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Alumni Collaborate for Chicago Musical Event

May 5, 2016

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Chicago-based composer [Eric Malmquist '07](#) will premiere his work *Blemish'd Muse* May 13 at a concert with several connections to other Illinois Wesleyan [School of Music](#) alumni.

Malmquist's work *Blemish'd Muse* is commissioned by the [Wicker Park Choral Singers](#) and will be presented by the vocal group and the [Chicago Composers Orchestra](#) (CCO). The Wicker Park Choral Singers (WPCS) were founded in 2008 by Mark Tomasino '06, who serves as artistic director. CCO was co-founded in 2010 by Brian Baxter '07 and a team of other composers, performers and community members to present the music of living composers. Baxter serves as CCO co-artistic director.

The May 13 performance, entitled "Hymn to Humanity," is comprised of works combining voices and instruments with texts dedicated to various forms of social justice, said Baxter. "We are delighted to be collaborating with the Wicker Park Choral Singers to cap off our sixth season," he said.

Malmquist's music draws from modern styles, blended with the influence of historical themes and early music. The texts of *Blemish'd Muse* draw from the works of Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg.

Other works on the May 13 program include *statement to the court* by Pulitzer Prize winner David Lang and *Thirst* by Julia Wolfe, winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Music for her oratorio *Anthraxite Fields*.

Tomasino founded WPCS two years after graduating from IWU because he was in search of a post-collegiate choral community. A member of the Collegiate Choir while a student at IWU, he has programmed and directed over 50 WPCS performances in the Chicagoland area. With the WPCS he has made multiple television and radio appearances, including the final season of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. The WPCS were the subject of an [IWU Magazine](#) story in 2010.

The May 13 "Hymn to Humanity" will be held at St. James Cathedral, 65 E. Huron St., Chicago, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$22 at the door and available for [advance purchase online](#).



Eric Malmquist '07



Brian Baxter '07



Mark Tomasino '06

