



VocalEssence & American Composers Forum  
announce the twentieth annual  
**Welcome Christmas Carol Contest**  
for SATB A Cappella Choir

**Postmark Deadline: Friday, June 16, 2017**

The custom of singing Christmas carols brings joy to the holiday season unlike any other tradition. And every December VocalEssence and the American Composers Forum celebrate this tradition in their own unique way: championing today's composers, exploring new works, and rediscovering lesser-known works of the past.

This year marks the twentieth year of the **Welcome Christmas Carol Contest** as VocalEssence and the American Composers Forum provide composers with the opportunity to compose a modern-day carol.

Open to composers of all ages, this year's contest requires writing a carol for SATB a cappella choir. Each year, the contest has produced wonderful new settings of familiar texts and carols based on existing poems and original texts, each year with a different instrument.

The two winners will each receive a prize of \$1,000, and the winning carols will be premiered at the December 2, 8, 9, and 10, 2017 **Welcome Christmas** concerts featuring the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers. The performances will be recorded for national broadcast in 2018 via American Public Media. The winners are invited to attend the rehearsals and performances at their own expense, and will have the opportunity for radio interviews as well as other media coverage and promotion.

#### **2017 Contest Guidelines**

- World premiere: No prior performance of submitted work.
- Original carol: No arrangements or new settings of existing tunes.
- Eligibility: Composers of all ages whose permanent residence is North America.
- Form: Carol (defined as a strophic song, which may or may not have refrains, that is associated with Christmas).
- Voicing: SATB A Cappella Choir (no additional accompanying instruments allowed).
- Duration: 3-4 minutes. Compositions longer than 4 minutes in length will not be reviewed.
- Text: Sacred or secular, medieval to present, appropriate for concert setting; Christmas or seasonal winter themes accepted. Proof of public domain or author's written permission for use of text is required.

## Who May Apply

- Composers of all ages; experience writing for voice and/or choirs is beneficial.
- Applicants do not need to be members of ACF to apply. However, if selected, the composer is expected to be a member for a one-year period. (For membership information visit [composersforum.org/get-involved/join-renew](http://composersforum.org/get-involved/join-renew) or call 651/251-2810).

## Submission Requirements

- Signed and completed application form
- One full score including duration
- A biography not to exceed one page
- Program notes not to exceed one page (optional)
- Document giving permission or status for use of text
- Optional: If you would like your materials returned, please enclose a check (payable to American Composers Forum) in the amount of \$5.00 to cover return postage. **Please do not include stamps or SASEs.**
- Please **DO NOT SEND RECORDINGS.**

## Deadline

Postmarked on or before Friday, June 16, 2017. Faxes will not be accepted.

## Selection Process

Applications and scores will be screened for completeness by ACF staff. Final selection and programming decisions will be made by VocalEssence Artistic Director Philip Brunelle. Note: American Composers Forum and VocalEssence reserve the right not to make an award.

## Notification

Composers will be notified by late July, 2017.

## VocalEssence

VocalEssence, called “one of the irreplaceable music ensembles of our time” by Dana Gioia, past chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts—and the choral ensemble that Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones says “sings magnificently”—impacts thousands of students, singers, and composers each year through its initiative programs, contests, and support for innovative art. VocalEssence was founded in 1969 and has debuted more than 250 commissions and world premieres. For more information, visit [vocalessence.org](http://vocalessence.org).

## For more information about this program contact:

William Lackey

[wlackey@composersforum.org](mailto:wlackey@composersforum.org)

# 2017 WELCOME CHRISTMAS CAROL CONTEST

# APPLICATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (eve): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Composition title: \_\_\_\_\_

Duration (mm:ss): \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

*I agree to the guidelines and terms of this competition. The work submitted has not received a public performance. Should my work be chosen, I agree to fulfill all requirements as stated in the guidelines and printed materials.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Checklist:

- ☐ Signed and completed application form.
- ☐ One copy of score including duration.
- ☐ Instrumental part vibraphone (no additional accompanying instruments allowed).
- ☐ Proof of public domain or author's written permission for use of text.
- ☐ Biography not to exceed one page.
- ☐ *Optional:* Program note not to exceed one page.
- ☐ *Optional:* \$5.00 check made payable to American Composers Forum for return of your application materials.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND RECORDINGS

**Application deadline:** Submissions must be postmarked by **June 16, 2017.**

**Mail to:** **Welcome Christmas Carol Contest**  
**American Composers Forum**  
**522 Landmark Center**  
**75 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**St. Paul, MN 55102-1439**