

SOME OF THE BEST OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Neil Hokanson



American society, *our* society, is a complex amalgamation of all that we are and all that we do. If someone asked you what you like *most* about our American culture and society, what would you say? What activities and organizations bring out the best in us as individuals and as a people? It is an interesting question to ponder...

I asked some of my colleagues at work this question. If your answer is anything like theirs, some of your favorite organizations and activities revolve around not-for-profit organizations. Think about it – music, theatre and dance, opera, museums, botanical gardens, zoos and a host of athletic and outdoor activities are accessible to us because of the important role non-profit organizations play in bringing us access to these enriching experiences. They exist quietly behind many of the places and activities we enjoy most.

Yet non-profits do so much more. Affordable housing, education, health care and social services are all areas where not-for-profit organizations play such an important role in making our society a better place.

An additional bonus to our community is that non-profits tend to be very efficient in what they do. Profit is not a goal, so the “customers” and the “shareholders” are one in the same. Those who run our charities tend to be passionate about what they do, and they give up the higher compensation available elsewhere in exchange for a chance to touch people’s lives.

Elected officials across the political spectrum recognize the unique value that non-profits bring to our communities, and that is why they assist in their support by providing individuals with generous tax deductions to support their favorite organizations and accomplish important personal financial planning objectives at the same time. From immediate income tax deductions, to bequests that reduce estate taxes to heirs, to charitable trusts that provide the donor with tax deductions and an income you can’t outlive, there are a wide variety of charitable giving strategies that are truly “win-win” for both the donor and your charitable recipient.

So enjoy the gifts the non-profit organizations in our community offer us as you would a wonderful sunset on the beach. And please remember how important your support is to these institutions that enrich our lives and to the people that run them. Volunteer a little time or expertise. Make a donation. Say a simple but powerful “thank you” to those who make these wonderful institutions work. At the end of the day, after all, we are the soul of the charitable institutions in our community, and they are our reflection.

 *“Happy Holidays”* 



"The best college choir in America!" – Russell Platt, St. Paul Pioneer Press

The ST. OLAF CHOIR

ANTON ARMSTRONG, CONDUCTOR



COPLEY SYMPHONY HALL
750 B STREET - SAN DIEGO

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2003 • 8:00 P.M.

TICKETS: \$100 PATRON, \$28, \$25, \$20

STUDENT & GROUP RATES AVAILABLE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT COPLEY SYMPHONY HALL TICKET OFFICE, TEL: 619-235-0804
FOR PATRON TICKETS, CALL CLAIREMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH, TEL: 619-273-7423

SPONSORED BY THE CLAIREMONT LUTHERAN VESPER CONCERT SERIES.

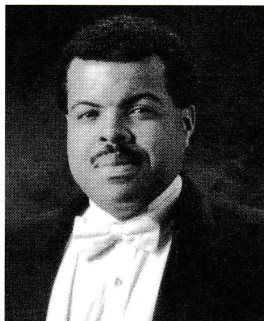
1520 St. Olaf Avenue • Northfield, MN 55057 USA • (507) 646-3179 • www.stolaf.edu

The ST. OLAF CHOIR

ANTON ARMSTRONG, CONDUCTOR

B.J. JOHNSON, MANAGER

The St. Olaf Choir, the widely acclaimed ensemble and longtime creative influence behind the *a cappella* choral tradition, has toured annually since 1912, when it was founded by F. Melius Christiansen. The 1920 tour to the major music centers of the East Coast sowed the seeds of the ensemble's national reputation — and established its unaccompanied style of singing as a significant force in American choral music.



ANTON ARMSTRONG
CONDUCTOR

Anton Armstrong has served as music director of the St. Olaf Choir since 1990. A 1978 Bachelor of Music graduate of St. Olaf College (where he was a member of the choir he now leads), Armstrong later earned a Master of Music degree in choral music from the University of Illinois and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from Michigan State University. He returned to St. Olaf after 10 years on the faculty at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Armstrong is well aware of the St. Olaf Choir's history and its place in American choral tradition. His D.M.A. thesis was devoted to "Celebrating 75 Years of Musical Excellence: The Evolution of the St. Olaf Choir."

Under the adept direction of Olaf C. Christiansen (who succeeded his father in 1941), Kenneth Jennings (who led the ensemble from 1968 to 1990) and Armstrong, the St. Olaf Choir has inspired and entertained audiences around the world. The St. Olaf Choir, has performed under such notable conductors as Sir Neville Mariner,

Neemi Järvi, Sir David Willcocks, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski and the late Robert Shaw, and it continues to make frequent appearances with the Minnesota Orchestra.

The St. Olaf Choir is acclaimed internationally, the result of 12 tours to Europe and Asia. In 1988, the group was one of only five choirs in the world invited to

participate in the Seoul Olympic Arts Festival in South Korea. In 1993, the ensemble completed a 21-day concert tour to New Zealand and Australia, marking the group's first tour "down under" and another credit to its global reputation. In June 2001, the choir embarked on a 21-day concert tour to France, Germany, Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

This past August, the St. Olaf Choir appeared on the world stage at the Sixth World Symposium on Choral Music in the Twin Cities as part of the finale "Minnesota Sings Farewell." The concert featured the St. Olaf Choir, VocalEssence (formerly the Plymouth Music Series Ensemble Singers), the Dale Warland Singers and Moore by Four, all Minnesota-based, nationally recognized music ensembles.

The St. Olaf Choir's growing discography features 14 discs, including *The Spirituals of Williams L. Dawson*, *Advance Australia Fair* and the most recent, *Great Hymns of Faith*. This January a new recording of works by Charles Ives will be released on Linn Records, the first international release on a major label by the St. Olaf Choir.



NORTHFIELD · MINNESOTA · USA

THE
ST · OLAF
CHOIR