



November 13, 2025

A Celebration of Joy and Unity this Holiday Season

MSU choirs and orchestra present *Alegria Navideña* at Wharton Center

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EAST LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan State University College of Music invites the community to celebrate the holidays with *Alegria Navideña (Christmas Joy)*, a colorful concert highlighting culture, language, and the spirit of the season. Taking place **Saturday, Dec. 6, at 7:30 p.m.** in **Wharton Center's Cobb Great Hall**, this festive event brings together more than 200 singers from MSU's Choral Union, State Singers, and University Chorale with the MSU Symphony Orchestra. Part of the MSU Federal Credit Union Showcase Series, the concert offers a joyful reflection on unity and shared celebration.

At a time when art has the power to bring people together, *Alegria Navideña* celebrates the beauty of cultural unity expressed through music and language. The program centers on **George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*, Part I**, performed in Spanish using a libretto translated by Mario Montenegro, originally commissioned as “a gift to those for whom Spanish is a first language.” The concert also includes **Ariel Ramírez's *Navidad Nuestra***, a culturally rich work infused with Latin-American rhythms and color.

“Our goal is to celebrate the universal language of music and the shared joy it brings,” said Sandra Snow, conductor and MSU Director of Choral Programs. “Singing these works in Spanish adds warmth and vibrancy that reflect the richness of our community and the many cultures that celebrate this season.”

Prior to the concert's conclusion, the program features the world premiere of **Lee R. Kesselman's *Festival of Lights***, a work that weaves an authentic Jewish voice into the tapestry of the season and celebrates themes of light and unity through a blend of English and Hebrew texts. The evening then concludes with a joyful audience sing-along of familiar seasonal carols—a hallmark of MSU's holiday tradition that fills Cobb Great Hall with shared voices and festive spirit.

“This concert represents the very best of collaboration,” added Octavio Más-Arocas, conductor and MSU Director of Orchestras. “It's a thrill to see our Symphony Orchestra and choirs unite for a performance that transcends language and invites our audience to join in the celebration. When everyone lifts their voices together in song, it truly captures the spirit of the season.”

Alegria Navideña is the second concert of the MSU Federal Credit Union Showcase Series, highlighting guest ensembles and exceptional performances from across the College of Music. The concert is generously sponsored by Barbara and Bill Given, Kevin and Amy Guskiewicz, and Ann, John and Abby Lindley.

Reserved-seat tickets for *Alegria Navideña* are available exclusively through Wharton Center. Adult tickets are \$31.50, senior tickets (age 60+) are \$29.50, and student tickets are \$20.50. Visit whartoncenter.com to purchase tickets online or call 517-432-2000, (800) WHARTON.

For more holiday music, the Showcase Series also brings **A Jazzy Little Christmas** on **Dec. 13** at the MSU Auditorium's Fairchild Theatre, a lively performance of holiday classics with a jazz twist. Visit music.msu.edu for more information about this and other MSU College of Music concerts.

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