

ABOUT OUR PERFORMERS

THE WISCONSIN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Founded in 1960, the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (WCO) is one of the elite chamber ensembles in the United States, and is dedicated to advancing Wisconsin communities through the transformative power of music.

Under the direction of Maestro Andrew Sewell, WCO leverages the unique characteristics of chamber music to bring a wide variety of repertoire to audiences in settings that range from the formality of the concert hall to the intimacy of smaller community venues and the open accessibility of parks and other public spaces. Through its core artistic programming—comprising a five-concert Masterworks series at Madison's Overture Center for the Arts, a holiday performance of Handel's Messiah at Blackhawk Church in Middleton, and the highly popular free summer series Concerts on the Square in Madison's Capitol Square—WCO annually shares the enrichment of live chamber music with 250,000 individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

Through collaborations with regional performing arts groups and touring performances, WCO extends its artistic programming to broader audiences and communities across Dane, Columbia, Jefferson, Waukesha and Sauk counties.



ANDREW SEWELL MUSIC DIRECTOR

Maestro Andrew Sewell enters his twentieth season as music director of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, and third season with the San Luis Obispo Symphony having had long tenures with the Wichita, Toledo and Mansfield, Ohio Symphonies. Known for his innovative programming and knack for discovering new talent, Sewell is a highly skilled orchestra builder with a wide knowledge and range of repertoire. In demand as a guest conductor, he has led the Toronto, Detroit, Milwaukee, Columbus, Syracuse, Illinois, Monterey, Gulf Coast and Eugene Symphony Orchestras, as well as the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Christchurch Symphony, National Symphony of Mexico, Kyushu Symphony (Japan), City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong, OK Mozart Festival, WI Peninsula Music Festival and Masterworks Festivals in the US and London.

Over the years he has been credited with numerous awards for services to music including the 2017 Service to Music Award from the Association of Wisconsin Symphony Orchestras, the 2013 Rabin Arts Youth Award for Individual Achievement by the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra, the 2005 Best Individual Artist Award by Wichita Arts Council, and 2005 Musician of the Year by the Wisconsin State Journal, for services to music and the greater arts community.

SAKURAKO ERIKSEN



Sakurako Eriksen, age 17, was born in Madison, Wisconsin. She started learning piano at the age of 4 in New Orleans. At the age of 8, she moved to Rochester, NY where she studied with Douglas Humpherys at the Eastman School of Music. When she was 13, she moved to Los Angeles and studied with Bernadene Blaha at the USC Thornton School of Music.

Currently, Sakurako lives in Milwaukee and studies with Stefanie Jacob at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and Anna Maimine at SUNY Buffalo. She has performed Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No.3 with the Chippewa Valley (2018) and La Crosse Symphony Orchestras (2019). In 2018, she performed at Stern Auditorium in Carnegie Hall. Additionally, Sakurako won second prize at the 2018 Aloha International Piano Concerto Competition and won in the 2014 Los Angeles International Liszt Competition and was awarded the Best Performance of an Etude.

Sakurako also enjoys performing cello and Japanese tea ceremony.



SUZANNE BEIA

Suzanne Beia, concertmaster, has been with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra since 1995, and is second violinist in the Pro Arte Quartet. She also serves as Co-Concertmaster of the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

A native of Reno, Nevada, she began her musical studies on the viola at the age of ten. Three years later, she shifted her attention to the violin and made her solo debut at the age of fourteen with the North Lake Tahoe Symphony. Since that time, she has performed on numerous occasions as a soloist with orchestras throughout the United States and Germany. Before coming to Madison, Suzanne held the position of Principal Second Violin in the Wichita Symphony and has held concertmaster positions with the Reno Chamber Orchestra, Bay Area Women's Philharmonic, Spoleto Festival Orchestra and Chamber Symphony of San Francisco. She also held the Assistant Concertmaster position in the New World Symphony.



JEANS 'N CLASSICS

Now celebrating their 23rd anniversary, Jeans 'n Classics is a star performer in the arts and entertainment scene right across North America. While most definitely not a tribute act, Jeans 'n Classics faithfully interprets the music of legendary rock and pop albums and artists, with their own special and signature flair.

PETER RUBARDT



Peter Rubardt has earned wide acclaim for powerful and insightful performances that inspire passionate responses to symphonic music. In addition to his long-standing position as Music Director of the Pensacola Symphony, in recent seasons he has added the Music Directorships of the Meridian and Gulf Coast Symphonies. Throughout his career he has worked successfully to broaden and deepen the relationships between communities and their orchestras, leading to growing audiences and a broad base of support. A gifted speaker about music as well as a performer, he actively engages audiences and community groups in the appreciation of symphonic music. Also busy as a guest conductor, Rubardt recently debuted with the Alabama Symphony, the Fort Worth Symphony, and the Augusta Symphony, among others.

SERGEI BELKIN



Sergei Belkin was born near Donetsk, Ukraine and grew up in Provedeniya, Russia. As a child he was fortunate to come under the teaching of Nina Andreevna Dronova, a master music teacher who taught him the accordion.

He blossomed and was soon competing in regional and national music competitions, winning awards throughout Russia. He studied music performance and education at the Kamchatka Music College under Dr. Vladimir Fedorovich Shashin from 1988 to 1993. Sergei was the first place winner of the international program of the European New Names Contest in 1992. He studied music performance at the Moscow Conservatory for two years before he emigrated to the United States in 1998. He is known for his artistry and technical excellence as well as his joyful and charming performance style.



ILYA YAKUSHEV

Russian pianist Ilya Yakushev, with many awards and honors to his credit, continues to astound and mesmerize audiences at major venues on three continents.

In the 2016-17 season, Ilya Yakushev appeared as piano soloist with the symphony orchestras of New Haven (CT), El Paso (TX), Dubuque (IA), La Crosse (WI), Lake Forest (IL); and Glacier Symphony (MT), in addition to recitals in New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Washington.

Highlights of Yakushev's 2017-18 season include return appearances with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Edmonton Symphony, Las Cruces Symphony, and Reading Symphony, as well as performances with Decatur Symphony and Johnstown Symphony. He will also play recitals in Texas, Louisiana, Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York.

FOR FULL INFORMATION ON THE WCO AND OUR GUEST ARTISTS, PLEASE VISIT WCOCONCERTS.ORG

WCO RESIDENT ARTIST LINDA MASSEY

Internationally acclaimed Madison artist Linda Massey has been the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's resident artist since 2017. This year's Concerts on the Square® poster, "Songs of Summer", will be available for purchase along with her works from prior Concerts on the Square® seasons.

