renaissance to the current day!

BCSS Southwest Concert

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 1:30 PM
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
12700 West Howard Avenue, New Berlin

BCSS Northeast Concert

Sunday, May 11, 2025 at 2:00 PM
Crossroads Presbyterian Church
6031 West Chapel Hill Road, Mequon

Learn more
about BCSS:



About Bel Canto Chorus

Values and Mission Statement

We believe lifelong learning builds thriving communities. At Bel Canto Chorus, we build communities by connecting people through music. We offer world-class choral programs in the Milwaukee Area. Our mission is to connect singers, audiences, and the community through experiences with diverse choral music.

About

Founded in 1931, Bel Canto Chorus is Southeastern Wisconsin's oldest continually performing arts organization. The group includes an auditioned adult performance chorus of approximately 100 singers and a Senior Singers program for those 55 or better who want to sing in an organized performance chorus. Characterized by a heartfelt belief in the value of Bel Canto Chorus's mission and vision, and supported by devoted singers and audiences, talented artistic and administrative staff, and dedicated Board members, the group's passion for sharing the thrill of live choral music has remained steadfast throughout its long, proud history.

Board of Directors

Officers

Theodore Perlick Molinari – President

Thayer Fisher – Treasurer

Marcia Schwager – Secretary

Directors

Ellen Fulton, Nina Johnston, Michelle Klotz, Meredith Marine, Sarah Paul, Stephen Ragatz, Tom Thiele, Zach Wallenbrink, Jacob Wolter

Artistic Staff

Artistic Director – Jonathan Laabs

Collaborative Pianist – Simone Gheller

Senior Singers Conductor – Rebecca Renee Winnie

Senior Singers Accompanists – Elna Hickson, Sunkyung Lee

Artistic Director Laureate – Richard Hynson

Assistant Conductor Laureate – Michelle Hynson

Administrative Staff

Managing Director – Kai Simone

Production Manager – Danielle Bridges

Chorus Cabinet

Kelly Bartyczak, CarolAnne Bozosi, Joe Hatchell, Mitch Haycock, Jim LaBelle, Angela Lee, Alex Pieper, Annalisa Ragatz, Stephen Ragatz, Kristin Raymond, Philip Starr, Kayla Wendlake

Bel Canto Chorus Financial Supporters

Bel Canto Legacy Society

Members of the Bel Canto Legacy Society have agreed to include the Chorus as a part of their estate planning arrangements. You may join them by contacting the Bel Canto office at (414) 481-8801.

Margaret E. Haggerty

Louise L. Hedrick

Sally D. Hoyt & Vaughn Ausman

Michelle & Richard Hynson

Kerry Saver

William & Susan Smith

Joanna & Chris Smocke

James Steinman

Roseanne & David Tolan

Louis Winter

Corporate and Foundation Support

\$10,000+

United Performing Arts Fund

\$5,000-\$9,999

State of Wisconsin

\$1,000-\$4,999

Clare M. Peters Charitable Trust

Godfrey and Kahn

Marcus Hotels & Resorts

Pieper Electric, Inc.

Bel Canto Chorus Individual Supporters

Standing Ovation (10,000+)

Anonymous [3]
Sally D. Hoyt & Vaughn Ausman
Lori & David Tolan

Bravissimo (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Meredith Marine
Peter J. Storer
Joe Tolan
Helen & Robert Vettori

Bravo (\$1,000-\$4,999)

Anonymous
Susan J. Brown
Thayer Fisher & Hayley German Fisher
Kirsten Goulde
Jeremiah Hegarty
Ed & Linda Mordy
Jeff & Marcia Schwager
Don & Kathy Schwerin
Marq & Rachel Ragatz Truscott
Richard Wagner

Fortissimo (\$500-\$999)

Anonymous
Robert Balderson
James & Mary K. Braza
Randy Casey
Stanley & Janet Fox
Janet Gibeau
Richard & Michelle Hynson
Agustin Ramirez Jr.
Julie Tolan & Mark Wiesman
Ellen G. Voth
James Ward

Forte (\$250-\$499)

Mark Dirksen
Brent & Nina Johnston
Emily & Kyle Knutson
Brad & Dede McLane
Alex & Rick Pieper
Raka & Lisa Rao
Kay Richardson
Kerry Saver
Mark Weller
Elaine & Robert Wessel

Mezzo Forte (\$100-\$249)

Anonymous [2]
Marcia Anderson
Tom & Carole Barnum
Jan & Bob Becker
Charlotte Bouche
Valerie Burbey-Lutzen
Sandra Christensen
Robert & Elizabeth Conway
Julie & Peter Craig
Dixie Deines
Martha Dobbs
Alex Freund
Ellen Fulton & James Hegarty
Anthony Grant
Eileen Griffiths
Kelly Griffiths
Joe & Lisa Hatchell
Mitch Haycock & Virginia Hirsch
Jeffrey & Linda Hayes
Louise L. Hedrick
Jim & Christine Hill

Randy Hoffman
Tom & Katie Hofman
Patrick Horne
Katherine Hughes & David McDowell
Kathleen & Tyrrell Hughes
Terese Jackson
Nancy Jacobs
Jerome Kerkman
Mary Ann & Charles LaBahn
Gordon Lang & Julie Zieffle
Joseph Laubenthal
Judy Zoelzer Levine
Lynne & Thomas Lindemann
Wayne Lueders
Barbara Lyons
Patrick Metzker
Melissa Newhall & George Yu
Dan Nordloh
Kristine O'Meara
Debbie Rakestraw
Doug & Judy Ross
Tim & Kathleen Schilz
Dean & Amy Sievert
James & Mary Stout
Theresa Sundberg
Veronica Thomas
Kathryn Walters
Michael Walton Sr.
Irene Warner
Elizabeth Wessel
Charlie & Denise White
Rebecca & Steven Whitney
John Wiesman

Friend (to \$99)

Anonymous [4]
Paul Alberte
Robert Allbright
Barbara Allbright
Monica & Dan Allen
Moki & Cindy Amini
Kyle Anderson
Christine Armstrong
Gary Aubry
Tish Azar
Larry Bannister
Donna Bartolone
Durim Berisha
Beverly Bersch
Roger Bialcik
Brian Bies
John & Judy Bintliff
Marilyn Hughes Blackmon
Gail Bosworth
Susan & Bruce Boyd
CarolAnne Bozosi
Anne Brower
David Brown
Mary Bykowski
Eileen Byrne
Patricia Byrne
Jeff Cady
Andrea Carroll
Jerald Cayo
Abby Armstrong Check
Carl Chelius
Mark Cherek
Robert Christie
Shawn Clausing
Antoinette Cristallo

Bel Canto Chorus Individual Supporters

Joseph Dalton
Wes Davis
Diane Davis
Margaret Devine
Cary Docter
Judith Dooley
Tricia & Bill Drimel
Michael Drimel
Mary Duffey
Catherine Dummer
Regina Dunst
Jennifer Dye
Bridget Eland
Barb Esaian
Molly Farley
Kathleen Farnsworth
David Flack
Patrick Foran
Tomilyn Forbes
Susan Forray
Rachel Frisk
Jo Ann Fritz
Anthony Fronczak
Lisa Galloway
Ben Garner
Albrecht Gaub
Kelly Gaulke
Margo Griesman
Paul Groth
Sarah Gruetzmacher
Ruth Gulotta
Eugene Guszowski
Mike Haas
Ma Regina Hagad
Elizabeth Hager
Rebecca Hammer
Mary Harrington
Dave & Judy Hecker
Kristin Heil
Elizabeth Heinecamp
Joan & Dave Henkel
Lori Herrmann
Lloyd & Elna Hickson
Julie Hockridge
Nan Hoene
Suzann Holte
Sean Hughes
Nancy Jetton
Audra Johnson
Peter & Karen Kaminsky
Rebecca Kaminsky
Ann Kammerer
Vincent Katter
Vicki Keogh
Melissa Kerhin
Ann Kleber
Heath Kluba
Elizabeth Kocol
Jack Koehler
Katherine Kress
Lucas Krogmann
Mary Anne Krupski
Jonathan & Erin Laabs
Paul LaBelle
Benjamin Landa
Michael Lang
Jacqueline Langsdorf
Patricia Laughlin

Robert Lawrence
Julie Lee
Dale & Barbara Lenz
Nancy Lindberg
Mack Lindsey
Rose Lopez
Todd & Sarah Lundquist
Stephen Maliszewski
Patricia Marchant
Ted Matkom
Beth Matkom
Ann McDonald
Pat & Ray Mehler
Amy Meyer
John Michel
Steven Midthun
Mona Miller
Darik Mischke
Sharon Morrow
Patti Moynihan
Patricia Mueller
Max Mullen
Ned Murphy
Alexander Nash
Terri & Stephen Neil
David Nelson & Lynne
Shaner
Iris Ninis
Pat Nnadi
Katie Panciera
Lori Ann Pannier
Jerilyn Percy
Judith Pemberton
Marjorie Piechowski
Sarah Poffenberger
Suzanne Pope
Michael Porada
Ruth Posekany
Anthony Prater
Ronald Puzia
Melanie Raymond
Diane Reynolds
Caroline Robertson
Richard Robinson
Brittany Rosales
Heidi Rosati
Barbara Rutschow
Megan & Sam Sarver
Jolene Schneider
Allen Schuh
Sarah & Joe Schwab
Kim Seidl
Sherrie Serros
Philip Starr

Dee Stein
Kurt Stengel
Leah Storey
Peter Stott
Thomas Streifender
Sheila Strock
Margo Stroeve
Brenda Stugelmeyer
Lora & Gregg Sunder
Francis Sweeney
Timothy Szczepaniak
Cindy & JD Thorne
Pamela Thurston
Maureen Unora
Vytene Urbonaite
Karen VanDrise
Patricia Wages
Barbara Wallner
Kristopher Wampole
Brian Waranauskas
Patricia Wages
Barbara Wallner
Kristopher Wampole
Brian Waranauskas
Christine Warsaw
Greg Webster
Kathryn Weisenburger
Annie Wells
David Wells
Susan Wells
Mary Beth Whalen
Hazel Wheaton
Lisa White
Steven Wiesner
Alex Wikstrom
Dan & Karen Williams
Jeffrey Williams
James Young
Stewart Yuen
Ronald Zacker
Nina Zealy
Marilyn & Doug Zwissler

If you identify any errors, please notify us at info@belcanto.org or (414) 481-8801.

The generosity of the foundations, corporate donors, and individual contributors listed above makes our music possible. If you are in a position to introduce us to a potential new corporate sponsor, please email Kai Simone at ksimone@belcanto.org. If you would like to make an individual, tax-deductible contribution to Bel Canto Chorus, please visit www.belcanto.org/donate.html. Every dollar makes a difference. We thank you warmly.



Lakeshore Commons,
Oak Creek



Waterford Lofts,
Waterford



**YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
REAL ESTATE EXPERTS**

ABOUT US

Founded in 2019, the Root River Realty has been a powerhouse in the Real Estate Investment and Residential Industry within Milwaukee, WI. The catalyst for growth was a 400-property portfolio that Santiago and Holly sold for a longtime Milwaukee Investor and client of theirs. They sold all 400 properties for him in under 400 days for a total sellout of \$38.6M.

WHY CHOOSE US?

- With over 20 years of expertise and a team of Real Estate Experts on their Roster, Root River Realty is equipped to go the extra mile for their clients.
- With experience in Residential Resale, Investment Portfolios, Short Sales, and Foreclosures this team is well educated to help every buyer and seller.

OUR SERVICES

- Assist clients in purchasing or selling residential and investment properties
- Offer expert advice on market trends, property values, and investment opportunities to help clients make informed real estate decisions.

CONTACT US

Amanda Jo Gonzalez
Client Care Coordinator
Operations Manager

414-522-0598

amandajo.gonzalez@kw.com

10001 Innovations Dr, Suite 102,
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

