

## Headliners/Special Events

### Headliners

#### Chanticleer



The Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer has been hailed as “the world’s reigning male chorus” by *The New Yorker* and is known around the world for its wide-ranging repertoire and dazzling virtuosity. Founded in San Francisco in 1978 by singer and musicologist Louis Botto, Chanticleer quickly took its place as one of the most prolific recording and touring ensembles in the world, selling over one million recordings and performing thousands of live concerts. The ensemble has garnered Grammy Awards for its recording of Sir John Tavener’s “Lamentations & Praises,” and the ambitious collection of commissioned works titled “Colors of Love.” Chanticleer is the recipient of the Dale Warland/Chorus America Commissioning Award and the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming.



**Tim Keeler** is music director of the San Francisco-based, Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer. Prior to moving to San Francisco, he forged a career as an active conductor, singer, and educator in New York City. He has sung with New York Polyphony, The Clarion Choir, the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and

Boys, TENET, and Ekmeles. As an educator, he has directed the University of Maryland Men’s Chorus, served as director of choirs at the Special Music School High School in Manhattan, and was also the choral conductor for Juilliard’s new Summer Performing Arts program.

#### The Soldiers’ Chorus of The U. S. Army Field Band



The Soldiers’ Chorus, founded in 1957, is the vocal complement of the United States Army Field Band of Washington, DC. The twenty-nine-member mixed choral ensemble travels throughout the nation and abroad, performing as a separate component and in joint concerts with the Concert Band of the “Musical Ambassadors of the Army.” The chorus has performed in all fifty states, Canada, Mexico, India, the Far East, and throughout Europe, entertaining audiences of all ages. In addition to presenting selections from the vast choral repertoire, Soldiers’ Chorus performances often include the music of Broadway, opera, barbershop quartet, and Americana. Most recently, the Soldiers’ Chorus co-commissioned *The Falling* and *The Rising: A New American Opera*, appeared on the CBS broadcast *Songs of Service*, and was featured on the Grammy Award-winning album *Soundtrack of the American Soldier*.

## Headliners/Special Events



Captain **Curran Schenck** became the associate bandmaster of The United States Army Field Band in September 2022. He is director and officer-in-charge of the Soldiers' Chorus and Six String Soldiers.

Prior to this assignment, he served as the executive officer of The United States Army Europe and Africa Band and Chorus in Sembach, Germany. He began his military service in 2010 as an enlisted trumpet player and served with the 25th Infantry Division Band, 10th Mountain Division Band, Army Ground Forces Band, and 392nd Army Band. Prior to joining the Army, he was a band director in central Florida. He holds a BME from the Florida State University.”



and music videos have won accolades and entertained fans worldwide. OneVoice has earned dozens of nominations and wins for the Contemporary A Cappella Awards.

### Opening Night Concert

“One Night Only!” This opening night concert will feature the best of pop a cappella groups from the Southern Region: OneVoice from Briarcrest Christian School, Eads, TN; Spirit of Southern from The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS; and The Pitchmen from Belmont University, Nashville, TN. These award-winning groups sing with energy, musicality, and will present arrangements that appeal to a wide audience.

#### Briarcrest Christian School OneVoice

Under the direction of Dr. J.D. Frizzell, Sony Recording artist OneVoice has become a leader in the contemporary a cappella movement. OneVoice has collaborated with multiple Grammy winners, including Foreigner, The Swingles, and New York Voices. They have performed at the Emmy's 70th Annual Governors Ball, The Sing-Off Live! Tour, two regional ACDA conferences, The London A Cappella Festival, and the National A Cappella Convention. With over 100 million streams and downloads, their audio recordings

#### University of Southern Mississippi Spirit of Southern



Spirit of Southern is the premier pop a cappella ensemble at The University of Southern Mississippi. The group performs at a variety of university and community events in and around the Hattiesburg area and serves as one of the primary recruitment arms of choral activities. The students in this group range from all undergraduate levels of study and come from various academic fields. They have been honored with invitations to perform at Mississippi ACDA/Mississippi MEA conferences. Spirit of Southern is under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Kilgore.

## Belmont University The Pitchmen



The Pitchmen are Belmont University's all-male-identifying a cappella group from Nashville, Tennessee. From their debut album, *Ultraviolet*, to becoming the 2023 ICCA Champions and taking home numerous awards for outstanding soloists, outstanding choreography, and outstanding vocal percussion throughout the competition season, the student-run group prides themselves on singing a broad range of music that offers something different for each and every audience member to enjoy. This year, every group member comes from a diverse background and brings with them an array of unique talents and perspectives. The group sets high standards for the character of their members and is known for the welcoming atmosphere they strive to create.

## Worship Experience

### Under the Firmament of Heaven: A Creation Service

In the resplendent Cathedral of the Assumption, our worship experience explores ancient stories and themes of creation, fallen humanity, and ultimate redemption through God's vision for a community connected by divine love. The worship design team, led by composer/creators Benedict and Talia Sheehan and lyricist/poet Tony Silvestri, has developed a transfor-

mative experience of ancient chant; festive hymns for voices, brass, and handbells; original compositions by Benedict Sheehan; congregational anthems written by Dan Forrest and Tony Silvestri; and music and texts from myriad traditions. Pianist/composer Dan Forrest, The Chancel Choir of Christ Church UMC, the Bronze Ringers of Floyd Central (IN) High School, and professional ensemble Artefact lead our worship.

## Artefact Ensemble



Artefact Ensemble brings together leading vocal artists from around the country to craft immersive experiences of human connection through the transforming power of song. Partnering with schools, community organizations, and religious institutions, Artefact Ensemble—in collaboration with its sister organization, Artefact Institute—offers workshops, masterclasses, and co-operative music-making experiences to students, teachers of music, music ministers, and underprivileged audiences who might not otherwise have access to high-level ensemble music. In 2021, Artefact was featured at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, performing the world premiere of Arvo Pärt's *O Holy Father Nicholas*.



**Benedict Sheehan** is a two-time Grammy nominee and American Prize winner. He has been called “a choral conductor and composer to watch in the 21st century” (ConcertoNet). He is artistic director and founder of Artefact Ensemble and the Grammy-

## Headliners/Special Events

nominated Saint Tikhon Choir, and artist-in-residence at St. Tikhon's Monastery in Pennsylvania. His works have been described as "brilliant" (*Choir & Organ*), "otherworldly" (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*), "evocative" (*Gramophone*), "extraordinary" (*Limelight*), and "simply beyond praise for excellence" (*Fanfare*). His music is published by Oxford University Press and Artefact Publications and has been performed by many of the world's leading vocal ensembles.

Blosser became the artistic director of the Louisville Chorus, one of Kentucky's oldest choral arts organizations. He is a former conducting fellow of the May Festival Chorus in Cincinnati, and he has held faculty positions at Butler University, the University of Indianapolis, and Covenant Christian High School. He holds degrees in choral conducting from CCM and Indiana University, and a BME from the University of Indianapolis.

### Christ Church UMC Chancel Choir



The Chancel Choir of Christ Church United Methodist is renowned in Louisville for its musical excellence, commitment to service, and dedication to its community. In addition to their weekly musical offerings in Sunday morning worship, the Chancel Choir performs concerts throughout the year that raise tens of thousands of dollars annually for social agencies and non-profits both home and abroad. The choir is completely non-auditioned and fully volunteer, believing that by making music together, we grow in relationship with one another, learn to trust one another, see the value in one another, and share in adventures that build lifelong memories.



**Daniel Blosser** is the director of music and worship at Christ Church United Methodist, where he conducts five choirs and oversees their robust music program of over five hundred volunteers. In 2023,

### Floyd Central High School Bronze Ringers



Floyd Central High School's two curricular handbell ensembles are a unique component of our music department. Floyd Central Bronze Ringers has sixteen ringers in grades 10-12. FCHS Handbell Ensembles are members of Handbell Musicians of America. The group performs on a 5-octave set of Schulmerich bells, a 3-1/2 octave set of Schulmerich bells, 5 octaves of Schulmerich chimes, lower 6th and 7th octave Malmark chimes, and 2 octaves of Schulmerich Silver Melody Bells. Members have been selected for the Indiana All-State Handbell Ensemble as well as the National Honors Handbell Ensemble.

**Angela Vaughan Hampton** is in her twenty-ninth year as director of choral music and handbells at Floyd Central High School, where she directs four choirs and two



handbell ensembles. In addition, she is the music director for Floyd Central's Theatre Arts Department. She is also the artistic director of Voces Novae, a semi-professional chorus in Louisville, and a freelance collaborative pianist. She holds degrees from the University of Louisville and is a National Board Certified Teacher.

and recordings on the Decca, Sony, and Naxos labels). Forrest serves as editor at Beckenhorst Press and self-publishes his concert music through The Music of Dan Forrest. He currently chairs the National ACDA Composition Committee, serves as adjunct composition faculty at Furman University, mentors composers through the annual John Ness Beck Foundation Choral Composers' Workshop, and serves as artist-in-residence at Mitchell Road Presbyterian Church (Greenville, SC).



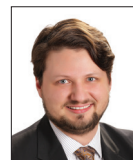
**Charles Anthony Silvestri** has provided custom poetry, libretti, and other texts over a decades-long career to almost a hundred composers globally. He has written for and worked with world-class ensembles such as VOCES 8, the King's Singers, HGO, and the Tallis Scholars. Silvestri speaks to choirs, classes, and concert audiences about his works, the creative process, the marriage of words and music, and his collaborative relationships with composers. He is the author of three books, including *A Silver Thread* (GIA 2019), a retrospective of almost twenty years of his lyric poetry. He teaches at Washburn University.



**Jim Rittenhouse** has been director of worship and music at Second Presbyterian Church, Louisville, since 2017. Second's Sanctuary Choir was featured as part of the ecumenical service at Southern ACDA in 2018. He recently conducted Haydn's *Creation* with the choirs from Second Presbyterian and St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal. He holds the performer's certificate and master of church music degrees from Southern Seminary. Rittenhouse is a frequent soloist with regional choral and chamber/orchestral ensembles, including the Louisville Orchestra and the Blanche Moyse Chorale in Vermont.



**Talia Sheehan** is a fourth-generation female church musician, ensemble singer, and music educator. She has performed with Cappella Romana, the Grammy-nominated Saint Tikhon Choir, the Grammy-nominated PaTRAM Institute Singers, and Artefact Ensemble. She is the director of the St. Tikhon's Music Program, a one-year intensive music leadership residency for Orthodox Christian church musicians. She teaches voice, music theory, and liturgical music, and directs three children's choirs and a women's choir. She is also the co-founder and program director of Artefact Institute, a collective of "culture creators" who work to build living contexts for the arts and community.



**Samuel Libra** is organist and assistant director of worship and music at Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville. A native of Minnesota, he graduated from Luther College in Iowa and completed graduate studies at the University of Washington. Libra can regularly be heard in worship and concert accompanying and performing solo works on organ, harpsichord, and piano. His research has focused on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, specifically the intersection between the organ and symphony, through the music of Charles-Marie Widor.



**Dan Forrest's** music ranges from major works for chorus and orchestra to smaller choral works, and is commissioned and performed around the world (including broadcasts on the BBC Proms and NPR

## Performing Choirs

### Apopka High School Belles



Belles, the premier treble choir at Apopka High school, frequently performs at local and national colleges/universities. Belles performed for the 2021 FL ACDA Conference and has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Orchestra Hall, and Steinmetz Hall. Belles comprises students in grades 10-12 who are heavily involved in campus activities, playing sports, as members and officers in the Student Government Association, and as members of National Honor Society.



**Sandra Shafer** is the director of choirs at her alma mater Apopka High School and has twice been named Teacher of the Year at Liberty Middle School (2014) and Apopka High School (2022). Student choirs under her direction have consistently received superior ratings at district music performance assessment. As a performer, Shafer sings with the Orlando Sings Symphonic Chorus and Solaria Singers. In Orlando Sings, Shafer also conducts the SSAA ensemble, Harmonia. She is an active conductor, clinician, and adjudicator throughout Florida, and has presented sessions at conferences of the Florida MEA and the Florida Vocal Association. She holds a bachelor's from Stetson University in DeLand, FL.

### Bak Middle School of the Arts Chorale



Chorale, the premier mixed chorus at BAK Middle School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, FL, strives to challenge its seventh- and eighth-grade members with demanding and interesting repertoire. Chorale is kept busy throughout the year by performing at community events and competing in festivals around the country. They consistently earn the highest ratings at district assessments and have a tremendous legacy of performing at state, region, and national ACDA conferences.



**Jorge Valls** holds a BME from Palm Beach Atlantic University. He is currently in his tenth year of teaching and his seventh year teaching at Bak Middle School of the Arts. In addition to Bak, he conducts the Men's Chorus for the Young Singers of the Palm Beaches. Previously, Valls built the choral program at Eagles Landing Middle School in Boca Raton and was the associate director for the Girl Choir of South Florida. He serves as the Middle School R&R Chair for Florida ACDA.



**Carrie Leahy** has taught for twenty-four years at the middle and high school levels in South Florida. She is currently in her second year teaching at Bak MSOA. Leahy grew up in Palm Beach County

and is honored to continue the tradition of choral excellence with students in her community. Her choruses consistently receive the highest ratings at music performance assessments and competition festivals. A former district chairperson of the Florida Vocal Association, Leahy holds a BME from the University of Miami and an MME from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

### East Carolina University Chamber Singers

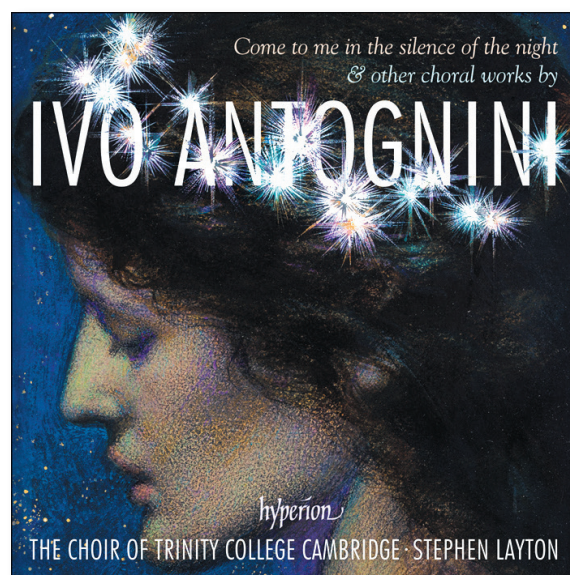


The ECU Chamber Singers is one of the premier choral ensembles in the United States. The ensemble maintains a vigorous performance and travel schedule and focuses predominantly on unaccompanied choral literature for advanced chamber choir. The group of 36-40 auditioned singers, primarily voice majors within the School of Music, has developed a national and international following due to a commitment to programming and performing quality choral music at the highest level. They have performed at various conferences, including National ACDA (2019), NCCO (2023), Southern ACDA (2020 and 2024), and North Carolina ACDA (2021).



**James Franklin** is the director of choral activities at East Carolina University, where he conducts the internationally renowned ECU Chamber Singers, conducts the University Chorale, directs the graduate program in choral conducting, and teaches

undergraduate conducting. In 2020, the ECU Chamber Singers won second place in The American Prize in Choral Performance in the college/university division. Franklin remains active as a guest conductor and clinician with invitations across the United States and abroad. In addition to his duties at ECU, he is a Grammy-nominated choral singer. Franklin holds degrees from Baylor University, Westminster Choir College, and the University of North Texas.



- Includes six octavos published by Alliance Music Publications
- AMP 1150 **Come to Me**
- AMP 0902 **O Magnum Mysterium**
- AMP 1110 **Gloria in Excelsis**
- AMP 1056 **Alleluia**
- AMP 1074 **Those Tender Words**
- AMP 1143 **The Angel**

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## Performing Choirs

### Florida State University Chamber Choir



The Florida State University Chamber Choir is an auditioned, SATB ensemble made up of graduate and undergraduate students, as well as FSU faculty and staff. The choir performs repertoire particularly suitable for a forty-voice ensemble and specializes in the performance of extended choral works. Recent performances include J. S. Bach's *St. John Passion*, Jocelyn Hagen's *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci*, G. F. Handel's *Messiah*, Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard*, and Robert Ray's *Gospel Mass*.



**Michael Hanawalt** is the director of graduate choral studies at the Florida State University, where he conducts the Chamber Choir, teaches graduate courses in conducting and choral literature, and serves as artistic director for the Tallahassee Community Chorus. Hanawalt was executive director of the professional male vocal ensemble Cantus, recording twelve CDs, participating in 200 educational outreach events, and performing 500 concerts, including collaborations with the King's Singers, the Boston Pops, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Minnesota Orchestra. Hanawalt is active as a tenor soloist, guest conductor, and arranger. Previous teaching appointments include St. Olaf College and Wichita State University, where he earned the College of Fine Arts Excellence in Teaching Award.

### Hightower Trail Middle School Eighth-Grade Chorus



The Choral Department at HTMS has been under the direction of Kati Stewart since 2019. There are three non-auditioned ensembles: Sixth-Grade Chorus, Seventh-Grade Chorus, and Eighth-Grade Chorus. Students rehearse for fifty minutes daily in two separate classes per grade level. The program maintains a continuous membership of over 300 singers. HTMS Choirs consistently earn superior ratings at performance evaluations. Most recently, our eighth-grade chorus performed at Georgia MEA in 2023.



**Kati Stewart** has been teaching middle school chorus since 2014. In addition to teaching, she enjoys performing as a staff church vocalist, choral artist, wedding singer, and jazz vocalist. Stewart regularly performs around the Metro Atlanta area. She holds degrees from Kennesaw State University (BME) and the Florida State University (MME). She lives in Marietta with her husband, Chris Otts, and their dog, Archer.



**Iron City Singers**



**Charles F. Henry** is the founder and artistic director of Iron City Singers. He is serving his fifteenth year of public education in Alabama, currently at Thompson High School in Alabaster. Henry earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has since led his choirs to earn superior ratings at state and regional performances and has thrice been invited to perform for the Alabama MEA Conference. He also holds an MM from the University of Georgia.



**Taylor Stricklin** is the choral director at Vestavia Hills High School. He earned his BME from Samford University and an MM from Louisiana State University. Prior to graduate study, Stricklin taught choral music at Dauphin Junior High School and Enterprise High School in Enterprise, AL. He currently sings in several professional ensembles: Red Shift, based in Baton Rouge, LA; and the Cahaba Chamber Chorale, based in Birmingham.

Iron City Singers is a volunteer ensemble based in Birmingham, Alabama. Every ICS rehearsal and performance is paired with a scheduled social event, a chance for members to engage with each other away from rehearsal and to learn about each other as individuals. Old friendships are strengthened and new friendships are forged through a mutual passion for choral singing. Too often, ensemble singing is exclusive to schools or places of worship, but ICS offers the opportunity to sing with like-minded people simply as a member of the community.

**Southern Region Registration Information**

Register at [acda.org/region-conferences](http://acda.org/region-conferences)

Attendee \$295 Retired \$195 Student \$100

**Registration after 11:59 PM CST January 31, 2024**

Attendee \$315 Retired \$235 Student \$135

**On-site registration**

Attendee \$350 Retired \$250 Student \$150

One-Day Registration \$175 (only available on-site)

## Performing Choirs

### Lafayette High School Madrigal Singers



The Madrigal Singers are recognized for outstanding choral singing in a variety of styles and genres. The group has performed for the Kentucky MEA Conference (2009, 2015, 2020, 2024) and for the ACDA Southern Region Conference (2010, 2018, 2024) and was awarded two silver medals at the World Choir Games in Cincinnati in 2012. The choir won a gold diploma and the mixed youth choir category in the 2014 Sing 'N' Joy International competition in Louisville. The choir appeared as a featured choir at the Inaugural Music for All-National Choir Festival in 2018, and served as a demonstration choir for the conductors' masterclass with the late Dr. Joseph Flummerfelt.



**Ryan Marsh** holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Louisville. He holds National Board Certification in vocal music and has completed coursework at the doctoral level at the University of Kentucky. Marsh is in his twenty-first year as director of choirs, also teaching AP Music Theory and serving as the program coordinator for the School for Creative and Performing Arts magnet program at Lafayette. His choirs have appeared at KMEA and ACDA conferences and consistently receive distinguished ratings at assessment events. He is also a contributing author to the *Teaching With Heart* compendium series by Jason Max Ferdinand.

### Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @Zelda Glazer BellArmonia



BellArmonia is the premier SSAA ensemble at Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer, a performing arts magnet school located in Miami, Florida. This ensemble is made up of Hispanic students who are all first- or second-generation immigrants from Latin America. Each time we travel to a new place we try to bring a piece of Miami with us by preparing repertoire in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. The MAS Vocal family consists of a united group of students, parents, alumni, teachers and administrators working toward our goal of building musical skills into performances that inspire our community, country and world.



**Cindy Ellis** is a Cuban American music educator and vocalist. As a jazz vocal soloist and alto with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, Ellis frequently performs and teaches masterclasses to K-12 students throughout North America. Most recently, the JMAX Singers collaborated with Jacob Collier and Coldplay for NBC's *Saturday Night Live* and were the headlining ensemble at the 2023 ACDA National Conference. A native of Holguín, Cuba, Ellis immigrated to the United States in 2005. She earned her BME from Florida International University and her MME from the University of Missouri. Ellis is one of two full-time choral directors at Miami Arts Studio.

**Middle Tennessee State University  
SOAL Chorale**



The MTSU SOAL Chorale is an unauditioned ensemble open to all university students who sing soprano or alto, regardless of gender identity or expression. One-third of the group are music majors; most students represent majors from across the campus, from law enforcement to horse science. The Chorale performs at least two concerts each semester, and their repertoire ranges from Baroque to Broadway. The SOAL Chorale has performed with the Nashville Symphony, for two governors at the state capitol, and twice for TMEA.



**Angela Tipps** conducts the MTSU SOAL (Soprano-Alto) and TEBA (Tenor-Bass) Chorales, teaches basic and choral conducting, coordinates the music appreciation courses at the MTSU School of Music, and musical directs in the Department of Theatre.

She is organist/director of music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Murfreesboro and musical director of the Middle Tennessee Choral Society. Her choirs have sung for ACDA and TMEA conferences and at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center and the Ryman Auditorium. Tipps received the BM from MTSU and the master of church music degree from Scarritt Graduate School in Nashville. A past president of Tennessee ACDA, she now serves as the Women's/SSAA R&R coordinator.

**Northwestern State University  
Northwestern Chamber Choir**



The Northwestern Chamber Choir has recently worked with composers Michael John Trotta, Vytautas Miškinis, and Richard Burchard premiering new choral works and producing recordings. They were featured at the eighth NCCO National Conference in 2019, won second prize in the Laurea Mundi Choral Competition in Budapest, Hungary, and won third prize and Best Compulsory Performance in the fourth AVE VERUM International Choral Competition in Baden, Austria. Additionally, the Northwestern Chamber Choir was invited to perform in the St. Martin's Czech National Church as a headline choir in Prague, Czechia.



**Nicholaus B. Cummins** is associate professor of music and director of choral studies at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. He also taught public school choral music in Alabama and Texas.

He has served as a clinician for honor choirs and secondary and university choirs throughout the United States. Cummins has also presented topics at regional and state conferences and was an ACDA International Conducting Fellow to South America. His wife, Whitney, is an elementary music educator in the Natchitoches Parish schools, and their daughters are Emma and Addison.

## Performing Choirs

### Pensacola Children's Chorus



**Alex Gartner** is the artistic and executive director of the Pensacola Children's Chorus (FL). An accomplished composer, conductor, and clinician, Gartner and his choirs have performed and presented at esteemed venues across the United States and the world. He is the co-author of *The Business of Choir* (GIA Publications). Gartner is a member of the ACDA National Standing Committee for Advocacy and Collaboration and was the former Southern Region R&R Chair for children's and youth choirs. He holds music education degrees from the University of Florida and the University of Cincinnati and a certificate in arts and culture strategy from the University of Pennsylvania.



**Juliana Joy Child** is the assistant artistic director of the Pensacola Children's Chorus (FL), where she serves as director and co-director of nine ensembles. Child has previously served as collaborative pianist for the FMEA elementary all-state chorus and for ACDA reading sessions. She also was the co-coordinator of the Children's Festival Chorus at the 2022 ACDA Southern Region Conference. Previously, Child worked with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers (Ithaca, NY) and the Ithaca Children & Youth Chorus, and the Act One Scene 1 musical theatre program (Brockton, MA). She holds bachelor's degrees from Ithaca College.

The Pensacola Children's Chorus (PCC) has been serving the youth and community of Northwest Florida and Southwest Alabama since 1990. A nonprofit organization, PCC operates fifteen unique choral programs that serve 300 singers. Known for its unique blend of traditional choral training with the showmanship and performance quality of musical theatre, PCC's performances attract an annual audience of 25,000 patrons. Previous ACDA performances include the 2019 Florida Conference and as part of the Children's Festival Chorus at the 2020 Southern Region Conference. PCC's choirs have performed at White House (2002) and Carnegie Hall (2022).



## 2024 ACDA Children & Community Youth Choir Conductors' Retreat January 13-14, 2024

Friday, Jan. 12, 2024 Pre-Conference session presented by Chorus America: "I'm running a business?" Boards, Marketing and Business Administration for Directors of Children & Youth Choirs.

Join us for a retreat like no other!



Register at <https://acda.org/conferences/childrens-community-youth-choir-conductors-retreat> or use the QR code

### Rivertree Singers



Founded in 2010, Rivertree Singers members are alumni of collegiate choral organizations who desire to delight and inspire arts communities across the globe. By giving voice to the human experience through passionate choral artistry, the singers build connections with audiences, arts organizations, schools, and emerging and established composers. What began as a small group of singers desiring an artistic outlet has grown into an internationally recognized and award-winning community arts organization of musicians, teachers, and professionals. In addition to invited performances, Rivertree Singers offers four concerts each season and hosts the Rivertree Singers & Friends Choral Festival every summer.



**Warren Cook** is founder of Rivertree Singers and retired professor and DCA at Bob Jones University, where he oversaw a graded program of five choirs enrolling nearly three hundred students. His choirs

have been auditioned performers at international and national events. Each summer, Cook conducts the Rivertree Singers & Friends Choral Festival, which recently included Robert Shaw's late contribution to the choral repertory, an unpublished English edition of Brahms's German *Requiem*. Under Cook's leadership, Rivertree Singers won the Oxford University Press Avent Competition grand prize. In 2019, Cook was honored with South Carolina ACDA's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

### River Bluff High School Bel Canto



Bel Canto is one of six ensembles in the River Bluff High School choral program. The choir is composed of advanced treble voices in the ninth through twelfth grades and consistently earns superior with distinction ratings at the South Carolina Choral Performance Assessment and at choral festivals throughout the southeast. Bel Canto members routinely earn selection to district and state honor choirs and most recently performed in the Memorial Day Festival Chorus in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. River Bluff High School's Bel Canto is highly honored to represent their school, district, and state in their first regional ACDA conference performance.



**Heather Wilcox** is director of choirs at River Bluff High School in Lexington, South Carolina. She is lead teacher for secondary choral music for the Lexington One School District and Vocal Jazz and Contemporary Commercial Choir for the South Carolina Choral Directors Association. Wilcox has served as clinician for honor choirs and artistically gifted choral intensives across South Carolina. Her choirs have performed for the South Carolina ACDA and the South Carolina MEA and consistently earn superior ratings at state, regional, and national choral festivals. She holds a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's degree in conducting from Winthrop University.

## Performing Choirs

### University of Georgia Hodgson Singers



The UGA Hodgson Singers serves as the flagship ambassadorial choral ensemble of the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia. Comprising many of UGA's most gifted and dedicated singers, this ensemble provides vibrant, pre-professional ensemble training for the next generation of professional singers, choral music educators, and talented choral enthusiasts. Membership in the UGA Hodgson Singers is open to all UGA students. The choir has performed at ACDA Southern Region (2014, 2018, and 2024), and for the GMEA In-Service Conference (2012, 2017, and 2023).



**Daniel Bara** is the John D. Boyd UGA Foundation Professor of Choral Music and the director of choral activities and professor of music at the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia, where he oversees seven university choral ensembles as well as the graduate choral conducting program. Bara is in demand as a guest conductor and clinician, having conducted all-state and honor choirs in twenty states and Carnegie Hall, and has served as clinician for conferences sponsored by NAFME, ACDA, AGO, and other school and church musical organizations. He is a past president of NC-ACDA. Bara holds a DMA from the Eastman School of Music, degrees from the University of Michigan, and is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy.

### Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham



The Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham provides performance opportunities for outstanding singers in North Carolina's Triangle region (Durham, Chapel Hill, and Raleigh). Its thirty-two members are selected from among musicians who have sung in other choral groups under Dr. Wynkoop's direction. VAE's mostly a cappella repertoire ranges from the Renaissance to the present and has included such diverse and challenging works as Tallis's *Spem in alium*, Schoenberg's *Friede Auf Erden*, Penderecki's *Agnus Dei*, and MacMillan's *Cantos Sagrados*. VAE has performed at the 2005 ACDA National Conference and at five Southern Region conferences.



**Rodney Wynkoop** is the founding director of the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham and has served as artistic director of the Choral Society of Durham since 1986. He recently left his position as director of University Choral Music at Duke University, where he conducted the Duke Chapel Choir and the Duke University Chorale for almost forty years. He has brought three of his choirs to perform at previous ACDA Southern Region conferences and has conducted at Carnegie Hall on several occasions. He is a recipient of Duke's Meritorious Service Award for Executive Leadership and the Lara Hoggard Award for Distinguished Service in Choral Music in North Carolina.

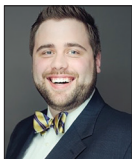
## Interest Sessions

### Beyond *The Wellerman*: Engaging and Accessible Classical Repertoire for the Developing Tenor/Bass Choir

In this session, the clinicians will discuss the importance of historical repertoire that engages the emerging tenor/bass singer and demonstrate pedagogy that effectively develops voices through this literature. Teachers will hear engaging examples from the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras appropriate for each level of tenor/bass choirs. The clinicians will also focus on the techniques used to prepare these historical works and how this repertoire targets developing tone, navigating changing voices, and understanding the classical sound. This session will illustrate how historical repertoire specifically can help get your tenor/bass choir headed in the right direction.



**Will Griswold** is a DMA choral conducting student at Southern Mississippi and recently finished his sixth year teaching high school in Texas. Griswold grew his program from five students to 100 and led ensembles to superior ratings at performance festivals. His Concert Choir performed at the 2022 Texas MEA Conference. While at USM, Griswold conducted University Singers, Tenebrae, Gulf Coast Civic Chorale, Chamber Singers, and will direct the inaugural season of the Gulf Coast Youth Chorale.



**Derek Meler** is a versatile performer, conductor, and educator based in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He specializes in collaboration through music, working with choirs and voice students to promote community and peace. Meler has performed with various artists and symphonies, including the Nashville Symphony and Opera Mississippi, and has conducted choirs across the southern United States. He directs the Stamps-Baxter School of Music and teaches both in the classroom and as a private voice teacher. He is pursuing his MM at the University of Southern Mississippi.

### Bridging the Gap: Fostering Productive and Collaborative Relationships Between Teachers and Administration

“My administration is out to get me.” “No one cares about my program.” “Our admin micromanages my program.” “My principals never heard a concert.” “They just don’t get it.” These are phrases we have all either heard or uttered during our careers, right? Because administrators are out to get us, right? WRONG! (Well, hopefully... ha!) This unique session is meant to work through the many challenges that we face as they relate to building/district administration and pinpoint effective strategies and solutions to overcoming said challenges. After all, both sides need each other. Better yet, our students need us...together!



**Kristin M. Claiborne** is in her second year as an assistant administrator and varsity boys basketball coach at Blythewood High School in South Carolina. Claiborne is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, having earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music education and educational administration, respectively. Currently, she is pursuing a doctorate in teacher leadership. Prior to administration, Claiborne spent ten years as a choral director with four choirs and a pop/jazz a cappella group. She serves as a clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer around the Southern Region while also serving as a university supervisor and teacher mentor.

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### The Declaration of Independence: How to Foster Independent Musicianship in Large-Group Choral Rehearsals

Choral rehearsals can be structured to allow singers to develop their personal, independent musicianship while participating in large group learning situa-

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tions. Techniques covered in this session will include rehearsal pedagogy that includes small group analysis, warm-up activities, and Dalcroze eurythmics. This session will allow for participation from all willing participants in music reading, music analyzing, response through movement, quick and strong sight-reading techniques, and how to structure mixed formation through scaffolding to ensure success for each singer. Students deserve to gain lifelong skills for singing. Come refresh your pedagogy and consider how to foster strong and independent musicians!



**Jill Campbell** serves as an assistant professor of vocal music at Eastern Kentucky University and teaches music education classes, directs the treble choir, and works with vocal jazz groups. She vocal coaches for musicals and also supervises student teachers. Campbell is the assistant director for the Kentucky Bach Choir. She is the past president for the KY ACDA chapter and is the state music research chair for Kentucky MEA. She taught elementary and secondary music and has worked in community and church music. A frequent clinician and adjudicator, she also presents workshops regularly around the country.

### Discovering the Basque Country: Composers and Repertoire from Northern Spain

Presenting the rich choral traditions of the Basque Country in Northern Spain, this session will familiarize attendees with contemporary Basque composers, and show that the music of these men and women is accessible, varied, and a wonderful way to introduce a different culture to your choirs. Alongside an introduction to the region's history, repertoire will be presented that varies in language (Basque, Spanish, and Latin), theme, voicing, and difficulty, ensuring that directors of choirs of all ages, types, and abilities will find something they can share with their singers and communities. Join me for a journey into this exciting repertoire!



**Beth Gibbs** is director of choral studies at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, FL. In addition to choral direction, she teaches conducting, choral pedagogy, caribbean music, and music and wellness. She earned a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Miami, MM degrees in choral conducting and vocal performance from East Carolina University, and a BME from Stetson University. Gibbs taught six years at the high school level in Atlanta, GA. In 2022, she became a Fulbright Scholar, teaching and working with choirs throughout Spain.

### Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Vocal Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy, gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.

**Stevie J. Hirner** will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.



## Forgotten Gems: Little-Known Works in the Public Domain

As historical research advances, choruses are taking a greater interest in forgotten pieces of our choral history. This presentation explores the under-represented people and pieces of the Renaissance through Classical eras. Attendees will receive a resource database of compositions and public domain scores for various levels and voicings. A balance of sacred vs secular and accompanied vs unaccompanied works will be presented. This session provides the opportunity to engage with historical literature in a new way, and shares resources to program a variety of repertoire that adheres to state and national standards while championing under-performed works.



**Angelica Dunsavage** serves as assistant professor and director of choral activities at Tennessee State University, where she conducts two ensembles and teaches courses in conducting. She received her DMA in choral conducting and music education from University of Arizona, her MM in choral conducting from Bowling Green State University, and her BME from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dunsavage serves as chief editor of publications for NCCO. She has presented posters and interest sessions for NCCO, ACDA, NAFME, and College Music Society conferences, and regularly serves as a clinician for area schools.

## Grace Nash: *Today With Music* Using Music, Speech, and Movement for Children's Minds and Voices

This session stems from the presenter's own case study research into and use of Grace Nash's approaches to musical understandings and the singing voices of young children. The session will focus on lessons used in her book *Today with Music* and their implications and use in the choral setting. Grace Nash's frameworks are

something that should not be overlooked, as she incorporated the methods of Laban, Orff, and Kodaly in schools before it was "hip" to do so. Insights from Nash continue to spark the presenter's lifelong interest in music education and the young singer.



**Thomas Blue** conducts the Young Choral Artists of Michigan (YCAM) and teaches at Oakland Christian School following retirement. His 7/8 Choir was selected to sing at the 2014 ACDA-MI Conference. Choir collaborations include Detroit Opera, Detroit Chamber Winds, and Rochester (MI) Symphony. He serves ACDA-MI as president-elect and as MS/JH representative. He is published in *Choral Journal* and *Chor-Teach*, with presentations at ACDA Midwest Regional and ACDA-MI conferences. He is an MSVMA adjudicator/clinician with degrees from Roberts Wesleyan University, Michigan State University and (ABD) in Mus. Ed. (choral cognate) from MSU.

## Let Your Numbers Soar! Recruitment Strategies for Choral Ensembles

As choral directors, we are always exploring ways to recruit singers into our programs. Focusing on identifying and developing recruitment efforts that appeal to the broader school community and at all musical levels, this session will include strategies to make meaningful connections to build and grow a choral program. In addition to sharing recruitment strategies, the clinician will share ways to establish a culture of singing and help new singers to discover their voice.



**Jennifer Sengin** is the visiting assistant professor of choral studies at UMKC, where she leads the graduate choral conducting program and conducts the flagship ensemble, Conservatory Singers and Choral Union. Sengin most recently served as the associate director of choral activities at Georgia State University. Under her direction, the Treble Choir won

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The American Prize in performance and was invited to perform at NCCO and GMEA Conferences. While at GSU, Sengin received two university-wide awards for teaching and achievement. She recently participated as a Conducting Fellow with ACDA's International Conductor Exchange Program to Germany.

### May the Circle Be Unbroken: Restorative Practices in Your Performing Ensemble

This session will introduce the idea of Restorative Practices and their uses within the rehearsal of a performing ensemble. Restorative Practices are based in empowering youth to have an equal voice and facilitating development of social emotional skill sets. Attendees will explore relationship creation and reparation, and learn strategies such as community circle, journaling, check-ins, and guided classroom discussions to facilitate a holistic approach that celebrates the student as an individual in the greater musical community. These practices are effective in unifying students with a diversity of experience, strengthening the sense of community in the ensemble.



**Amanda Goldberg** is a music educator passionate about using singing to develop the whole person. She holds a BME from St. Olaf College. Goldberg is presently the assistant director of Concert Choir for the Girl Choir of South Florida. She is also the choral director at Wellington Landings Middle School in Wellington, FL, where she is piloting a program for restorative practices in Palm Beach County. She is honored to be the recipient of Palm Beach County's 2022 Central Region Beginning Teacher of the Year.

### Music Matters:

#### A Pedagogical Framework for Literature Selection

Literature selection has been a robust discussion in our field because we understand its numerous influences on the success of choral organizations, particularly the profound impact of repertoire choices on choral singers' musical growth. This interest session will provide a pedagogical framework for literature selection that addresses three central components: 1) the educational benefits of exposing singers to a broad range of musical styles; 2) sequencing repertoire to build on singers' competencies; and 3) the influence of diverse literature choices on choral pedagogy.



**Jabarie Glass** is the associate director of choral studies at the University of South Carolina, where he conducts University Chorus and Gamecock Chorale and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in conducting and choral pedagogy. Choral organizations under his leadership have been selected to perform at Southern ACDA Region, Mississippi ACDA, and the South Carolina MEA. Glass earned dual bachelor's degrees in business management and music education from the University of Mississippi, an MME from the Florida State University College of Music, and a doctoral degree in conducting from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

### "No Hidin' Place" Music by Black Composers for the Secondary Choral Setting

In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in choral music by Black composers. Unfortunately, much of this repertoire is beyond what most secondary school choral ensembles can successfully grasp. This session will survey pieces by Black composers of the

past and present that are appropriate for the forces, needs, and educational goals of most secondary choral settings. An array of voicings will be represented, from 2-part to SATB with minimal divisi. The pedagogical and technical content of each piece will be highlighted. Attendees can expect to view and sing excerpts of these pieces in the session.



**Christopher Leysath** is director of choirs at North Augusta High School in North Augusta, South Carolina, where he leads three choral ensembles and established the group piano program. He holds degrees in choral music education and piano from the University of South Carolina. Leysath has conducted honor choirs in South Carolina and Georgia, and served as director of “Bound to Sing,” a pre-adolescent boy choir based in Aiken, SC. He also serves as choirmaster and organist at Grace United Methodist Church in North Augusta. He has performed or presented at numerous ACDA conferences, SCMEA conferences, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and abroad.

### Nobody Sits on the Bench: Cultivating Singer Agency in Community Choirs

Every singer has a role—some color the tone of the section, some lead musically, and others help blend certain voices together that otherwise might never agree. In this session, we will present a voice identification system that can be used to verify to singers that they are playing an important role no matter the size of their voice. This session will also address pedagogical strategies for adult singers of all ages, explore promoting self-dignity through a fair and personal audition process, and share ideas for keeping people singing longer.



**Tucker Biddlecombe** is associate professor and director of choral activities at Vanderbilt University’s Blair School of Music, where he conducts the Vanderbilt Chorale and coordinates the music education program. He also serves as director of the

Nashville Symphony Chorus, which has included chorus preparation for many of the repertoire’s most revered masterworks. He has conducted honor choirs in a dozen states and conducted residencies in the United Kingdom and China. Biddlecombe is a graduate of SUNY Potsdam and the Florida State University.



**Lauren Ramey** is the associate director of choral activities and director of music education at East Tennessee State University, where she conducts BucsWorth Tenor Bass Choir. She also teaches courses in choral conducting and music education. Additionally, Ramey serves as the director of music at First Presbyterian Church Johnson City. She was previously the director of choirs at Ravenwood High School, where the Ravenwood Choirs performed at the 2019 Music For All-National Concert Festival and the 2017 and 2019 Tennessee MEA Conferences. Ramey was a recipient of the CMA Music Teacher of Excellence Award and was a quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator Award.

### “Other Duties as Assigned” Beating Teacher Burnout

Beating teacher burnout is vital to our professions and our personal health. We will present findings from top researchers in music education, share lived experiences, and engage in open discussion and collaboration. This session will offer practical, active ideas to help beat teacher burnout both inside and outside of the classroom. Attendees will gain a toolkit of ideas to combat the feeling of burnout and an ongoing community to share future ideas and resources as we move forward in action!



**Christina R. Vehear** is a music educator and advocate based in metro-Atlanta, where she teaches at Cheatham Hill Elementary. She received her MME from the Florida State University and her BME from Kennesaw State University. Vehear is pas-

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sionate about celebrating diversity, work in accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and restoration, cross-curricular connections, and using music as a means for humanity and bringing people together. She regularly advocates for people and music and is an active presenter, adjudicator, clinician, and conductor.



**Sierra R. Manson** is the director of choral activities at Hillgrove High School in Cobb County, GA. Previously, she served as a choral director in both Fulton County and Henry County. She received

her MME from the Florida State University and her BME from Kennesaw State University. She is passionate about advocacy in the classroom, as well as mental health in both students and educators, and the power of music in bringing people together.

### Reverse the Decline: Amplifying and Sustaining Women's Voices in Conducting

Our choral community has work to do to create more equitable musical spaces that celebrate, support, and cultivate women's leadership on the podium. Join us as we share our findings from our podcast conduct(her), lift the successes of women conductors across the globe, and provide resources. Together we will develop a musical ecosystem that is more inclusive of women scholars, composers, conductors, and teachers who are contributing to the field. Participants will walk away from this session with ideas to build more inclusive space within our choral landscape and celebrate the impact of women choral directors.



**Kyra Stahr** is a DMA candidate in choral conducting at University of Miami Frost School of Music and the associate director of the Master Chorale of South Florida. She completed her MM in choral music from University of Southern California and

earned her BM from Miami (OH) University. At USC, Stahr was associate conductor of Oriana, served on the USC Thornton Student Council, and was director of the South Bay Children's Choir. She has participated in the ACDA Eastern Conducting Masterclass and presented at the World Symposium on Choral Music.



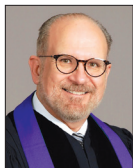
**McKenna Stenson** has built a career inspiring students to sing with confidence and motivating communities to create lasting change through song. Stenson is an assistant professor on faculty at the

University of Kansas (KU), where she serves as associate director of choral activities and conducts the KU Glee Club and Oread Singers. In addition to leading ensembles, Stenson teaches classes in choral methods and undergraduate and graduate conducting. She enjoys serving as a guest conductor, clinician, presenter, and adjudicator for choirs throughout the United States and abroad.

### The Song of the Church and Congregational Identity

Church musicians and pastors who are responsible for selecting the hymns and songs sung by a congregation in worship settings are not simply enabling shared liturgical expressions, they are shaping the congregation's sense of identity through those sung expressions. This interest session will explore some of the theological, philosophical, and practical foundations of the relationships between congregational singing and identity. Using video/audio excerpts of worshiping congregations from differing traditions, the ways in which core congregational identity is expressed through singing will be seen and heard. We will highlight challenges related to selecting the sung expressions of the congregation.

**Andrew Roby** serves as a leader in the areas of music and worship arts with The Memorial Baptist Church



in Greenville, NC. He is also the artistic director and concert choir conductor for the Greenville Choral Society. Previously, Roby served as a professor of music in the areas of church music, choral music, and vocal studies at Asbury College, Shorter College, and Union University. For fifteen years, he taught courses in the foundations and practice of Christian worship in the Schools of Divinity of Gardner-Webb University and Campbell University. He is a past president of North Carolina ACDA.

### Towards a Holistic Approach for Neurodivergent Learners in the Choral Classroom

There is a wealth of literature in the fields of music education, music therapy, and psychology regarding neurodivergent people, but next to no pedagogical material relating to large-group practices, particularly within the choral rehearsal. Many, if not most, choir directors will encounter neurodivergent students in their programs at some point and will likely not know which strategies effectively include their neurodivergent learners in their classrooms. This session presents existing research and offers rehearsal techniques, classroom management strategies, and repertoire recommendations for high school choir directors to feel prepared to give all students a holistic and equitable learning experience.



**Peter Allen Haley** recently completed his DMA in conducting at the University of South Carolina. He previously spent seven years teaching high school chorus in North Carolina. He has held leadership roles on the executive board of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians and the 2020 and 2022 ACDA Southern Region Conferences. He holds degrees in music and church music from Wingate University and Samford University. He has the honor of being the second-best teacher in his house, behind his wife, Ashley, and is a proud parent to Patrick and Libby Kay.

### The Transcendent Experience: Creating Culture and Meaning in Performance and Worship

Uplifting, meaningful choral performances come from groups with strong ensemble culture that are also deeply connected to the culture around them. This interest session will describe the Technique of Culture Creation as developed by Artefact Institute. Our panel of acclaimed choral artists will then discuss how to enrich aspects of choral performances in worship: lyricist Tony Silvestri on storytelling and text, Chanticleer Artistic Director Tim Keeler on ensemble and audience building, and composer and conductor Benedict Sheehan on ritual. Our panel will share valuable tools for creating meaningful performances that attendees can use in their own work.

**Tim Keeler** will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 63.

**Benedict Sheehan** will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 65.

**Talia Sheehan** will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 67.

**Charles Anthony Silvestri** will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 67.

### Turning Choral Warm-Ups Upside Down

Choral conductors often bemoan warm-ups, longing for new material to enhance old tricks. In this interactive session, learn how to design choral warm-ups that increase retention and connection with the music. By exploring modes, intervals, rhythms, and styles, an ensemble can maximize the first notes of a rehearsal and seamlessly transition into reading and making music. Learn to sing smarter by reinforcing concepts in the

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repertoire, honoring diversified pedagogies and techniques. Participants will have a chance to workshop and design the perfect warm-ups for their needs. Suitable for all ages and abilities.



**Jami Lercher** (she/her) is assistant professor of choral music education at Baldwin Wallace University, where she conducts the BW Treble Choir and teaches courses in choral methods, conducting, and vocal technique. She holds a BME from Iowa State University, an MM from the University of Wales, and a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Miami, Frost School of Music. Having spent fourteen years in public schools, she is an advocate for music

education for all and has presented regionally and internationally on inclusive choral classrooms.

### Who is in Charge Here? Personal Leadership Development for the Conductor

Conductors are leaders. They are responsible for directing the collective musical will of an ensemble using whatever tactics are necessary to achieve success. But where does a conductor learn the “tactics” that would make them into a great leader? And did the ends justify the means? This session will immerse participants in a study of their own individual leadership style. We will contextualize the conductor’s role using contemporary leadership theories, engage with self-reflective leadership development exercises to identify personal values and skills, and use the results of these exercises to discover how we can contend with leadership challenges.



**Matthew Abernathy** is the artistic director of the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay-Principal Chorus of The Florida Orchestra. Previously he was on staff at Minnesota Opera, most recently serving as interim chorus director for the Opera’s professional chorus and music director of Project Opera (the company’s youth opera ensemble). Prior engagements include chorus master for the Lakes Area Music Festival and assistant conductor for Minnesota Chorale. He holds degrees from SUNY Potsdam-Crane School of Music, the University of Michigan, and the University of Minnesota.

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## Honor Choir Conductors

### Advanced SATB Honor Choir (Grades 10-12)



**Sydney Guillaume**'s compositions are known to be intricate, challenging, and yet highly spirited. His compositions have been performed around the world and featured at numerous conferences

and international festivals for ACDA, the World Choir Games and Ireland's Cork International Choral Festival. Originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Guillaume is currently residing in Portland, Oregon, working as a full-time composer, conductor, and frequently doing workshops on his music with university and high school choirs throughout North America. Since 2013 he has been the conductor of Imbroglia Sextet, a group of musicians from Haiti, Spain, Bolivia, and the United States.

### Youth SATB (Grades 7-9)



**Derrick Fox** is the associate dean of graduate studies and creative endeavors and a professor of choral conducting at Michigan State University. Prior to MSU, he was the director of choral activities and

distinguished professor of music at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and assistant professor of choral music at Ithaca College. Fox has taught at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels. His conducting experiences have included singers from upper elementary choirs through collegiate and community choirs. He was awarded the 2021 Bryan R. Johnson Service Award by the Nebraska Music Educators Association and the 2022 University of Nebraska Omaha Award for Distinguished Research/Creative Activity.

### Advanced Treble Honor Choir (Grades 10-12)



**Kristina Caswell MacMullen** serves as the Mary Gibbs Jones Chair of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Baylor University. She conducts the Baylor A Cappella Choir, Chamber Singers, and

leads the graduate program in choral conducting. Prior to her appointment at BU, MacMullen earned the Sir William Osler Award at Ohio State University and the President's Special Recognition Award at the University of North Texas. As an active adjudicator and clinician, MacMullen has conducted all-state and honors choirs throughout the United States. MacMullen earned both her BME and MM degrees from Michigan State University and a DMA at Texas Tech University. She sings with the professional ensemble Mirabai.

### Youth Treble (Grades 4-6)



**Andrea Ramsey** enjoys an international presence as a composer, conductor, scholar, and music educator. Before leaping into full-time composing and guest conducting, Ramsey held positions at The

Ohio State University and the University of Colorado Boulder, respectively. An award-winning composer with over 150 works to date, she believes strongly in the creation of new music. A native of Arkansas, she has experienced in her own life the power of music to provide a sense of community, better understanding of our humanity, and rich opportunities for self-discovery.