

2021/2022 SEASON



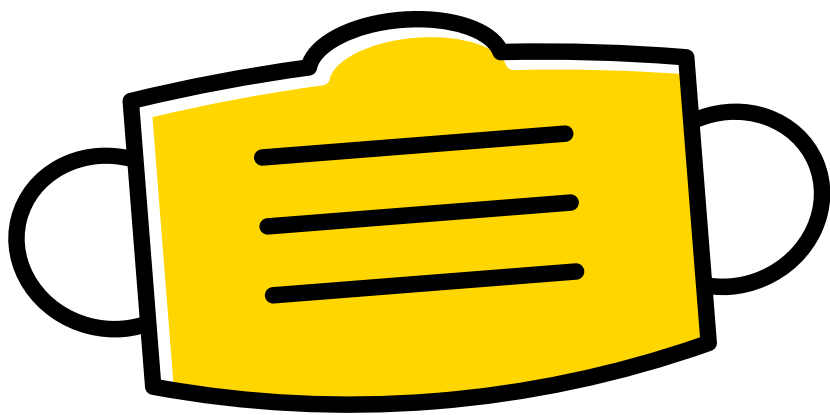
HANCHER AUDITORIUM

STRAIGHT NO CHASER

Thursday, December 9, 2021
7:30 pm



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STRAIGHT NO CHASER

Thursday, December 9, 2021, at 7:30 pm
Hancher Auditorium, The University of Iowa

Program will be announced from the stage



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Anywhere in the world, nine dapper gentlemen vocalists saunter across the stage and immediately bring audiences to their feet...

They do so with nothing more than microphones in hand, grins ear-to-ear, witty banter on point, and an uncanny ability to belt out holiday staples, R&B smooth jams, and stadium anthems carried by style, swagger, and spirit. For as much as the story of Straight No Chaser belongs to those nine fellas on stage, it also belongs to a devoted community of millions worldwide affectionately dubbed, "Chasers," who cemented the a cappella collective's status as an international phenomenon.

At the same time, theirs may be the most unlikely and unexpected underdog story in all of music...

In 2007, co-founder Randy Stine uncovered a college-era clip of he and nine of his old buddies singing "The 12 Days of Christmas" back in 1998. On a whim, he uploaded it to YouTube, where Atlantic Records Chairman/CEO Craig Kallman watched the video. Blown away by the talent and chemistry of this a cappella anomaly, he hunted the boys down to sign them. Nobody expected such a response—least of all the guys in the video.

Throughout the ensuing decade-plus, the group—Stine, Tyler Trepp, Seggie Isho, Michael Luginbill, Walter Chase, Jerome Collins, Charlie Mechling, Steve Morgan, and David Roberts—surpassed a series of remarkable milestones. Their unassuming rise would be highlighted by album sales of 1.6 million in the U.S. alone, ticket sales of 1 million worldwide, 100 million-plus YouTube views, 100 million streams, dozens of major television performances, three PBS specials, collaborations alongside everyone from Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Elton John to Stevie Wonder and Kristen Bell, and a pair of gold-certified albums, *Holiday Spirits* and *Christmas Cheers*. They ushered a cappella into the mainstream, paving the way for pop culture phenoms like "The Sing-Off" and Pentatonix. Continuing to forge ahead, they ascend to new benchmarks with each move. Annual tours sell out, television shows can't get enough, and they always defy the odds, not just for a cappella, but for music, at large.

That brings us to 2019 when Straight No Chaser commenced their next and arguably most exciting "Act"—as not just artists, entertainers, and performers, but founders of SNC Records in partnership with Warner Music Group's Arts Music Division. Crystallizing this phenomenon, Straight No Chaser now has a launchpad to bring up other likeminded artists and outliers.

"You could say this is 'Act 3,'" affirms Isho. "Act 1' was back in college. 'Act 2' was getting back together and getting signed. 'Act 3' is taking a little more control of our future and the future of other artists by launching our label. By touring over a decade, we've got a community of 'Chasers' who have become friends more than fans. We realized we could become tastemakers for them. They've shown us amazing support, and we want to introduce them to more music. Rather than getting on a bus and just going where we're told, we're carving out our own path. We have more control of our destiny. We're ready to keep this spring going as long as we can. It's almost like our first time doing everything again."

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

"Unlike other musicals or shows we can think of, we know there are still *another* ten 'Acts' to go, at least," smiles Stine.

Fittingly, the new chapter begins with the 2019 *Open Bar* EP and tour of the same name. For the EP, Straight No Chaser reimagined, re-envisioned, and recharged "five songs you'd hear at a bar and the majority of the room would know them," according Trepp. Among those, they introduced the project with a chantable cover of the seminal Semisonic hit "Closing Time." Broken down into handclaps and harmonies, the song spotlights the power of their vocal union.

"It was the first song we recorded for *Open Bar*," Trepp goes on. "We wanted something we could do live as a 'no mic tune.' It also shows our sense of humor at the end of the show. Whereas we'd typically close a set on a serious love song or Christmas tune, we'll put the mics down for a super intimate moment and start singing, 'You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here,' and the audience reacts and laughs."

They also transform Eddie Money's "Take Me Home Tonight" into a stripped-down sing-a-long punctuated by call-and-response crooning. Meanwhile, their take on country canon classic "Tennessee Whiskey" intoxicates with soul as they stir up Dan + Shay's "Tequila." Not to mention, they score another surprise on a scorching rendition of Smash Mouth's "All Star." Trepp smiles, "Everyone loves it, whether they admit or not."

Most importantly, everyone always sings along to Straight No Chaser in the end. That will never change.

"We always want people to feel like they've been entertained, had fun, and can't wait to come back and see another show," Isho leaves off. "We pride ourselves on making the tours new, fresh, and different every year. The nine of us have become family. That theme resonates. We had regular jobs before Straight No Chaser. Fans are the reason we get to do what we do. They're the end-all be-all. There aren't enough words to describe our appreciation."

"Straight No Chaser is something that we started in school, and it became our college experience," adds Randy. "It's incredible to know it's become our lives. We're going through everything together. All of us are married with kids. We're so thankful for the fans who allow us to continue our college dream well into our forties. Every night, we get the opportunity to go on stage and be ourselves. We're not putting on an act or using character names. We don't have to fake it. This is Straight No Chaser."





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Hancher is grateful for the generous support of all our donors, especially during this past year of challenges. We welcome and thank those of you who joined us as first-time donors this year. We thank those who donated the value of your tickets for the cancelled performances in the spring of 2020. We thank those completing your pledges to the Fund for Rebuilding Hancher. And we thank our donors who have created and are creating endowed funds to support Hancher in perpetuity. That steady support will be critical to our ability to serve the campus, community, and state in the years to come.

We've weathered the pandemic and will continue to adjust to the changes in university funding because of your steadfast generosity—both financially and in terms of ongoing encouragement. Thank you all!

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Our new Hancher Season Cup allows patrons to take drinks purchased in the Stanley Café into the auditorium to enjoy during performances. The cups are refillable (and dishwasher safe) and can be brought back to Hancher to be used at subsequent events.

Purchase yours at the Box Office, the Hancher Showcase, or the Stanley Café.



Only beverages purchased from the Stanley Café can be taken into the auditorium. Patrons should not bring beverages from home. Also, alcoholic beverages cannot be taken out of Hancher Auditorium in a Hancher Season Cup as this would violate "open container" restrictions.

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