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### Heartland Men's Chorus Takes Flight with Ambitious Spring Program

Kansas City, MO—It's the perfect travel plan: a flight from Russia to Australia to Italy to Spain in less than two hours! The next Heartland Men's Chorus concert aims to astound audiences with the diverse capabilities of the human voice. Part concert, part worldwide tour and part thrill-ride, *Global Destinations: A Non-Stop Flight* (March 24-25, 2007, at the Folly Theater) will have audiences on the edge of their seats. From African tribal songs, to unique Eastern Russian works, to aboriginal chant, the 120-voice Heartland Men's Chorus seeks to change the public's perception of choral music.

Joe Nadeau, artistic director of HMC, views this world music program as a natural extension of the Chorus' mission. "Two important parts of our Mission Statement are 'advancing men's choral music' and 'reaching out to diverse audiences.' This program achieves both, through new commissions and truly unique choral sounds."

"It's a concert that will stretch not only our singers, but our audiences as well. We're asking them to travel outside the box of the usual Western European choral repertoire, and that's exciting."

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Currently completing his doctorate in choral conducting at the University of Kansas, Nadeau looked to his colleagues to provide some arrangements for *Global Destinations*. New commissions and arrangements will be provided by fellow doctoral students R. Douglas Helvering and Dan Forrest.

Helvering's new work is a collection of four African tribal songs entitled "Sobane Iculo." Included in the medley are "Unonganga," a song of revelry and joy encouraging the listener to celebrate the human condition, "Imaliyam" and "Umakot," two Zulu folk songs, and "Shosholoza," a song that originated in Zimbabwe that has been unofficially adopted by South Africa as a "second" national Anthem. "Shosholoza," in which the chorus mimics the sound of a train, has been recorded by performers around the world, including Peter Gabriel and Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

KU student Dan Forrest has arranged his "Amen" for men's voices. This movement from a larger work for mixed voices was originally performed by the KU Chamber Choir. The lush and melodious *a cappella* arrangement features the Chorus divided into a double choir. Forrest juxtaposes the two choirs as each presents a separate version of the theme.

Also included in the program will be a repeat performance of "Past Life Melodies," a piece HMC performed at the 2000 GALA Festival, a quadrennial convention of gay choruses from around the world. Originating from Aboriginal chant, "Past Life Melodies" features overtone singing that weaves a hypnotic effect on the audience. The

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piece, written by Australian composer Sarah Hopkins, has its roots in Hoomei “throat” singing, which is indigenous to Western Mongolia, and the overtone chanting of Tantric Tibetan Buddhism. The singing technique allows singing in two different voices simultaneously. Through singing a steady fundamental note in the low register and then modulating the shape of the mouth cavity, one can produce a “second voice” consisting of high harmonics or overtones. The result can induce goose bumps and, when HMC has previously performed the piece, standing ovations.

Other highlights will include “Naduri,” an Eastern Russian work that utilizes a singing technique similar to yodeling. A working song from the Imereti region in Western Georgia, the song was usually sung when the men were plowing the fields. The call-and-response format of the piece originated with shepherds in the region.

Nadeau is quick to point out that *Global Destinations* is *not* a geography lesson. “It’s going to be a visceral thrill for our audience,” he says. “I keep imagining the old Memorex television commercial, in which the listener is literally ‘blown away’ by the sound. It’s adventurous programming, and our audiences will be stunned by the variety of unique sounds coming from the stage of the Folly Theater!”

Heartland Men’s Chorus performs *Global Destinations: A Non-Stop Flight* at the Folly Theater, 300 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, on Saturday, March 24, 2007, at 8:00 pm and Sunday, March 25, 2007, at 4:00 pm. Tickets are available online at [www.hmckc.org](http://www.hmckc.org) or by calling 816-931-3338.