

Tesfa Wondemagegnehu

2019 NAFME All-National
Mixed Choir

With a love of music as big as his last name, Tesfa Wondemagegnehu has been sharing joy and a vision for equity and justice through song for over a decade. Through a triumvirate of teaching, conducting, and performing, he has found a way to transform both students and audiences and to reach those seeking resolutions of peace, equality, and respect ... through music.

Tesfa Wondemagegnehu serves as the conductor of the Viking Chorus and the Chapel Choir at St. Olaf College. He is also the guest artistic director of one of North America's Largest LGBTQ+ choirs, Minnesota's One Voice Mixed Chorus. Tesfa maintains an active voice studio and teaches Music & Social Justice with the goal of helping bridge the gap of social injustice through music, dialogue, and inspiring participants to take action in their communities.

Tesfa has conducted and given masterclasses, workshops, and clinics both nationally and internationally. In 2017 he co-led the American Choral Directors Association's national high school honor choir, working collaboratively with Eric Whitacre. In June of 2017, he was named the composer-in-residence for Choirs of America at Carnegie Hall, where he had the opportunity to conduct and lift over 600 voices in singing the world premiere of his composition *May the Road*. Wondemagegnehu made his Severance Hall debut in 2017, co-conducting with Cleveland Orchestra Chorus Master Dr. Lisa Wong a choir comprising high school students from the Cleveland area, and in 2016 he worked with Los Angeles Master Chorale artistic director Grant Gershon, co-conducting their 1,000-student honor choir in the majestic Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Tesfa holds a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting and Vocal Performance from the Florida State University and a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performing from the University of Memphis. While teaching high school, Tesfa was named Orange County Public School Teacher of the Year and received the Macy's National Magic of Teaching Award. This award celebrated an innovative voice program started at Freedom High School in Orlando, where the class participants, who received free voice lessons and vocal coaching, obtained over \$3 million in college scholarships from some of the most prestigious music schools in the country.



All-National
Honor Ensembles