CAROLFEST

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 - 7:30pm
Meany Hall—Katharyn Alvord Gerlich Theater
$10 all tickets
Buy Tickets

This popular annual program by the Chamber Singers, University Chorale, University Singers, Treble Choir, Gospel Choir, and UW Glee Club features seven conductors, six choral ensembles, five hundred singers, four graduate conductors, three choral faculty, two hours of great music, and one impressive grand finale.

GEOFFREY BOERS

Geoffrey Boers is Director of Choral Activities at the University of Washington in Seattle, a program widely recognized as forward thinking, unique, and of great distinction. Under his direction, the graduate choral program has developed a singular mission: to nurture the whole student as conductor-teacher-servant-leader-scholar. This vision has led the program to become one of the most vibrant and innovative in the country, attracting students from around the world interested in exploring the future of our art. Through his teaching he is exploring the evolution of conducting gesture and rehearsal pedagogy and their connection with the emerging neuroscience of mirror neurons, empathy, perception, learning, and personal transformation. His exploration has led to new thoughts about conducting and teaching with regard to breath, movement, artistry, personal awareness, and cultural development. Recently, his work has led to the mentoring of local choral cohorts of teachers and conductors who are interested in building professional communities of ongoing mentorship and musical development. He has developed such mentorship programs across the United States and Canada. In addition to these thoughts about mentorship he is actively working with other leaders in ACDA and NAfME to develop a more unified and useful system for development of musicianship, assessment, adjudication, and repertoire grading.

Geoffrey maintains an active conducting, teaching, workshop and clinic schedule; his recent engagements
have included conducting concerts in Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, Meyerson Concert Hall in Dallas, New York's Alice Tully and Avery Fischer Hall at Lincoln Center, the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, and Benaroya Hall in Seattle. In addition he has served as artist-in-residence in Toronto, Ontario, Mainz, Germany, as well as Seoul, Korea with the world-renowned choir the Incheon City Chorale.

In addition to his position at the UW, Boers sings professionally and is the conductor of the Tacoma Symphony Chorus where he conducts both the choir and symphony players in a four-concert season.

Since his tenure at the University of Washington, the choral program has become a leader in promoting the performance, study and exchange of Baltic music in the United States. The choir has toured to the Baltic countries in 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2013. Geoffrey Boers was awarded a prestigious Royalty Research Grant in 2004 to create a Baltic Choral Library in collaboration with the UW Library as well as State and academic libraries in the Baltic. This collection of scores, manuscripts, vocal music, and writings is the first of its kind in the United States. This collection has promoted yearly exchanges with choirs and conductors from the Baltic area who travel each year to Seattle. Further, it has led to numerous UW choral students winning awards and scholarships to travel, study, and work in the Baltic countries.

GISELLE WYERS

Giselle Wyers is the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor of Choral Music at the University of Washington, where she conducts the award-winning University Chorale and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in choral conducting and music education. University Chorale’s latest CD, Resonant Streams (on the MSR Music Recordings label) was reviewed by Gramophone magazine last spring. Her semi-professional chorus, Solaris Vocal Ensemble, specializes in the performance of contemporary American choral literature. Their premiere album Floodsongs won the The American Prize Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music, in the professional ensemble division for 2017-18.

As a guest conductor, Wyers has led high school honor choirs and all-state choruses in New York (Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center), Georgia, Missouri, Louisiana, Connecticut, Nebraska, Texas, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, and Vancouver, Canada. She has conducted semi-professional ensembles across the United States and in Germany, the Netherlands, Estonia, and Sweden. She will direct All-State choirs in Nevada, Wisconsin and Kansas in 2020.

Wyers is a leading national figure in the application of Laban movement theory for conductors. She has served as guest lecturer in conducting at Sweden's Örebro Universitet, Eastman School of Music, Ithaca College, Westminster Choir College, University of Iowa, Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Portland State University.

Wyers’ choral works are published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing Company as part of the "Giselle Wyers Choral Series," and have been performed across the United States, Canada, Australia, Cuba, and numerous European cities. Her latest premiere was a 30 minute choral cycle entitled And All Shall Be Well, commissioned by the Vashon Island Chorale. In 2020, four new choral works will premiere across the United States. She is also committed to mentoring scholar-writers in the field, and serves on the editorial board of ACDAs Choral Journal.

PHYLLIS BYRDWELL

Phyllis Byrdwell, director of the UW Gospel Choir, is Minister of Music at Mount Zion Baptist Church of Seattle and also a music educator for Lakeside School. She has conducted several seminar workshops on Gospel music throughout Washington state and nationally, and served as a songleader for the Baptist World Alliance

Byrdwell was inducted into the Washington Music Educators Association's Hall of Fame in 2002 and serves on the Seattle Symphony Board of Directors.

A School of Music alumna, she holds a bachelor's degree in music and bachelor's and master's degrees in music education.

People Involved: Geoffrey Boers, Giselle Wyers, Phyllis Byrdwell

Event Type: Performances, Student Activities and Performances

Related Areas of Study: Choral Activities, Choral Conducting, Conducting, Vocal Performance

Voice Program

Related Ensembles: Chamber Singers, Gospel Choir, University Chorale, University Singers

UW Glee Club, UW Treble Choir

School of Music · University of Washington · Music Building, Box 353450 · Seattle, WA 98195
Telephone: (206) 543-1201 · Email: musinfo@uw.edu

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