Press Release
For immediate release
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Note to Editors: High-resolution photos available at http://uniontheater.wisc.edu/press/index.html

POWER IN HARMONY: CHANTICLEER

Hailed as “the world’s reigning male chorus” by The New Yorker, recognized Grammy award winning, and remembered Wisconsin Union Theater veterans, Chanticleer, honors its ancestral history in performance and song. The all-male vocal ensemble is set to perform in Shannon Hall Saturday, February 21, 2015 at 8 p.m. Purchase tickets online or call the Box Office at 608-265-ARTS (2787). Tickets can also be purchased at either Vilas Hall (entrance on East Campus Mall, 821 University Avenue) or the box office in the Wisconsin Union Theater. Ticket prices are as follows. General Public: $45, $25; Wisconsin Union Members & Non UW-Madison Students: $40; UW-Madison Faculty & Staff: $42; UW-Madison Student (with ID): $10.

The Wisconsin Union Theater is excited to bring Chanticleer back to the theater for the ensemble’s 37th annual season. Chanticleer’s performance is just one of many stops on the ensemble’s tour, reaching 25 of the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden in addition to one night in Madison, Wisconsin.

The 12-member a cappella group started releasing records in 1981, blending renaissance, jazz, and gospel genres together to create a sound unlike any other in the years since its
formation. Chanticleer boasts over eighty composer collaborations with more than one million record sales and two Grammy award wins. The ensemble has also received recognition by the Dale Warland/Chorus America Commissioning Award, the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming.

The group has historically paid special attention to the African-American coral tradition, with the inclusion of gospels, spirituals, and jazz movements in their repertoire. Such efforts led Chorus America to present the Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award to Chanticleer’s director emeritus Joseph H. Jennings this year for his efforts to acknowledge such traditions during his time as a singer and leader for the ensemble.

The group’s formation is described on their website as the following:

“Over the years, Chanticleer founder Louis Botto was often asked if, at that first convening of singers around a dining room table in San Francisco he had any idea it would become what it is today. He would usually answer, ‘yes,’ with a broad smile and a twinkle in his eye. As a graduate student in musicology, Louis found it odd that much of the repertoire he was studying—vocal music of the medieval and Renaissance periods—was not being performed. He decided to form a group to sing this neglected repertoire, using only male voices, as was the tradition in most churches during the Renaissance. Louis turned to members of choirs in which he sang, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and the Grace Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys, asking if they might be interested in this endeavor. Nine members were selected, including Louis (who sang tenor), and rehearsals began for their debut performance.”

This performance was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.