

MARCH / APRIL 2025

CHORAL JOURNAL



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Writing Music in the
Sacred Harp Tradition



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ADVOCACY STATEMENT

The human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself and its place in the world through the study of and participation in choral music. Singing in a choir produces more active and involved citizens. It affects self-worth in youth and adults. It builds connectivity throughout communities. Society benefits from the aesthetic beauty and community of singers created by choral programs within schools, houses of worship, and community organizations through involved citizenry, connectivity throughout communities, and feelings of personal self-worth. The American Choral Directors Association and its membership resolve to ensure the survival of choral programs for this and future generations by:

Actively voicing support for funding at local, state, and national levels of education and government; collaborating with local and national organizations to ensure the distribution of arts funding data and arts-related activism opportunities; advocating for full access to choral singing and inclusion of all singers in a choral program; and ensuring the distribution of advocacy statements and data regarding choral programs.

From the Executive Director



Robyn Hilger

Finding Our Steady Voice in Uncertain Times

In times of uncertainty and change, it's natural to feel anxious about the road ahead. As choral artists and educators, we are deeply invested in the well-being of our communities, our students, and our organizations. When the world around us feels chaotic, we may wonder how to navigate the challenges while staying true to our mission. But here's what we know: Choirs have always been a source of resilience, connection, and hope. We bring people together across differences, teach the power of collaboration, and remind others—through music—that unity is possible even in uncertain times.

History has shown us that the arts endure. Choral music making has survived wars, economic downturns, and societal shifts. Why? Because people need to sing! They need spaces where they can express emotion, build community, and find meaning. Our choral spaces are some of the only places providing all of those things at the same time. Our work has always mattered and it remains critical today.

So how do we stay steady in uncertain times?

First, we focus on what we can control. We may not have influence over every external challenge, but we do have control over the spaces we create. Our rehearsal rooms, classrooms, and concert halls can continue to be places of trust, encouragement, and artistic growth.

Second, we lean on our community. We are not in this alone. We are part of a vast network of choral musicians, educators, and advocates who support one another. Now is the time to strengthen those connections—through conversations, collaborations, and collective problem-solving.

Third, we keep moving forward. Change can be unsettling, but it also creates opportunities. Perhaps this is a moment to rethink approaches, find new partnerships, or reaffirm the values that guide our work. Adaptability has always been a hallmark of successful choral leaders.

Most importantly, we remember why we do this. The power of choral music does not depend on external circumstances. It exists in the voices of those who gather to sing, in the communities that are strengthened through harmony, and in the countless lives touched by what we create when we convene.

As we face the coming months, let's hold fast to our purpose. Let's take care of ourselves and each other. And let's continue doing what we do best—bringing people together through music. I look forward to seeing so many of you in Dallas at the National Conference. I know we need this time together to celebrate everything that is beautiful and resilient about our profession. See you there!

From the President



David Fryling

I've said it before, but it bears repeating: Choir is Community. And Community only exists where there is Belonging. Whether it's coming together in song, collaborating with composers and other colleagues, or sharing moments of discovery in our musical journey with our students, we thrive as choral artists only when we create spaces where others feel that they are seen and that they belong.

Every year our national and regional conferences serve as pinnacle experiences, bringing us physically together to celebrate, learn, and inspire. Our horizons are broadened and our assumptions are challenged as we each in our own way search not only for inspiration but also for affinity at these events. And, of course, the face time we are gifted with our various "relatives" within our ACDA family is an even deeper treasure in our post-2020 world.

But let me remind you—ACDA is so much more than a single yearly event. The other 360 days of the year ACDA offers a wealth of opportunities for professional growth, networking, and service; including:

- Regional and state summer programs designed to enrich and rejuvenate each of us
- Webinars targeted to specific genres and topics of interest
- Local reading sessions and retreats, offering the chance to engage with your hometown colleagues while exploring new repertoire and rehearsal techniques
- This journal, which holds so much knowledge, experience, and wisdom between every one of its covers
- Whatever we can dream up next, together!

Our work as choral artists is deeply meaningful and profoundly important, and our strength is only as potent as the diversity of voices, ideas, and experience we amplify. In this month's journal you will find several ways to add your voice (or nominate someone else's) to our mission, including:

- A call for nominations to the Research & Publications Committee
- A call for nominations for the Julius Herford Dissertation Prize
- A call for applications to the 2026 International Conductors Exchange Program (ICEP)

You matter deeply to the continued pursuit of ACDA's vision to "Create powerful artistic experiences and be advocates for cultural and educational change that we might transform people's lives." We do this by getting involved, amplifying each other's voices, and embracing the full scope of what belonging to ACDA already means, and what it might look like in the future.

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Amanda Bumgarner

After two issues full of National Conference information, I am excited to be back with regular feature articles, columns, and news in this March/April 2025 issue of *Choral Journal*. Be sure to flip to the back and browse the listing of summer festivals and workshops that will be taking place this summer. This is a free listing, and if you would like to see your event featured next year, submissions are due by January 15 of each year. In other association news, don't miss information on the next International Conductors Exchange Program (ICEP), which will be taking place with Portugal in 2026, and a call for nominations for this year's Julius Herford Dissertation Prize.

In other association news, don't miss information on the next International Conductors Exchange Program (ICEP), which will be taking place with Portugal in 2026, and a call for nominations for this year's Julius Herford Dissertation Prize.

This month we are highlighting articles on two unique musical genres. First, authors and Sacred Harp singers Lily Hammond, Abigail Cannon, and Esther Morgan-Ellis "outline how the community-based nature of shape-note singing affects the contents of contemporary compositions, determines composers' philosophies, and influences singers' engagement with new musical works." Second, Donna Arnold's article offers a look at Serge Jaroff's Don Cossack Choir, a choir formed in a concentration camp in Turkey during the Russian Civil War that later became popular in the United States.

The "Choral Conversations" Column features Pearl Shangkuan, the current National ACDA President-Elect. Pearl speaks with Mary Tuuk Kuras about memorable moments from her career, preparing choruses, and finding balance. Finally, find articles related to teaching expression, approaching choral tone, a reflection from a past ACDA national conference session, and information about ACDA archive holdings at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. We hope you can find something in this issue that will encourage you in your work.

If you have feedback on these or any other articles in *Choral Journal*, you can send a Letter to the Editor to: abumgarner@acda.org. Guidelines are online at acda.org/choraljournal, where you can also find information on article submissions for features, columns, and reviews. I value your input on what you enjoyed reading over the past year and what topics you would like to see in future issues. You can email me directly or visit <https://tinyurl.com/8uuveexj> to share your feedback. I look forward to hearing from you!

ACDA Members Elect Jessica Nápoles National President-Elect



Jessica Nápoles has been elected as the president-elect for ACDA. Nápoles will begin her term as the president-elect on July 1, 2025. She will immediately join the ACDA National Board as an ex officio member until her term begins. She will serve as the ACDA President in 2029.

Jessica Nápoles is professor of choral music education at the University of North Texas. She teaches undergraduate coursework in choral methods, conducts the Concert Choir, and mentors graduate students in research. A native of Florida with a Cuban-American background, Napoles taught middle school chorus in the public schools of Miami and Orlando, FL. She received her BME, MME, and PhD in Music Education from The Florida State University. Prior to her appointment at UNT, she taught at the University of Utah for 11 years.

Dr. Nápoles is an active choral conductor, clinician, and adjudicator, frequently engaging in guest conducting opportunities locally, regionally, and nationally. She has conducted all-state and honor choirs in twenty-five states across the United States. In addition to her identity as a choral conductor, Dr. Nápoles is a well-known researcher with numerous publications. She served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing*, and the *Journal of Music Teacher Education*.

She is currently the chair of the ACDA's Research & Publications Standing Committee. Additionally, she served as assistant conference chair for the 2019 and 2021 ACDA National Conferences, the honor choir coordinator for the 2015 and 2017 National Conferences, and the co-chair of the 2025 Dallas National Conference.

Learn more about Jessica Nápoles by listening to Episode #4 of the ACDA Podcast. Scan the QR code to listen or search *ACDA Podcast* on Spotify or Apple podcasts.



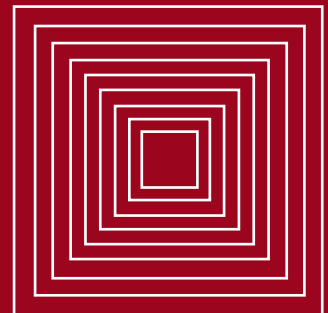
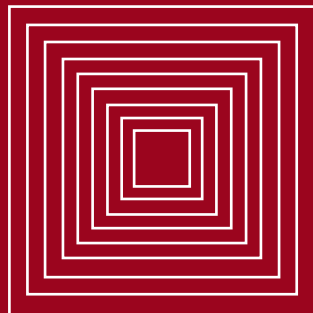
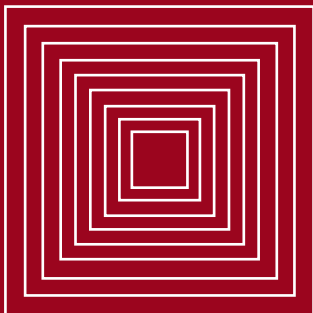


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COMPOSITIONS SHAPED BY COMMUNITY

WRITING MUSIC IN THE SACRED HARP TRADITION

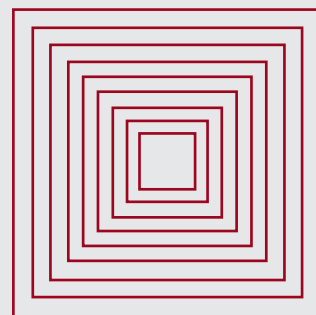
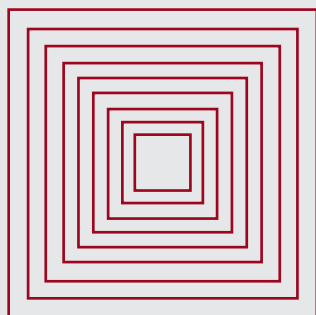
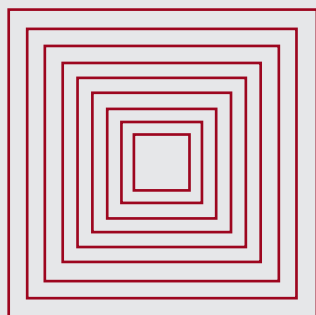
Lily M. Hammond

Abigail C. Cannon

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis

In many choral traditions, compositions are crafted with the expectation that an experienced group of musicians will give a rehearsed and polished performance for an audience. In the shape-note tradition, however, there are no rehearsals or audiences; rather, the singers, all of whom have varying levels of experience, make music for each other. Sitting in a square and facing one another, they sing song after song, sometimes for hours, without ever revisiting a selection. The goal of the singers, rather than to render a

perfected performance, is to facilitate a fulfilling and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.¹ In this article, we will outline how the community-based nature of shape-note singing affects the contents of contemporary compositions, determines composers' philosophies, and influences singers' engagement with new musical works. This research draws from interviews with three shape-note composers, a review of historical and recent writings about shape-note singing, and the authors' experiences as shape-note singers.



A note about definitions

In this article, we will alternately refer to this practice as “Sacred Harp singing” and “shape-note singing.” Neither term is wholly satisfactory. “Sacred Harp singing” is overly narrow, since the composers discussed here have songs included in tunebooks other than *The Sacred Harp*. “Shape-note singing,” however, is overly broad, since there are ongoing traditions of sacred singing in the United States that used shaped notation yet do not employ the styles or practices associated with Sacred Harp singing.

An Approach to Composition

Composers in the Sacred Harp tradition do not need any specific compositional training; their experiences as shape-note singers provide the foundation for their engagement as composers. Both historically and in modern practice, singers of all backgrounds contribute as tunesmiths, often acquiring their skills through experimentation and informal, community-based learning. All a composer must possess is the interest and desire to contribute as a member of the community.

One of our interview subjects—shape-note singer, scholar, and composer Jesse P. Karlsberg—describes the musical identity of composers as that of being “singers first.”² This sentiment is echoed by Sacred Harp composers P. Dan Brittain and Rachel Wells Hall. The community-centered values of Sacred Harp singers have a direct impact on the composers and the music that they create. This research contributes to a growing body of work on the unique processes employed by composers who write for participatory singing groups. Community singing composer Fiona Evison, for example, describes the technique of “relational composition,” noting that it “value[s] people highly” and “often involves collaboration and co-ownership.”³ Our work focusing on shape-note composers, who share these values, illuminates an approach to composition that empowers community singers and prioritizes their joy.

The Shape-Note Tradition

Shape-note singing is a participatory form of music making in which there are no artist-audience distinc-

tions.⁴ The primary musical objective of this activity is to engage and interact with other singers. Sacred Harp singing exists as a spatial and immersive art form. The vibrations in the air create a physical presence that feels different depending on one’s location in the singing space. Each individual seeks to contribute to a heightened musical and social experience for all the participants. Shape-note singers do not practice for months to render a musical performance perfectly for an audience. They sing only for themselves and for each other. In shape-note singing, individual singers take turns picking and leading a song for the group to sing. In this way, each member has the agency to contribute to the musical choices, as opposed to one conductor making all the literature decisions.

Shape-note singing carries on the tradition of nineteenth-century tunebooks that were printed using shaped notation, a sight-singing aid that replaces round note heads with four different shapes. These correspond with syllables to indicate specific scale degrees (Figure 1).⁵ The first tunebook to use shaped notation—William Little and William Smith’s *The Easy Instructor, or A New Method of Teaching Sacred Harmony*—was published in Philadelphia in 1801.⁶ The shape-note singing tradition is often referred to as Sacred Harp singing because *The Sacred Harp* is the name of the most popular shape-note tunebook, first published in Georgia in 1844 by Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha James King.⁷ White oversaw multiple revisions of the book during his lifetime in an effort to keep the contents relevant to the singers who used it. After his death in 1879, conflict over the book’s contents resulted in the emergence of competing editions.⁸ What is now called the “Denson” version of *The Sacred Harp* has remained the most popular since the first quarter of the twentieth century, with new editions appearing approximately every thirty years.



Figure 1. Four-shape system

WRITING MUSIC IN THE SACRED HARP TRADITION

The Denson version's popularity is attributed to the musical conservatism of the book's editors, who rejected modern developments in hymnody. The singers in the Sacred Harp community were generally not interested in the new gospel style that rose in popularity in the 1910s and 1920s. Gospel collections, which were issued annually in slim paperbacks by publishers such as James D. Vaughan and A. J. Showalter, were characterized by a prevalence of the major mode, swinging rhythms, call-and-response, and cheerful texts emphasizing salvation.⁹ While gospel songs appear in the "Cooper" revision of *The Sacred Harp*, which traces its lineage to a 1902 revision issued by W. M. Cooper, the Denson revision has retained the original mid-nineteenth-century composition style, admitting only oc-

casional gospel elements.¹⁰ The shape-note composers interviewed for this article all write in the "dispersed harmony" style favored in the Denson revision. Ideally, each new tune will adhere to the forms and compositional principles established before 1844 yet will also carry unique appeal as a distinctive composition.¹¹

P. Dan Brittain's composition COBB is an example of a plain tune, one of the principal genres of shape-note composition (Figure 2). In a plain tune, the four parts move in relative homorhythm. In a fugging tune (Figure 3 on the next page), an opening homophonic passage is followed by a section in which the voices enter one at a time. The fugging tune is emblematic of the singing school tradition. Composers also tend to set the same poets who were favored by nineteenth-centu-

1. Rise, rise, my soul, and leave the ground, Stretch all thy thoughts a - broad,

2. Crea - tures with all their end - less race, Thy pow'r and praise pro - claim;

10
— And rouse up ev - 'ry tune - ful sound — To praise th'e - ter - nal God.

But saints that taste Thy rich - er grace De - light to — bless Thy name.

Figure 2. P. Dan Brittain, COBB, 1971.

Text: Isaac Watts 1st 1707, 2nd 1719.

Used with permission of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company, Bremen, GA.

1. When we our wea - ried limbs to rest Sat down by proud Eu - phra - tes' stream:

2. Our harps that when with joy we sung Were wont their tune - ful parts to bear,

6

1. We wept with dole - ful thoughts op - pressed, And
2. With si - lent strings ne - glect - ed hung, On

1. We wept with dole - ful thoughts op - pressed, And Zi - on was our
2. With si - lent strings ne - glect - ed hung, On wil - low trees that

1. We wept with dole - ful thoughts op - pressed, And Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme, And
2. With si - lent strings ne - glect - ed hung, On wil - low trees that with - ered there, On

11

Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme, And Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme. mourn - ful theme.
wil - low trees that with - ered there, On wil - low trees that with - ered there. with - ered there.

mourn - ful theme, our that mourn - ful theme, And Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme. mourn - ful theme.
with - ered there, that with - ered there, On wil - low trees that with - ered there. with - ered there.

Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme, And Zi - on was our mourn - ful theme. mourn - ful theme.
wil - low trees that with - ered there, On wil - low trees that with - ered there. with - ered there.

Figure 3. Judy Hauff, WOOD STREET, 1986.

Text: Tate and Brady, 1696.

Used with permission of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company, Bremen, GA.

ry tunesmiths. Texts by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), which dominate *The Sacred Harp*, were chosen by Brittain for all four of his songs that appear in the current revision and by Karlsberg for the composition discussed in this article.

Shape-note tunebooks were created primarily for use in singing schools, and they have long been associated with music pedagogy. For this reason, a group of shape-note singers is still referred to as a “class,” and the leading of a song is still called a “lesson.”¹² In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, traveling singing masters used *The Sacred Harp* and other shape-note books to teach music literacy and singing to rural Protestant congregations.¹³ Singing schools typically occurred during agricultural lulls when there was no farm work to tend to.¹⁴ They ran on average for two weeks at a time, with singing Monday through Friday. Each day would begin at 9:00 a.m., with dinner on the grounds at noon, and conclude around 3:00 p.m.¹⁵ Shape-note singers still use this schedule, along with several other elements from the singing schools, as a model for present-day singing events.

During a “singing”—a term that describes any musical gathering of shape-note devotees—class members sit in a formation known as the hollow square.¹⁶ The songs are mostly in four-part harmony, although occasionally the alto part is missing. The melody is always found in the tenor part—an inheritance from English west gallery music. The tenor and treble parts are both sung in octaves by high and low voices, which produces six-part harmony. Each voice part comprises one side of the square, and singers direct their sound to the center of the square formation. In previous and present practice, shape-note singing unites participants across denominational lines, and many singers today come from non-Christian faith communities or identify as non-religious.¹⁷ Whether or not singers affirm the beliefs represented in the song texts, musical participation and community involvement are top priorities.

Shape-note composers emerge from this ecosystem of egalitarian and community-minded music making. When Karlsberg describes composers as “singers first,” he means that their identities and contributions as singers are more important than their identities and contributions as composers. A shape-note composer does not

transition from a singing practice to a compositional practice. Instead, they compose as a service to the singing community of which they are lifelong members. The next section will provide an introduction to three shape-note composers followed by a more detailed explanation of shape-note composition.

Composer Biographies

Jesse P. Karlsberg¹⁸ is the senior digital scholarship strategist at the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship and associated faculty in the Department of Music at Emory University. His initial exposure to shape-note singing came during his undergraduate program at Wesleyan University, during the part of a course titled “Worlds of Music” that was taught by Professor Neely Bruce. Bruce was the director of the choir and would often write his own shape-note compositions and bring them in for the choir to test out and sing. As Karlsberg explains, “Most people love it or hate it [right away], but my love for this music developed gradually.”¹⁹ His primary interest during his undergraduate studies was twentieth-century experimental music and composition. He was initially interested in Sacred Harp singing for some of the same reasons that he liked experimental music. It was a form of group singing, and he was already involved in choir singing, where he discovered he loved to sing with other people.

P. Dan Brittain²⁰ earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in composition and wrote music for shape-note singers as well as for chorus and band. He served as commander and conductor of the U. S. Continental Army Band at Fort Monroe, Virginia. After his retirement from the army, he worked as a college band director, a choirmaster, and, finally, a public school band director before he fully retired. As previously mentioned, four of his songs are included in the current Denson edition of *The Sacred Harp*. Upon his death in 2023, he was memorialized with a two-day singing in Arkansas in April 2024.

Rachel Wells Hall²¹ is an associate professor of mathematics at St. Joseph’s University in Pennsylvania, where her current research focuses on mathematical music theory. She was also a member of the folk trio Simple Gifts. Hall has four original compositions in

the shape-note compilation *The Valley Pocket Harmonist* (2024), and her work on the editorial committees of that volume and *The Shenandoah Harmony* (2012) included arranging songs (which often meant writing all parts other than the tenor) and adding alto lines to three-part songs. This significant compositional work is typical of the shape-note tradition. Composers have worked as “arrangers” of popular and folk melodies since the earliest days, while the addition of alto lines was undertaken by a range of tunesmiths at the turn of the twentieth century.²² Hall has also submitted several compositions for inclusion in the revised Denson edition of *The Sacred Harp*, set to be published in 2025. All three composers are (or were) active singers within the shape-note tradition.

Approaches to Shape-Note Composition

Compositions contributed to *The Sacred Harp* by living composers are imperative ingredients in what is sometimes called a “living tradition.”²³ The singers interact with the composers, who are also singers, on a regular basis. This dynamic prompts singers to connect each composer as an individual with their compositions, which enhances the emotional impact the music has on the community.

Karlsberg began composing shape-note music within his first year of exposure to Sacred Harp singing. Coming from a compositional background, writing shape-note music was a natural form of participation for him. It also allowed him to explore his understanding of the musical form and theory. Karlsberg sought out relationships with living composers who had their songs published in *The Sacred Harp*. He built a special relationship with a patriarch and composer in the tradition, Raymond Hamrick.²⁴ At the beginning of their friendship, Karlsberg and Hamrick communicated via letters and phone. Later, Karlsberg moved from the northeast to Georgia, where Hamrick lived. Karlsberg was inspired by Hamrick’s compositions and was intrigued to discover how Hamrick—who, like so many other shape-note composers, received no formal music education—had learned to write music from others in the tradition. There are important singers and compos-

ers in the community who are formally educated, but most composers have developed their skill through informal mentorships as far back as the book’s first publication in 1844.²⁵ When asked what he valued most about his friendship with Hamrick, Karlsberg said:

Raymond motivated me to write music that was moving to me, music that was singable. He encouraged me to get out of my own way by writing simple, characteristic songs that I just wanted to sing. That’s what it’s all about. My goal became for singers to pick up on the notes by the second time they sing it.²⁶

The value placed on community in the Sacred Harp tradition affects the contents of the compositions themselves. A recurring theme across interviews and the literature was that each vocal part has a melodic nature. “The big thing is to make sure that each part has a melody of its own,” noted Brittain. “That’s one of the differences from traditional harmony.” Every shape-note book begins with a section known as the rudiments that outlines various concepts pertaining to shape-note singing, such as basic music theory, vocal technique, and principles of composition. The rudiments in *The Sacred Harp* read: “*Sacred Harp* music is polyphonic. The tune (melody, air) is carried by the tenor part, but the other parts, ideally, are good melodies on their own, making all parts interesting.”²⁷ Hall discussed this concept and referenced a quote from the rudiments of another shape-note book, *The Hesperian Harp*, which reads:

When your Air [or the tenor] is written, compose your Bass, Treble, &c.; and in doing this you must, if you would reach the hearts of those who can feel music, not only make all the parts of your tune perfectly harmonic, but make each part so good a melody that it will charm even when sung by itself.²⁸

Though each part is melodic, the other parts are still somewhat subservient to the tenor as the result of having been composed in the aforementioned order: tenor, bass, treble, and finally alto. Brittain outlined this order and explained that writing the bass after the tenor allows

the chords to begin coming together. The subsequent parts must maintain appropriate harmonic structure when combined while still conserving their own melodic integrity. He said that this compositional process was difficult at first, but it “just kind of flow[ed]” once he became more experienced.²⁹ Eighteenth-century composer William Billings described the interaction between melodic parts that creates harmonies, writing:

The first part [tenor] is nothing more than a flight of fancy, the other parts are forced to comply and conform to that, by partaking of the same air, or, at least, as much of it as they can get. [...] therefore, the grand difficulty in composition, is to preserve the air through each part separately, and yet cause them to harmonize with each other at the same time.³⁰

Thus, each part is both its own melody and a component of a harmonic whole. In allowing each voice its own melody, composers break several voice-leading rules that are often present in classical music. Parallel fifths and octaves, voice crossing, and unresolved dissonances are characteristic of the style. “I found out that I had to put aside my formal training,” observed Brittain. “We do a lot of parallels. There are things that you can’t do in classical that you can do in Sacred Harp.”

WOOD STREET is a contemporary composition by Chicago singer Judy Hauff that exhibits a range of typical characteristics (Figure 3). It is one of four compositions by Hauff in the current Denson revision of *The Sacred Harp*; her compositions also appear in other collections (see Appendix at the end of this article). In WOOD STREET, parallel octaves are present between the tenor and bass in m. 3 and the final measure. In mm. 6-7, the alto entrance is in parallel fifths with the tenor, while the alto moves in parallel fifths with the bass in m. 10. The treble part enters in m. 7 with a note that is dissonant with the tenor, and a second dissonance is created in m. 11 when the tenor leaps to an A while the treble moves stepwise to a B^b. While this composition does not include notated voice crossing, voice crossing is heard between the treble and tenor because those parts are sung in octaves by mixed-gen-

der singers. Hauff, incidentally, has no formal training in music and composed her tunes orally, recording herself singing each part and listening back to the parts together until she was satisfied with the harmonies.³¹

The Sacred Harp rudiments explain that:

Sacred Harp harmony does not follow the rules of conventional harmony, which were well established in the 18th century. [William] Billings fiercely declared his independence (“I don’t think myself confined to any rules of composition laid down by any who went before me”) and he practiced what he preached.³²

The rudiments later define some of the characteristics of conventional harmony, such as homophony, complete triads, and avoidance of parallel motion—none of which typify Sacred Harp compositions. The rudiments state that, “In composing, one should explore the harmonic possibilities and evaluate each case by its sound in its own context. It is best not to be a slave to a preconceived list of concords and discords.”³³

Brittain has three fusing tunes included in the current Denson revision of *The Sacred Harp*. Specifically, his composition titled AKIN is an example of a song in which the voices interact in this way (Figure 4 on the next page). Visually, the contour of each part already appears to be melodic. Each part could be independent, but when the voices come together, several unconventional part-writing elements emerge that are characteristic of the style. The very first chord, for instance, lacks a third, which gives it an open sound. In the third measure, the treble and bass have parallel octaves, while the alto and tenor have parallel fifths. Then, in the fusing part, when all the voices come back together, the tenor and alto have parallel octaves. This is not a part-writing flaw. Rather, these parallels and open chords are integral to the style.

Composers’ Philosophies

The community-based nature of the shape-note tradition affects the contents of works composed within that tradition. Rather than writing with the expectation of a performance for an audience, both Brit-

COMPOSITIONS SHAPED BY COMMUNITY

tain and Hall shared the philosophy that the purpose of their music is to facilitate rewarding participatory experiences for Sacred Harp community members. When asked what he hoped people gained from his music, Brittain answered, “partially fun and partially community. It helps the community.”³⁴ Hall concurred: “The community part of [composing] is really important to me.” This focus on participation and enjoyment is demonstrated in the ways that these composers approach their music-writing. Karlsberg seeks to write “a song I just [want] to sing”—a song that he and other singers will immediately enjoy and that will be rewarding for everyone.³⁵ Hall explained that the compositional rules she has for herself include providing the altos

with a high note and giving the trebles a time to shine. She also discussed one of her compositions in which the bass part was especially melodic. The emphasis was on the singers having an enjoyable experience and each part being valuable.

It is typical for tunesmiths to involve singers in their compositional process. Once a composer has roughed out a new tune, they will bring it to the community to ensure that it sings well and to invite feedback. Brittain relied heavily on experienced singers to guide his development as a composer:

The fun part was that I would write a tune and carry it with me to the next singing and

With - in Thy cir - cling pow'r I stand, On ev - 'ry side I find Thy hand; A - wake, a - sleep, at home, a - broad, I am sur - round - ed still with God. God.

10
A - wake, a - sleep, at home, a - broad, I am sur - round - ed still with God. God.

wake, a - sleep, at home, a - broad, at home, a - broad, I am sur - round - ed still with God. God.

home, a - broad, at home, a - broad, I am sur - round - ed still with God. God.

at home, a - broad, I am sur - round - ed still with God. God.

Figure 4. P. Dan Brittain, AKIN, 1971.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1719.

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get Hugh McGraw and Buford McGraw and Buell Cobb and one or two of the others and they would sing it for me and then offer suggestions. And so I kind of had some really good tutoring right at the beginning. ... Having [experienced singers] look at all my songs and say don't do this, do this. It was a quick way of learning.

If singers do not enjoy any element of a song, the composer will be quick to revise it. Hall recalled an occasion on which she brought some compositions to her local group: "I could hear that some of the chords were hard to tune, so I changed them." She discussed how some classical composers (particularly those working in high-art contexts) may be encouraged to write difficult parts that sound virtuosic, and she noted the contrast in shape-note composition: it is essential to consider whether something will be done well rather than sound virtuosic.³⁶ (This is also a typical concern for composers in the educational sphere.) This allows everyone, regardless of experience, to participate. The melodic nature of each individual part is reflective of the value placed on the community members' enjoyment and experience.

Karlsberg explained that his ultimate purpose is to contribute memorable songs to the tradition. Every song in *The Sacred Harp* is a vehicle for some of the most meaningful experiences that the singers have.³⁷ Singing these songs is a spiritual encounter for many participants. Specific songs are associated with friends, family, and other loved ones. Every member in the community attaches special meanings and associations to certain songs, which accumulate continuously. Karlsberg shared a story about his song NATIONAL BLESSINGS, which is published in the Cooper edition of *The Sacred Harp* (Figure 5 on the next page).³⁸ Karlsberg composed this tune as a setting for a 1707 Isaac Watts text beginning "Lord, what a heav'n of saving grace," and he titled the composition A GLIMPSE OF THEE after the concluding phrase of the refrain. The editors of the Cooper edition changed the text and title. It is common in the shape-note tradition for a beloved text to be paired with many different tunes and for a tune to appear with different texts across collections.

Aubrey Barfield (1937–2019), a North Florida singer active in the regional Sacred Harp community, led NATIONAL BLESSINGS at all-day events on a regular basis.³⁹ The song was also sung at his funeral. Karlsberg did not know Barfield well and never saw him after NATIONAL BLESSINGS was added to the Cooper book, but he found out through mutual friends that his own music had found a special place in the heart of a fellow participant in the community.

The composers' comments reminded the authors of our research in the area of musical leadership in shape-note singing.⁴⁰ The resounding theme in that study was that leadership is a collaborative effort between the person in the center of the square and the singers, and that the goal is for members of the community to enjoy the music and to have a fulfilling experience. The composers seem to have this same outlook. Among other things, they do not merely write for the community but encourage the community to write as well. Brittain talked about how he would be happy to have only one of his songs in the next revision if it would mean that other composers' work would have a chance to be included. As he put it, "the more people we have writing, the better the community is."⁴¹ The exhortation for community members to compose has been a part of shape-note tradition for a long time. In the rudiments of *The Hesperian Harp*, the author writes, "and now, dear reader, male or female, let me urge you to try your hand at composing tunes; be not afraid to try, though every numbskull about you should laugh at your attempts."⁴² *The Sacred Harp* preface emphasizes that continuing to include new and present composers in each updated revision since 1844 is "the main reason [the book] has lasted so long and will continue to survive."⁴³

Singers' Engagement

Composers write with the understanding that the community has some liberty with the use of their compositions. There are notable discrepancies between communities in terms of musical interpretation. Brittain himself noted that in Georgia the tempos tend to be much slower than in Alabama, where he said they sing "a mile a minute,"⁴⁴ and the authors have certain-

1. Great God of na-tions now to thee, Our hymn of grat-i-tude we raise, —
 Thy name we bless, Al-might-y God, For all the kind-ness thou hast shown. —

2. With hum-ble heart and bend-ing knee, We of-fer thee our song of praise.
 To this fair land the Pil-grims trod, This land we fond-ly call our own.

12. Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; In dan-gers still our
 Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; In dan-gers still our
 Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; In dan-gers still our guar-dian be: —
 Great God pre-serve us in thy fear; In dan-gers still our guar-dian be: —

19. guar-dian be: O spread thy truth's bright pre-cepts here; Let all the peo-ple wor-ship thee.
 guar-dian be: O spread thy truth's bright pre-cepts here; Let all the peo-ple wor-ship thee.
 O spread thy truth's bright pre-cepts here; Let all the peo-ple wor-ship thee.
 O spread thy truth's bright pre-cepts here; Let all the peo-ple wor-ship thee.

Figure 5. Jesse Pearlman Karlsberg, NATIONAL BLESSINGS, 2009.

Text: A. A. Woodhull, 1831.

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WRITING MUSIC IN THE SACRED HARP TRADITION

ly seen a wide variety of interpretations of Brittain's own songs. One of Brittain's compositions, NOVAKOSKI, receives particularly wide-ranging treatment due to revisions made in the editorial process and Brittain's own intervention (Figure 6). When Brittain first composed NOVAKOSKI, which is a fugging tune, he included a meter change from $\frac{2}{2}$ to $\frac{4}{4}$, indicating that the fugging section was to be performed at a faster tempo. Later, he removed the meter change and set the entire song in $\frac{2}{2}$, thereby suggesting that it should be sung slowly. When NOVAKOSKI was published, however, the revision committee changed the meter to $\frac{4}{4}$. At Camp Fasola Europe in 2012, Brittain discussed this revision history with a group of students and led them in singing NOVAKOSKI

with the tempo change. He was happy with the result and announced that he would welcome performances both with and without a faster fugging section.⁴⁵ Today, singers sometimes briefly note this history when they lead NOVAKOSKI, and they discuss non-notated interpretive practices outside of formal singing contexts.

The work of revising committees constitutes a core means by which the community has a direct impact on compositions. In addition to composing songs, Hall has worked as a reviser. In this capacity, she wrote about twenty alto parts, arranged songs that were originally just tenor lines, chose different lyrics for tunes, and changed the titles of several songs that appear in *The Shenandoah Harmony*, even though she is not always cred-

1. Come, we that love the Lord, And let our joys be known; Join in a song with sweet ac-cord, And thus sur-round the throne, And thus sur-round the throne.

2. Let those refuse to sing Who never knew our God; But children of the heav'ny King May speak their joys abroad.

3. Then let our songs abound, And ev'ry tear be dry; We're marching thro' Immanuel's ground To fairer worlds on high.

Figure 6. P. Dan Brittain, NOVAKOSKI, 1989.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1707.

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COMPOSITIONS SHAPED BY COMMUNITY

ited for each contribution. As she described the work:

It's totally part of the tradition [that] these songs get just gone over and over and over again by people in different generations and cobbled together. Things get stuck together that were never meant to be together before. People change notes and sometimes they pick completely different poetry for it or change the title or all sorts of things like that. So it's not weird. It's not like we took some Bach and altered it.⁴⁶

She shared an example of one of her favorite songs, DEVOTION, written by Alexander Johnson in 1818. The

tune has undergone many changes, such that it can no longer be identified as the work of a sole composer; instead, it is a product of the community (Figure 7).⁴⁷ Hall hopes future communities would feel that they had her permission to change things in her own compositions. "The beauty of the tradition," she reflected, "is that you can choose. You can take any one of the versions that has existed throughout history or you can change them and make it your own. It's not for sure that the original is the best one."

Revision committees ultimately decide which new compositions enter the repertoire and which do not. Currently, a committee of nine active singers is revising the Denson edition of *The Sacred Harp*, with the expect-

Alto part added in 1835
Boxed notes have associated year

1. Sweet is the day of sa - cred rest; No mor - tal cares shall seize my breast; _____

2. Then shall I share a glo - ri - ous part When grace hath well re - fined my heart; _____

3. Then shall I see and hear and know All I de - sired and wished be - low; _____

O may my heart in tune be found Like Da - vid's harp of sol - emn sound. sound.

And fresh sup - plies of joy are shed, Like ho - ly oil, to cheer my head. head.

And ev - 'ry pow'r find sweet em - ploy In that e - ter - nal world of joy. joy.

Figure 7. Alexander Johnson, DEVOTION, 1818.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1719.

Historical analysis first published by Rachel Wells Hall.

Used with permission of Rachel Wells Hall and the Sacred Harp Publishing Company, Bremen, GA.

tation that the new book will be unveiled at the United Sacred Harp Musical Association Convention in September 2025. During the revision process, the committee received over 1,100 songs for consideration, most of which seem to have been new compositions.⁴⁸ Every song was sung and recorded at an open singing, and 157 finalist songs were recorded a second time at two all-day singings held in Georgia and the UK during June 2024.⁴⁹ The purpose of the revision singings was both to ensure a fair evaluation, which requires that the songs be sung and heard in their proper context, and to include the larger community of singers in the selection process. It has not yet been announced how many new songs or living composers will be added to *The Sacred Harp*, but it is likely to be a large number. It appears that interest in shape-note composition is at an exceptionally high level.

Conclusion

Shape-note composers continue to gain inspiration and guidance for their work by carefully examining compositions from past generations and evaluating their reception within the community. Their intent is to contribute to the tradition while remaining faithful to the forms and styles that are so highly valued by singers. The greatest reward a shape-note composer can receive is to see their song become meaningful to singers in the community.

The lengthy and intensive process by which the Denison revision of *The Sacred Harp* is currently being updated, which will see little-used songs dropped from the book and new songs added in their place, is centered on maintaining the health and vibrancy of the singing community. The revision committee is dedicated to keeping the songs that have accumulated meaningful and spiritual associations across time. The new compositions that will be incorporated hold a different kind of value for the community: the composers of these songs will be living members of the community, who sing and maintain a familial-like bond with the other participants. The compositions in this tradition facilitate a deep connection between living composers and singers and those of generations past.


One of the great strengths of the Sacred Harp singing community is that all singers are encouraged to con-

tribute as composers. As mentioned in the beginning of this article, there is no expectation of training or special talent. The narrow stylistic confines make composing

“**Participants take ownership of the practice by determining what music the community is going to sing and how they are going to sing it.**”

accessible to a broad swath of participants, and the use of shaped notes has been further demonstrated to support creative activity.⁵⁰ A related strength is that all singers are encouraged to contribute as music directors, taking their turn in the square to select and lead a song in the way they want to hear it sung.⁵¹ Both of these practices contribute to the highly democratic nature of Sacred Harp singing. Participants take ownership of the practice by determining what music the community is going to sing and how they are going to sing it. Other singing communities can learn from the Sacred Harp community and further democratize their activities by creating or expanding opportunities for participants to compose songs, select repertoire, shape interpretation, and possibly even make significant changes to the compositions of others. Empowering singers in this way increases their investment and solidifies their shared identity as members of a meaningful collective.

As we have demonstrated, shape-note music results from a collaborative effort between the community and the composer. First, the values of shape-note singers—specifically, the values of community and participation—directly impact the contents of the compositions, particularly in that each part is melodic. Second, this value impacts the composers’ outlooks, specifically in that they approach writing music with the community in mind. Finally, this value affects the actual performance of the songs in that the community has liberty to interpret and, in some cases, directly change the songs themselves. In this way, the community-based nature

of shape-note singing affects the contents of the compositions, the composers' philosophies, and the singers' engagement with the works. 

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- ³ Fiona Evison, "From Art Music to Heart Music: The Place of the Composer in Community Singing," in *The Oxford Handbook of Community Singing*, ed. Esther M. Morgan-Ellis and Kay Norton (Oxford University Press, 2024), 949-50.
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- ⁵ Buell Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (University of Georgia Press, 1978), 6. Readers may also be interested in: David W. Music, "The Decline of the American Tune Book," *Choral Journal* 58, no. 1 (August 2017): 8-15.
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- ⁸ Jesse P. Karlsberg, "Joseph Stephen James's *Original Sacred Harp*: Introduction to the Centennial Edition," in *Original Sacred Harp: Centennial Edition*, ed. Jesse P. Karlsberg (Pitt Theological Library, 2015), viii.
- ⁹ James R. Goff, *Close Harmony: A History of Southern Gospel* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 52, 67.
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- ¹¹ A. Michael V. Stecker, "'If I can Reach the Charming Sound, I'll Tune my Harp Again': The Fasola Tunebook Publication Renaissance," master's thesis (University of Florida, 2019), 193.
- ¹² Anne Heider and R. Stephen Warner, "Bodies in Sync: Interaction Ritual Theory Applied to Sacred Harp Singing," *Sociology of Religion* 71, no. 1 (2010): 84.
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- ¹⁵ Buell Cobb, *The Sacred Harp*, 128.
- ¹⁶ Kiri Miller, *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 2.
- ¹⁷ George P. Jackson, *The Story of The Sacred Harp, 1844-1944* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2010), 3.
- ¹⁸ b. 1981
- ¹⁹ Jesse P. Karlsberg, interview.
- ²⁰ 1946-2023
- ²¹ b. 1969
- ²² Rachel Wells Hall, "The Alto Part in Shape Note Tune-books, 1867-1911" (paper, Annual Meeting of the Society for American Music, Minneapolis, MN, March 11, 2023).
- ²³ Laura Clawson, *I Belong to This Band, Hallelujah! Community, Spirituality, and Tradition among Sacred Harp Singers* (University of Chicago Press, 2011), 159.
- ²⁴ David Steel and Richard Hulan, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp* (University of Illinois Press, 2010), 119-20.
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- ³⁰ David Steel and Richard Hulan, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp*, 43.
- ³¹ Judy Hauff, interview by Esther Morgan-Ellis, January 15, 2025.
- ³² Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha James King, *The Sacred Harp*, 21.
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- ⁴⁷ Rachel Wells Hall, “Philadelphia, Birthplace of the Shapes and Center of Shape-Note Publishing” (Sacred Harp Publishing Company, September 1, 2017), <https://originalsacredharp.com>.
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Appendix: Sources for New Shape-Note Repertoire

All shape-note collections that have been compiled or revised in recent decades include new compositions by members of the singing community. Below is an annotated list of prominent collections, including information on how to procure each tunebook.

Carden, Allen D., ed. *The Missouri Harmony: 2005 Edition*. Second ed. (Missouri Historical Society Press, 2005). Purchase from University of Chicago Press.

When the publication committee responsible for revising *The Missouri Harmony* (1820) put out a call for new compositions, they received fifty-three submissions from tunesmiths in eight U. S. states, Canada, and England. A few dozen tunes by singers P. Dan Brittain, Judy Hauff, Ted Johnson, John Bayer, Dan Gibbons, James Solheim, and others were added to the 2005 revision.

Dakan, Myles Louis, et al., *The Shenandoah Harmony* (The Shenandoah Harmony Publishing Company, 2012). Purchase from The Shenandoah Harmony Publishing Company.

This compilation consists mostly of old songs taken from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century tunebooks, but it also contains recent compositions by a wide range of contemporary composers.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

Gordon, Larry, and Anthony G. Barrand, eds. *Northern Harmony*. Fourth ed. (Northern Harmony Publishing Company, 1998). Used copies of this collection can be found online.

The first edition of *Northern Harmony*, which was issued in 1979, collected old tunes by Vermont composers. Later editions added new compositions by active singers. In the current edition, more than one-third of the tunes are new. Contemporary composers are introduced with a biographical sketch.

Hamrick, Raymond C. *The Georgian Harmony*. Second ed. (Raymond C. Hamrick, 2012). Purchase at one of the four annual singings in Georgia that are dedicated to its use.

Raymond C. Hamrick was one of the great twentieth-century shape-note tune writers. This collection brings together several hundred of his compositions, written over the course of the past half-century.

Hunter, Daniel L., et al., *The Valley Pocket Harmonist* (The Shenandoah Harmony Publishing Company, 2024). Purchase from The Shenandoah Harmony Publishing Company.

This collection, subtitled “A Supplement to *The Shenandoah Harmony*,” brings together historical and new compositions/arrangements in approximately equal measure. Central to the collection are thirty-four previously unpublished tunes by Ohio composer John Bayer Jr. (1954-2016).

Walker, William, John Deason, and O. A. Parris, eds. *The Christian Harmony: 2010 Edition* (Christian Harmony Music Company, 2010). Purchase from Christian Harmony Music Company.

The most recent edition of *The Christian Harmony* (1866) does not constitute a thorough revision, but it does include new tunes by singers Lawrence Beveridge, Raymond C. Hamrick, John Plunkett, John Newton Merritt, and Bill Hollingsworth, all of which are located near the back of the book.

White, Benjamin Franklin, and Elisha James King, eds. *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition* (Sacred Harp Publishing Company, 1991). Purchase from Sacred Harp Publishing Company.

This is the most used shape-note tunebook. The 1991 revision incorporated new compositions by a range of active singers. The next revision, scheduled for release in September 2025, is expected to contain dozens of new compositions.

White, Benjamin Franklin, and Wilson Marion Cooper, eds. *The Sacred Harp: Revised Cooper Edition* (The Sacred Harp Book Company, 2012). Purchase from The Sacred Harp Book Company.

The most recent Cooper edition of *The Sacred Harp* contains recent compositions by twelve singers.



2024 JULIUS HERFORD PRIZE CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Each year the Julius Herford Prize Subcommittee of the Research and Publications Committee accepts nominations for the outstanding doctoral terminal research project in choral music. Projects are eligible if they comprise the principal research component of the degree requirements, whether the institution defines the project as a "dissertation," "document," "thesis," or "treatise," etc. The submitted projects are evaluated entirely blind with regard to dissertator, assisting faculty, institution, or any other identifying material, by an unpaid panel of choral conductor-scholars.

When a dissertation may be nominated: The year 2024 indicates the year in which the relevant doctoral degree was conferred. Dissertations must be nominated in the calendar year following the year in which the degree was conferred. The prize is awarded in the calendar year following the year of nomination. Thus, the dissertation of a student with a 2024 degree can be nominated through June 10, 2025; the prize will be awarded at a 2026 ACDA regional conference.

The award: The winner will receive a \$1000 cash prize and a plaque. The committee reserves the right to award two prizes or no prizes in any given year.

Nomination Requirements and Procedure:

1. An institution may submit only one document for that year's prize. In the event that there are two nominations of equal merit from one school, the letter from the Dean, Director, or Chair of the music school (described below) must justify the additional nomination. The submitting faculty member, institution, and/or the writer must be currently a member of ACDA in good standing.
2. Links to the nomination form and instructions for uploading the dissertation are found on the prize webpage: visit acda.org; under "About," select "Award & Competitions." OR, visit <https://forms.gle/2MUmUmCxuRw7a3J7A>.

The nomination form will require the following uploads:

- PDF abstract of the dissertation WITHOUT any material identifying the student, faculty, or institution.
 - PDF title page of the dissertation WITH identifying information, including the dissertator's name and institution.
 - PDF of a signed letter from the dean, director, or chair of the music school of recommendation. Letters from the chair of the choral area are not acceptable. The letter must include the following: (1) the full name of the student, (2) the year in which that student's degree was granted, and (3) the full title of the dissertation.
 - PDF page with contact information (full name, title, mailing address, email address, telephone number) for (1) the faculty member making the submission and (2) the dissertation author.
 - PDF of the complete dissertation WITHOUT any material identifying the student, faculty, or institution. The information can be removed or blacked out.
3. **The dissertation and all accompanying materials must be uploaded by June 10, 2025, noon CST. If one or more of these requirements is not met, the dissertation will be eliminated from consideration.**

SERGE JAROFF'S DON COSSACK CHOIR: A TREASURE FROM THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA

DONNA ARNOLD

Serge Jaroff's Don Cossack Choir was a unique phenomenon in the history of twentieth-century choral music. Its original members were Cossack refugees from Russia's Don River region. Expelled from their country in 1920 after losing the Russian Civil War to the Bolsheviks, they were transported to a bleak concentration camp in Turkey. Serge Jaroff (1896–1985), a detainee with a choir school education, founded a choir there and transformed it into a world-class *a cappella* ensemble, which, once freed, established a professional career and went on to achieve widespread and long-lasting international renown.

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Photo featured on the cover of the 1968 album, *An Den Ufern Des Don (On the Banks of the Don)*.

The Don Cossacks were popular in the United States for many years, and from 1943 on were American citizens. Although they are still revered in Western Europe, especially in Germany, in the United States they largely faded from public awareness after Jaroff's death in October 1985 at the age of eighty-nine.

Interest in Russian choirs has grown considerably since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. This has brought renewed attention to the Don Cossacks in Europe, but as yet they have received little attention in America. Thanks to recent efforts in Germany and the Netherlands, reissues of their recorded and filmed legacy have become readily accessible on the Internet. The following narrative explores the choir's history, the nature of its music, and Jaroff's life.

Founding the Choir

The Cossacks were a cultural group known and feared for their military prowess who had served the Tsar for centuries. They joined the White Army, which opposed the Red Army of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, and surprisingly, were decisively defeated in Crimea. They were forced into exile in late 1920, and thousands were transported to a concentration camp in the village of Çilingir near Istanbul, Turkey.¹

Against all odds, it was there that the Don Cossack Choir was born. When a cholera epidemic broke out in the camp and despair deepened, the commanding officer ordered that a choir be formed to raise morale by singing for Russian Orthodox services. Serge Jaroff, a graduate of Moscow's famous Synodal School of Church Singing, was the only professional musician there and thus was ordered to conduct it.²

Jaroff assembled thirty-six of the best singers from the Cossack regimental choirs. He provided repertoire for them from memory because no scores were available, held rigorous rehearsals, and in a matter of months polished them to a high level of artistry.³ Eventually liberated in Bulgaria, the men stayed together and became the resident (although unpaid) choir at the Russian embassy's small church in Sofia, where their beautiful singing attracted large crowds.

Influential supporters encouraged the impoverished men to undertake a professional career in western Eu-

rope.⁴ These supporters set them up as a resident choir at a factory in France and provided financial support for their travel.⁵ On their way, however, they ran out of money in Vienna. They abandoned the plans for France and held a concert at Vienna's elegant Hofburg Palace on July 4, 1923.⁶ A large audience attended, mainly out of curiosity. Dressed in their ragged uniforms, the men opened with Rachmaninov's "Тебе поем" [Тебе поем], known in English as "We Sing to Thee." Initially there was silence, but soon the audience erupted into thunderous applause and enthusiastic cheers.⁷ Offers poured in from many other cities and countries, and they began touring widely in the non-Soviet world with spectacular success. New recruits, mostly from the émigré community, enabled them to continue touring for nearly sixty years. They eventually gave over ten thousand concerts. Countless newspaper reviews from the United States and Europe document their brilliant career.⁸

Serge Jaroff: Background

Unknown to the choir's fans, Jaroff was not born a Cossack. He was born March 20, 1896, to an ordinary merchant family in the small town of Makariev, a few hundred miles from Moscow, which is nowhere near the Don River. His father planned to send him to a business school, but at age ten the musically gifted boy won a scholarship to study at the Synodal School of Church Singing in Moscow, the main center of teaching for Russian Orthodox Church Music at that time.⁹ As a member of its famous choir, Jaroff participated in many performances in Russia and abroad.¹⁰ He was undoubtedly given an excellent music and general education there, but reports indicate that he had been a poor student.¹¹

After graduation in 1917, he attended a Moscow military school just as the Russian Revolution was underway. Eventually he joined a Cossack unit in the civil war even though he looked nothing like the typical formidable Cossack warrior. He had a youthful appearance, was thin, and was of very short stature, being only 4 feet 10.5 inches tall. Nevertheless, he was commissioned a lieutenant and served valiantly in a Cossack machine gun corps.¹²



Photo 1. Screenshot from the 1956 German movie *Das Don Kosaken Lied* showing the choir in concert.

Once he became a famous conductor, his strict control of his Cossack giants fascinated concertgoers. The choristers always dressed in austere Cossack uniforms like the ones they had worn in battle, and they always took the stage in strict military formation. Master showmen, they made this setup very popular (Photo 1).

The Choir's Repertoire and Technique

In their concerts and recordings, the Don Cossacks always sang in Russian. Their repertoire would have been familiar in Russia, but to their international audience, it was something new. The initial concert format worked so well that it never changed.¹⁴ First came Russian liturgical music that Jaroff adapted for classical performance by making it far more emotionally expressive than would have been considered appropriate for church services. Some devout Orthodox worshippers found fault with him for presenting their sacred music in such a manner, but in concert it was effective as clas-

sical music.¹⁵ A beloved example is Grigory Lvovsky's "Господи, помилуй" [Gospodi pomilui], "Lord Have mercy."¹⁶

Next came Russian folk and traditional music, which Jaroff arranged in the style of art songs. Their lyrical beauty was moving, and over the years several became popular in concert and on records. "однозвучно гремит колокольчик" [Odnovzuchno gremit kolokolchik], known in English as "Monotonously Rings the Little Bell," is one of the best loved.¹⁷

Last on the program were Cossack military songs. Some were serious and others light-hearted, but all were highly energetic and sometimes included wild Cossack dances.¹⁸ They provided a rousing finale to their performances, and audiences demanded encores.¹⁹ It is remarkable in the annals of reception history that such unusual musical programs captivated large audiences of professional musicians, music critics, and ordinary citizens worldwide for over half a century.

The Don Cossacks' profound expressiveness and technical brilliance combined to render barriers of language

and unfamiliar repertoire irrelevant. Constant dramatic variations in tempi and dynamics were an especially moving hallmark of their style. Their attacks, cutoffs, intonation, diction, and blend were so precise that many reviewers described their technique as perfect.²⁰ Distinguished music critic Deems Taylor stated that they were the best chorus he ever heard or ever hoped to hear.²¹ The famous German orchestral conductor Herbert von Karajan was once asked if there were any choirs that particularly impressed him. He said there was one: Jaroff's Don Cossacks. He attended all their concerts to try to figure out how Jaroff obtained his powerful, precise attacks but never succeeded.²²

The Move to America

The choir was based in Berlin and toured mostly in Europe in the 1920s, but in 1930, they began touring in the United States. Despite Jaroff's apprehensions, they were immediately a great success in various regions of the country and were eagerly invited back every year.²³ As newspaper reviews document, they performed in diverse venues, ranging from Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Opera House to school auditoriums in small cities.

Most of the choristers had fought in two wars: World War I and the Russian Civil War. Dismayed by the military buildup they witnessed in Europe in the early 1930s, which suggested that more war was imminent,²⁴ Jaroff made the dramatic decision to move the choir members to New York and to seek American citizenship.²⁵ With help from Bronson M. Cutting (1888-1935), a United States senator from New Mexico who was an ardent fan,²⁶ they gained permanent-resident status in 1936 and citizenship in 1943 and were based in New York from then on.²⁷ Members of the American choral community had ample opportunity to experience their artistry, and it was reported that they learned much from the Don Cossacks.²⁸

Jaroff as Conductor

Serge Jaroff's conducting style was unusually restrained. The singers, who numbered twenty-two after World War II, stood in two parallel lines or arcs in con-

cert and watched him intently. He used subtle hand motions and poignant facial expressions to evoke the effects he wanted.²⁹ Rachmaninov, who was a strong supporter of the choir and had mentored Jaroff early on, had advised him to conduct this way.³⁰ Fortunately, there are numerous film clips from earlier and later in his life that show him doing so (Photo 2 on the next page).

Commentators constantly marveled at his physical restraint. Far more importantly, however, Jaroff interpreted every work the choir performed in extraordinarily minute detail, which resulted in the constant expressive nuances that moved audiences so deeply.

Arrangements

Jaroff arranged most of the choir's music, and his innovations in voicings and timbre set his arrangements apart. He included falsettists³¹ to sing treble parts. This made mixed-choir repertoire from the Russian Orthodox canon possible. He stated in a rare interview that he divided the choir into falsettist, first tenor, second tenor, baritone, bass, and octavist sections, often with further divisions.³² The octavist range for which Russian choirs are famous is an octave below the normal bass range. His frequent octavist doubling of bass lines and placement of lyrical melodies in the falsettist register focused attention on his superb octavist and falsettist sections and gave the choir a signature sonority that was aesthetically very compelling.³³

Homophonic texture and basic tonal harmony typify the liturgical and secular works in the choir's repertoire. This reflects the fact that Western-influenced classical music in Russia has a relatively short history. Ukrainian-born composer Dmitry Bortniansky (1751-1825), who is best remembered for his choral works, is generally recognized as Russia's first great master of that westernized style, which he learned from study in Italy.³⁴ The choir's repertoire encompassed his works through those of nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century masters.

A notable example of the latter is Alexander Kastalsky (1856-1926), who was director of the Synodal School from 1910 to 1918 when Jaroff studied there. He championed the "New Direction" movement in Russian sacred choral music, which sought to create an au-

A TREASURE FROM THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA

thentic national style by incorporating ancient chant.³⁵ The Communist takeover sadly brought that initiative to an end.

In liturgical and secular works, Jaroff's arrangements often showcased the full choir in close harmony. In performance, the blend of the sections was impeccable. Jaroff's sound ideal was to emulate the effect of a string ensemble.³⁶ The traditions of the Synodal Choir in which he sang as a boy may have given him the idea, for the sound of the Synodal choir was said to approach that of a string quartet or choral orchestra.³⁷

Jaroff often exploited the sonority of humming, having all of his choristers hum, or having some hum while the others sang words.³⁸ This became a trademark of their style. The best-known examples are his arrange-

ments of Bortniansky's "Коль рабен наш Господь в Сионе" [Kol' slaven nash Gospod' v Sione], known in English as "How Glorious Is Our Lord in Zion."³⁹

Solo and small-ensemble passages adorned many of Jaroff's arrangements, and in the choir's secular music, choral accompaniments emulating sounds such as guitars playing, horses' hooves clattering, or soldiers marching also became a trademark of their style. Their performance of Lev Knipper's "Полюшка Поле" [Polyushka pole], "Meadowland," also called "Song of the Plains," exemplifies this.⁴⁰

Jaroff's military songs could be strident and forceful, but military songs were also where he introduced humor into his arrangements. The subjects of such songs range from celebrations of Cossack victories to



Photo 2. Screenshot from the 1956 German movie *Das Don Kosaken Lied* showing Jaroff conducting in concert.

adventures in the lives of ordinary soldiers. The music is often punctuated with sounds of loud whistling, raucous laughter, and exuberant yells. The “Song of Ataman [General] Platoff” exemplifies the celebration of a great victory against Napoleon.⁴¹

Accessing the Arrangements

Unfortunately, hardly any scores of Jaroff’s arrangements are available for perusal or performance, and the situation regarding them is complex. There is an official successor choir in Germany called the “Don Kosaken Chor Serge Jaroff,” led by Wanja Hlibka, who was the youngest of Jaroff’s choristers during the last years of his career. Hlibka now has custody of hundreds of Jaroff’s manuscripts, and since he uses them in concert, would have a proprietary interest in them.⁴²

Only two sets of Jaroff’s arrangements appear to have ever been published (listed below), and these scores are rare. According to the WorldCat database, which shows library holdings worldwide, only about fifteen libraries own copies. This author works in one of these research libraries.



Photo 3. Song of Ataman Platoff manuscript from www.russian-records.com.

Cossack Choir conducted by Serge Jaroff], ed. Issay Dobrowen. Berlin: Don Cossacks [sic] Choir, 1927.

1. *Album of Russian folk songs, from the repertoire of Don Cossack chorus under the direction of Serge Jaroff*, ed. Constantin Shvedoff. New York: C. & C. Music Printing Corp., 1938.

2. *Популярныя русскія народныя песни изъ репертуара Донскаго Казачьяго Хора регент Сергей Жаровъ*, [Popular Russian folk songs from the repertoire of the Don

It is revealing to compare the arrangements to extant recordings. In print, the arrangements look far simpler than Jaroff’s complex performance practices suggest, with few dynamic or tempo markings. A few images of his manuscripts are online and make it possible to listen with scores (Photo 3).⁴³

Such sparse written detail makes it clear that the nuances of his interpretations, which were impossible to

notate, were the key factors in turning the works into the masterpieces that enthralled their fans. It was key to the choir's long-term success that Jaroff made many new arrangements of favorite pieces and interpreted pieces differently every time they performed them.⁴⁴ Thus, he retained interest both for the choristers and their loyal audiences.

Audio and Video Legacy

Fortunately, the availability of audio recordings and videos is much different than that for scores. The Don Cossacks began making 78 rpm records in 1925, and later made many LP and 45 rpm records. There is a lengthy discography detailing them on russian-records.com, with some audio available.⁴⁵


Recently most of their records have been reissued on CDs and are available on streaming audio databases, especially Spotify and Naxos Music Library. Irina Minsky, widow of distinguished choir member Michael Minsky, has made extraordinary efforts to bring this about.

Many fans have uploaded audio files and video clips on YouTube. The Don Cossacks starred in three German feature films, *Das Don Kosaken Lied* in 1956, *Alle Tage ist kein Sonntag* in 1959, and *Mein bester Freund* in 1971; as of this writing, they are on YouTube in entirety. The choir also appeared in several German specials for German public TV in the 1960s. In these TV programs the choir moved around and deviated from the strict parallel line or parallel arc formations they always used in concert. Some full episodes and many excerpts are on YouTube.⁴⁶

Epilogue

Apart from how they are regarded in Germany, it is surprising that, as popular as they once were in the United States, the Don Cossacks would be so largely forgotten. Although he dreamed of being able to return to Russia with his choir, Jaroff was never able to do so. A resident of New Jersey, he died there in 1985 before the fall of the Soviet Union.⁴⁷

A person who was closely associated with the choir for years stated that only those who have been to a con-

cert are able to fully grasp the uniqueness of this choir, and that their recordings could only capture the sound of the choir inadequately.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, although listening to recordings or watching videos would not replicate the experience of hearing the Don Cossacks live, their recorded and filmed legacy is a remarkable repository of the choral art. For choral practitioners, access to these resources offers insight into Jaroff's methods, the nature of his choir, and the qualities that made it great. For all lovers of classical choral music who have not yet experienced them, their music is a rich treasure waiting to be discovered. 

NOTES

- ¹ Paul Robinson, *The White Russian Army in Exile, 1920–1941* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 35.
- ² Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken erobern die Welt; Don Kosaken Chor Serge Jaroff 1921–2015* (Groningen: Nederland Rusland Centrum, 2015), 28–29.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 30–31.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 33–34.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.
- ⁶ “Cossack Choir Wins Austrian Triumph,” *Tampa Tribune*, July 29, 1923, 1.
- ⁷ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 37.
- ⁸ *Ibid.* Since their initial success, many imitators have arisen, some being active to this day. Thus, Jaroff's choir is often referred to as the Original Don Cossack Choir. Knowing this helps to identify their recordings now. Some of the imitators were good. Others, however, were very poor, and their claims of nonexistent connection with Jaroff unjustly damaged his reputation. This was the reason the successor choir was founded.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*; Svetlana Zvereva, *Alexander Kastalsky: His Life and Music*, trans. Stewart Campbell (Ashgate, 2003), 127.
- ¹⁰ Sergei Bertensson and Jay Leyda, *Sergei Rachmaninoff, A Lifetime in Music* (Indiana University Press, 2001), 17, tell that his boy soprano solo greatly impressed Rachmaninov at the first public hearing of his Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.
- ¹¹ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 18.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 21.
- ¹³ “Music; Cossacks Back,” *Time Magazine* v. 16:20, November

- 2, 1931, 40.
- ¹⁴ Katharina Kucher, "Vom Flüchtlingslager in die Konzertsäle der Welt; Die Geschichte des Don Kosaken Chores," *Osteuropa* 57:5, May 2007, 62.
- ¹⁵ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 102.
- ¹⁶ Gospodi pomilui video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAPZ-ZVuBhQ>
- ¹⁷ Monotonously Rings the Little Bell video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-FdNrYYDuM>
- ¹⁸ "Don Cossack Choir Presents an Organ of Human Voices," *Albuquerque Journal*, November 7, 1934, 5.
- ¹⁹ Sterling Sorensen, "1,500 Acclaim Magnificent Singing of Cossack Chorus," *Capital Times* [Washington, D.C.], November 14, 1934, 2.
- ²⁰ "Cossack Program Termed Inspiring," *Albuquerque Journal*, November 23, 1950, 8. The choir is said to be "living up to its long-standing reputation of perfection..."
- ²¹ "World's Finest," *Globe-Gazette* [Marion City, Iowa], September 23, 1939, 4.
- ²² Herbert von Karajan and Richard Osborne, *Conversations with Karajan* (Harper & Row, 1989), 48-49.
- ²³ "Russian Chorus First Fine Arts Number at T.C.," October 23, 1939, *Denton Record Chronicle*, 3, tells how officials tried to get them back to their town for five years, but they were too busy.
- ²⁴ Richard W. Insley, "Bollofine [sic], Don Cossack Singer, Lauds America and Its Box Office Receipts," *Trinity Tripod XXXV*:4, October 18, 1938, 1-3.
- ²⁵ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 70.
- ²⁶ "Cossack Singers Are Preparing To Take Citizenship Papers," *Kokomo Tribune*, October 31, 1939, 12.
- ²⁷ Their immigration records are on Ancestry.com.
- ²⁸ Richard Irl Kegerreis, "History of the High School A Cappella Choir" (doctoral diss., University of Michigan, 1964), 74-75.
- ²⁹ Ivan Assur, Interview by Svetlana Zvereva, "About the Don Cossack Choir under the direction of S. A. Zharov," *Slovo*.
- ³⁰ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 42.
- ³¹ Although falsetrists and countertenors are technically not the same, this writer maintains that we would use the term countertenors for the singers Jaroff called falsetrists. An early article supports this: "Jaroff Cossacks Demonstrate Art," *The Gazette* [Montreal], October 7, 1947, 10, states that "the counter-tenors and deep basses" were virtuosos.
- ³² Steven West and Wassilj Flustikoff, "The Original Don Cossacks and the Music of the Don, an Interview with Serge Jaroff." *Etude LXI*: 11, November 1943: 706, 758-59.
- ³³ Editha K. Webster, "Don Cossack Chorus Thrills 2,300 with Magnificent Performance of Concert Season Here," *Sioux City Journal*, October 29, 1937: 14.
- ³⁴ Marika Kuzma, "Bortnyans'ky [Bortniansky, Dmytro Stepanovych]," *Grove Music Online*, 2001.
- ³⁵ Vladimir Morosan, *One Thousand Years of Russian Church Music* (Musica Russica, 1991), liv-lv.
- ³⁶ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 38.
- ³⁷ Vladimir Morosan, *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia* (Musica Russica, 1994), 234.
- ³⁸ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 38.
- ³⁹ How Glorious Is Our Lord In Zion video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtKX2cC2sfU>
- ⁴⁰ Meadowland video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLTFJV9HWBw>
- ⁴¹ Ataman Platoff video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFBKNBkiOiI>
- ⁴² www.don-kosaken-chor.de/don-kosaken-chor-englisch/
- ⁴³ Image of score for "Volga Boatmen" [folk song] <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=712562284216586&set=a.470218165117667> Image of score for "Gospody pomilui" by Grigori Lvovsky [liturgical song] <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=712561994216615&set=a.470218165117667>
- ⁴⁴ Assur interview.
- ⁴⁵ www.russian-records.com/search.php?search_keywords=Jaroff
- ⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CS9C82IhPE>
- ⁴⁷ "Serge Jaroff," *New York Times*, October 8, 1985, A24.
- ⁴⁸ Irina Minsky, *Vierzig Don Kosaken*, 96.



INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTORS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Portugal 2026

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

ACDA is pleased to announce Portugal as the next partner for the International Conductors Exchange Program (ICEP). In 2025, six American and six Portuguese conductors will be selected to participate in a bilateral, mutual exchange to take place in 2026. Conductors will be paired based on backgrounds and interests, and will visit each other's choral communities, sharing techniques, and learning best practices. Visits by the Portuguese conductors will be centered around the 2026 ACDA Regional conferences. U.S. conductors will host their counterparts in their local communities for region visits 3-5 days before or after their regional conference. In turn, American conductors will be hosted in Portugal in June 2026. Typical residencies are 9-10 days, and exact dates will be determined in consultation with our Portuguese partners.

ICEP is providing opportunities for the next generation of choral leaders to represent the United States as ambassadors to the world in the exchange of music, ideas, and cultures. Established in 2010 and coordinated by ACDA's International Activities Committee, the program has connected choral conductors in the United States with counterparts in Cuba, China, Sweden, South Korea, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Uruguay, Kenya, South Africa, Germany, and the Philippines. Between 2012 and 2025, over 80 American conductors have participated in the exchange program, hosting an international conductor and traveling abroad to observe and lead rehearsals and performances, present lectures and master classes, and take part in conferences and other activities.

ICEP OBJECTIVES

1) To create connections between leaders of the U.S. choral community and colleagues across the globe. 2) To forge stronger relationships between ACDA and choral associations around the world. 3) To raise the visibility and leadership role of ACDA in the global choral community.

Application Period: April 3 – May 30, 2025

SELECTION CRITERIA - EMERGING CONDUCTOR

The Standing Committee for International Activities is charged with the selection of emerging leaders of the choral profession to represent the United States. The Committee has developed the following list of criteria:

1) Is a current member of ACDA, 2) Is an active choral conductor in a professional (remunerative) position, 3) Leads choirs with a demonstrated level of excellence, 4) Exhibits a high level of human understanding, tact, and cross-cultural sensitivity, 5) Has a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 20 years in the profession

Candidates may reflect a wide diversity of interests and accomplishments (church/synagogue, community/professional choir, primary/secondary/higher education).

For more information and to apply, visit: <http://acda.org/resources/ICEP>
Application deadline: May 30, 2025

In Memoriam

Anthony T. Leach (1951-2025)



Dr. Anthony T. Leach passed away in January 2025 at the age of seventy-three. He was a life member of ACDA and professor emeritus of music and music education at Penn State University. Leach joined the faculty at Penn State in 1994 and became the second Penn State University Laureate, appointed in 2009. He was a Lions Paw honoree, received the PSU President's Award for Engagement with Students, the Forum on Black Affairs Humanitarian Award, and other awards and honors too numerous to list.

Tony created Essence of Joy and the community choir Essence 2, both of which specialize in spiritual and secular African American music. He first formed Essence in response to a request for music performance for a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. banquet in 1991. As he recalled in a 2014 interview with WPSU National Public Ra-

dio, "I said I don't have a choir, but I'll ask kids who are associated with choirs to join me." That group grew into Essence of Joy, which later became a course for Penn State students. He also founded Essence of Joy Alumni Singers, which reunited singers from across the country for performances at conferences of all types, including ACDA, Ethnomusicology, and Bent but not Broken.

His choirs performed at festivals throughout the United States and Canada as well as around the world, including England, Spain, China, and South Africa. He will long be remembered as a friend, leader, and mentor to those singers whose lives he touched at Penn State. In addition, he was a known church musician in the DC area, Pittsburgh, and at the University.

CHORAL CONVERSATIONS



A Conversation with Pearl Shangkuan

with Mary Tuuk Kuras



Dr. Pearl Shangkuan is a highly sought-after conductor, lecturer, and clinician nationally and internationally. She is the current national president-elect of ACDA, and previously served on the board of directors of Chorus America,

and as president of Central ACDA Region and Michigan ACDA. She is the chorus director of the Grand Rapids Symphony, editor of Hinshaw Music, and professor emerita of music at Calvin University. She has conducted numerous all-states and headlined several ACDA conferences. She has received awards from Michigan ACDA, Michigan YWCA, Calvin University, and an Honorary Life Member Award from the National Collegiate Choral Organization.

In 2024, you stepped down as professor of music at Calvin University. What aspect of your outstanding tenure there makes you smile most as you reflect on your work?

Taking my choirs on international tours to four continents! I have so many wonderful memories of concerts in amazing venues. But the spontaneous singing during

a tour stands out as well—visiting the Great Wall of China and singing *Lift Thine Eyes* by Felix Mendelssohn. Singing all over South Africa, including at Robben Island where Mandela was imprisoned for many years; singing in an AIDS hospice; and singing and dancing our way through airport security at the request of the airport personnel! Singing in a very poor church in the township of Soweto—a two-hour-long service in a simple structure that was their church building and yet one of the most powerful glimpses of heaven for my students and me. My students singing in a *favela* (slum) in Brazil and seeing the pride on the faces of the Brazilian children who sang for us.

Introducing my students and leading them in performing movements of the monumental *B minor Mass* by Bach. Hosting residencies at Calvin of the Bach Collegium Japan, Stephen Paulus, Moses Hogan, Dan Forrest, and bringing in guest conductors for my students to experience like Anton Armstrong, Maria Guinand, and my own teacher, Joseph Flummerfelt. Commissioning new works and bringing these to life. In all these experiences, the underlying goal of helping to broaden the minds and hearts of my students was ultimately met.

CHORAL CONVERSATIONS

Now that you are no longer at Calvin University, you are rebalancing your professional endeavors. What do you look forward to the most in this new stage of your career?

My husband, in jest, predicted (correctly) that I would be even busier after letting go of my day job. My travels for guest engagements nationally and internationally have increased significantly in recent years. I truly enjoy traveling to all different places, interacting with local choir directors, and learning about their cultures and their choral communities—appreciating the commonalities as well as each other’s struggles.

I continue to greatly enjoy my work as chorus director of the Grand Rapids Symphony and continue to grow in my work as editor of Hinshaw Music. This editor position allows me to “connect multiple dots” and have fun while at it! It gives me great satisfaction to be able to provide a platform for composers and arrang-

ers, especially those who are starting out, and creating new series for the catalog to expand our resources for choirs of all types and levels.

Your work as chorus director of the Grand Rapids Symphony requires you to prepare choruses for different styles of music and conductor expectations. How do you prepare for each production to ensure the chorus is ready to be turned over to the conductor of the production?

Not only am I preparing the symphony chorus—a dedicated all-volunteer chorus that spans a wide range of abilities and experience—to know the notes and rhythm, but I also prepare them to be very flexible and to respond to the conductor. This can be tricky, as we don’t see the conductor until the week of the performance. Except for only one time in two decades that I’ve been doing this, I have never received any advance

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information from the conductors of the productions. I study and try to figure out the different ways a conductor could approach the music artistically and historically. In studying the score, I also look at it like a conducting teacher—for example, knowing various ways a tricky transition can be conducted, explaining to the chorus, and preparing the chorus by conducting these spots in a different way each time while rehearsing them. This helps the chorus to be able to read and understand the gestures of a conductor and keeps them on their toes.

I often tell them that the greatest compliment I can receive as one who prepared them is when they “become like the regular ensemble of the conductor and are no longer mine.” I also occasionally “translate” to the chorus to help them achieve what the conductor wants in ways that they can understand and produce.

Can you share an example of a chorus production that was particularly difficult to prepare? Why was it difficult? What did you do to overcome the challenge so that the chorus “became like the regular ensemble of the conductor”?

There are two productions that stand out particularly. I still break out in cold sweat whenever I think of them! One was preparing the *B minor Mass* of J. S. Bach. I had “bowed” the choral parts in a specific way in preparation for a conductor from a distinct historical approach. The week before the concert, there was an unexpected change in artistic leadership to one with a different approach. Of all the masterworks in the choral repertory for this to happen! Once the conductor arrived and I saw the “flight plan” at the rehearsal, at each warm-up rehearsal that I had with the chorus, I “translated” and made changes in anticipation of what the conductor would want.

Because of certain assigned portions for the soloists and chorus that the first conductor had made (which the second conductor no longer wanted, and which was only rehearsed at the final rehearsal), the chorus had to learn four pages of new music within twenty-four hours of the concert! And this extended portion wasn’t run through at the compressed dress rehearsal. Things turned out very well, but we pulled it

off only because of the dedication and the quality of this chorus that was able to quickly learn and respond to this kind of dramatic change.

The other example is John Adam’s *On the Transmigration of Souls*, a difficult work that required my pulling out all the tricks I know as a chorus director and then even more to work through the very challenging portions. The ending was especially difficult rhythmically. At each rehearsal all the way to the dress rehearsal, there continued to be misalignments where things were on the border of unraveling. At the concerts, I sat white-knuckled and prayed the whole time! Thankfully, everything held together, and all went well.

In both instances, there’s a high level of mutual trust set and cultivated in the chorus environment—the trust of the chorus members that I’ve prepared them for all eventualities and my trust of the chorus members that each will perform at their very best. This goes way beyond notes and rhythm to the environment built over time of high expectations, mutual trust, and respect.

You frequently travel throughout the United States and internationally as a conductor and clinician. How do you prepare for those engagements and what steps do you take on arrival to achieve a successful experience for all involved?

To help me keep track, I create a folder for each of the engagements with the repertoire and all other pertinent details. As a guest conductor, I rely on the preparation of the singers by their respective choir directors, and their having transferred and learned with the markings that I send ahead of time. I then pace each rehearsal carefully based on what I’m hearing and how they’re responding to get the work done and quickly, keeping them engaged and not wearing them out to get to the best level of performance. Programming is fundamental. I strive to balance the levels of difficulty, styles, and moods to create both unity and variety toward an enjoyable and rewarding whole experience for the singers as well as for the audience.

How have you been able to balance your various professional endeavors, especially considering the different professional skillsets they each require?

It makes for a crazy schedule for sure and constant juggling! Time management is key. I must know my different roles clearly—as conductor, as chorus director preparing for another conductor, as editor, etc., and plan and execute accordingly. Whichever choir I stand in front of, I want them to feel that they have my full attention and that I have prepared as best as I can to provide them with a good artistic experience.

Intentionally balancing the active side of things (teaching, conducting, presenting) with silence and solitude (time to think, plan, reflect, and study) is a must. I do most of my score study while on flights, traveling with different scores that I need to learn for different concerts. Being at 30,000 feet can give one a great sense of clarity, a different perspective about the essence of the music and about one's work and life. I truly enjoy the variety of repertoire of the different choirs, both my own and for guest engagements: sacred and secular, treble to SATB chamber, large multi-movement works and premiering new works.

“ **Intentionally balancing the active side of things (teaching, conducting, presenting) with silence and solitude (time to think, plan, reflect, and study) is a must.** ”

I also enjoy the challenge of figuring out how best to teach whatever level of singers I'm working with for a particular engagement. To get them from point A to point B as efficiently and effectively as possible (especially with guest engagements where the schedule is very compressed from the time of arrival to performance) is the goal.

My professional endeavors always go in tandem with

my everyday life as a mom with a disabled child. Together with my husband, I plan for the details of our son's daily life—his schedule and activities, his restrictive diet, and for nearly a decade, his struggle with a rare blood disorder. I have learned during the harder days to be able to set the worries aside when I step on the podium. I've been strengthened and nourished by the music even as I conduct and always have that at the back of my mind when I program, hoping that it may be so for the audience as well, especially during difficult times for them as individuals.

Can you share a few artistic memories over your career that especially fill your heart?

- The long silence that lingered for minutes at the end of conducting the Grand Rapids Symphony and Chorus on *Requiem for the Living* by Dan Forrest in spring 2024. It was a collective, long moment of silent reflection that I'll cherish for a long time to come. The most poignant kind of response!
- Conducting the 300-strong ACDA National SSAA Honor Choir in Cincinnati in 2023... unforgettable! The joy of having composers featured in the program at the rehearsals to interact with the singers.
- Performing with Dan Forrest, festival chorus and orchestra, at Winchester Cathedral in England, the incredibly beautiful space, hearing the reverberation at the end of each phrase.
- Performing *Prayer of St. Francis* (among many other works) at the Cathedral of St. Francis in Assisi, where he is buried, with the composer Allen Pote in attendance.
- Each time I conduct at Carnegie Hall.
- While conducting at mass at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, the sense of awe that hit me felt like a physical sensation.

You have touched singers of all ages, audiences, and colleagues across the United States and internationally. You have also served as a tremendous role model. What message do you strive to impart in those interactions?

I never think of myself as a role model...I don't feel I'm old enough yet! I just always try to do my best wherever I go, knowing that it will impact those I am working with during that time. There's the parable in the Bible of the servants with different numbers of talents. I've always felt I have but one talent and should use it diligently and wholeheartedly as a response of gratitude to my Creator. Everywhere I go, I sense a hunger for beauty, meaning, and connectedness that I feel incredibly honored to be a part of.

It's been said to me by participants on many occasions how important it is to see an Asian American conductor and—in conducting large works—a female conductor on the podium. I see my work, especially in my ACDA leadership role, as walking alongside choir directors, encouraging and finding ways to help support their work. During the difficult years of the pandemic, as hard and exhausting as it was being a collegiate conductor, it didn't in any way compare to that of school choir directors and music teachers. At my core, I see myself as a working mom trying my best. I can appreciate how hardworking choir directors must juggle and empathize with the discouragement that sometimes comes with a lack of appreciation for their dedicated work.

If art is supposed to change us, why do you think so many choral conductors program music that simply affirms the morality of their singers and audience? (This question was supplied by the previous Choral Conversation interviewee. See “A Conversation with Donald Nally,” *Choral Journal* October 2023.)


Based on my own experience when I had a community chorus that relied on the concert intake to survive, I had to program toward a certain level of familiarity for that audience, a necessary and pragmatic matter. I would often sneak in some new music (style and con-

tent) into the program to help educate the audience and gradually broaden its taste and experience.

Another aspect I've seen especially in the recent years of global health crisis and societal upheavals is that audiences seek solace in such gatherings. Something familiar makes them feel more comfortable. I found it helpful and effective to speak a few words to the audience—not to talk down or guilt them, but to gently encourage them to expand their hearts toward something that may not be their usual perspective.

People walk in different ways and at different tempos. For some, it may feel like too slow a change; for others, too fast. And yet as a leader (in the choral realm), it's an important part of our mission to bring together as many as possible in this journey of life through the art that we share. Our work is not only teaching the elements of music but also being a persistent guide, which requires great creativity and sensitivity, and sometimes, great patience.

Please provide a question for the next Choral Conversations interviewee to answer.

Looking back at your career, what three things would you tell your twenty-year-old self? 

Mary Tuuk Kuras currently serves as CEO of MTK Practical Leadership and as a board member of Chorus America. A lifelong singer, pianist, organist, and violinist, she has also served as an executive leader in the C-Suite of Fifth Third Bancorp and Meijer Inc., and as president and CEO of the Grand Rapids Symphony. mary@mtkpracticalleadership.com

IJRCS International Journal of Research in Choral Singing

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Editorial Board: New members

ACDA's research journal, the *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing*, is pleased to announce the appointment of three new members of the Editorial Board:

Cara Bernard, University of Connecticut

Kelly Bylica, Boston University

Rhonda Hackworth, University of Mississippi

Editorial Board: Thank-you

ACDA wishes to recognize the service of Julia Shaw on the Editorial Board (2019-2024) and of Adam White as the Assistant Editor (2018-2024). Finally, we recognize the service of Patrick Freer, who served as editorial board member (2016-2017), Associate Editor (2017-2018), and Editor (2018-2024).

Call for Submissions

The International Journal of Research in Choral Singing seeks submissions. Published by the American Choral Directors Association, IJRCS is supported by a large international editorial board of scholars in historical, philosophical, qualitative, and quantitative research. Founded in 2002, the aims of the journal are to disseminate empirical research related to the art, science, and pedagogy of choral singing. Quantitative research reports should use APA format, and all others may use APA or Chicago-Turabian Style/Chicago Manual of Style. The IJRCS encourages appropriate use of sound or video files that support or illustrate research. Reviews of literature are acceptable for consideration.

Find submission details at the ACDA website (see URL below) or contact the editor at ijrcs@acda.org
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Bryan Nichols, Editor

Research Report

Bryan E. Nichols, editor

Teach Expression First! Applying Research Results to the Rehearsal

by Rebecca L. Atkins and Craig R. Hurley

Whether in the context of rehearsals or performances, one of the greatest joys for an artist and teacher is to hear the choir effectively embody the appropriate dynamics, phrasing, articulations, tone, and connection to the text, culminating in a genuine heartfelt expressive performance. Finding ways to lead students to consistently sing musically in both rehearsal and performance requires a plethora of teaching strategies.¹ Jaques-Dalcroze held the belief that students should concurrently learn rhythm, pitch, and expressive elements.² Similarly, Robert Shaw incorporated expressive elements early in the learning process by combining each element of a song (rhythm, pitch, or text, with expressivity) in various ways during rehearsals, aiming to create a precise and expressive performance.³ Both Jaques-Dalcroze and Shaw regarded all four elements (rhythm, pitch, text, and expression) of a song as equally significant contributors to the overall performance. Similarly, some choral method textbook authors suggest expression should be learned early in the song-learning sequence.⁴ However, other authors advocate rhythm, text, and pitches should be learned first, with the introduction of expression at a later stage when learning a song.⁵ With this conflicting information, we decided to run a series of studies to test the timing of adding expressive elements in song acquisition.

To explore the most effective timing on when to

introduce expressive elements, we created two variations of a pre-recorded learning sequence. The first we called an infused-expression learning sequence which incorporated expressive elements (i.e., dynamics, articulations) alongside rhythm, pitch, and text. For example, students listened to the text spoken in rhythm performed with expression, and then were prompted to echo the text in rhythm with the expressive qualities phrase by phrase. Then singers listened and echoed the text and rhythm sung on pitch with expression phrase by phrase. Conversely, what we called the post-expression sequence, choirs were introduced to rhythm, pitch, and text first, then prompted to add expression as the last step. Songs learned under the infused-expression learning sequence were performed with significantly more expression compared to those learned under the post-expression learning sequence whether singing solo⁶ or in a group.⁷

In a fourth study, a modification was made to the vocal model.⁸ The vocal model was expressive throughout the learning sequence, regardless of whether expressive elements were being emphasized or not. Surprisingly, in this study, there were no statistical difference between the songs learned, whether an infused- or post-expression sequence, though the results approached significance ($p = .059$). The mean percentage of expression ratings were higher on songs learned through the in-

fused-expression sequence compared to songs learned through the post-expression sequence. Expressive vocal modeling can be especially powerful when performed from the very beginning of the song learning sequence. Kinesthetic movement in an infused-expression sequence also improved expressive performance in sixth graders.⁹

Applications to the Choral Rehearsal

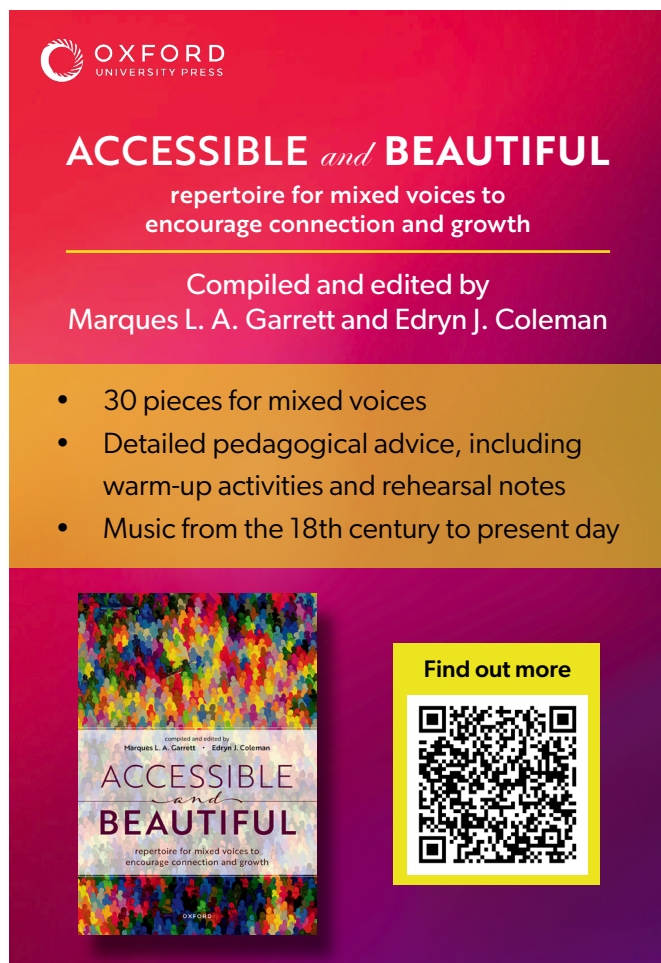
Teaching using an infused-expression approach with and without kinesthetic movements, could be utilized when teaching any song. To ensure success from all students, teachers should complete at least two successful expressive repetitions between each step as outlined below. Furthermore, asking students to evaluate what they do and hear keeps the challenge level high enough

for students who are successful the first time.

A choir exploring singing harmony but not reading notation yet could first practice identifying the four expressive elements they will perform in the round “Ghost of Tom” by sound. First, students should be able to perform expressive elements accurately in a warm-up, then be facilitated through this infused-expression sequence focused on expressive elements as they learn the song (see Figure 1 on the next page—expressive elements added).

Students will:

1. Listen to the teacher sing an expressive performance of the song.
2. Listen again and then turn to their neighbor and “Talk about things they noticed that made this song interesting and expressive.”
3. Listen to expressive model again and create a movement matching what they hear.
4. Listen again and perform the movements they created.
5. Answer questions (or turn and talk) about why they chose the movement they created and how the movement matched the sounds they heard.
6. Echo first line and movement performed by the teacher (picking a movement from a student) with expression.
7. Echo second phrase and movement with expression.
8. (Continue the rote process phrase by phrase focusing on expression.)
9. Perform the entire song with expressive elements using movements.
10. Perform the entire song with expressive elements without the movements.




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11. Perform the song with or without movements against the teacher starting later.

12. Split in two groups and perform in a round with movements and then without movements.

13. Split in three and four groups and start at different times based on success rate of two groups with or without movements as needed for success.

The next sequence is for a choir who reads notation but may become frustrated if unable to read all four elements (pitch, rhythm, pitch, and text) at one time. A focus on just one element like rhythm paired with expression creates more frequent moments of successful attempts compared to unsuccessful attempts (positive reinforcement of target skill). The lesson targets are musically important, at an appropriate skill level of difficulty, achievable quickly, and an audible change is heard by the students.¹⁰ Mastering smaller chunks suc-

cessfully rather than repeating a more difficult skill unsuccessfully may spur energy and motivation.

In the warm-ups, students practice echoing, decoding, and reading paired eighth notes, quarter notes, and dotted half notes in common time with expression (steps 1-3 below). Through the following infused-expression sequence focused on expressive elements, singers would learn the main chorus of *Hine Ma Tov* arranged by Naplan¹¹ using notation focused on musical expression (see Figure 2).

Students will:

1. Echo rhythm patterns from the song with various expressive qualities by clapping and speaking rhythm syllables.
2. Listen to teacher's expressive rhythmic patterns and decode using syllables.

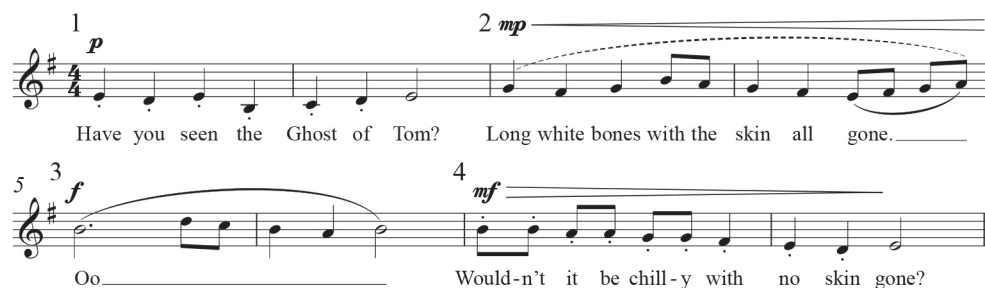


Figure 1. Traditional Round, *Ghost of Tom*.



Figure 2. Allan Naplan arr., *Hine Ma Tov*.
(articulations added)

Research Report

3. Decode various rhythm flashcards using rhythm syllables.
4. Look at Figure 1 and read the rhythms of the melody expressively.
5. Reinforce expressive rhythm reading by adding kinesthetic supports: claps on the accents and legato hands on the legato notes (as shown by a slur).
6. Listen and apply teacher feedback on expression and repeat until successful.
7. Echo sing the melody on solfa, keeping rhythmic and expressive elements.
8. Echo speak text, still including expressive elements while following notation.
9. Echo sing text, still including expressive elements while following notation.

A choir who reads music fairly well, applies solfège to octavos, and is able to hold harmonies between voice parts could be successful using the following infused-expression approach. To prime the students for the expressive elements, students would read the text only (no music notation) of *Homeward Bound* (SATB, Alfred Publishing, <https://content.alfred.com/catpages/00-7845.pdf>)¹² and discuss the meaning of the text and what expressive elements they would expect to perform with this text. Then, students follow this sequence utilizing questions and feedback interspersed throughout for successful execution of the expressive elements and musical content.

Students will:

1. Look at the solo melody line on page 7 (last page) and decide and mark where the breaths should be based on the text and melodic line. (View a score preview at the URL listed above)
2. Justify those choices with neighbors and then discuss how the tempo, meter, and dynamic changes at the end express the text and emotion.
3. Conduct and speak (legato) the rhythm with preferred counting system and breathe at chosen places (pick note up to 54-59). (repeat as needed)
4. Sing the tonic triad and starting pitch.
5. Sing the solo line on a lip buzz with piano doubling the part (if needed), breathing at the agreed upon places through m 59.
6. Sing again on a lip buzz, adding crescendo and decrescendo, adding a movement flowing across the body following crescendo, changing directions at the breath and showing the decrescendo.
7. Sing again on a lip buzz, with movement and expression, no piano.
8. Sing on an [u] vowel with the connected legato line, and all expressive markings no piano.
9. Sing on an [u] vowel in the same way with piano accompaniment.
10. Take 30 seconds to figure out the solfège in parts (m. 60-end) noting the dynamics and tempo changes.
11. Practice singing on solfège with sections in circles, adding expression and tempo changes (2 minutes).
12. Come together and sing as a group with expression on solfège with piano.
13. Compare and contrast singing the end with and without the optional breath and choose as a class.
14. Sing ending with expressive qualities on lip buzz with piano support.
15. Sing ending with expression on an [u] vowel without piano support
16. Perform entire page with expression on [u] with all expressive qualities with accompaniment.

In this short segment, students learn the main melody of the piece focused immediately on singing a legato line with correct phrasing, using the technical skill to sing the crescendo and decrescendo while executing long phrases. Solfège was not needed on the solo line and was added as a support on the harmony section. Also notice the scaffolding where either the support of the piano or movements is removed each step until students are independently singing with no help. In the next lesson, following a quick review of the expressive elements and melody on the last page, teachers could choose to add text to the last page keeping the expressive elements, or have students apply the expressive elements of the last page to the beginning of the song.

Why This Approach Works

- *More opportunities for successful repetitions and expressive feedback*

Introducing expression early in the song learning process keeps the focus on the musicality rather than the notes and rhythms, providing ample opportunities to hone expressive skills. How often do teachers hear students say they are done learning the piece because they know the notes and rhythms already? Learning the song is not the objective! Singing beautifully and artistically is the objective! The song is only the content in which students apply and practice specific musical skills and vocal technique in the same way students in a literature class identify concepts (theme, plot line, protagonist, character growth, foreshadowing, setting, etc.) and apply to each new book they read. When expression is integrated and rehearsed from the initial stages of learning, conductors have more chances to offer feedback, repetitions, and questions about expressive elements. Focusing the rehearsal on expression makes expression more important to students than learning “the song.”

- *Students learn one version and develop and practice only one motor skill*

Singing forte is a different technical skill than singing piano in terms of breath, energy, balance, and blend. Having multiple repetitions results in multiple correct

repetitions reinforcing the motor skill needed for the technique. For example, after rehearsing the entire piece mezzo forte for several weeks to learn notes and rhythms, suddenly changing to singing softly requires a different motor skill/vocal technique altogether. All the repetitions learned on notes and rhythms without expression must be “undone” and replaced with successful repetitions to develop the new technique. Expressive musicianship is fundamental to all students’ development and should not be delayed until technique is in place. “Technique exists so that it is possible to make music—therefore, it is important to remember that making music is the reason for technique, and not the reverse. This is an inseparable partnership.”¹³

How to Be Successful Using This Approach

Planning! Planning! Planning!

Choir directors often juggle multiple responsibilities, are pressed for time, and may find themselves learning a song alongside their students during rehearsals, resulting in expressive elements being added as an afterthought towards the end of the learning process. To ensure that expression is integrated from the start, directors must find time to score study and have a plan to be able to lead with expression first. Expert teachers have a clear auditory image of the piece at hand before beginning rehearsals and model beautifully and expressively throughout the rehearsal.¹⁴ While this plan may change during rehearsals, having a solid foundation is crucial.

Challenges of This Approach

- *No way can students do that many things at once!*

Small sequence steps are key to success. Teaching expression early in the song learning sequence requires students to perform multiple skills at the same time. When confident on each individual skill, performing multiple skills can be rewarding, but attempting to perform multiple skills without confidence can lead to feelings of anxiety and stress. Successful teachers have lesson targets that are positioned at a level of difficulty

that is close enough to the student's current skill level that the targets are achievable in the short term.¹⁵ It is the responsibility of the teachers to provide a balance of challenge and support for the students (see Figure 3).

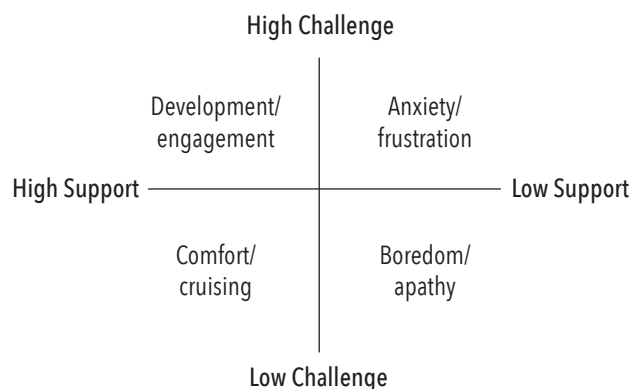


Figure 3: Teaching-learning zones based on Mariani's¹⁶ teaching style framework

Rehearsals can be derailed if students are asked to perform high level skills without the necessary support for success. Just like climbing a ladder with missing rungs, asking students to perform expressively without a proper foundation can leave students feeling exposed and unsupported. Be intentional of the scaffolding included in the sequence.

• *The performance is soon! We have to get through all the music!*

Introducing expression at an early stage may feel initially as slowing down the learning process. In rehearsal, it is more advantageous to teach smaller portions of a song with expression rather than larger sections without expression. Previously in our teaching careers, we could cover sixteen measures of a song during a rehearsal, but with the inclusion of expression, we may only get to eight measures. The good news is expressive ideas often recur throughout the piece. Therefore, students can apply the musical expression ideas learned from the initial eight measures to the subsequent 8, and transfers to future music, ultimately saving time in the overall learning process.

Conclusion

Focusing on artistry transfers to a more expressive performance which audiences enjoy and rank higher than musical skill when attending a concert.¹⁷ Unlike rhythm, pitch, or text, expression allows for individual interpretation by the director and performer. As the director of the choir, an important job is to interpret the music in a meaningful expressive way. Even if the expression markings are not in the octavo, directors have the freedom to make artistic choices. Encouraging the students to be a part of the interpretation process helps them develop into more expressive musicians.

Teaching expression first allows students to concentrate on learning the expressive version of a song thereby simplifying the rehearsal, and focuses students on artistry. Since we began incorporating expression right from the start in rehearsals, we have observed a marked difference in the expressiveness of our choirs' performances. This concept spurred our series of research studies, and the results of these studies support this initial observation.¹⁸ Through multiple expressive repetitions, our students have gained more confidence and are able to fully immerse in the moment. Infusing expression throughout the learning sequence has injected life and joy into our rehearsals that sometimes felt like drudgery. Learning only one version (an expressive one) of the song, providing more opportunities for expressive repetitions, and focusing on expressive feedback have all contributed to the improvement of artistry in our ensembles. □

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NOTES

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On the Voice

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Creating a Tapestry of Color: Mindfully Approaching Choral Tone

by Emily Frizzell

With recent emphasis on diversity initiatives and culturally responsive pedagogy in the choral classroom, choral music educators are reexamining methods for introducing diverse styles of choral music to their students. Teachers looking to instruct students in diverse repertoire may find themselves lacking the skills and experience to do so in a way that stays true to the style in question. Therefore, the exploration of respectful methods of appropriate performance practice is ongoing.¹

Every individual style of music is unique. Texture, instrumentation, historical period, and harmonic progression are some of the defining characteristics of a musical style.² In choral music, one of the most salient stylistic characteristics is the choral tone of the singers. Gospel, spirituals, jazz, country, and blues are all styles of music that developed in the United States, yet they all require a unique vocal tone production. Singing any of these styles of music in a choral setting requires authenticity to the distinctive style. With so many unique styles of music from around the world now more readily accessible than ever before, choir teachers looking to skillfully teach diverse repertoire have their work cut out for them. Some understanding of choral tone production techniques from various cultural and stylistic

perspectives is necessary to effectively produce authentic choral performance practice across musical styles.

The purpose of this article is to share information and strategies for teachers beginning to explore non-classical styles of choral singing, including contemporary Western styles and styles from around the world. We will begin with a brief discussion on the benefits of programming music of diverse styles, after which we will review the barriers to programming in diverse styles, including the preservice educational experience of choir teachers in the United States. The article will conclude with practical applications for choir directors looking to empower their students through a more comprehensive education in choral tone.

Benefits of Programming Diverse Styles of Music

To understand the value of studying diverse choral tone practices, choral directors must first explore the value of programming music from various cultural backgrounds. The United States national standards direct choral music educators to relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical contexts, providing students with opportunities to demonstrate

an understanding of relationships between music, other disciplines, and their daily lives.³ These standards are used to create choral music curricula and textbooks, which can then be referenced by teachers when planning lessons.

Choral music educators who program music of diverse styles see the intrinsic value of providing their students with a range of choral experiences. Additionally, including music from cultures represented in the ensemble can provide many unique opportunities. For example, students from the represented culture can take on leadership roles in teaching music and sharing their culture with their peers.

Choral styles outside the classical singing norms can also prove beneficial to students. A few examples are contemporary a cappella, gospel, and barbershop. Contemporary a cappella is touted as an effective means of teaching independent musicianship and nurturing students' artistic expression.⁴ Gospel music, traditionally taught by rote, provides inclusivity and community for musicians of various music-reading abilities.⁵ It can also be a safe place for students to practice improvisation and singing with spontaneity and a sense of freedom.⁶ Barbershop harmonies require impeccable intonation to achieve the desired characteristic ring.⁷ Regardless of the style, all choral music has something to offer.

Barriers to Programming Diverse Styles of Music

Although there are numerous benefits to teaching music in diverse styles, teachers face barriers when endeavoring to teach music in styles that may be unfamiliar to them. In Stefanie Cash's 2019 survey, teachers self-reported their greatest perceived barrier is a fear of misrepresenting foreign cultures.⁸ Perceived barriers also included difficulty accessing authentic arrangements and text pronunciation guides. Additionally, teachers expressed concern about students' vocal health and interest in or maturity with unfamiliar styles of music.

Vocal health concerns may be further barriers to teachers' programming of diverse repertoire. There has long existed a perception amongst vocal music professionals that singing in nonclassical styles can be unhealthy; however, there is little evidence to support that there is one optimal singing technique.⁹ Theoretically, vocalizing in any style could be done in unhealthy ways if singers unknowingly employ unhealthy singing habits. Similarly, arguments exist that singing in unfamiliar styles can be damaging to the voice since singers haven't been sufficiently trained in the unfamiliar style and, therefore, lack the specialized knowledge of its practices.¹⁰ While there may be validity to this particular concern, its mere existence is further evidence that choir directors should be training in and familiarizing their choristers with various singing styles.

Diverse Music Styles in Choral Music Teacher Education

The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) handbook stipulates that undergraduate music programs develop "increased understanding of musical achievements from various analytical, historical, and cultural perspectives [and] musical perspectives informed by studies of various cultures and historical periods."¹¹ However, not all American choral music education programs are the same, and with so much content to cover, they may not fully prepare preservice music educators to teach diverse styles of music to their future students. Choral music education programs may not require courses like vocal pedagogy or choral literature, and even the ones that offer such courses may



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focus primarily on Western classical choral music.¹²

Therefore, some undergraduates may only learn how to sing in non-Western languages and styles by doing so in choral ensembles or applied voice lessons. This can be problematic, as some choir directors may focus the majority of rehearsal and performance time on music from the dominant culture.¹³ Additionally, many applied voice teachers primarily focus on bel canto-style singing with their students. This tendency to focus on what is most familiar can result in a gap in knowledge, contributing to the perpetuation of ignorance, transfer of misinformation to students, or even inappropriate or offensive performance practices of music from cultures not native to the ensemble.¹⁴

Tone production of the ensemble is one specific aspect of performance practice in choral music that can be particularly delicate. When music styles of a community reflect the diverse cultures within that community, disparate ideas about performance practices, like considerations regarding choral tone, can exist.¹⁵ Directors may have preconceived notions of what constitutes “good” tone. How can choral directors be expected to educate their singers in authentic tone production across a variety of music styles when they have not been wholly educated in it themselves?

Implementing Stylistically Appropriate Choral Tone in Diverse Music Styles

How singers approach nonclassical styles depends on the traditional style and its historically appropriate performance practices. Since choir directors typically spend four or more years in college studying primarily bel canto-style singing and the Western choral tradition, there are many vocal techniques to which they haven't been exposed. For instance, they are trained in maintaining a low larynx and elongating vowels—great for singing Palestrina and Verdi, but not always the best tools for singing in styles that require variations of belting. Many belting styles, for example, require the larynx to be raised and the mouth to be spread more horizontally to achieve a brighter vowel.¹⁶

In an attempt to support choir directors as they introduce diverse repertoire to their choristers, here are three ideas for developing stylistically appropriate and healthy tone production across various styles of singing.

They are intended to serve as a quick and easy-to-implement starting place for teachers interested in branching out into diverse styles of repertoire.

1. Share Characteristic Vocal Models with Your Students.

Singers must have an impression of the desired vocal sound before they can effectively produce the sound.¹⁷

- When introducing new styles of singing to your ensembles, play recordings of ensembles and soloists native to the style. When possible, bring in guest artists or friends who are experienced in the style to present, model, and teach. College professors and local voice teachers can be great resources as models of vocal tone for new and diverse musical programming.
- Listen to *several* vocal models within a style—not just one—so that the stylistic characteristics, rather than the individual singer's or choir's characteristics, become familiar to the ensemble.¹⁸
- In the same vein, provide opportunities for your students to listen to more songs in the style than the one your choir may be performing. Diversifying the singers' aural experiences may contribute to a more efficient learning process when introducing diverse repertoire.¹⁹ The more familiar they are with a style, the more likely they are to produce the characteristic sounds with ease.

2. Incorporate Diverse Foundational Vocal Production Skills into Warm-Ups.

Students who spend the entirety of warm-ups developing their classical voices cannot be expected to healthily, readily, or appropriately sing anything other than the classical style. When students practice using resonators and articulators in various ways, they are more likely able to imitate the differences between tone production techniques. Allow time for practicing nonclassical tone production early in the learning cycle and early in the rehearsal to reinforce new habits that could benefit students as they learn new styles of music. Once they are familiar with these sensations, they can recall them when needed in rehearsal and apply them to the diverse music styles they are learning.

Here are some specific elements of tone that can

vary with the style of the piece and some exercises for practicing each:

- **Nasality** can be appropriate in certain styles of singing. Since nasality is controlled by the soft palate, explore the spectrum of nasality with your students by raising and lowering the soft palate during vocal warm-ups.²⁰ Students can try yawning to feel the soft palate lifting (while being careful not to overextend the jaw during the yawn). Another common technique is to pinch the nose closed while singing a pitch. If there is nasality in the tone, the sound of the voice will change when the nose is pinched; if there is no nasality, the sound will not change.²¹

- Many teachers already implement techniques to help students **blend vocal registers**, but these techniques can be particularly useful when teaching music that emphasizes the use of singers' less-developed registers.²²

Try using exercises like sirens that start high in the range and work down to bridge the gap(s) between registers.²³ It can also be helpful to implement a “speech-to-singing” routine, in which students speak the text of a piece using increasingly higher dynamics until they are at the *forte* level and then switch to speech-singing at varying dynamic levels.²⁴ These exercises can help singers become more familiar with all areas of their voice rather than only the registers used for classical singing styles. A soprano who primarily sings in her head register, for example, will become more experienced in using mixed and chest registers, which could support her in singing various styles of music, like contemporary commercial, gospel, or jazz.

- Varied methods of **vocal onset** are used across musical styles. In vocal warm-ups, try having students sing the syllable “ha” to sensationalize a breathy onset, “uh” to sensationalize a glottal onset, and [a] to sensational-

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ize a coordinated onset.²⁵

- For maximum intelligibility, Western contemporary popular and musical theatre styles tend to emphasize the **speechlike pronunciation of vowels**.²⁶ Moving the “hump” of the tongue more forward, like in speech, can increase intelligibility and provide the brighter sound these styles require.²⁷ Provide students with opportunities to try vowel modification exercises, particularly those that involve intentional tongue movement, to help students become aware of the sensations that simultaneously alter the vowel and *brightness* of the tone.

- A lowered larynx may be best for singing in classical styles, but it is not the only option. **Varying degrees of raised laryngeal placement** can contribute to healthy and stylistically appropriate tone production in contemporary and some non-Western styles of singing.²⁸ When I first learned this concept, I was confused because it conflicted with what I had learned in all my years of vocal training. Working with a brilliant teacher, I learned how to be flexible with my larynx to achieve the desired tone across different styles and was amazed at how quickly I learned to access parts of my voice that hadn’t previously been developed.

To begin exploring laryngeal placement with students, try having them gently rest a hand on their throat to feel the larynx move up and down with swallowing and yawning to become familiar with the sensations associated with laryngeal placement. Then play around with how it feels to sing with a raised larynx. I suggest starting with the syllable “yeah” on descending pentascales, rearticulating on each pitch, and sliding through all the vowel sounds. “Yeah”—or “nyeah” if that works better—allow for nasality, forward placement, and horizontal spread of the mouth, which can facilitate healthy singing with the larynx raised.

- The easiest way to recreate a singing style is to “put your face in the right place.”²⁹ While classical singers anchor the larynx and relax the tongue and jaw, many high belters jut out their jaw, ramp their tongue, and raise their cheeks.³⁰ Of course, these specific techniques aren’t for every style or every singer, but it is noteworthy that **facial expressions** can help put the

larynx in the right place for the desired tone production. It could be helpful to watch videos of professional choirs of differing cultural or stylistic backgrounds to note and mimic their facial expressions while singing. Encourage your students to try out various facial positions when singing warm-ups so they can actively feel the sensations associated with different styles of singing.

3. Develop a System.

While many choir directors involve themselves in the choral network by attending professional development conferences and participating in professional learning communities, it can be challenging for them to take the time needed to actually implement the suggestions from experts in the network.³¹ Choir directors are already stretched thin between score study, fundraising, after-school rehearsals, performances, and all the administrative tasks involved in teaching.³² How can choir directors go about appropriately and thoroughly educating choir students in a variety of tone practices without adding significantly more to their already full plates?

- Save concert programs, professional development session handouts, repertoire guides, repertoire suggestions, slide shows, recordings, presenters’ contact information, and any other useful resources.


- While you’re sitting in professional development sessions, scan any handouts and other resources with a scanning app on your phone (JotNot, for example).

- Compile the resources you collect to make them more readily accessible when planning time is limited. Keep all resources in one easily accessible place online (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox), on your computer desktop, or even in your desk drawer. That way, you may be more likely to put these valuable resources to use in meaningful ways when teaching your students about choral tone in diverse styles or anything else new, for that matter!

Conclusion

It is imperative to recognize that certain practices in choral tone are appropriate in certain contexts. Choir directors and students may have diverse backgrounds

in music, so it is likely that some styles of music will be unfamiliar to the director, some students, or all involved. Teachers who lack background in certain choral tone practices will likely need guidance as they become equipped to teach choral music from diverse stylistic backgrounds.

This article is meant to be a starting point, and these suggestions are intended to help choir directors begin to explore varied tone production techniques that could be useful in teaching music of styles outside the bel canto realm. There are many other practical steps choir directors can take to inform teaching practices in choral tone. Following research-based suggestions for choral tone development in various styles can open the door to a world of diverse repertoire for choral teachers and students. Facilitating students' exploration of all registers and placements in their voices is quite possibly the most important mechanism for guiding them through any unfamiliar stylistic territory. The more familiar choristers are with all parts of their voice and how to use them, the more easily they can comfortably and healthily produce sounds needed for diverse styles of music. 

Additional Resources

- Theodore Dimon, Jr., *Anatomy of the Voice: An Illustrated Guide for Singers, Vocal Coaches, and Speech Therapists* (North Atlantic Books, 2018).
- National Association of Teachers of Singing: Science-Informed Voice Pedagogy Resources: https://www.nats.org/cgi/page.cgi/Science-Informed_Voice_Pedagogy_Resources.html
- Summer Institutes and Workshops, such as:
 - Shenandoah University's CCM Vocal Pedagogy Institute: <https://www.ccmstitute.com/>
 - Westminster Choir College's Voice Pedagogy Institute: <https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-arts-sciences/westminster-choir-college/programs-opportunities/voice-pedagogy-institute>

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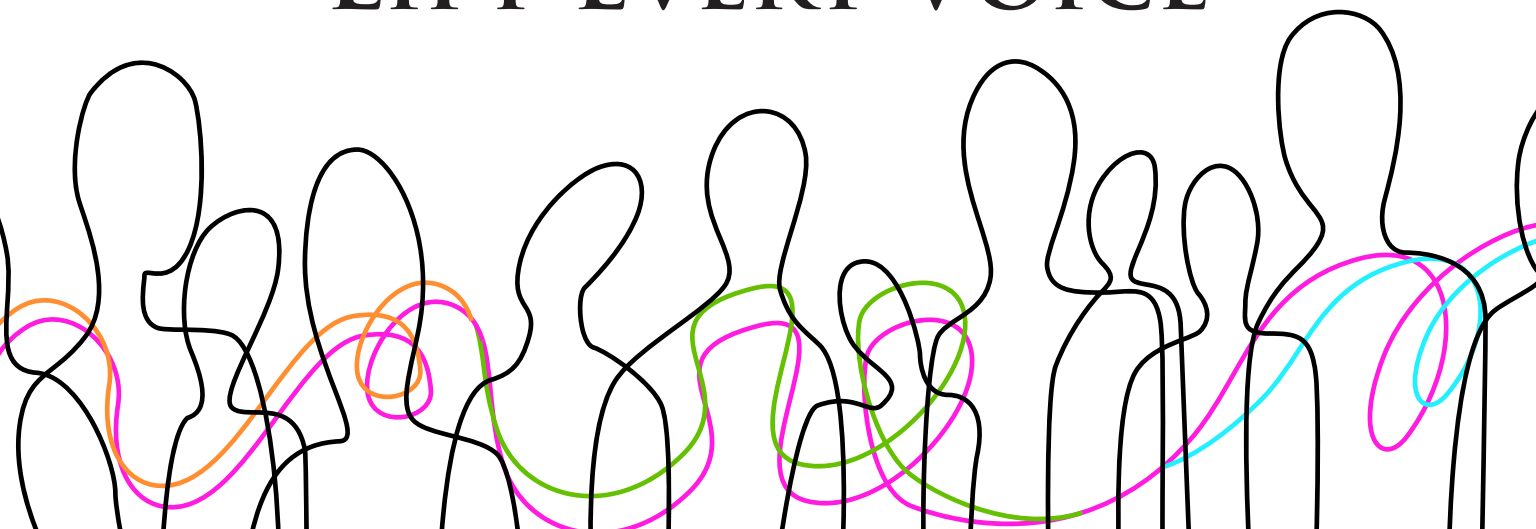
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LIFT EVERY VOICE



Accessible and Beautiful: Reflections from Our 2023 ACDA National Conference Insight Session

by Edryn J. Coleman

When we were invited to present an insight choir session at the 2023 National Conference, I knew it was an incredible opportunity to showcase the hard work of our students and the diversity of our choral program within the overall school community at Oakland Mills High School in Columbia, Maryland. Our choir reflects a rich tapestry of backgrounds and cultures and embodied the 2023 Conference theme, “A Place of Belonging.”

The Oakland Mills community is among the most diverse school communities within the Howard County, Maryland, Public School System with 80% minority enrollment: 44.4% Black, 20.8% Hispanic, 19.7% White, 7.2% Asian, and 7.7% two or more races. The ethnic percentages of the singers reflect the diversity of our school and the community at large. Our singers are Christian, Muslim, atheist, and open members of the LGBTQIA+ community. At a time when people who felt unseen were given a voice, I felt strongly that the timing was right and that our choral program was the physical manifestation of the conference theme through our collaboration and representation.

Through perseverance and dedication, our students demonstrated that *every* choir, regardless of perceived obstacles, has a place at ACDA. Their success is a pow-

erful reminder that diversity in choral music is not just important—it is essential. This experience reinforced my belief that all choirs have something valuable to offer. My hope in documenting this journey is to inspire others to share their own stories and take the challenge to submit a proposal for the next regional or national conference session themselves, thereby engaging with the broader choral community.

Session Structure and Goals

Through a multi-faceted experience that was part reading session, part teaching session, all within the context of an honest conversation, the overall goal of our session was to contribute to our diverse choral community in the following ways:

- 1) Address the need for more accessible SATB/SAB choral music that offers multiple opportunities for building and teaching music skills and an impactful performance experience.
- 2) Address the need for more diverse music composed and arranged by minoritized choral musicians.



3) Address the need to create a place of belonging in the choral space that supports the social and emotional needs of every ensemble member.

Through our session, titled “Accessible and Beautiful: SATB/SAB Music by Minority Composers/Arrangers,” we sought to share with attendees a body of repertoire that may potentially serve them in their teaching contexts. We chose to structure the session in a sequential format for each of the six selections: performance, discussion of the piece, followed by singer perceptions. Each piece was performed by the Oakland Mills singers along with the audience in a reading session-style format.

After singing each selection, I guided session participants through the points of accessibility for teaching, including pedagogical tools and potential challenges. Lastly, the Oakland Mills High School choral students shared their perceptions as they related to belonging in choir through their personal connections to the selected repertoire. These insights sometimes encompassed storytelling that related to engagement with the text, how rehearsing the music brought the singers closer to each other, and specific elements in the process that fostered deeper connection and belonging.

Making a Decision and Navigating Insecurities

Although it may be a daunting task to present a session at a national conference in front of peers, my advice is for everyone to consider adding your voice to the important conversations happening in our profession. So many of us choral musicians have wonderful ideas to share, but the thought of presenting in front of an audience of professional colleagues can be intimidating. And indeed, it can be. However, there are so many important messages for all of us to share with one another in the spirit of uplifting the profession and engaging meaningfully with our beloved choral art. Although it was a risk I undertook with trepidation, my students and I are so much richer for it.

When structured carefully, I believe that the choral rehearsal is a magical, experimental place where relationships of trust are formed between conductor and

choir. For me, being in the classroom with students while working together and finding what techniques work best for our ensemble is a fun and enjoyable process. It is in these spaces where we discover those “tricks that click” that develop and become defined across time. Teachers and students in the classroom are all learning together, every day. I have always enjoyed the rehearsal process just as much (and sometimes more) than the actual performance. Therefore, the opportunity to present the insight choir session was well suited for my musical goals. It was neither exclusively an interest session nor concert performance but the melding of both.

Making the decision to present this session came with a plethora of human emotions and insecurities. “Am I smart enough to talk to a room full of choral colleagues?” “Are we good enough to sing in a room of other choral conductors at ACDA?” And generally, “Am I doing this right?”

There have been times at ACDA conferences when I have witnessed other teachers commenting about not feeling a sense of belonging or even feeling welcomed at all. The content of many of these comments are the challenges in some schools’ finances, not being able to afford the experience of singing at a conference, and comments expressing that the sound or style of their specific ensemble would not be seen as “ACDA-worthy.” Comments like those sadden me, although I, too, have felt that way. This session was intended for all of those unheard and marginalized voices who felt as if their choir didn’t belong at ACDA! Insecurities need not necessitate inaction. As the saying goes, “Anything worth having is worth working for!”

The first thought after deciding that “I am going to do this!” was, “Now, what am I going to do?” That surely sounds comical, but it was true for me. I felt very deeply that my school program was emblematic of the conference theme (“A Place of Belonging”), which was my driving motivator to submit the application. I had to ask myself many hard questions, giving serious thought to what we could offer in this style of session, for example: “What routine(s) or procedures have I infused with my music teaching that yields positive results in our classroom?” I wanted to present a session that would be as impactful, inclusive, and encompassing as the conference theme itself.



Creating a Master Plan

What is it that choral folks need? I was still searching for that innovative “thing” that would benefit every colleague who attended the session. As choirs began to return to in-person rehearsals, many directors personally shared with me that their ensembles had learning gaps and/or were smaller. To me, this was a sound pedagogical reason to look for accessible music. In addition, many conductors and singers alike are looking for more composer/arranger diversity in the music they perform. With those ideas in mind and much soul-searching, I set my sights on a choral reading session using my school choir as the demonstration ensemble. Rather than a reading session in the traditional format, however, I sought something original and innovative. This brought me to the idea of a hybrid reading session with three main goals for each attendee.

- 1) Provide choral colleagues with accessible, voice-specific repertoire for SAB/SATB ensembles that not only provides foundational teaching examples but also provides the singers with a successful and beautiful performance.
- 2) Provide choral colleagues with accessible repertoire that is composed and arranged specifically by persons of color.
- 3) Provide choral colleagues with a live demonstration of students performing the music while showing a community of trust built between teacher and students through student testimonials and real-time responses reflecting their connection to the music during the session.

So, the plan was formed. In our Insight Session, participants would engage in this hybrid session that was part-reading session, part-concert session, with honest and direct conversation with the students. Choir members would share with the audience how they connected with the selected repertoire to find a place of belonging in our school choir by linking their thoughts and feelings to the music performed. Hearing students express what belonging meant to them in relation to being in a choir could provide a pathway for ACDA participants who wanted to remodel or rebuild the sense of belonging in

their own choral communities.

With the plan in place, we submitted the application, and many nervous months later, the acceptance arrived via email. The sheer joy and feelings of accomplishment were real and intense. Our choir and school community were elated. Our students felt celebrated and excited. But, once the initial excitement from being accepted subsided, reality set in. We needed a financial plan, as the trip to Cincinnati was going to be expensive. Additional finances were required for meals, lodging, and transportation, and much more to get us there. There were so many days that I doubted myself. Many days I left school thinking, “What have you done to yourself? What made you think you could be impactful?” Those were the feelings that questioned whether I belonged. I ignored them and kept forging ahead. In my mind I knew that what we presented in our session would serve a greater purpose.

Considering Financial Responsibilities

After setting aside those concerns and insecurities, I immediately began searching for hotels and working to secure the best price for transportation. I knew that a few parents could afford the cost outright, but for many it would be a larger but tenable burden they would struggle to carry. I also knew that other students just would not have the financial means to support this opportunity. This meant we needed to employ some form of fundraising.

I knew that I needed to find lodging at the least expensive hotel. I began to do my research and found an affordable hotel in Kentucky that was a ten-minute bus ride across the bridge from the Cincinnati Convention Center. Success! After booking our rooms, I looked to secure the charter bus. Once all the logistics had been handled for my school system and approved, it was now time to start gathering the funds to pay for everything.

Through public giving, we raised all of the funds required to make this trip a reality. It was difficult to believe we did that within a six-week time frame. What an enormous gift and privilege. Through the generosity of so many people, no student in our choral program had to pay for transportation or lodging. Now we could direct our focus to preparing musically for our Insight Session.

Presenting the Session

Presentation Day came quickly. I knew that my first goal and joy was to thank the many people in the audience who made financial contributions to assist us in making this trip happen. I wanted people to know how appreciative we were for the support we received.

We presented two sessions that day. We had a few hiccups, but the students were actively engaged and dedicated to doing their best. One of the most impactful moments in each Insight Session was when choristers were asked to give their personal testimonials on how they connected to the repertoire and how the repertoire helped to create a place of belonging for them. Students were not coached on their personal reflections or on how they should connect to each song so that discussion could be organic and somewhat spontaneous. They were, however, asked to keep notes about which songs they best connected to and, if they were willing, share those thoughts in the session with the audience in an honest and sincere manner. The students truly felt that was one of their favorite moments. As their teacher, I agreed. The personal element added a layer of meaning that was critically important.

Reflections

Once we returned from our travels, we made time to reflect on the overall experience. The students felt as though they “left their mark on ACDA,” as one student said. They were overwhelmed with audience support

and responses. They were equally proud of themselves. Then I asked them to share their most memorable moment from the session. Without hesitation, they all replied, “The Jason Max Ferdinand Concert!” I was both surprised and excited. After all our personal preparation and performance, I was certain their first thoughts would be to reflect on their own performing experience. The most memorable moment for them, however, was a performance by another ensemble. That made me so proud of them for broadening their experiences in choral listening. Students find their musical inspiration from a myriad of influences.

I hope you consider applying to present at the next regional or national conference. No matter whether sight-reading tools, vocal pedagogy tips, or the blueprint on how to build the best booster program, if you have something to share, trust yourself and be brave! You don’t know what will happen until you try.

Table 1 shows the list of the selections presented in the session with points of accessibility. We hope that your students will have a meaningful experience singing and learning these pieces, as we did. ■

Edryn J. Coleman, a student-centered educator, teaches choir and piano at Oakland Mills High School and choral methods courses at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, while passionately advocating for accessibility in choral literature and the diversity of composers performed.

Table 1: Repertoire Selections Presented in the Session

Title	Composer	Publisher	Voicing	Points of Accessibility (teaching and learning)
JAM!	Tracy Wong	Graphite Publishing	SSA, SAB	<p>Shared unison beginning theme between all voice parts (mm. 1-18)</p> <p>Uncomplicated rhythmic figures throughout the selection</p> <p>Supportive ostinato in the Baritone line (mm. 19-22)</p> <p>Accessible vehicle for singing non-English text</p>



Music of Life	B. E. Boykin	Oxford University Press	SSA, SAB	<p>Fully accompanied to support overall performance with limited vocal ranges</p> <p>Unison beginning theme with all voices at the beginning (mm. 1-8)</p> <p>Individual lines highlight in solo form for solo-sectional singing (mm. 19-20)</p> <p>Accessible method for teaching compound time</p>
O Magnum Mysterium	Evan Ramos	Carl Fisher/ BriLee Music Publishing	SATB, SSA, SAB, TTB	<p>Unison beginning pitch for entire ensemble to start sections with limited vocal ranges</p> <p>Homorhythmic movement with pulse-driven uncomplicated rhythmic figures throughout</p> <p>Accessible vehicle for singing non-English text and pure vowels</p> <p>Largely diatonic allowing for solfege use in learning</p>
Sing Out, My Soul!	Marques L. A. Garrett	Beckenhorst Press	SATB, SSA	<p>Fully accompanied to support overall performance</p> <p>Unison singing of the main theme shared across all sections and call-and-response of the theme between upper and lower voices (mm. 16-28, 40-44)</p> <p>Homorhythmic movement with pulse-driven uncomplicated rhythmic figures</p>
TaReKiTa	Reena Esmail	Oxford University Press	SATB, SSAA, TTBB	<p>Unison beginning pitch for the entire ensemble with uncomplicated rhythmic figures throughout</p> <p>Unison shared theme between dual voices (mm. 17-30) in addition to being an accessible</p> <p>Onomatopoeic text syllables provide an accessible avenue for performing non- English text</p>
The Word Was God	Rosephanye Powell	Gentry Publications	SATB, SATB-divisi, SSAA, TB/TTB/TTBB	<p>Written with optional accompaniment and limited vocal ranges</p> <p>Shared homorhythmic movement shared between soprano/alto and tenor bass voices throughout</p> <p>Pulse-driven rhythmic figures with strong ostinato figures shared with all voices throughout the selection</p>

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ACDA Archives at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign: Not-So-Hidden Treasures

by Hilary Apfelstadt

In January 2022, the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, housed at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), acquired archival material from the American Choral Directors Association's (ACDA) national office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Prior to that time, I served as ACDA's interim executive director from September 2020 to September 2021, and one of my responsibilities was to help direct the disposition of materials housed in the national headquarters. Not only were they taking up valuable space, but they were somewhat inaccessible to researchers. It occurred to the Executive Committee at the time that at least some of the holdings should be in a university library where they would be safely stored yet accessible to people interested in the materials.

In addition to records of national conferences and correspondence with regions, as well as multiple copies of past *Choral Journals*, ACDA had received items from the estates of outstanding choral leaders such as Elaine Brown, Walter Collins, Harold Decker, Colleen Kirk, Robert Shaw, and Fred Waring, among others. Among the documents were examples of teaching materials such as syllabi for conducting and choral literature courses, marked scores used for personal analysis and teaching purposes, copies of concert programs, and performing editions. Looking at the materials in person provides fascinating insights into the minds of some of the American choral profession's leaders from

many decades ago, and holds research potential for contemporary scholars interested in the history of our field and, in particular, the musical approaches of these luminaries.

When I started working at ACDA in September 2020, the archives were housed on the second floor of the national office building in Oklahoma City. At one point we had a full-time archivist, Dr. Christina Prucha, now head of collection services at the University of Portland Library, who did a wonderful job cataloging and organizing the materials. It was she who provided the index we shared with the University of Illinois archivist, Scott Schwartz, when we proposed sending them to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and that index proved very helpful. After Christina left ACDA, there was no full-time archivist hired, and the work was absorbed tangentially into the jobs of other employees. We continued to acquire materials from conferences, issues of the *Choral Journal*, and occasional donations, but without one person overseeing things, the archives were in limbo of sorts.

As a former member of the Research and Publications Committee, I was determined that we not lose valuable archival materials, and in October 2020, sought the advice of Dr. Marvin Latimer, the author of *Excellence in Choral Music: A History of the American Choral Directors Association* (Hinshaw Music Pub.), and Dr. John Silantien, then chair of the Research & Publica-

tions Standing Committee. Dr. Latimer suggested some materials could be digitized, some disposed of (i.e., duplicates), and others donated to a university library. We also consulted with Dr. Christina Prucha. Dr. Latimer recommended we invite Dr. Silantien to Oklahoma City to examine the archives and help us decide how to manage the holdings. That visit took place in April 2021, resulting in recommendations for what could be shredded (e.g., outdated financial records), what should be saved in the national office (e.g., materials related to ACDA conference history), and what should be saved in historical archives (e.g., materials donated by well-known choral musicians such as Walter Collins and Elaine Brown).

We decided to keep the Division (now “Region”) Collection and the National Conference Collection in Oklahoma City, and to move materials pertaining to specific choral conductors and conducting pedagogy to the University of Illinois. Dr. Harold Decker, national president of ACDA from 1966 to 1968, founded the country’s first doctoral program in choral conducting there in 1958.¹

It seemed the most appropriate site to house the ACDA archives; so, with the help of Dr. Andrea Solya, now director of choral activities at UIUC, I began discussions with Scott Schwartz, director and archivist for music and fine arts. Because of the level of organization already existent in the archives (thanks to Dr. Prucha), the proposal received a positive review, and by January 2022, the materials were on their way. I am grateful to the work that Dr. Brent Ballweg, then associate director of ACDA, did to facilitate the move.

The Collection

Once the materials arrived in Illinois, Scott Schwartz and his assistants had considerable work to do to integrate the materials into the collection there. Space constraints mean that not everything is on site; when someone wants to see something in the collection, one must make a formal request online so the materials can be retrieved and brought to the Sousa Archives space on campus. That fact is clearly indicated on the website. There are two ways to access a description of the materials, either through the ACDA website (www.acda.org) or by going directly to the UIUC site. On the ACDA website, look for “archives collections” under the “Re-

sources” tab for a complete description of the holdings and a link to the University of Illinois archives website.² Scan the QR code to visit the digital archives.



On this website, the description of the collection reads as follows:

Consists of correspondence, programs, lectures, photographs, research files, newsletters, newspaper clippings, sound recordings, meeting minutes, awards, publications, music scores and parts, and personal papers documenting the careers of major American choral directors and leaders of the American Choral Directors Association between the 1950s and 2000.

Detailed Description

Record Group 1:
Harold A. Decker Papers and Recordings,
1902–2009

Record Group 2:
Colleen J. Kirk Papers and Sound Recordings,
1949–2003

Record Group 3:
Russell Mathis Papers,
1960–1977

Record Group 4:
L. Stanley Glarum Papers and Audio Recordings,
1930–1977

Record Group 5:
Morris D. Hayes Papers and Realia,
1956–1991

Record Group 6:
Elwood Keister Papers,
1958–1995

Record Group 7:
Ferenc Farkas Collection,
1933–2001

Record Group 8:
Charles C. Hirt Papers,
1923–2001

Record Group 9:
Walter S. Collins Papers,
1940–1996

Record Group 10:
Elaine Brown Music and Papers,
1880–2005

Record Group 11:
Fred Waring Collection,
1937–1997

Record Group 12:
F. Melius Christiansen Choral Scores,
1918–1954

Record Group 13:
Robert Shaw Collection,
1954–2005

Record Group 14:
Robert and Ellis Snyder Choral Library
and Personal Papers,
1935–1999

Record Group 15:
Small Collections,
1893–2006

Each group number on the website includes a link, which leads to a very detailed list of contents of boxes and their folders. For example, clicking on the link for “Record Group 15” yields the following information:



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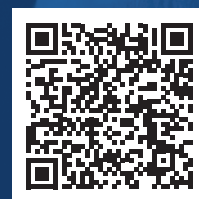
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Following this is a list of materials in each series.

Collectively, the ACDA archives comprise a wealth of information about leading choral conductors who developed the profession throughout the country—conductors, teachers, advocates, leaders—and a rich resource for choral researchers. When I had the opportunity to examine materials in depth, I was fascinated to examine score markings of Elaine Brown, for example. In 1948 she founded The Singing City in Philadelphia; her goal was to form an integrated community choir for avocational singers. Everyone was welcome

regardless of race, religion, or gender. Ms. Brown was a pioneer, both as a female conductor, and also as someone championing diversity and inclusion long before it became a collective goal of our profession. On her scores, she wrote the number of syllables in phrases, a strategy that clarified the phrase structure; she showed phrases with simple brackets and arcs; she included contextual information about the composers and the titles; she added some dynamic shadings and harmonic detail. She included word-by-word translations for foreign languages. Everything she wrote on the scores served the purpose of highlighting musical detail and showed her meticulous thinking process.³

Charles Hirt, who served as ACDA national president from 1970 to 1972 and taught at the University of Southern California, was known for his excellent musicianship, his scholarship, and his leadership. He kept detailed records about ACDA business as well as about his various conducting appearances, including correspondence and programs. Looking at the latter reveals a philosophy of programming that was prominent in our profession for many decades, one that highlighted the importance of the western choral canon but also championed contemporary composers of the time. And looking at the range of events, both domestic and international, at which Charles Hirt was asked to present and/or conduct gives a sense of the enormous impact he had on the profession. In addition to teaching materials, there are examples of his writing and copies of scores.

Harold Decker's materials include copies of dissertations by his advisees, as well as one from the University of Miami (Coral Gables) by James Ewing about Elaine Brown: "Elaine Brown and the Singing City: The Choral Art as a Communicative Social Force" (1976). Several of the documents reflect Decker's own interest in twentieth-century composers. As founder of the country's first DMA choral conducting program, Decker had many ideas about what constituted appropriate study and performance materials, and these alone are worthy of examination. His class notes are extensive and detailed, and there are numerous materials pertaining to his service in ACDA. Concert programs, tour materials, and scores comprise multiple boxes. In looking through a number of his scores, I noted that some of these were marked sparingly but with helpful notes.

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In Tallis's forty-voice motet, *Spem in Alium*, for example, Decker mapped the score with cues and placement of voices in the eight choirs.

Robert Shaw's materials comprise ten boxes that include scores edited by Mr. Shaw for the Atlanta Symphony Chorus as well as many marked by his copyist, Harold Keuper. Seeing the latter brought back personal memories about my experiences singing with the Robert Shaw Festival Singers in France and in the United States. We worked from copies of those meticulously marked scores that included part transfers between S2 and A1, for example, or T1 and A2. As a young professional, I recall the experience of learning how to balance an ensemble by moving voices among the parts rather than simply relying on dynamic changes within sections. By doubling an alto line with some T1s, Shaw was able to highlight a soloistic line by brightening the color and bringing the part into prominence. It seems a simple concept now, but at the time, it was a novel idea to me and one I adopted to good effect.

Archival Display

In October 2023, UIUC hosted the Illinois ACDA chapter's annual fall conference, for which Scott Schwartz and his assistants put together an archival display that was housed in the lobby of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts on campus (Photos 1-3). In the regular updates on the Sousa Archives website, Mr. Schwartz posted an article about the display.⁴ The description included this information:

The Sousa Archives' latest exhibition, "Singing Cities: American Choral Directors Leading the Nation in Song," which opened last week at the University of Illinois' Krannert Center for the Performing Arts for the American Choral Directors Association's (ACDA) 2023 Conference, has been moved to the Center for the rest of the school year. The Sousa Archives acquired the ACDA archives in January 2022.

During the Great Depression and World War II, American audiences listened and danced to Big Band performances. But during the post-war period, many Americans began listening to



Photo 1. Robert Shaw display



Photo 2. Robert Shaw display



Photo 3. Elaine Brown display

more choral music. People celebrated the war's end by communal singing in churches, and in community, high school, college, and professional choirs.

Americans were already listening to choirs on weekly radio programs like Fred Waring & the Pennsylvanians. During the late 1960s, Robert Shaw's Choir in Atlanta became popular. The Winter Olympic Committee selected Charles Hirt, a choral director from Los Angeles, to direct a choir at the 1960 Olympics in Squaw Valley, California. Following this, Walt Disney asked Hirt to conduct a series of concerts at Disneyland's Main Square USA in the early 1960s.

Nearly fifteen years before the Civil Rights movement gained national visibility, Elaine Brown, the director of Singing Cities in Philadelphia, included African Americans in her choir. Brown was also the director of choral music at Temple University, one of many universities where choral music grew in importance.


Meanwhile at the University of Illinois, Harold Decker established the first doctoral degree program for choral conducting, causing Decker and the University of Illinois to become leaders in the movement to educate generations of choral directors.

This exhibit highlights the work of four of America's leading 20th-century choral directors who shaped the nation's choral music traditions: Robert Shaw, Elaine Brown, Harold Decker, and Charles Hirt.

Conclusion

The ACDA Archives housed at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign provides a wealth of artifacts and information that sheds light on our profession and some of its outstanding luminaries of the twentieth century. Many of these people not only set high standards for choral music but also served ACDA in leadership roles as national presidents and conductors of perform-

ing choirs. Several of them taught generations of choral musicians, both directly and indirectly, and had powerful and lasting influence. There is a plethora of potential research topics for scholars, and I encourage our membership to investigate.

In addition, according to Scott Schwartz, the archivist, "The Center [for American Music] will consider adding other significant conductors' papers to our collections if they have a direct national connection to the work of ACDA, while other conductors' papers might be better suited in appropriate regional archives that best reflect those individuals' contributions at a regional level." Sometimes universities will house materials of distinguished graduates, for example. For questions about the ACDA Collection, please contact the UIUC Sousa Archives staff directly at sousa@illinois.edu. 

Hilary Apfelstadt is professor emerita of choral studies at the University of Toronto. She is a past national ACDA president (2007-09) and past interim executive director of ACDA (2020-21).

NOTES

¹ For detailed information on the context of this program, see Marvin E. Latimer, "The Nation's First D.M.A. in Choral Music: History, Structure, and Pedagogical Implications," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 32, no. 1 (2010): 19–36. A more recent document about the program is Andrew Bruhn's 2023 DMA dissertation, "The History of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Graduate Choral Music Program, 1958–2023."

² <https://archon.library.illinois.edu/archives/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=13001&q=AC-DA+archives>

³ Readers may be interested in Janet Yamron and Sonya Garfinkle, "Elaine Brown: Breaking Down Barriers through Song," *Choral Journal* 58, no 5 (December 2017): 24–32.

⁴ <https://www.library.illinois.edu/sousa/2023/10/25/new-sousa-archives-exhibit-opens-today-at-the-krannert-center/>



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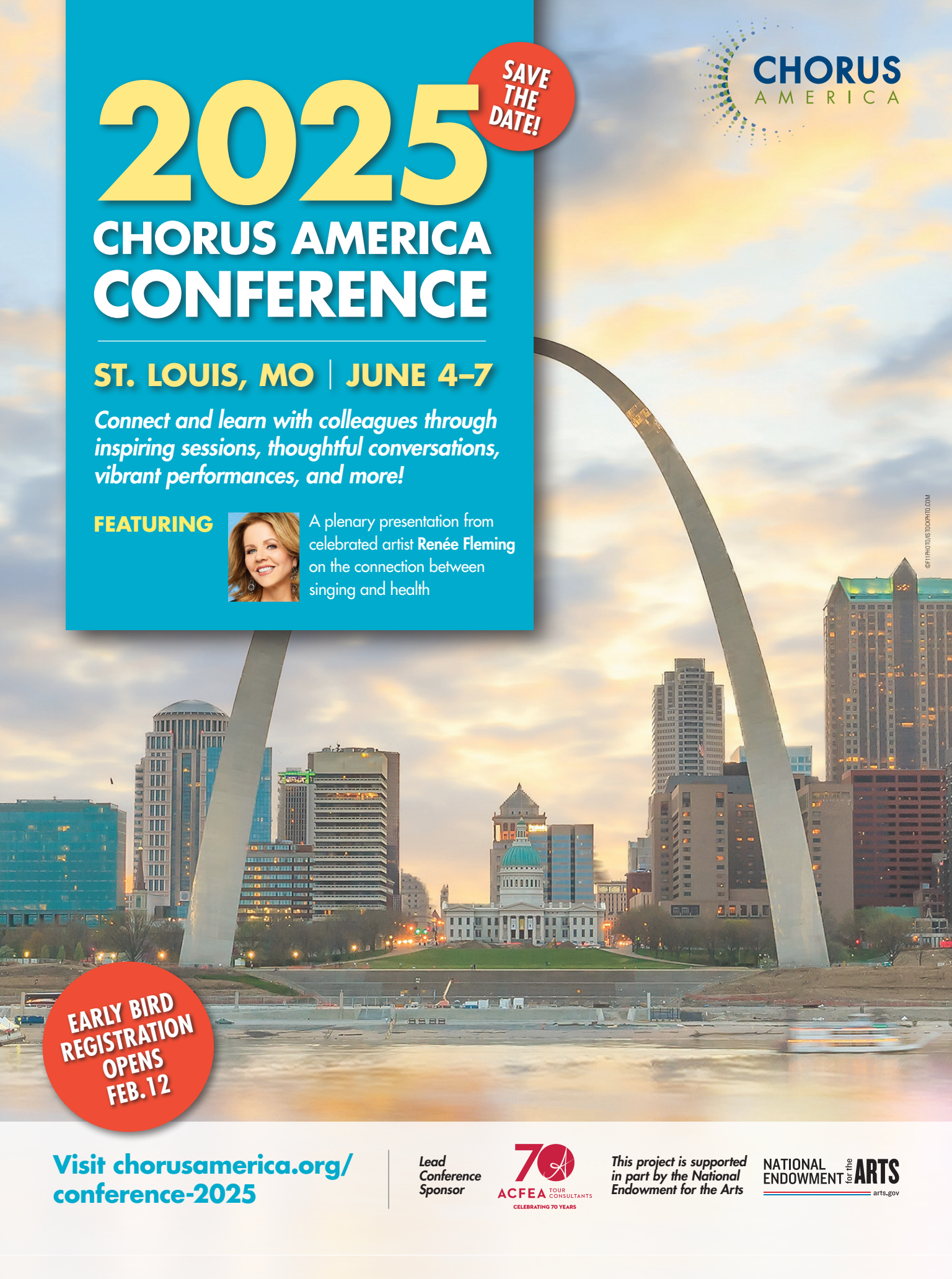
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QUARTERLY ENDORSEMENTS



JULIAN DAVID BRYSON

e pluribus unum (Hope Like Gold)

- SSAATTBB; a cappella; English (Andrea Thoenes)
- 3' 30". A statement of hope in democracy: that an educated population would make wise decisions for human betterment. Dramatic unisons, shimmering poly-chords, musical gestures of sighing and heaving. Powerful musical metaphor: belief in a fervent dream. Size needed for texture; musical security for fluctuations. College and above. (ProjectEncore.org/julian-david-bryson)



MICHAEL BUSSEWITZ-QUARM

Bright Light

- SATB; piano; English (Charles Anthony Silvestri)
- 4' 30". A message of hope, confidence, and comfort in shared life experience. Unison, paired voices, minimal imitation; interest retained through forward harmonic and rhythmic intensity. Piano is harmonically supportive but independent of the voices. Commissioned by a HS; moving enough for more experienced groups to consider. (ProjectEncore.org/michael-bussewitz-quarm)



PATTI DRENNAN *(new to PROJECT : ENCORE)*

Lux Aeterna Domine

- SSAATTBB; a cappella; Latin (Requiem Mass)
- 3' 57". A new settling of this traditional text that offers the sense of a gentle yet strong embrace. The need for solid divisi (especially low basses) is no joke. The texture is rich, the chromatic turns often unexpected and energizing, resulting in shimmering tone clusters. College and above. (ProjectEncore.org/patti-drennan)



JOAN JOHNSON DREWES

Lift My Soul

- SATB, divisi; a cappella; English (Psalm 143: 8)
- 3' 00". Written during the height of the pandemic on a Psalm that doesn't directly refer to God, leaving open "the possibility and belief that 'steadfast love' can come from, [many sources]." Harmonies and clusters reveal the composer's work with jazz. Gentle, ascending lines and blocks of chords. College/semi-pro. (ProjectEncore.org/joan-johnson-drewes)

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JOSEPH ECKMAN *(new to PROJECT : ENCORE)*

Hope is the thing with feathers

- SSATB; a cappella; English (Emily Dickinson)
- 4' 29". Musical reflection of the poetic metaphor of the bird (hope) within the soul that stays with one regardless of circumstance. 314 (the number of the Dickinson poem, serves as a motif. Dissonant clusters—storms in life; Bb as the constant. Stunning tone poem in musical poetry. Solid HS choir, and above.
(ProjectEncore.org/joseph-eckman)



CHRISTOPHER J. HOH

Hallelujah, I Been Down Into the Sea

- SATB; a cappella; English (African American Spiritual)
- 3' 30". Based on a lively, little-known spiritual; suitable for a baptism or general use. Typical verse-refrain alternation, each refrain intensifying with additional imitative movement. Lively and rhythmic with very minimal SA divisi (none for TB). Strong concert closer for HS level and above!
(ProjectEncore.org/christopher-j-hoh)



JOHN MUEHLEISEN

Non si levava (after Monteverdi)

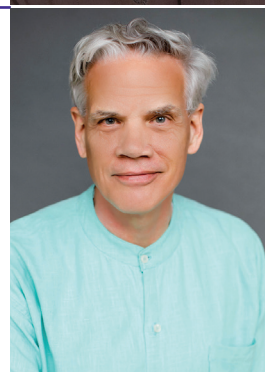
- SATB divisi; a cappella; Italian (Torquato Tasso)
- 7' 15". An impressionistic portrait of two lovers waking at dawn after a blissful night, soon to be parted. A reimagining of the first of Monteverdi's *Madrigals in Book Two*, even referencing some of Monteverdi's material. Lush, romantic writing, filled with the the sweetness and longing of the poetry itself. Collegiate and above.
(ProjectEncore.org/john-muehleisen)



JOHN ROMMEREIM

Vox dilecti mei

- SATB divisi; string quartet, harp or piano; Latin (Song of Solomon 2:8)
- 4' 17". The third movement of *Convivencia*, a six-movement work based on love poetry from the three Abrahamic religious traditions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—seeking to find common ground among them. Sweeping lines contrast with an almost breathless sense of ecstasy. Beautiful conceptually and musically. College and above.
(ProjectEncore.org/john-rommereim)





ACDA NATIONAL
2025
March 18-22 Dallas, TX

2025 ACDA National Conference

Student Conducting Masterclass Participants

The National Student Conducting Masterclass selects students through a competitive process in the early fall of the even-numbered year. The Collegiate National R&R Team serve as the program coordinators. The selected participants have the opportunity to receive personalized guidance from esteemed choral directors and will conduct the Biola University Chorale (Shawna Stewart, director) as the demonstration choir at the 2025 National Conference.

Studio's production of Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and music director of Out of the Blue, a prison outreach choir. He received a bachelor's degree in music from Harvard University and master's degree in choral conducting from Yale's Institute of Sacred Music. He looks forward to lending his training and diverse experience to conducting works for choir, musical theater, opera, and orchestra.

Graduate



Youngeun Kim, a native of South Korea, is a second-year doctoral student in choral conducting at the University of Arizona. As a graduate teaching assistant, she currently serves as the assistant conductor of the University Community Chorus. Additionally, she is the music director at First United Methodist Church and the assistant conductor at Tucson Masterworks Chorale. She presented on the Korean female composer Hyo-won Woo at the University of Arizona's DEI Choral Literature Intensive in June 2024 and was awarded the Medici Scholarship in 2024. In 2022, Kim was one of three conductors selected to conduct in the Southern ACDA Region Conference Conducting Masterclass with Dr. Eugene Rogers. Kim completed a BM in vocal performance and MM in choral conducting from Ewha Woman's University in South Korea, and earned a second master's degree in choral conducting from the University of Louisville.



Kyra Stahr is a DMA candidate in choral conducting at the University of Miami, and serves as a graduate teaching assistant and assistant conductor of Seraphic Fire. Stahr is instructor of record for Choral Conducting 1 and the premier treble ensemble, Bella Voce. An active guest conductor, clinician, and presenter, she has shared her expertise at international conferences, including the 2023 World Symposium on Choral Music, the 2025 ACDA National Conference, and TMEA 2025 Conference. In 2022 she was selected for the ACDA Eastern Graduate Conducting Masterclass. She holds an MM in choral music from the University of Southern California and a BM in vocal performance and music education from Miami University. Stahr co-founded and co-hosts the podcast *conduct(her)* with her sister McKenna Stenson. *conduct(her)* amplifies the voices of women conductors and composers while exploring the gender divide in the choral music field.

Stahr is instructor of record for Choral Conducting 1 and the premier treble ensemble, Bella Voce. An active guest conductor, clinician, and presenter, she has shared her expertise at international conferences, including the 2023 World Symposium on Choral Music, the 2025 ACDA National Conference, and TMEA 2025 Conference. In 2022 she was selected for the ACDA Eastern Graduate Conducting Masterclass. She holds an MM in choral music from the University of Southern California and a BM in vocal performance and music education from Miami University. Stahr co-founded and co-hosts the podcast *conduct(her)* with her sister McKenna Stenson. *conduct(her)* amplifies the voices of women conductors and composers while exploring the gender divide in the choral music field.



Alissa Ruth Suver has an active career as a teacher, conductor, and singer. She sings with professional choral ensembles around the country, including the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Skylark, Ensemble Altera, Conspirare, Ensemble Iona, ensemble viii, The Crossing, and True Concord. In the past year, she has been selected for conducting masterclasses at Eastern ACDA (Jason Max Ferdinand, clinician) and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival (Jeffrey Douma, clinician). She also has a wealth of middle and high school choral teaching experience, most recently at Timber Creek High School in Fort Worth, Texas. She holds a BME from Capital

University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. Studying in the studio of Dr. Eugene Rogers, Mukasa has recently served at the University as music director of Arts Chorale, assistant conductor of the Men's Glee Club, chorus director of the Opera



Sydney Mukasa is a conductor, tenor, and pianist from Baltimore, Maryland. He is currently in his third year of doctoral study in choral conducting at the University of Michigan School of Music,

Theatre & Dance. Studying in the studio of Dr. Eugene Rogers, Mukasa has recently served at the University as music director of Arts Chorale, assistant conductor of the Men's Glee Club, chorus director of the Opera

University and is currently pursuing her MM in choral conducting at Baylor University in Waco, TX, where she lives with her husband, Brent, and their pudgy cat, Frankie.

distinguished choral faculty. As an aspiring high school chorus teacher, she is committed to empowering the next generation of musicians through inclusive, collaborative, and impactful music making.

Undergraduate



Peyton Caleb Bowditch is an aspiring music educator and choral conductor currently pursuing a BME at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). Raised in Raleigh, North Carolina,

Bowditch is committed to fostering diversity and inclusivity in the musical arts. As an African American male and member of the LGBTQIA+ community, he brings a unique perspective to advocacy for underrepresented communities in music education. Bowditch was one of only four participants chosen for the NCAC-DA Undergraduate Conducting Masterclass in 2023, guided by Dr. Craig Hella Johnson. He received the John Philip Sousa Award and the Patrick S. Gilmore Leadership Award. At UNCG, he serves as an ambassador for the College of Visual and Performing Arts, music director for the Iota Epsilon chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, and choral representative on the NAFME Board.



Reid Simmons is a conductor and organist from the Greater Philadelphia area. He is currently finishing his studies at West Chester University of Pennsylvania for two bachelor's degrees in music education and organ performance.

Simmons serves as the director of music at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, where he conducts the choir; plays organ; oversees the music program; and has founded, produces, and conducts the annual community choral Love Concert. The Love Concert was created to inspire people of all backgrounds to join together and produce a secular concert themed around spreading love, acceptance, and advocacy in the community and the world. In 2022 he received the Lois Williams Concert Choir Award, an award given to a strong choral ensemble leader who goes above and beyond to demonstrate choral and musical excellence.



Isabella Pinilla is a senior choral music education major at the Florida State University, where she is also pursuing a specialized studies certificate in voice performance. She currently serves as president

of the Gospel Choir, as well as assistant music director and performance director of the FSU AcaBelles. She also served as outreach chair for FSU's chapter of ACDA from 2023 to 2024, helping recruit new members and foster community among future music educators. Pinilla's diverse musical experiences extend to solo performances and arranging for various ensembles. Her passion for music education is reflected in her fieldwork, including leading rehearsals at middle and high schools and receiving masterclass feedback from



Thien-An Truong is a dedicated second-year vocal performance student at San Jose State University, where he has a passion for teaching voice and choral music, along with a profound respect for

the human voice as an instrument. Truong was selected as one of only four participants to conduct at the Western ACDA Region Conference Undergraduate Masterclass in Pasadena, CA, with Dr. Joseph Huszti during his first year. He spent a week in the summer of 2024 with Cascade Conducting in Tacoma, WA, assisting Dr. Geoffrey Boers. During his senior year of high school, he served as student assistant director of the Christopher High School Chamber and Bella Voce choirs, conducting rehearsals, concerts, and playing accompanimental percussion. Truong plans to pursue a career as a conductor, specializing in orchestral-choral works, operas, and choral ensembles.

**MidAm
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MAY 31 - JUNE 7, 2026

PARIS, FRANCE

JUNE 7 - JUNE 14, 2026

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JUNE 14 - JUNE 21, 2026

LONDON, ENGLAND

JUNE 21 - JUNE 28, 2026

STOCKHOLM & UPPSALA, SWEDEN

JULY 5 - JULY 12, 2026



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212.239.0205

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2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

SKILLS

KNOWLEDGE

COMPETENCE

TRAINING

PRODUCTIVITY

LEARNING

PERFORMANCE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section is an annual free listing of choral events taking place between May 1 and September 1, 2025, that were submitted to the *Choral Journal* editor. Submissions are open to anyone and are due January 15 each year. Events are listed chronologically. Contact information appears at the end of each entry.

May 21 - 25, 2025

New Love Songs at Tanglewood

Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood
Lenox, Massachusetts

Anthony Trecek-King leads the Brahms Neue Liebeslieder Waltzes and music by Copland and Shank.

Contact: info@berkshirechoral.org
www.berkshirechoral.org

June 2 - 4, 2025

Teaching Music Literacy: Developing Independent Musicians

Phoenix Children's Chorus
Phoenix, Arizona

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore techniques for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: info@pcchorus.org
www.pcchorus.org/summerliteracy

June 8 - 28, 2025

Music in the Marche

Mondavio, Italy

Aspiring musicians receive in-depth vocal training, daily Italian language classes, cultural immersion, and travel to various Italian destinations.

Contact: musicinthemarche2018@gmail.com
www.musicinthemarche.com

June 9 - 12, 2025

Music Literacy: More than Simply Notes on a Page!

Flagler College
Saint Augustine, Florida

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore techniques for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger and Dr. Hillary Ridgley.

Contact: Kip Taisey
KTaisey@flagler.edu
www.flagler.edu/summer-music-education-institute

June 9 - 13, 2025

Summer at the Scheidt Choir Camp

University of Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee

Immerse yourself in a week filled with inspiration, education, and camaraderie as you embark on a musical journey with our expert faculty.

Contact: sats@memphis.edu
memphis.edu/scheidtsummer

June 9 - 20, 2025

Congregational Song

Location: Virtual

A graduate course for credit or audit, online, weekday mornings, featuring daily experts in denominational streams of the chronological history of hymnody and Psalmody.

Contact: Charlotte Kroeker
214-751-7669
ChurchMusicInstitute.org

June 10 - 13, 2025

Summer Music Institute + Advanced Chamber Program

Sun Valley Music Festival
Sun Valley, Idaho

Work and perform with one of the most respected festival orchestras, musicians, and faculty in the nation! Re-

ceive daily coaching and prepare a staged Opera Workshop recital performance.

Contact: Stephanie Streja
stephaniestreja@gmail.com
www.svmusicfestival.org/summer-programs/

June 10 - 13, 2025

Spire Chamber Ensemble Choral Conducting

and Vocal Scholars Institute
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Kansas City, Missouri

Conductors in the institute will have the rare opportunity to conduct the Spire Chamber Ensemble. Vocal Scholars will participate in workshops with the faculty and members of Spire.

Contact: Ben A. Spalding
913-226-5413
ben.a.spalding@gmail.com
<https://www.spirechamberensemble.org/choral-conducting-institute8203.html>

June 12 - 14, 2025

University of Arizona Choral Literature Intensive

Location: Virtual

In its third year, this event (fully online) features ten lectures and listening/discussion sessions on outstanding music of historically excluded composers and populations.

Contact: Dr. James Higgs
925-642-8079
jameshiggs@arizona.edu
choral.music.arizona.edu

June 12 - 15, 2025

Celebrating Alice Parker Bard College at Simon's Rock

Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Explore the legacy of composer Alice Parker with conductor Cameron LaBarr.

Contact: info@berkshirechoral.org
www.berkshirechoral.org

June 15 - 19, 2025

Illinois Choral Conducting Symposium University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Clinicians: Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt and Dr. Andrea Solya

Contact: <https://music.illinois.edu/engagement/adults-and-professionals/illinois-choral-conducting-symposium/>

June 15 - 20 and June 22 - 27, 2025

Presbyterian Association of Musicians Worship & Music Conference Montreat, North Carolina

For children, youth, adults, pastors, music directors, organists, singers, ringers, worship leaders, and church members. Provides a year's worth of worship resources and nurtures faith.

Contact: Lisa Myers
502-569-5288, ext. 3
lisa.myers@pcusa.org
www.presbysmusic.org/conference



Summer at Westminster

1- and 2-week intensive programs for high school students, young artists, and professionals offered by Westminster Choir College and Westminster Conservatory



Adult Programs:

- » Conducting Intensive
- » CoOPERative Young Artist Program
- » Choral Festival
- » Elementary Choral/General
- » Voice Pedagogy Institute

High School Programs:

- » Musical Theatre Institute
- » Organ Institute
- » Piano Institute
- » Solo Vocal Artist
- » Vocal Institute

RIDER.EDU/SUMMERARTS

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

June 15 - 29, 2025

Schmidt Vocal Institute

Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

A two-week summer intensive for high school singers with guest faculty Julia Faulkner (The Curtis Institute/Lyric Opera of Chicago), Gordon Hawkins (Arizona State University), and Ana María Martínez (Rice University).

Contact: Linda McAlister
linda@schmidtvocalarts.org
www.schmidtvocalarts.org

June 16 - 21, 2025

Northwestern Bach Academy

Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois

The Academy includes some of the country's leading scholars and performers of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music. Designed for musicians of all experience levels.

Contact: 847-491-3141
summermusic@northwestern.edu
<https://music.northwestern.edu/academics/summer-session>

June 16 - 22, 2025

Kantorei KC Summer Choral Institute

Kansas City, Missouri

Unique opportunities for children and young adults to collaborate with professional musicians in a focused environment and perform in a world-class venue.

Contact: Leah Owen
leah.owenbrockett@gmail.com
kantoreikc.com/choralscholars (young adults 18+)
kantoreikc.com/enroll2025 (youth 18 and under)

June 18 - 22, 2025

Green Lake Festival of Music Choral Institute and Composer Residency

Ripon College
Ripon, Wisconsin

Participate in one or both programs: the Choral Institute with Monroe Crossing or the Composer Residency featuring Shawn E. Okpebholo.

Contact: Deb MacKenzie
920-748-9398
info@greenlakefestival.org

June 19 - 22, 2025

Encore Choral Retreat 2025

Quincy, Massachusetts

A choral rehearsal and concert retreat dedicated to community building for singers of all experience levels aged 18+. The weekend serves as a fundraiser for SSCC youth programming.

Contact: Kirsten Oberoi
oberoi@sscchorus.org
www.sscchorus.org/encore

June 20, 2025

The Wonder of It All with Vox Anima London

Ely Cathedral, UK

There is no more appropriate space than the magnificent nave and octagon at Ely Cathedral for this performance of *Creation* by Dan Forrest.

Contact: Helen Steel
helen@voxanimalondon.com
www.voxanimalondon.com

June 22 - 29, 2025

Into the Light: Haydn, Brahms & Runestad

UMass

Amherst, Massachusetts

Rob Istad conducts Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, Brahms' *Nanie*, and Runestad's *Into the Light* with full orchestra.

Contact: info@berkshirechoral.org
www.berkshirechoral.org

June 23 - 26, 2025

Music Literacy:

More than simply notes on a page!

Vacation Village at Bonaventure
Weston, Florida

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore techniques

for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: Anthony Ciotti
ciotti5@yahoo.com
www.floridasingingsons.org/summer-literacy-workshop

June 23 - 27, 2025

Engage, Elevate, Empower: Teacher Well-Being & Artistic Social Emotional Learning for the Performing Arts Educator

George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Engage in research-based practices to restore your health and well-being inside and outside of the classroom.

Contact: academy@gmu.edu
<https://masonacademy.gmu.edu/professional-development/wellbeing-workshop/>



Refine your artistry, create opportunities, and lead the way in a changing world.

At the **Peabody Conservatory**, you'll study with renowned faculty, including:

Voice: Tony Arnold • Barry Banks • Margaret Baroody Elizabeth Bishop • Carl Dupont • Elizabeth Futral, Marc C. von May Distinguished Chair of Vocal Studies Denyce Graves • Ah Young Hong • Randall Scarlata William Sharp

Opera: Catrin Davies, Acting • Mary Duncan, Artistic Director and Manager • Melissa Freilich, Movement Laurie Rogers, Music Director

Vocal Coaching & Repertoire Studies: Eileen Cornett Scott Crowne • William Hobbs • Patrick O'Donnell Claire Galloway Weber • Wei-Han Wu • Gloria Yin

Chorus & Choral Conducting: Beth Willer, Director of Choral Studies



peabody.jhu.edu
667-208-6600

The Peabody Conservatory meets **100% of demonstrated financial need** for domestic undergraduate students, with no loans. Learn more: peabody.jhu.edu/NoLoans.

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

June 23 - 27, 2025

Atlanta Summer Conducting Institute

Atlanta, Georgia

A week-long series of seminars and conducting masterclasses co-led by Drs. Daniel Bara and Deanna Joseph geared toward music educators, graduate students, church musicians, and community choir conductors.

Contact: Amy Reid
404-413-5927
areid24@gsu.edu

June 23 - 27, 2025

High School Solo Piano Week

Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

This workshop offers the serious young pianist an enriching and inspiring musical experience, exposing each participant to the artistic and practical aspects of solo performance.

Contact: James Goldsworthy
SAP@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

June 23 - 27, 2025

Sing A Mile High International Choral Festival

Denver, Colorado

For singers in grades 5-12.

Contact: Chrys Harris
303-797-7464
chrys@youngvoices.org
www.singamilehigh.org

June 23 - 28, 2025

Ohio University Summer Arts Academy

High school students interested in voice performance and choral music education work with distinguished

music faculty to explore choral and contemporary a cappella music, vocal music recording, and live stage performance.

Contact: Dr. Peter Haley
pahaley@ohio.edu
summerarts@ohio.edu

June 25 - July 6, 2025

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Choir Program

Twin Lake, Michigan

For students of all proficiency levels to practice fundamental skills in sight singing, breath management, tone production, stage presence, diction, and solo and ensemble singing.

Contact: admissions@bluelake.org
231-894-1966
<https://bluelake.org/choir>

June 26 - 27, 2025

Montana Choral Directors Summer Institute

Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana

Clinician: Dr. Lynne Gackle. Campus housing available.

Contact: Kirk Aamot
kaamot@montana.edu
Opusevent.com

June 27 - July 13, 2025

Oregon Bach Festival

Eugene, Oregon

The Grammy-winning, international music festival returns for its 55th season.

Contact: Josh Gren
541-346-5666
obfstaff@uoregon.edu
OregonBachFestival.org

June 30 - July 1

Relevant Repertoire

Baldwin Wallace University
Cleveland, Ohio

A two-day graduate-level course on selecting, rehearsing, and performing choral music that offers relevant and meaningful connections to our world today!

Contact: Jami Lercher
jlercher@bw.edu
<https://cas.bw.edu/departments/teacher-education/institute-music-teaching-learning/>

June 30 - July 2, 2025

Teaching Music Literacy: Developing Independent Musicians

La Crosse, Wisconsin (also virtual)

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore techniques for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: Dr. Jill Wilson
563-387-2148
wilsji01@luther.edu

June 30 - July 2, 2025

UMKC Choral Conducting Symposium

University of Missouri-Kansas City
Conservatory Performing Arts Center

Work with Drs. Charles Robinson, Jennifer Sengin, and Sandra Snow to enhance skills in conducting, rehearsing, and communicating with ensembles at all levels.

Contact: Elizabeth Valle
816-235-5448
vallee@umkc.edu
<https://info.umkc.edu/cmcd-choral/choral-conducting-institute/>

June 30 - July 4, 2025

Vocal Institute

Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

In addition to singing in the Institute Choir, participants will receive training in conducting, choral performance and literature, interpretation of solo repertoire, technique, and voice science.

Contact: Vinroy D. Brown, Jr.
SAP@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 2 - 13, 2025

Sarteano Choral Workshop

Sarteano, Italy

For conductors and singers, culminating in unforgettable concerts at the historic Chiesa di San Francesco in Sarteano and the UNESCO World Heritage town of Pienza.

Contact: Tony Thornton
sarteanochoralworkshop@gmail.com
www.choralplanet.com

July 5 - 12, 2025

Considering Matthew Shepard

Washington National Cathedral
Washington DC

Experience this soulful oratorio of acceptance and hope with conductor Jeffrey Benson.

Contact: info@berkshirechoral.org
www.berkshirechoral.org

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

July 6 - 11, 2025

Lutheridge Music Week

Asheville, North Carolina

An annual conference for adults set in the Blue Ridge Mountains for church choir directors, organists/key-boardists, handbell conductors, and those who love to sing and ring.

Contact: Karol Kimmell
MusicConferenceKK@icloud.com
https://lutheridge.org/summer_camps/adult-music-week/

July 7 - 9, 2025

Building Literacy and Musicianship Skills

West Milford High School
West Milford, New Jersey

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore specific techniques for developing audiation, dictation and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: Dwight Weaver
dwight.weaver@wmtps.org
wmhschoir.ludus.com

July 7 - 11, 2025

“Side-by-Side” Kodály-Inspired Children’s Choir

George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Plan and teach lessons to students ages 6-12 and observe master teachers as they work with the summer Children’s Choir Camp.

Contact: academy@gmu.edu
<https://masonacademy.gmu.edu/professional-development/supplementals/>

July 7 - 11, 2025

Organ Institute

Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Individual organ instruction and coaching with classes in organ history, building styles, organ literature, and sacred music. Open to organists and experienced pianists.

Contact: Michael Diorio
SAP@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 7 - 13, 2025

Coastal Carolina University Choral Conducting & Group-Voice Pedagogy Intensives

Conway, South Carolina

Hands-on workshops that integrate accessible, inclusive, engaging, and science-informed choral and group-voice practices.

Contact: Dr. Alyssa Cossey
acossey@coastal.edu

July 12 - 13, 2025

Kentucky ACDA Choral Conservatory

Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Provides voice and conducting lessons, music theory and diction classes, and performance opportunities for high school juniors and seniors.

Contact: Raye Hurley
raye.hurley@franklin.kyschools.us
kyacda.org

July 7 - 18, 2025

Solo Vocal Artist

Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

An opportunity for dedicated young classical singers to

develop their art through personalized, hands-on instruction.

Contact: Akiko Hosaki
SAP@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 9 - 20, 2025

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Choir Program

Twin Lake, Michigan

For students of all proficiency levels to practice fundamental skills in sight singing, breath management, tone production, stage presence, diction, and solo and ensemble singing.

Contact: admissions@bluelake.org
231-894-1966
https://bluelake.org/choir

July 10 - 13, 2025

Franschhoek International

Choral Conducting Seminar
Franschhoek, South Africa

Conductors will focus on improving their gestural communication, and rehearsal efficiency while working with an advanced lab choir. Dr. Giselle Wyers and Dr. Gerrit Scheepers, clinicians.

Contact: admin@franschhoekchoralseminar.com

July 10 - 17, 2025

International Children's Choir Festival

with Vox Anima London
London and Kent, UK

A week of immersive choral singing in London, Canterbury, and Rochester, with inspirational leadership from Joshua Pedde and Amy Hughley of Indianapolis Children's Choir.

Contact: Laura Cloke
laura@voxanimalondon.com
www.voxanimalondon.com

July 13 - 17, 2025

University of North Texas Choral Conducting Symposium

Denton, Texas

An opportunity for music educators, graduate student conductors, church musicians, and community choir conductors to grow as artists as we delve deeper into the requisite skills of a conductor.

Contact: Brian C. Murray
bmurray7@uwyo.edu
https://choral.music.unt.edu/conducting-symposium

July 13 - 19, 2025

Westminster Conducting Intensive

Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Led by master teachers Donald Nally and Beth Willer, this course focuses on the coordination of breath, gesture, and listening as the fundamental building blocks of the advanced conductor.

Contact: Jason Vodicka
609-896-5155
casdean@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 13 - August 1, 2025

Santa Fe Desert Chorale 43rd Annual Summer Festival

Santa Fe, New Mexico

One of the nation's largest choral events, featuring a twenty-four-voice professional choir drawn from a national roster.

Contact: Emma Marzen
505-988-2282
info@desertchorale.org
https://desertchorale.org

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

July 14 - 15, 2025

Kentucky ACDA Summer Conference

First Christian Church
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Featuring headliners Laura Kitchel and Vic Oakes, breakout sessions, reading sessions, an evening of singing Vivaldi's *Gloria* with chamber orchestra, and a new music in worship night.

Contact: Daniel Wesley
dwesley@lexingtonchristian.org
kyacda.org

July 14 - 21, 2025

Boston University School of Music Summer Choral Intensive

Boston University School of Music
Boston, Massachusetts

Through a combination of podium time, faculty coaching, and private lessons, this course offers immersive, hands-on instruction for aspiring, current, and experienced choral conductors.

Contact: Daniel Parsley
dparsley@bu.edu
www.bu.edu/cfa/academics/degrees-programs/
conducting/

July 16 - 18, 2025

Music Literacy & More

New Bern High School
New Bern, North Carolina

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore specific techniques for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: Luke Hancock
252-294-6002
luke.hancock@cravenk12.org

July 16 - 19, 2025

West Chester University Choral Conducting Symposium

West Chester University
West Chester, Pennsylvania

For working conductors who wish to improve their podium skills, gestural communication, and score analysis techniques. With Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt, Dr. Kimberly Dunn Adams, Dr. Ryan Kelly.

Contact: Kimberly Dunn Adams
610-436-2952
kadams2@wcupa.edu

July 20 - 23, 2025

CCDA Summer Conference

ECCO Oakhurst, California

Stay near beautiful Yosemite Park and attend workshops with our headliner, Andrea Ramsey.

Contact:
www.calccda.org/ccda-summer-conference.html

July 20 - 26, 2025

Westminster Choral Festival

Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Explore masterworks of the choral repertory through intensive rehearsal and performance, this year focusing on the Duruflé *Requiem* and other French motets.

Contact: Jason Vodicka
609-896-5155
casdean@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 20 - 27, 2025

Epworth Music and Worship Retreat

Manchester University
Manchester, Indiana

Work daily with world-renowned choral composer Craig Courtney, deepen your spiritual connection, and share your story through the harmony of a welcoming and inclusive community.

Contact: registrar.efcs@gmail.com
<https://epworthmusicandworshipretreat.com/>

July 21 - 23, 2025

Fostering Music Literacy in Rehearsals and the Music Classroom

Gardner-Webb University
Boiling Springs, North Carolina

Focus on the acquisition of music literacy skills via a sound before symbol approach and explore specific techniques for developing audiation, dictation, and improvisation with Dr. Carol Krueger.

Contact: Eric Johnson
ejohnson24@gardner-webb.edu

July 21 - 24, 2025

Choristers Guild Institute

Richmond's First Baptist Church
Richmond, Virginia

A training program for leaders of children's and youth choirs (K-8), where participants receive week-long, intensive instruction and mentoring.

Contact: Karol Kimmell
469-398-3606
institute@choristersguild.org
www.choristersguild.org/events/choristers-guild-institute/757/

July 21 - 25, 2025

Westminster Voice Pedagogy Institute

Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

This focused, intensive program gives a detailed overview of science-informed and experience-driven voice pedagogy with emphasis on both classical and commercial singing styles.

Contact: Jason Vodicka
609-896-5155
casdean@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 21 - August 1, 2025

Musical Theatre

Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Participants will refine their skills in singing, acting, and dancing through professional theatre training from renowned faculty with experience on Broadway, National Tours, TV, and film.

Contact: T. Oliver Reid and Ryanne Domingues
SAP@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

July 23 - August 3

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Choir Program

Twin Lake, Michigan

For students of all proficiency levels to practice fundamental skills in sight singing, breath management, tone production, stage presence, diction, and solo and ensemble singing.

Contact: admissions@bluelake.org
231-894-1966
<https://bluelake.org/choir>

2025 Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

July 26, 2025

Tucson Girls Chorus Annual Summer PD Day

Tucson, AZ (recording will be available)

Learn from AZ music educator Amy Van Winkle (and more!). Sessions will provide inspiring and immediately applicable tools for choir conductors and music educators of all grade levels.

Contact: tucsongirlschorus.org/summer-pd

Contact: Nathan Wheeler

nwheeler@zephyrpoint.org

www.zephyrpoint.org/programs/adult/music-conference

July 27 - August 2, 2025

Kaleidoscope Vocal Academy at Yale

Yale University

New Haven, Connecticut

Twenty-four singers (ages 16-18) will receive masterclasses and workshops with Dr. Jeffrey Douma, Dr. Arianne Abela, and Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble.

Contact: Arianne Abela

kaleidoscopevocalensemble@gmail.com

kaleidoscopevocalensemble.com/academy

July 27 - August 1, 2025

Zephyr Point Summer Music Conference

Lake Tahoe, Nevada

We invite career and lay musicians who seek to enrich their lives, and the lives of others, through music. Three available tracks: Choral, Conducting, Handbell.

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2025 WORSHIP & MUSIC CONFERENCE
JUNE 15-20 & JUNE 22-27
MONTREAT, NORTH CAROLINA

Lynda Hasseler
Adult Choir Director

Luke Browder
Senior High Choir Director

Amy Kotsonis
Middler Choir Director

Michael Burkhardt
Children's Choir Director

July 27 - August 3, 2025

Mozart and Bernstein in Berlin

Haus Des Rundfunks
Berlin, Germany

Jenny Wong leads Mozart's *Requiem* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*.

Contact: info@berkshirechoral.org
www.berkshirechoral.org

July 28 - August 1, 2025

Choral Conductors Workshop

Seaside, Oregon

Professional development workshop that gives special emphasis to the role nonverbal skills can play in rehearsal and performance. Featuring Rodney Eichenberger, Edith Copley, and Jason Max Ferdinand.

Contact: Sandy Baker
503-891-0683
sandy@choralconductorsworkshop.com
www.choralconductorsworkshop.com

July 28 - August 1, 2025

Special Topics in Choral Pedagogy

Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Lynnel Jenkins, Sarah Perry, and Tom Shelton co-teach this immersive course on engaging and supporting elementary/middle school students in choral and general music settings.

Contact: Jason Vodicka
609-896-5155
casdean@rider.edu
www.rider.edu/summerarts

August 1 - 2, 2025

ACDA Voices United Summer Conference

Hylton Performing Arts Center
Manassas, Virginia

A collaborative conference of VA, MD/DC, and DE ACDA state chapters featuring a conducting masterclass session, children's honor choir, community festival chorus, exhibitors, and sessions.

Contact: <https://acdavoicesunited.com>

August 6 - 17, 2025

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp Choir Program

Twin Lake, Michigan

For students of all proficiency levels to practice fundamental skills in sight singing, breath management, tone production, stage presence, diction, and solo and ensemble singing.

Contact: admissions@bluelake.org
231-894-1966
<https://bluelake.org/choir>

August 9 - 10, 2025

New York ACDA Summer Conference

Siena College, New York

Immerse yourself in inspiring choral music making, innovative workshops, and unforgettable performances. Elementary, middle school, and high school honor choirs will be in residence.

Contact: nyacda@gmail.com
nyacda.org

CHORAL JOURNAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Book Reviews	Gregory Pysh	gregory.m.pysh@gmail.com
Choral Reviews	Amanda Bumgarner	abumgarner@acda.org
Lift Every Voice	Amanda Bumgarner	abumgarner@acda.org
On the Voice	Matthew Hoch	mrh0032@auburn.edu
Recorded Sound Reviews	Amanda Bumgarner	abumgarner@acda.org
Rehearsal Breaks	Jennifer Rodgers	rodgersj@iastate.edu
Research Report	Elizabeth Hearn Elizabeth Cassidy Parker	ehearn@olemiss.edu eparker@temple.edu
Student Times	Micah Bland	mbland1613@gmail.com

For feature article submissions, contact the editor, Amanda Bumgarner, at <abumgarner@acda.org>. View full submission guidelines at acda.org

Book and music publishers should send books, octavos, and discs for review to:
Choral Journal, Attn: Amanda Bumgarner, P.O. Box 1705, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73101-1705

OTHER ACDA PUBLICATIONS CONTACT INFORMATION

ChorTeach	Amanda Bumgarner	chorteach@acda.org
International Journal of Research in Choral Singing	Bryan Nichols	bnichols@psu.edu

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