

**Paul Weber** is an organist, conductor, and composer based in New Orleans, where he is organist and choirmaster at Trinity Episcopal Church. In 2016 he founded Krewe de Voix Chamber Choir, a professional vocal ensemble that specializes in music of the 16th and 17th centuries. Now in its seventh season, Krewe de Voix has performed throughout the New Orleans metro area, collaborating regularly with Marigny Opera Ballet. In demand as a concert organist, Weber has recently performed at the national conferences of the Organ Historical Society, the Church Music Association of America, and the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, as well as at concert series at cathedrals across the country. He holds national and international prizes in organ performance, including from the Arthur Poister (Syracuse, New York) and Erfurt (Germany) competitions. A prolific composer of choral music, Weber founded the sacred music program at Franciscan University, where he was professor of sacred music and director of university ensembles.

#### **Krewe de Voix**

Paul Weber, director

Kenya Lawrence Jackson, Joy Meade, and Lauren Oglesby, sopranos

Dena Borman, Anne Simpson, and Claire Shackleton, altos

James Rodrigue, Kevin Rouchell, and Dylan Tran, tenors

Michael Meade, James Rosenbloom, and Christopher Warwick, basses

James Rosenbloom, cello

**Mahmoud Chouki** is a master guitarist, multi-instrumentalist, and composer living and working in New Orleans. His compositions incorporate influences from across the globe, ranging from Europe, Andalusia, the Middle East, North Africa, Latin America, and the southern United States. Chouki combines classical guitar with instruments such as the Moroccan loutar; the sintir, from Mali; the oud, a lute used in East African and Middle Eastern music; the Algerian mandole, resembling an elongated mandolin; the Bağlama saz, a Turkish long-necked bowl-lute; the banjo; and a variety of percussion instruments. Chouki has performed around the world, at events and venues such as the Magic Lutes Concerts in Qatar and Bahrain; the Pirineos Sur International Festival of Cultures in Sallent de Gállego, Spain; Snug Harbor Jazz Bistro in New Orleans; Café de la Danse in Paris, France; and Safar, a site-specific performance series at the New Orleans Museum of Art.

In conjunction with the exhibition  
*Spanish New Orleans and the Caribbean / La Nueva Orleans y el Caribe españoles*

The Historic New Orleans Collection presents



## **La Noche Buena** **Spanish Christmas Music of the New World**

December 15, 2022

St. Louis Cathedral

New Orleans, LA



MUSEUM • RESEARCH CENTER • PUBLISHER

## Program Note

Spanish ships bound for the Americas were full of cargo with limited accommodations, yet officials managed to find space for music and instruments—a testament to the value of music in Spanish culture. The Native peoples they encountered in the Americas shared their love of music, and it became an important diplomatic and religious tool in Spain’s colonial enterprise.

Spanish missionaries incorporated music into their spiritual conquest of the Americas—and Indigenous peoples embraced stringed instruments, polyphony, and Western compositional techniques and performance practices. Missionaries translated musical texts into Indigenous languages, and Natives soon began composing European-influenced liturgical music themselves. Tonight's program is designed to illustrate the resulting richness of this largely unknown musical legacy of the Spanish Americas.

Gregorian chant is an essential component of the Roman Catholic liturgy. *Puer natus est nobis* serves as the entrance song on Christmas Day, while *Creator alme siderum* is an oft-used Advent hymn. In the version of *Creator alme siderum* heard tonight, the chant alternates with polyphonic verses written by Joseph Loaysa y Augurto, choirmaster of the Cathedral of Mexico during the late 17th century. Also based on Gregorian chant is the *Magnificat* of Esteban Salas y Castro, a native of Havana known as the first significant Cuban composer of Western music.

The guitar served a unique role in the Spanish baroque repertoire. Important in both folk and fine art music, it was an essential continuo instrument along with the harp, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. Among the more famous Spanish guitar masters was Gaspar Sanz, who published three volumes about the instrument 1674-97. His *Españoleta* no. 3 and *Canarios* are both dances.

Compositions by American Indians heard tonight include works written in Spanish; Náhuatl, an Aztec language; and Quechua, a language spoken throughout the Andes. The music of Tomás Pascual, a 16th-century Mayan composer from Guatemala, is part of a massive musical archive in the northwestern Guatemalan village of Santa Eulalia. Cared for in the village for four centuries, the archive is now housed at the University of Indiana at Bloomington.

The two hymns composed in Náhuatl are considered to be the work of a Native composer who took the name of his teacher, Hernando Franco, upon his conversion to Catholicism—a common practice at the time. Juan Pérez Bocanegra, a Franciscan priest, published his *Ritual, formulario e institución de curas* for the use of priests in Indian parishes; it contains liturgical texts in both Quechua and Aymara, another Andean language. Bocanegra’s book includes *Hanacpachac cussisuininen*, the first polyphonic vocal music published in the Americas.

Finally, there are the *villançicos* (carols) by Fray Gerónimo González de Mendoza and Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla. Originally folk songs, *villançicos* had become associated with Christmas by the 17th century. They consist of an *estribilo* (refrain) that alternates with *coplas* (or stanzas).

—Alfred E. Lemmon, director of THNOC's Williams Research Center

## Program

Puer natus es nobis (Introit for Christmas Day Mass)	Gregorian chant, mode VII
Españoleta no. 3	Gaspar Sanz (Spain, 1640–1710)
Oy es dia de placer	Tomás Pascual (Guatemala, 1595–1635); arr. Paul Weber, 2022
Serenissima una noche	Fray Jerónimo González de Mendoza (Spain and Mexico, fl. 1633–1661)
Creator alme siderum (Vespers hymn for Sundays of Advent)	Gregorian chant, mode IV; arr. Joseph Loaysa y Augurto (Mexico, ca. 1630–1695)
Victoria, Victoria	Tomás Pascual
Sancta Maria e yn il huicac cihuapille	attributed to Hernando Franco (Mexico, 1532–1585)
Dios itlaçonantzine	attributed to Hernando Franco
Magnificat	Esteban Salas y Castro (Cuba, 1725–1803)
Canarios	Gaspar Sanz
Hanacpachap cussicuinen	attributed to a Native music student of Juan Pérez Bocanegra (Peru, 1598–1645)
Si tanta gloria se da	Tomás Pascual
A la xácara xacarilla	Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (Spain and Mexico, ca. 1590–1664)

*Please silence your phone during the performance. The use of recording devices and flash photography is prohibited.*

*The Historic New Orleans Collection gratefully acknowledges the Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond, archbishop of New Orleans; Very Reverend Philip G. Landry, rector of St. Louis Cathedral; and the staff of St. Louis Cathedral for their generous support and assistance with this evening's performance.*