Official Publication of the American Choral Directors Association

US ISSN 0009-5028

CHORAL JOURNAL

MAY 2020

Choir as a Caretaker of Caregivers

PICTURE YOURSELF HERE

Who Are The Brave: Music in Honor of President's Day
Joseph M. Martin, Composer/Conductor
February 17, 2020, Carnegie Hall


Sir Karl Jenkins

MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

THE MUSIC OF SIR KARL JENKINS

Jenkins: Requiem
Jenkins: *Cantata Memoria: For the Children of Aberfan*
Jonathan Griffith, DCINY Artistic Director
and Principal Conductor


Dan Forrest


Mack Wilberg

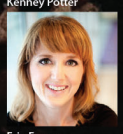
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2021
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

THE MUSIC OF MACK WILBERG AND DAN FORREST

Forrest: *LUX: The Dawn from On High*
John Paul Johnson, Guest Conductor
Dan Forrest, DCINY Composer-in-Residence

Wilberg: Requiem
Mack Wilberg, Composer/Conductor


Kenney Potter


Erin Freeman

SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2021
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

MUSIC FROM BEETHOVEN AND FAURE

Beethoven: Mass in C
Kenney Potter, Guest Conductor

Fauré: Requiem
Erin Freeman, Guest Conductor


Greg Gilpin


Tucker Biddlecombe

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2021
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

THE WORLD BELOVED

Music for Young Voices
Greg Gilpin, Composer/Conductor

Barnett: *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass*
Tucker Biddlecombe, Guest Conductor


Eric Whitacre

SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2021
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

THE MUSIC OF ERIC WHITACRE

Join Eric and the Distinguished Singers International in a concert featuring *Lux Aurumque*, *Seal Lullaby* and other favorites. DCINY will also be premiering selections from Eric's latest large work *The Sacred Veil.*

Eric Whitacre, Composer/Conductor

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May 2020/ Volume 60, Number 10

Annual dues (includes subscription to the *Choral Journal*): Active $125, Industry $150, Institutional $125, Retired $45, and Student $35. Library annual subscription rates: U.S. $45; Canada $50; Foreign $170. Single Copy $3; Back Issues $4. Circulation: 18,000. Main office: 405-232-8161

The *Choral Journal* (US ISSN 0009-5028) is issued monthly except for July by the American Choral Directors Association. Periodicals postage paid at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and additional mailing office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Choral Journal, 545 Couch Drive, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102.

Since 1959, the *Choral Journal* has been the refereed, international journal of the American Choral Directors Association. Each issue features: scholarly articles, anonymously peer-reviewed by the editorial board; refereed articles on pedagogical or scientific issues for the choral conductor; refereed articles with practical advice and ideas for the choral conductor; reviews of books, recorded sound, and choral works by choral experts; and editorials from association leadership. The January issue previews each year's regional or national conference offerings. Articles from the *Choral Journal* can be found in the following online databases: JSTOR (Arts & Sciences XI Collection); ProQuest (International Index to Music Periodicals); University Microfilms International; NaPublishing; RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale); EBSCO music index; and WorldCat. Advertising options are available for members and nonmembers. Cover art by Efrain Guerrero. Interior art by Tammy Brummell. Musical examples by Tunesmith Music <www.Tunesmithmusic.com>.

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NEWS

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ADVOCACY STATEMENT

Whereas the human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself through study and performance in the aesthetic arts; and

Whereas serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded state institutions and their programs throughout the country;

Be it resolved that all citizens of the United States of America actively voice affirmative and collective support for necessary funding at the local, state, and national levels of education and government to ensure the survival of arts programs for this and future generations.

From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tim Sharp

How Do We Sing?

I came of age as a young musician during the "dawning of the age of Aquarius" or, in other words, during the time of the Broadway musical *Hair.* Not long after *Hair* premiered, other new musical influences burst into my life and filled my growing musical appetite in forms such as Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar.* And although I had grown up in the church and sung psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs since infancy, I had never heard a song of lament that had strong meaning for me until hearing the song "On the Willows from Godspell" by Stephen Schwarz. In this song, Schwarz paraphrases the Hebrew scriptures' Psalm 137 with these words:

On the willows, there
We hung up our lyres
For our captors there required of us songs
And our tormentors, mirth
Saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion

But how can we sing?
Sing the Lord's songs?
In a foreign land?

The question "*How do we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*" (Psalm 137) still haunts me. In the last few weeks, this is the very question we have asked ourselves over and over throughout the choral community and in a variety of ways as we wonder "how," in a practical way, we are to sing anything in this newly found "strange land" caused by a worldwide pandemic, and "how," in a spiritual way, can we sing anything in this time of despair and hopelessness.

As I departed each of our Regional Conferences in March, I painfully reminded all of our members gathered at these events that this would likely be the last live music we would hear for a long time. I said those words along with the admonition to breathe it all in and enjoy it, remembering that this is what we are called to do and to lead as a community of professional choral musicians. This experience, I suggested, would make us focus on what is essential about the choral art.

The "how do we sing" question for us in the days that initially followed the outbreak of COVID-19 and resulting quarantine was an academic one: "How can we rehearse our choirs in isolation?" and "How can we perform with our choirs when we are isolated?" To this question, I did what many of you did and went to the phone and Internet to research various possibilities in the realm of rehearsal software and other online distance learning resources.

Others were asking the more emotional version of this question, which is: "How can we find the spirit to sing in times like this?" and "In this strange

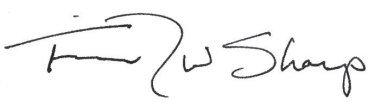
land where we now find ourselves, how can we muster the desire to sing?" As services, meetings, rehearsals, and classes were canceled, and then as concerts and performance tours were canceled, we felt sadness and despair, and it was difficult to imagine singing.

The Greek philosopher Marcus Aurelius writes about how a fire turns everything that is thrown into it into flame. He says that obstacles are actually fuel: "The impediment to action advances action." He continues, "…what stands in the way becomes the way."

In his book *Where Good Ideas Come From* innovation writer Steven Johnson sites the theory of "desirable difficulties" as an optimistic way to work toward innovation. Desirable difficulties are challenges to our thinking or to our work that would normally appear as obstacles to forward progress. These disadvantages force an individual to adapt and be better prepared against future difficulties. Viewing such challenges as "desirable" is an optimistic view, knowing challenges only help to sharpen ideas and bolster the resolve to move ahead.

It is a beautiful way to approach the world—and ultimately, the only one suited for a time such as the one we are in now. To avoid difficulty would mean complete retreat, not only from social interaction, but from life. It would mean hiding in ignorance. Instead, we can embrace the moment we have and strive to welcome challenge. I choose to rejoice in the unexpected and work to turn despair into something new by owning it. I have found that tension is my wake-up call to new levels of learning and experience and growth.

The American Choral Directors Association strives to be your resource for meeting the challenges of this moment and a source of inspiration as you continue to pursue excellence in choral music education, performance, composition, and advocacy.



sharp@acda.org

The 12 Purposes of ACDA

- To foster and promote choral singing, which will provide artistic, cultural, and spiritual experiences for the participants.
- To foster and promote the finest types of choral music to make these experiences possible.
- To foster and encourage rehearsal procedures conducive to attaining the highest possible level of musicianship and artistic performance.
- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral groups of all types in schools and colleges.
- To foster and promote the development of choral music in the church and synagogue.
- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral societies in cities and communities.
- To foster and promote the understanding of choral music as an important medium of contemporary artistic expression.
- To foster and promote significant research in the field of choral music.
- To foster and encourage choral composition of superior quality.
- To cooperate with all organizations dedicated to the development of musical culture in America.
- To foster and promote international exchange programs involving performing groups, conductors, and composers.
- To disseminate professional news and information about choral music.

—ACDA Constitution and Bylaws

Executive Director's Log

What's on Tim's Daytimer?

Apr 27-29 Advisory Board
CANCELED
Austin, TX

May 1 Opera "Firebird Motel"
San Francisco, CA

May 5 CMA Foundation
Teachers Award
Nashville, TN

May 9 Beethoven "Mass in C"
CANCELED
Tulsa, OK

May 11-12 MSVMA
Grand Rapids, MI

What's on Tim's iPad?

Successful Aging
by Daniel Levitin

Tiny Habits
by BJ Fogg

What's Tim's Latest App?

Opera Touch

What's Tim Listening to?

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
Paul Mealor
New England Chamber Choir

The Passion of Yashua
Richard Danielpour
UCLA Chamber Singers

Hear more at <www.acda.org>.
Log in and click on the
First Listen icon

From the **PRESIDENT**

Lynne Gackle

Having just experienced the excitement and energy of two of the six recent Regional ACDA conferences, I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate and to thank the leadership within each of the six Regions for the countless hours of visioning, planning, and dedication, freely given in order to organize and execute these conferences on behalf of ACDA and its members. These conferences provide each of us a chance to reflect, revitalize and to reconnect. If you were unable to attend, I want to encourage you to put the dates of March 17-20, 2021 on your calendars to attend the next National Conference which will be held in Dallas, Texas.

In this issue of the *Choral Journal,* you will find detailed information concerning the constitutional changes we will be voting on as a national organization within the next 3-4 weeks. In short, these proposed changes include the following:

Constitutional Changes:

• The merger of the North Central and Central Regions into the MIDWESTERN Region. Last fall, the memberships of the Central and North Central Regions were polled to determine if the two Regions should be merged into one geographically named Region. The results of the poll from BOTH Regions overwhelmingly indicated that the merger would be a positive change.

• The ACDA membership in each state not organized as an Affiliate State Association shall be designated as either (1) a state membership of the Association governed by the ACDA Constitution and Bylaws ("state membership"), or (2) a subordinate chapter of the Association (the terminology "subordinate chapter," is derived from the group tax exemption rules of the Internal Review Code. This proposed change will establish a better legal structure within the association for the long term while allowing the state chapters to continue doing all that is special and unique to the mission of ACDA.

• ACDA will follow all CURRENT regulations of the US Internal Revenue Service for those Affiliates who reside in the US.

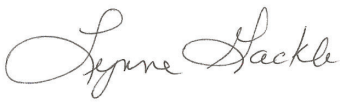
By-Law Changes:

• Each Affiliate Association or Subordinate Chapter Association may charge dues for its purposes in addition to those of ACDA with the following qualifications: approval of the ACDA National Board must be obtained for the adoption of dues, for the amount to be charged, and for the fiscal procedures to be used in billing and collecting.

• Regarding the Repertoire and Resource Committees (R & R): Ethnic Music will now be known as "World Musics and Cultures," Men's Choirs will be known as "Men's Choirs/TTBB;" Women's Choirs will be known as "Women's Choirs/SSAA," and will continue to be overseen by the National R & R Chair.

Both National Standing Committee members and National Repertoire and Resources (R & R) Chairs will communicate on a regular basis. (This may include National Conference (odd years) and/or National Leadership Conferences (even years) as well as appointed (scheduled) video conferencing meetings.

If you wish further information, please see page 6 of this issue, or view the specific proposed changes when you access the eBallot from our emailed voting alert. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I ask you to please take the time to vote on these important issues. Thanks so much and I hope that you have a restful and restorative summer!



From the EDITOR

Amanda Bumgarner

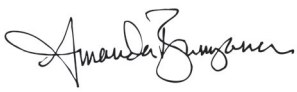
Part of my work as the editor of *Choral Journal* is scheduling the articles and columns that appear in each issue. Focus issues, article topics, and columns are prepared months in advance, and I have a spreadsheet where I keep a list of upcoming titles. Recently we saw the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). You will note, however, that this issue of *Choral Journal* does not contain any content speaking specifically to this major global pandemic. I share this because I do not want you to be caught off guard by the lack of content on something that is directly affecting your work as choral music educators, conductors, and composers. I am, however, often surprised by how themes or complementary topics seem to come together almost on their own. Our cover article, written by Rina Ritivoiu, summarizes "positive research patterns concerning the physical and psychological benefits of choir for caregivers of patients." We are likely all aware of the positive effects of choir for those struggling with some type of medical diagnosis, but this article takes a unique approach, discussing patients and their caregivers. This can relate to caregivers of any medical needs, including those affected by the Coronavirus Disease.

The May 2019 issue of *Choral Journal* featured an article written by Matthew Hoch and Linda Lister titled "Choral Music Composed by Women: A Brief History." The authors began the article with sixteenth-century madrigalist Maddalena Casulana and moved through Baroque, Romantic, and Modern Eras.

Not soon after the article was published, I received a "Letter to the Editor" bemoaning, as the letter author stated, the "most unfortunate and major omission" of St. Hildegard von Bingen in the list of women composers discussed. I searched the *Choral Journal* index and did not find any published articles on this composer. Matthew Hoch took up the challenge of such an article, submitted his piece, and the editorial review board was pleased to see Hildegard as a featured voice. We are excited to share this introduction to Hildegard's complete musical oeuvre as our second feature article.

Our third feature article examines Gian Carlo Menotti's choral work *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* which author Jonathan Ledger calls "Menotti's most fascinating yet unfamiliar choral work." The author goes on to say that "[d]espite infrequent performances and little attention in the literature, two layers of subtext in the work's libretto… offer intriguing insights into [Menotti's] personal struggles."

There are also a number of column articles in this issue, and don't miss the recap of the Children's and Community Youth Choir Directors' Retreat, complete with photos from the event!



Proposed ACDA Constitution and Bylaw Changes

CONSTITUTION

Article IV
Autonomy and Organization

Section 5. The membership shall be organized, as a convenience in planning and executing some of the activities and programs of the Association, according to geographic Regions of the United States. The Regions, as defined in the Bylaws, shall be named: ~~Central~~, Eastern, **Midwestern**, ~~North Central~~, Northwestern, Southern, Southwestern, and Western.

~~Section 8. The ACDA membership in each State not organized as an Affiliate State Association shall be designated only as the State membership of the Association and shall be governed according to the provisions of the ACDA Constitution and Bylaws.~~

Section **8**. Each Affiliate State Association shall exercise autonomy over State association government and programs and activities as provided in the ACDA Constitution and Bylaws. Each Affiliate State Association shall have a Constitution and Bylaws to determine the organization and government of that association and for the direction of State activities.

Section **9**. All publications of Affiliate State Associations shall include the following under or immediately following the name of the Association: Affiliate Association of the American Choral Directors Association.

Section **10.** Affiliation of associations as described above shall require the approval of the Executive Committee and National Board of the ACDA.

Section 11. The ACDA membership in each state not organized as an Affiliate State Association shall be designated as either (1) a state membership of the Association governed by the ACDA Constitution and Bylaws ("state membership"), or (2) a subordinate chapter of the Association within the meaning of the group tax exemption rules of the Internal Revenue Code ("Subordinate Chapter Association," collectively, together with state membership, the "state associations"). Any state membership that intends to be treated as a Subordinate Chapter Assocation covered by the Internal Revenue Service group tax exemption shall adopt corporate bylaws substantially in the form of the model proposed in ACDA's current Financial Policies and Procedures.

Section 12. ACDA will follow all current regulations of the US Internal Revenue Service for those affiliates who reside in the U. S.

BYLAWS

Article II
Dues

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall set the amount of dues to be paid for all categories of membership and the amount of all other fees. Changes in the amount of membership dues must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the National Board.

Section 2. ~~ACDA membership dues in each Affiliate Association shall be the same as those specified for the National Association and shall be payable to the American Choral Directors Association~~. Each Affiliate Association **or Subordinate Chapter Association** may charge dues for its purposes in addition to those of ACDA with the following qualifications: approval of the ACDA National Board must be obtained for the adoption of dues, for the amount to be charged, and for the fiscal procedures to be used in billing and collecting.

Article VI
Duties of National Officers and Appointed Officials

Section 6. The National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and Resources (R&R) serves in an advisory role for the National Conference and assists in providing resources for the membership at large. He/she shall, in collaboration with the Executive Commit-

tee, appoint the twelve National Chairs for each of the following choral areas:

(1) Children and Youth Community Choirs, (2) College and University Choirs, (3) Community Choirs, (4) Contemporary Commercial, (5) ~~Ethnic Music~~ **World Musics and Cultures**, (6) Junior High/Middle School Choirs, (7) Men's Choirs**/TTBB**, (8) Music in Worship, (9) Senior High School Choirs, (10) Student Activities, (11) Vocal Jazz, and (12) Women's Choirs**/SSAA**.

Article XIII
Committees

Section 1g. The Executive Committee will appoint National Chairs of Standing Committees, with the exception of the Chair of the Repertoire and Resources Committee, for a four-year term. National Chairs may be reappointed once for a maximum of eight consecutive years. The National President or National Standing Committee Chair may recommend removal of a National Standing Committee member from office to the Executive Committee for action.

Each National Standing Committee shall consist of three to five members, including the Chair. The Executive Committee will appoint a staff liaison and Executive Committee representative to each committee. Committee members shall be recommended to the Executive Committee and Executive Director by the National Chair to serve as project managers in each focus area. Standing Committee Chairs may appoint sub-committees to execute more complex projects. Committee members serve four- year appointed terms and may be reappointed once for a total of eight consecutive years or until the project is completed. **National Standing Committee members shall communicate on a regular basis.**

~~National Standing Committee members shall communicate on a regular basis and will meet at the National Conference (odd years) and at the Leadership Conference (even years). The committees will report to the appointed Executive Committee liaison.~~

Section 2a. National Chairs of Choral Repertoire and Resources Committees, as enumerated in Article VI, Section 6 of the Bylaws, are appointed for a two-year term. A National Committee Chair may be reappointed twice, for a maximum of six years. The National President or National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and Resources may recommend removal of a National Committee Chair from office to the Executive Committee for action. **National Repertoire and Resources chairs shall communicate on a regular basis.**

Section 2b. The National Chair for the committee on Choral Repertoire and Resources shall, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, appoint three National R&R Coordinators to oversee Youth Choirs (Children and Community Youth, Middle School/Junior High, and High School), Collegiate Choirs (College/University, Student Activities) and Lifelong Choirs (Community Choirs, Music in Worship). The National R&R Chair will oversee the Repertoire Specific areas (Men's**/TTBB** Choirs, Women's Choirs**/SSAA**, Jazz Choirs, Contemporary/Commercial, and ~~Ethnic Music~~ **World Musics and Cultures**).

Article XIV
Regions

Section 1. The Regions of the Association shall be as follows: ~~CENTRAL – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio;~~ EASTERN – Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; **MIDWESTERN - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin** ~~NORTH CENTRAL - Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin;~~ NORTHWESTERN – Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming; SOUTHERN – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia; SOUTHWESTERN – Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas; WESTERN – Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah.

International Calendar of **CHORAL EVENTS**

Due to the Coronavirus and current situation, these dates and events are subject to change.

22nd Statys Šimkus Choir Competition, Klaipėda, Lithuania, May 14-17, 2020. Competition is open to mixed, male, female, youth, children's choirs, sacred music, vocal ensembles, folk choirs.
Contact: Klaipeda Choir Association AUKURAS, 19th International Stasys Šimkus Choir Competition,
Email: aukuras@ku.lt or simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com
Website: www.aukuras.org/simkus

Varna International 21st Annual Conducting Workshop and Choral Singers, Bulgaria, May 24-June 3 2020. Scholarships for conductors and singers featuring Stabat Mater by Rossini.
Contact: Varna International
Email:
conducting@VarnaInternational.com
Website:
www.varnainternational.com

Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, June 4-7, 2020. Non-competitive event for choirs of all traditions and nationalities. Choirs will meet each other through formal and informal concerts and other social events. It will include a 'Big Sing' choral performance lead by Bob Chilcott and one The Anúna Technique Workshop on June 6.
Contact: Limerick Sings,
Email:
information@limericksings.com
Website: www.limericksings.com

Singing Brussels Celebration Weekend, Brussels, Belgium, June 6-7, 2020. Free singing festival to meet hundreds of professional vocalists, ensembles, coaches and amateurs, all keen to sing together. Warm up your vocal cords, exercise your breathing and perfect your rhythm at the inspiring workshops, including one led by Paul Smith's vocal ensemble VOCES8.
Contact:
Singingbrussels@Bozar.Be
Website: https://www.bozar.be/en

Zimriya 2020 - The Sacred and Profane Choral Festival, Acre, Israel, June 21-25, 2020. Workshops of Liturgical music, led by renowned conductors, as well as public concerts and 'Choir to Choir' performances, will be held day and night throughout the festival; 'Open Stage Performances' of choirs and singing groups and ensembles will take place in the pathways of old Acre.
Contact: ZIMRIYA,
Email: harzimco@netvision.net.il
Website: www.zimriya.org/en/

International Choral Festival CorHabana, La Havana, Cuba, June 23-27, 2020. Music makes the world go round, a musical exchange trip in partnership with CorHabana Choral Festival. Experience the art, culture, and natural beauty of Cuba and meet and collaborate with choral directors and singers from Cuba and all over the world!
Contact: International Choral Festival Corhabana,
Email: coronac@cubarte.cult.cu
Website: guerra.digna@gmail.com

Festival Coral de Verão, Lisbon, Portugal, June 26-28, 2020. Partake in international choral competitions and immerse your choirs in the historical and cultural district of Belém.
Contact: SourceWerkz,
Email: info@sourcewerkz.com
Website: pscf.sourcewerkz.com/

IFAS 2020 – 26th International Festival of Academic Choirs, Pardubice, Czech Republic, July 3-8, 2020. Competition with possible Grand Prix for university and college choirs or youth choirs (age 18-30). Free Bohuslav Martinu Award competition for all kind of choirs (except children's choirs)
Contact: IFAS - Alena Mejstříková,
Email: ifas.pardubice@seznam.cz
Website: www.ifas.cz

55th Barcelona International Choir Festival, Spain, July 6-12, 2020. Singing week in the magnificent city of Barcelona, workshops, final concert at the Palau de la Musica, individual concerts for the participating choirs in Barcelona. Workshops with Conductors: Jordi Casals (Catalonia-Austria) - Beethoven 250th Anniversary Mass in C Major, Elisenda Carrasco (Catalonia) - The Colors of our Sound for Children's Choirs, Alfonso Casado (Spain) - Musical Theater: Text and Music.
Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales,
Email: fcec@fcec.cat
Website: www.fcec.cat

Chanakkale International Choir Festival and Competition, Chanakkale, Turkey, July 7-12, 2020. Non-competitive festival or competition for female, male, mixed adults, mixed youth, mixed children, and folk choirs from all over the world. Contact: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Email: info@canakkalekorofestivali.com - Website: http://www.canakkalekorofestivali.com/

Edinburgh Early Music Summer School, United Kingdom, July 12-17, 2020. Renaissance music in Scotland, including the nineteen-part O bone Jesu and Missa Dum sacrum mysterium of Robet Carver and music by Peebles, Josquin and Jachet of Mantua directed by Rory McCleery.
Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek,
Email: lucy@lacock.org
Website: www.lacock.org

Choralp 2020, Briançon, France, July 18-25, 2020. International singing week for choirs or individual singers including two workshops. Workshop 1: Arthur Honegger, King David, for narrator, soloist, chorus and orchestra, level B, conducted by Valérie FAYET (France). Workshop 2: Rachmaninov Vespers (Extracts) A Capella, level A, conducted by Marie-Claude REMY (Belgium). Contact: Association A Coeur Joie France, les Choralies,
Email: choralp@gmail.com
Website: www.choralp.fr

International News

FIRST AFRICA CANTAT FESTIVAL
NAIROBI, KENYA
AUGUST 22-29, 2020

During this inaugural Africa Cantat, three-hour workshops will be presented by guest conductors. The repertoire of each workshop will be performed during the final festival concert. The Africa Cantat programme will take you on an exciting musical safari through various cultural areas, repertoires and choral practices around the world under the direction of the following conductors:

- Andre Thomas (USA) : Understanding and performing the Negro Spirituals
- Jennifer Tham (Singapore) : Connecting continents – a musical journey
- Sergio Sansão (Brazil) : Brazil-Africa, a musical bridge
- Ambroise Kua Nzambi Toko (DR Congo): Enjoy a musical boat ride into the waters of equatorial Africa
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Choir singing can be, among other benefits, a helpful vehicle to manage stress. Among people who experience high levels of stress are those who take care of patients with medical needs. These caregivers may be relatives of the patient, professional caretakers, or other medical professionals. Regardless of relation, all caregivers may undergo anxiety and physical exhaustion. Caregivers face many unique problems, and this article will serve as an introduction summarizing some of the positive research patterns concerning the physical and psychological benefits of choir for caregivers of patients. Some of the research cited in this article is focused specifically on cancer patients; however, it is the author's hope that our society will continue to explore choir as a positive outlet for *all* patients and their caregivers with the goal of moving toward a more sensitive and healthier community.

CHOIR AS A CARETAKER OF CAREGIVERS

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Potential Negative Aspects of Being a Caregiver

Any type of medical diagnosis creates many problems that can be an ongoing sources of stress for the caregiver. The list of issues may include financial problems that are caused by hospital bills. Additionally, while some caregivers may get paid for taking care of patients, they may also be working multiple jobs. As the condition of the patient worsens, some of these caregivers may choose to reduce the number of hours they work in other jobs in order to provide a sufficient amount of care. Additionally, if the patient was a significant contributor to the household income, the entire household will also have to adjust their spending habits.

On top of these challenges, psychological problems in caregivers may include the fear of losing the patient, which could lead to anxiety and depression. It is inevitable that patients will experience negative emotions during the therapy and recovery period, but their caregivers are also exposed to psychological impacts and physical fatigue while they labor to help the patients. These experiences can include "depression, reduced self-esteem, feelings of isolation, fatigue and anxiety."[1] One way to counteract these unique problems is to encourage caregivers to join choirs.

Delightful Forgetfulness Via Flow

In 1975, Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi introduced the concept of flow to the field of positive psychology. He referred to "this peculiar dynamic state—the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement—as flow. In the flow state, action follows upon action according to an internal logic that seems to need no conscious intervention by the actor."[2] The "holistic sensation" of flow that Csikszentmihalyi described can offer caregivers an anxiety-free zone. The effect of flow when *participating* in music is significantly different than when *listening* to music. Listening to music allows for reflection on stressful problems, while participating in music takes more attention away from those problems. When research subjects passively listened to a selection of music, it actually gave them "psychological spacing for reflection and contemplation,"[3] but subjects who actively participated in music focused only on the activity, making the state of flow more available to them.[4] These findings are relevant for caregivers. It may be that caregivers could receive the benefits that these studies cite if they join a choir. The response of caregivers engaged in making music should be studied, because their experience may lead to flow and cause them to momentarially forget their sources of anxiety and depression.

The Secretion of the Trust Hormone

In addition to the psychological benefits of flow, the release of the hormone oxytocin through choral singing can also counteract the problems that caregivers face. Oxytocin has been defined by its roots and what it does:

> The word *oxytocin* is derived from the Greek words meaning "quick birth." In humans, functions of oxytocin were originally associated with maternal behaviors such as mother-infant bonding, breast-feeding, and uterine contractions… Oxytocin mediates social behavior and regulates stress and anxiety.[5]

There are a number of positive feelings that oxytocin produces. These include "feelings of trust, generosity, compassion, kindness, caring, and empathy [toward] the people around you."[6]

Researchers have found evidence that oxytocin is released during choral singing. For example, one study stated that "Group singing produced the highest scores on trust and cooperation compared to other group activities… the belief that oxytocin plays a large role in the social and health benefits of music [also] appears to be supported by previous behavioral findings."[7]

Other studies have compared group singing to various activities. There are many forms of collective behavior such as simple hand movements, dancing, call-and-response, and chanting. Music stands out as one of the most effective ways, however, to unify participants "irrespective of age and physical fitness, on a social action that is highly structured and aesthetically rewarding."[8]

In addition, the results of a 2017 neuroscience study

revealed important evidence concerning the power of choral singing on mood in comparison to solo singing.[9] The positive results of singing in a choir were consistent with previous findings. Twenty minutes of singing in a choir was enough to evoke positive feelings and happiness and reduce anxiety and unhappiness.[10] Those who sang in a choir felt a consistent level of excitement while they sang and soon after they stopped singing. On the other hand, solo participants indicated that their excitement was slightly higher before singing but actually decreased to a lower level than that of choir singers soon after the solo singing. These findings present significant evidence for the physical and psychological benefits of singing in choir.

The Reduced Secretion of Stress Hormones

In 2016, a groundbreaking study on the subject of the benefits of singing among cancer patients and their caregivers was published. Daisy Fancourt and her fellow researchers in the United Kingdom reported on the data they had gathered in a publication titled "Singing Modulates Mood, Stress, Cortisol, Cytokine and Neuropeptide Activity in Cancer Patients and Caregivers."[11] Three groups of subjects participated in the study: cancer patients, bereaved caregivers, and current caregivers. A professional choir director led the process that consisted of one seventy-minute set of choir singing. This included warm-up exercises, learning new songs, and singing familiar choir songs. Before and after singing, each subject was tested for components of the immune system.[12] The result from all three groups of singers showed that singing reduced negative feelings while improving mood level and significantly increased cytokines, which are important components of the immune system.

In a 2017 neuroscience study published under the title "A Pilot Investigation of Quality of Life and Lung Function following Choral Singing in Cancer Survivors and Their Caregivers," the activity of singing together was found to reduce the stress hormones that negatively impact the health of participants.[13] That study examined adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH) levels after participants sang together in a choir. As a reminder, ACTH is a neurohormone that leads to the release of glucocorticoids, such as cortisol, from the adrenal gland, in response to stress.[14] ACTH lets the brain perceive and respond to pain or difficulties. After singing together for thirty minutes in both standard repertoire and improvisation sessions, participants experienced social flow and their ACTH mean decreased, indicating a favorable reduction of glucocorticoids.[15] These benefits at the biological level coincide with the psychological benefits already discussed and those that will be addressed in the following section.

Vitality Despite Fatigue

Another benefit of choral singing for any type of caregiver is its potential to increase vitality despite the day-to-day fatigue that caregivers face. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines vitality as an "active force or power; mental or physical vigour; activity, animation, liveliness."[16] According to a 2012 study on the quality of life among cancer patients and their caregivers, after three months of singing in choir, both cancer survivors and their caregivers gained vitality and indicated a "trend of reduced anxiety and depression."[17] Their medical interventions and daily schedules still demanded a great deal of physical endurance, and there was no significant change in physical fatigue. Vitality gained through choral singing benefited the participants mentally, however, and acted as a tenacious life force that counteracted many of their unique problems.

The Empathy Benefit

The psychological and biological findings described above should continue to be analyzed in the choral setting. This type of study is likely to confirm what many choir directors may have assumed intuitively, which is that group singing evokes empathy among singers. The following section will further explore the role of empathy among musicians and how this benefit might be helpful for caregivers.

Those who take care of patients dealing with cancer or any type of medical concern represent many walks of life and cultural backgrounds. Through their involvement in the art of singing, they may be encouraged to

connect with people from different backgrounds. While choir members have experienced different upbringings and educational training, once they join a choir of caregivers, they will all have one thing in common: a person with a medical need has affected their lives. As a result of this common experience, they can empathize with each other. They will likely go through similar experiences, such as the sorrow of witnessing the patient's pain, the frequent feelings of physical fatigue, and the inevitable decrease of time spent socializing. These common experiences will increase their understanding of each other. Choirs can encourage empathy and bonding through entrainment.

The Entrainment Effect of Unison Singing

One of the most important findings on the relationship between unison singing and its entrainment effect on singers is that "Music determines heart rate variability of singers."[18] *Entrainment* is a kind of synchronization between organs and other body systems. A 2013 study found that the structure of a song can change the breathing pattern and heart rate of the singer. Most importantly, the study indicated that "unison singing of regular song structures makes the hearts of the singers accelerate and decelerate simultaneously"; this unity in singers at the cardiovascular level could have the potential to create a bonding experience among singers.[19] It is not only the hearts of singers that showed the effect of singing in unison. Their brains also revealed a change: "choir singing coordinates the neurophysiological activity for timing, motor production of words and melody, respiration and heart rate variability."[20] This entrainment is a description of the physiological side of the social benefit of group singing.

The power of unison singing has the potential to increase the feeling of inclusion and empathy creating a rather quick bonding experience among singers. If caregivers were to become involved in choral singing, the activity of singing would encourage empathy and build community.

The Mind-Body Connection

The connection between the biological and psychological studies that have been mentioned above can be explained by researchers in the field of neuroscience. Antonio Damasio, a professor of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Philosophy at the University of Southern California, has pioneered an explanation of the connection between the mind and body. He summarizes his theory by stating:

> (1) The human brain and the rest of the body constitute an indissociable organism, integrated by means of mutually interactive biochemical and neural regulatory circuits (including endocrine, immune, and autonomic neural components); (2) The organism interacts with the environment as an ensemble: the interaction is neither of the body alone nor of the brain alone; (3) The physiological operations that we call mind are derived from the structural and functional ensemble rather than from the brain alone: mental phenomenon can be fully understood only in the context of an organism's interacting in an environment.[21]

While working with patients who had brain damage, Damasio found that many of them began making bad decisions because they could not experience emotions properly.[22] This was important because it meant that even if most normal brain functions were still happening, the emotions that patients were unable to feel were creating problems for them.

The emotional benefits of choir will have physical benefits, and these benefits are important for caregivers. Because of this connection, choir directors can think about how to make choir emotionally helpful for caregivers. They can also think about how to keep that element of fun in singing, rehearsing, and performing. That way the physical effects can last a long time.

Motivating Elements

While the activity of being involved in music tends to be very rewarding, some caregivers might not have sung in a choir before. As a result, emphasis on competition, fast-paced rehearsal techniques, and even performance in some cases would not be suitable for some of the participants of this type of choir. For caregivers, choir directors should provide extrinsic motivation by showing a genuine interest in the quality of life and holistic health of the members. Additionally, directors should convey the value of choral singing and their love and passion for it, as that may inspire participants to even higher levels of enjoyment.

During the initial stage of choral singing with caregivers, recognizing which genres of music members enjoy is likely to help the choir keep participants engaged. In order to provide a repertoire that is desirable at any stage, the director should have choir members verbally list songs they know and like. The motivation to be involved in this type of choir may increase when participants are exposed to familiar songs. During the beginning stages of the formation of the choir, the repertoire should mostly comprise familiar songs. Research has been done that supports this method. According to studies on motivation, when members of music groups were involved in selecting the repertoire, their motivation to learn the pieces significantly increased.[23] Initial use of familiar materials may especially help members who may be new to singing. Once the choir is established, however, there can be a mixture of familiar and new songs. Those who join after the choir is established will enjoy the familiar songs, while the rest of the choir can enjoy learning new pieces.

Choosing music for caregiver choirs requires a thoughtful process. The language of the music should be uplifting and calming. The choice of lyrics should be positive and hopeful, and although some sad songs are appropriate in the repertoire, they should contain some element of hope. Texts that cause only sad emotions with no element of hope should be avoided. Rhythmic and tonal elements should be simple enough to follow and not discourage participants or cause them to lose the motivation to learn. Since the primary purpose of this choir is different from that of a typical high school, college, or university choral program, the director may need to do more research on accessible music. Finally, although the selection of music should be accessible, the educational component of choral singing should not be completely put aside. Good breathing exercises and singing techniques should be taught effectively without meaningless repetition.

The Role of Choir Directors

Although choir directors are experts in teaching choir, when working with singers who vary in age, musical skill level and motivation, they should adjust their teaching style so that they are focused on more than performance or difficult repertoire. Choir directors should consider caregiver choirs to be primarily a way to engage with the caregiver community. In other words, the choir director should see the choir as an altruistic project that makes a difference in the lives of caregivers. When the caregivers' psychological and physical health improves, their interaction with patients will also be more positive.

Choir directors can contribute to the psychological and physical health of caregivers by the way they interact with them. Although choir directors are not medical doctors, their position may contribute to the healing effect that the choir may have on the members. A clinician's kind and caring approach has been known to be closely connected to the positive improvement of the patient's health.[24] A conductor's benevolent leadership style might be equally helpful in other ways.

The choir director's attempt to provide optimistic and meaningful social interactions for the caregivers may compensate for the reduced social interactions that caregivers are experiencing. When caregivers attend choir rehearsal, they may be experiencing one of the few social interactions in their week. Therefore, choir directors should strive to make their interaction with caregivers encouraging, while being aware of any caregivers who appear lonely and trying to involve them in the group.

Another social dynamic that should be considered by the choir director is the tendency for choir members to form cliques. As mentioned above, many caregivers' social well-being has been negatively affected by their reduced social interactions. Choir leaders should be

proactive in introducing new or potential members of the choir to the regular members so that they are acknowledged and welcomed. As choir leaders intentionally create a welcoming atmosphere for the new attendees, the tendency to exclude others may be reduced.

Conclusion

Although few studies have been conducted on the effect of choir singing on caregivers and their patients, there is sufficient data to show that being actively involved in singing with others can heal and motivate the singers who participate in group singing. Additionally, singing with others alleviates worries and heightens mood. When the cortisol hormone is decreased during singing, participants feel less stress. Although they may be physically tired, caregivers may gain access to joy, fulfillment, friendships, and vitality through group singing.

While choir directors may be able to help caregivers through their leadership and teaching style, the caregivers themselves can benefit from the research that has been outlined in this article. The role of caregivers has many stressful elements. As a stress management option, the positive results of studies on the entrainment effect of unison singing and the psychological benefits of the state of flow for those who participate in choir were explained. Flow allows people to focus on the moment without thinking about fear, anxiety, and depression.

Some studies have specifically revealed the positive effects of choir singing for caregivers, specifically those dealing with cancer. These results demonstrate that social bonding and the support a choir offers for its members plays an important part in affecting the mental and physical wellbeing of caregivers. The mood of caregivers was positively improved; their glucocorticoids, or stress hormones, were consistently reduced. At the same time, oxytocin was released, which causes positive feelings of empathy and encourages bonding, and cytokines, components of the immune system, were increased. In many studies, the brain's role in creating physiological changes was explained by the mind and body connection. Although the caregivers in the studies described still experienced tiredness from their duties, they reported that even after short periods of singing in choir, they felt invigorated and were more hopeful about the future.

Stress and disease seem unavoidable. When a diagnosis is pronounced over the body, their caregivers suffer with them and also experience a wide range of emotional, mental, and physical stress. Many countries pour money into research, trying to improve the health of their citizens. Chemists spend extended time in laboratories to discover a medicine that will effectively cure various diseases. Humanitarian foundations accept ambitious grant proposals and try to stop nationwide epidemics.

What if there were a solution for associated stress on hand? If that solution were identified at the neuro and biochemical level, and if it were found to trigger positive hormonal responses, build the immune system, and reduce the secretion of stress hormones, people would probably want to know more about it. Assuming that its benefits provided for the mental, physical, and social well-being of the individual, people might actually embrace it. Its news would spread quickly, provided that it was also accessible, effective, relatively inexpensive and known to consistently improve people's lives. *What if that solution were simply to sing in a choral group?*

The fields of neuroscience and psychology have shown that choir singing is a positive healer of the entire human organism. Support groups are aligned with choirs in the desire to create a supportive community. By personal experience, many choir members know that choir not only supports them musically but also socially, mentally, and physically. We can confidently speak about the recent discoveries of the benefits of singing in a group to friends and family who are caregivers. What a caring way to help them reduce stress, boost their immune systems, and increase their vitality. CJ

Author's Note: Those who are interested in learning more or starting their own singing support group should visit the website of the UK charity, Tenovus: https://www.tenovuscancercare.org.uk/singwithus. The choirs Tenovus has already developed in England can serve as great models for similar endeavors in the United States; their website provides accessible presentations on sing-

ing support group research.

NOTES

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The Music of Hildegard von Bingen: A Categorical Overview of Her Complete Oeuvre

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By far the most important woman composer of the medieval era is the Benedictine abbess Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179). One of the great thinkers of her day, her achievements went well beyond musical and poetic endeavors and encompassed many other disciplines, including theology, hagiography, medicine, and science. The importance of Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) in the history of music—let alone European intellectual thought—also cannot be overstated. Among musicians, she is best known for her dramatic play, *Ordo virtutum* (*Play of Virtues*), and for her collection of seventy-seven chants, all gathered under the title *Symphonia armoniae celestium revelationum* (*Symphony of the Harmony of Celestial Revelations*). This article—which represents the first-ever featured article on Hildegard in the *Choral Journal*—will provide an overview and introduction to Hildegard's complete musical oeuvre and will advocate for the inclusion of her works in choral settings.[1]

One of the best concise summaries of Hildegard's extraordinary impact on theology, literature, sciences, and the arts is by Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Debra L. Stoudt, who write the following:

> No other medieval woman, and indeed few medieval men, achieved the level of Saint Hildegard of Bingen's literary and artistic production. This fourth female Doctor of the Church composed a trilogy of visionary treatises (*Scivias, Liber vite meritorum,* and *Liber divinorum operum*); the *Ordo virtutum,* the first extant morality play; the lives of Saints Disibod and Rupert; the *Expositiones evangeliorum,* fifty-eight homilies on the gospels; the liturgical songs of the Symphonia; commentaries on the Rule of Benedict and the Athanasian Creed; the *Solutiones triginta octo quaestionum*; an original language—the *Lingua ignota*; more than three hundred letters addressed to a range of audiences from popes to lay people; and at least portions of the *Cause et cure*, a medical work on the humors, and the *Physica,* a description of the characteristics of plants, elements, trees, stones, fish, birds, animals, reptiles and metals, and in some instances their medicinal properties.[2]

Hildegard von Bingen: A Brief Biography

The youngest of ten children, Hildegard was born in 1098 in Bermersheim, near Alzey in Rheinhessen. When she was eight, her parents—Hildebert and Mechthild of Bermersheim—promised her to the church. After taking her vows at the age of fourteen, Hildegard was moved to the newly built Benedictine monastery at Disibodenberg, West of the Rhine, where she shared a stone cell with Jutta von Spanheim (1091–1136). Jutta was to become Hildegard's mentor, confidant, and closest friend. In fact, both Hildegard's and Jutta's vows were received on the same day, All Saints Day in 1112, thus increasing the bond between them.

Jutta instructed Hildegard in Latin, liturgy, and the psalter. Jutta's theology, however, differed from Hildegard's. While Jutta favored austerity and self-mutilating acts such as flagellation, Hildegard believed that the body was a temple and should be treated as if it were holy. Hildegard also believed that earthly intellectual and artistic achievements would pave the way to heaven, and she sought to learn and create as much as possible, all for the glory of God.

After Jutta's death in 1136, Hildegard was elected *magistra* (prioress) of the abbey at Disibodenberg, essentially becoming its leader, although she was still supervised by the abbot. Hildegard eventually sought to establish her own convent, and with endowments from the noble community she purchased land at Rupertsberg near Bingen in 1147. Hildegard moved her community there after construction was completed in 1150, and the Archbishop of Mainz issued founding documents in 1152. By 1158, Hildegard secured financial in-

dependence from Disibodenberg, and in 1163 she was given the title of "abbess" by Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa. In 1165, she founded the abbey at Eibingen, a daughter house near Rüdesheim, after Rupertsberg outgrew its confines. The Abbey of Saint Hildegard still stands in Eibingen today (Photo 1).

Photo 1. The Abbey of Saint Hildegard in Eibingen.

Hildegard's collected musical works were assembled between 1151 and 1158 into a cycle that she called *Symphonia harmoniae caelestium revelationem* (*Symphony of the Harmony of Heavenly Revelations*). This was the largest scale liturgical cycle yet written, rivalled only by that of Peter Abelard in the 1130s. The title, *Symphoniae harmoniae celestium revelationum*, is intended to indicate that these pieces were divinely inspired, as well as the idea that music is the highest form of human activity, mirroring the heavenly spheres and celestial choirs of angels. These chants were intended to be sung by sisters at the convent and other liturgical functions.

In the final decades of her life, Hildegard corresponded with intellectuals all over Europe. She became famous for her prophesies and miracles, and in the centuries after her death on September 17, 1179, she became known as the the "Sibyl of the Rhine."[3] In 1223 a protocol was issued for her possible canonization, but neither Pope Gregory IX nor Pope Innocent IV granted approval for her sainthood. Finally, on May 10, 2012—almost eight hundred years later—Pope Benedict XVI canonized her, and on October 7 of the same year, he designated her as a "Doctor of the Church," a title given to those whose writings or teachings have had a particularly strong impact. She is one of only four women saints in history to hold that title.[4] Hildegard's feast day is celebrated each year on September 17.

Hildegard's Poetry and Writings

Although the primary focus of this article is on Hildegard's music, she is equally accomplished as a poet and woman of letters. She was also famous for her visions, which she began experiencing at the age of five. She recorded these visions in one of her most famous works, *Scivias* (1141), which took her ten years to write and comprised twenty-six revelations. In this large vision cycle, Hildegard "reveals a mystic universe in which the history and workings of cosmic forces often take the form of allegorical figures."[5] This work also contained fourteen lyric texts that were later set to music. *Scivias* is the first of three books on religious doctrine and ethics; the other two are *Liber vite meritorium* (1163) and *Liber divinorum operum* (1173). Ian D. Bent and Marianne Pfau write that these "three visionary tomes have been described as a trilogy of apocalyptic, prophetic, and symbolic writings."[6] (Photo 2 on page 21)

Other important prose works of Hildegard included *Physica* (on natural science) and *Causa e cure* (on medicine), both of which were written between 1150 and 1160. In 1172, she completed biographies of Saint Disibod and Saint Rupert, the patron saints of the respective convents she served. It was Hildegard's poetry, however—almost all of which is preserved, with music, in the *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationem*—that has endured as perhaps her greatest achievement. The originality and complexity of Hildegard's poetry continues to fascinate both academics and musicians. Medieval Latin scholar Peter Dronke writes the following:

A Categorical Overview of Her Complete Oeuvre

Photo 2. Hildegard with Her Amanuensis (Illumination from Scivias)

Hildegard's poetic language is among the most unusual in the medieval European lyric. She shows herself aware of the imagery of mystical love in the *Song of Songs*, as well as of certain traditional figural relationships elaborated by the Church Fathers. Thus for instance both Ecclesia and a virgin martyr can be portrayed as the bride of the divine Lamb; Mary is seen as the healer of Eve's guilt, or as the flowering branch of the tree of Jesse, or as the dawn in which Christ the Sun rises. But in developing such images and expressions Hildegard delights in poetic freedom, and in taking diverse kinds of language to new limits. I would signal especially her daring mixed metaphors, her

Hildegard: A Timeline

1098: Hildegard born at Bermersheim, near Alzey in Rheinhessen

1106: Hildegard becomes a novice at Disibodenberg; entrusted to Jutta von Spanheim

1112: Hildegard takes vows with Jutta on All Saints Day

1136: Jutta dies; Hildegard becomes *Magistra* at Disibodenberg

1141: *Scivias* completed

1147: Hildegard purchases land at Rupertsberg near Bingen

1150: Hildegard moves her cloister to Rupertsberg

1151–58: *Symphonia armonie celestirum revelationum* collected

1163: *Liber vite meritorium* completed

1165: Hildegard establishes daughter abbey at Eibingen near Rüdesheim in Hesse

1173: *Liber divinorum operum* completed

1179: Hildegard dies on September 17

2012: Pope Benedict XVI canonizes Hildegard and makes her a Doctor of the Church

insistent use of anaphora, superlatives, and exclamations, her intricate constructions in which several participles or genitives depend on one another (Photo 3).[7]

Hildegard's Genres and Compositional Style

Before discussing Hildegard's music, it is helpful to review the medieval plainchant genres in which she composed, namely antiphons, responsories, sequences, hymns, alleluias, and *symphoniae*—a genre unique to Hildegard's oeuvre. These genres—all of which are sacred—are primarily distinguished from one another based on their specific role in liturgical worship.

Photo 3. An Illumination from Liber Divinorum Operum.

Medieval Plainchant Genres

Antiphons are usually sung before or after a canticle, psalm, or psalm verse.[8] Antiphons are the most frequently encountered genre in the medieval plainchant repertory. Over half of Hildegard's compositions are antiphons, and antiphon texts cover a wide variety of topics, ranging from the Trinity to the Virgin Mary to venerating specific saints. In Hildegard's oeuvre, antiphons are sometimes (but not always) paired with responsories. Each antiphon ends with "EUOUAE" (*saeculorum, amen*).

Responsories are usually sung as musical postludes after a lesson is read. They are typically introduced by a solo cantor and repeated by a full choir, with several additional repetitions within the liturgy.[9] In the medieval plainchant repertory, responsories are bountiful in number, surpassed only by antiphons. They are most commonly heard at Matins or Vespers as opposed to Mass, where graduals or alleluias are usually heard instead. Like her antiphons, Hildegard's eighteen responsories cover a wide variety of topics and—as in the case of the responsories she composed for patron saints—are sometimes paired with specific antiphons. Responsories are also often more elaborate than antiphons in their poetic language, melodic style, and formal structure. Marianne Pfau writes that "Hildegard's responsories are her most lofty compositions and are quite unparalleled in their melodic decoration by any other medieval composer of monophony."[10]

Sequences are poetic and musical additions to the liturgy, usually sung in the Mass immediately after the alleluia, to which the sequence often relates melodically. Poetically, sequences are also more formulaic than antiphons and responsories with verses always occurring in double-versicle pairs: AA, BB, etc. Because of the fact that little liturgical action occurs at this point in the service, there was ample opportunity for plainchant composers to elaborate musically, thus making sequences more adventurous than antiphons and responsories in their melodic content and structure. Hildegard's seven sequences take advantage of this opportunity for compositional complexity:

> [The sequences] are so profoundly motivated by Hildegard's devotional life that it is hard to

> tell whether she is exploring music and poetry through spirituality or vice versa. The songs are conceived on a large—sometimes a massive—scale; it is in superabundance that Hildegard found herself both as poetess and composer. Profligacy of imagination relieved the intensity of her impressions whilst validating her as a visionary in the eyes of her contemporaries. The corresponding musical resources are immense, ranging from the most tranquil melody to an almost obsessive declamation at high pitch. Everywhere we sense a movement of the mind in music. This is the work of deeply engaged artistry: in Hildegard's words, of "writing, seeing, hearing and knowing all in one manner."[11]

Hildegard's seven sequences include one for the Blessed Virgin Mary (19. "O virga ac diadema"), one for the Holy Spirit (28. "O ignis Spiritus paracliti"), four for patron saints (44. "O beata infantia" for Saint Disibod; 49. "O Jerusalem" for Saint Rupert; 53. "O Euchari in leta via" for Saint Eucharius; and 54. "Columba aspexit" for Saint Maximin), and one for Saint Ursula (64. "O Ecclesia"). Each sequence ends with "amen."

Medieval *hymns* are defined by their texts as opposed to their stationing within the liturgy.[12] In the medieval Christian tradition, hymns are songs of praise, often composed for specific saints on their feast days. Hildegard categorizes four of her chants as hymns: one for the Blessed Virgin Mary (17. "Ave Generosa"), one for the Holy Spirit (27. "O ignee Spiritus"), one for Saint Matthew (50. "Mathias sanctus"), and one for Saint Ursula (65. "Cum vox sanguinis").

Hildegard labels two of her compositions as *symphoniae,* which an interesting designation because it seems to invent a new genre—no other medieval composers recognize this term as a genre associated with their compositions. Marianne Pfau speculates that "as a genre, Hildegard may have appropriated the term *symphanos* for a hymn-like piece to be sung in unison, as distinct from *antiphonos,* which specified singing in octaves."[13] Hildegard's two symphoniae include a chant for virgins (57. "O dulcissime amator") and a chant for widows (58. "O Pater omnium"). As the alleluia, the seven sequences and the two *symphoniae* are the only chants composed by Hildegard that were used in Mass (as opposed to the daily office), it is possible that she was using the term to designate pieces written for the Mass that did not fit the double-versicle mold of the sequences.

"O virga mediatrix" (No. 18) represents Hildegard's lone venture into the *alleluia* genre. In the Mass, the alleluia—along with its proper-specific verse—occurs immediately before the reading of the Gospel in all seasons except for Lent, when a tract is sung instead.[14] Hildegard's poem likens the Blessed Virgin Mary to a branch from which "the beautiful flower came forth in purest integrity," which is of course a reference to Jesus Christ (Photo 4).[15]

Photo 4. An Illumination of Hildegard with Richardis von Stade and Her Scribe

Hildegard's Compositional Style

Hildegard's compositional oeuvre distinguishes itself amidst other twelfth-century chant repertories through its artistic ambition and compositional complexity. In the words of Karin Pendle:

> Hildegard's elaboration and embellishment of melodic formulae resulted in more continuous, through-composed musical lines. Musical stability arises from organic melodic unity, rather than from external factors such as strophic form or regular poetic meter. Hildegard's songs often encompass a wide range of two octaves or more, and in some cases reach nearly three octaves. Melismatic elaboration in her responsories reaches exceptional levels, with frequent melismas [sic] of thirty to forty notes on carefully selected words. Her habitual use of as-

Hildegard von Bingen: Complete Works

Hildegard's complete oeuvre includes 37 (44) antiphons[1], 18 responsories, 7 sequences, 4 hymns, 2 *symphoniae*, 1 alleluia (with verse), and 1 kyrie. The morality play *Ordo virtutum* contains an additional 82 melodies. The following is a complete list of Hildegard's chants, which are organized in eight volumes according to liturgical hierarchy. All eight volumes are edited by Marianne Richert Pfau published by the Hildegard Publishing Company. The *Ordo virtutum* and *Kyrie* are published separately.

***Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum* (1151–58)**

Volume I: Chants for the Trinity: Father and Son

1. O vis eternitatis (responsory)
2. O virtus Sapientie (antiphon)
3. O quam mirabilis (antiphon)
4. O Pastor animarum (antiphon)
5. O cruor sanguinis (antiphon – fragment)
6. O magne Pater (antiphon)
7. O eterne Deus (antiphon)

Volume II: Chants for the Blessed Virgin Mary

8. Ave Maria (responsory)
9. O clarissima mater (responsory)
10. O splendidissima gemma (antiphon)
11. Hodie aperuit (antiphon)
12. Quia ergo femina (antiphon)
13. Cum processit (antiphon)
14. Cum erubuerint (antiphon)
15. O frondens virga (antiphon)
16. O quam magnum miraculum est (antiphon)
17. Ave generosa (hymn)
18. O virga mediatrix (alleluia)
19. O viridissima virga (unlabeled by Hildegard)*
20. O virga ac diadema (sequence)
21. O tu suavissima virga (responsory)
22. O quam preciosa (responsory)
23. O tu illustrata (antiphon)

Volume III: Chants for the Trinity: Holy Spirit

24. Spiritus sanctus vivificans (antiphon)
25. Karitas habundat (antiphon)
26. Laus Trinitati (antiphon)
27. O ignee Spiritus (hymn)
28. O ignis Spiritus paracliti (sequence)

Volume IV: Chants for the Celestial Hierarchy

29. O gloriosissimi (antiphon for the angels)
30. O vos angeli (responsory for the angels)
31. O spectabiles viri (antiphon for the patriarchs and prophets)
32. O vos felices radices (responsory for the patriarchs and prophets)

*Pfau categorizes this chant as an antiphon.

cending or descending leaps of a fifth is also exceptional for chant.[16]

Hildegard's melismata are noteworthy not only for their length, but also for their frequency and range; many span large ranges of the voice, sometimes up to two octaves. A high level of skill is expected of the singer, and perhaps this speaks to the level of musical training amongst the sisters in Hildegard's convent. Like all composers, there are also certain stylistic "thumbprints" that are characteristic of Hildegard's melodic lines, one of the most famous being a rising fifth followed immediately by a perfect fourth to the reach the octave in a mere span of three notes.[17]

Hildegard's Compositions

Hildegard's music is remarkably well preserved in two

33. O cohors milicie (antiphon for the apostles)
34. O lucidissima (responsory for the apostles)
35. O speculum columbe (antiphon for Saint John the evangelist)
36. O dulcis electe (responsory for Saint John the evangelist)
37. O victorissimi (antiphon for the martyrs)
38. Vos flores rosarum (responsory for the martyrs)
39. O vos imitatores (responsory for the confessors)
40. O successores (antiphon for the confessors)

Volume V: Chants for the Patron Saints

41. O mirum admirandum (antiphon for Saint Disibod)
42. O viriditas digiti Dei (responsory for Saint Disibod)
43. O felix anima (responsory for Saint Disibod)
44. O beata infantia (antiphon for Saint Disibod)
45. O presul vere civitatis (sequence for Saint Disibod)
46. O felix apparicio (antiphon for Saint Rupert)
47. O beatissime Ruperte (antiphon for Saint Rupert)
48. Quia felix puericia (antiphon for Saint Rupert)
49. O Jerusalem (sequence for Saint Rupert)
50. Mathias sanctus (hymn for Saint Matthew)
51. O Bonifaci (antiphon for Saint Boniface)
52. O Euchari columba (responsory for Saint Eucharius)
53. O Euchari in leta via (sequence for Saint Eucharius)
54. Columba aspexit (sequence for Saint Maximin)

Volume VI: Chants for Virgins, Widows, and Innocents

55. O pulchra facies (antiphon)
56. O nobilissima viriditas (responsory)
57. O dulcissime amator (symphonia)
58. O Pater omnium (symphonia)
59. Rex noster promptus (responsory)

Volume VII: Chants for Saint Ursula and 11,000 Virgins

60. Spiritui Sancto (responsory)
61. O rubor sanguinis (antiphon)
62. Favus distillans (responsory)
63a. Studium divinitatis (antiphon for matins)
63b. Unde quocumque (antiphon for matins)
63c. De patria (antiphon for matins)
63d. Deus enim in prima (antiphon for matins)
63e. Aer enim volat (antiphon for matins)
63f. Et ideo puelle (antiphon for matins)
63g. Deus enim rorem (antiphon for matins)
63h. Se diabolus (antiphon for matins)
64. O Ecclesia (sequence)
65. Cum vox sanguinis (hymn)

Volume VIII: Chants for Ecclesia

66. O virgo Ecclesia (antiphon)
67. Nunc gaudeant (antiphon)
68. O orzchis Ecclesia (antiphon)
69. O choruscans lux stellarum (antiphon)

manuscripts, usually labeled by musicologists as "D" and "R."[18] When reconciled, these manuscripts represent a total of seventy-eight distinct works, including forty-four antiphons, eighteen responsories, seven sequences, four hymns, two *symphoniae,* one alleluia verse, one kyrie, and one full-length morality play.[19] All are monophonic plainchants that set Latin poetic texts by the composer, the Greek *Kyrie* being the lone exception. Seventy-six of these works—all but the *Kyrie* and her morality play *Ordo virtutum*—are grouped under the collective title *Symphonia armonie celestium revelutionum*.

Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum

The *Symphonia* is the largest chant repertoire of the medieval era by a single author and a product of what scholars call the "twelfth-century Renaissance"—an age in which intellectual vigor, philosophic depth, and aesthetic brilliance characterized the monastic arts. Hildegard compiled the *Symphonia* during the years spanning 1151 to 1158, organizing her seventy-six chants into eight hierarchical categories. Pfau writes notes that Hildegard "offers [the chants] in groupings that reflect the heavenly and ecclesiastical hierarchy, from the divine to the mundane, ranging from the persons of the Trinity at one end of the spectrum to widows and innocents at the other."[20] Women saints were of particular interest to Hildegard: fifteen of the chants are addressed to Saint Mary and thirteen to Saint Ursula.

The term symphonia appears to be carefully selected by Hildegard. Peter Dronke writes:

> *Symphonia* is a key concept in Hildegard's thought, and one that she discusses in early as well as late works. It designates not only a harmony of diverse notes produced by human voices and instruments, but also the celestial harmony, and the harmony within a human being. The human soul, according to Hildegard, is "symphonic" (*symphonialis*), and it is this characteristic that expresses itself both in the inner accord of soul and body and in human music-making.[21]

The contents of the *Symphonia* are best understood when examined within their hierarchy and according to the groupings laid out by Hildegard. The reader of this article is encouraged to examine the scores when reading this commentary. The most current and widely available resource is the eight-volume collection published by the Hildegard Publishing Company and edited by Marianne Richert Pfau.[22]

Volume I: Chants for the Trinity: Father and Son

The highest order in the celestial hierarchy is given to the Holy Trinity, and this first group consists of chants devoted to the Father and Son: God and Jesus Christ. Interestingly, however, Hildegard does not write any chants for Christ alone. He is always one and the same with the Father. All are antiphons except for the first chant, "O vis eternitatis," which is a responsory. The fifth chant, the antiphon "O cruor sanguinis," exists only as a fragment, although we do have the complete text preserved. Each of these seven chants belongs to the daily office as opposed to the Mass. The eight daily monastic prayer services were devoted to reciting the 150 psalms each week, and antiphons would have been used to frame these psalm recitations.

Volume II: Chants for the Blessed Virgin Mary

The fact that Hildegard interrupts the Holy Trinity, devoting the second highest tier in her cosmology to the Blessed Virgin Mary before proceeding onward to the Holy Spirit, is significant and deliberate. As Mary is the mother of Christ, her stature is elevated, occupying a place that is of equal status to the Holy Trinity. Pfau observes the following:

> Hildegard celebrates Mary as the second Eve, the Mother of God who made good what Eve had thrown into confusion. Because God has chosen her for the incarnation of his Word, Mary stands among the Trinity. We may conclude that Hildegard met the new Marian cult that developed so strongly in France during the twelfth century, where a host of new church buildings was dedicated to "Notre Dame." Hildegard's work on Mary, and particularly the prominent position allotted to the Blessed Virgin within the Symphonia, can be taken as the German correlative to that movement.[23]

Indeed, Hildegard devoted more chants to the Blessed Virgin Mary than to any other saint. At sixteen in number, Volume II is the largest in the entire *Symphonia.* It is also the only volume in the symphonia that includes examples of every genre in which Hildegard wrote; there are eight antiphons, four responsories, one sequence, one hymn, and one alleluia (with verse). There is also one uncategorized chant (19. "O viridissima virga") that Pfau identifies as a ninth antiphon.[24]

Volume III: Chants for the Trinity: Holy Spirit

Hildegard's five chants for the Holy Spirit were all written for the holy day of Pentecost, which takes place on the Sunday that is fifty days (or seven weeks) after Easter. The volume comprises two psalm antiphons (24. "Spiritus sanctus vivificans" and 25. "Karitas habundat"), one short votive antiphon (26. "Laus Trinitati"), a thirteen-verse hymn (27. "O ignee Spiritus"), and a sequence of five couplets for Mass (28. "O ignis Spiritus paracliti"). Pfau writes the following about this short collection:

> The Holy Spirit emerges variously as life giver, healer, divine love, as companion to the virtuous, fighter of temptation and sin, and as world soul inspiring peace, bringing together the micro and macrocosm in one harmonious universe…. In these poetic meditations on the Holy Spirit, Hildegard evidently struggles with a notion almost too changing, fluent, and all-encompassing to comprehend and express in mere human language. The poetry of the hymn and the sequence in particular is even more dense with enigmatic images than most of her other texts, and clearly she is vying for a sense of the inexpressible, ever vital presence of the spiritual force she envisions and in whose shadow she as a deer lived, a force that works transformation and change within a human soul that embarks on a relationship with it.[25]

Also worth noting in this volume is the personification of the Holy Spirit as Karitas in the antiphon "Karitas habundat." Karitas appears in many of Hildegard's visions. She is depicted as an all-encompassing figure who offers charity and peace to the universe.

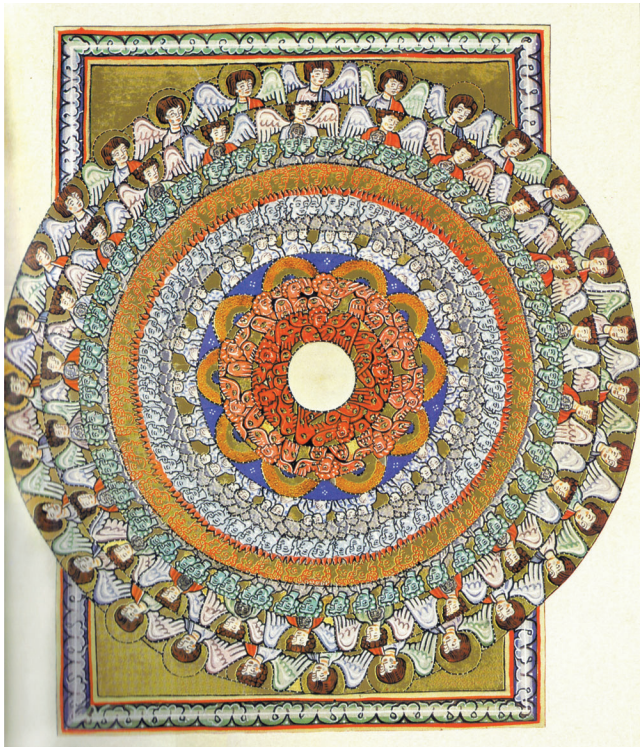

Photo 5. Illumination of a Multitude of Angels (from Scivias)

Volume IV: Chants for the Celestial Hierarchy

Hildegard's "celestial hierarchy" in this volume includes angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors. All but two of the twelve chants contained in this volume were published in her 1141 work *Scivias,* albeit without music. Pfau comments on the important connection that exists between *Scivias* and the *Symphonia*:

> This affinity of *Scivias* and *Symphonia* underscores the important role music holds in Hildegard's cosmology. It is twofold: the divine palpably reveals itself through music, and humankind is able to participate in the celestial hierarchy through singing and listening to music which praises the divine. For Hildegard, the human soul is in its essence symphonic, and music is humanity's life line, especially in so far as it allows people to join the celestial hierarchies in their eternal praises (Photo 5).[26]

Particularly noteworthy of this volume is Hildegard's organization of these twelve chants into six antiphon-responsory pairs: one pair each for the angels, patriarchs and prophets (as one entity), apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors. As both the antiphon and responsory are chants for the daily office, these pairs were likely sung within the same service on specific liturgical feast days.

Volume V: Chants for the Patron Saints

The fourteen chants of this category devote special attention to Saint Disibod and Saint Rupert, the patron saints of Hildegard's respective convents at Disibodenberg and Rupertsberg. Saint Didibod receives five chants (two antiphons, two responsories, and a sequence), and Saint Rupert receives four (three antiphons and a sequence). The remaining five chants are devoted to Saint Eucharius (who receives a responsory and a sequence), Saint Matthew (a hymn), Saint Boniface (an antiphon) and Saint Maximin (a sequence). This volume is particularly noteworthy for its inclusion of four of Hildegard's seven sequences. Pfau writes about the historical importance of these saints within Hildegard's social context of twelfth-century Germany:

> The songs in this volume are dedicated to six saints who held historical significance in central Germany during the Middle Ages: Boniface, Mathias, Eucharis, Maximin, Disibod, and Rupert. Saint Boniface, also known as the "Apostle of Germany," served as the first archbishop of Mainz, the diocese to which Hildegard's religious houses belonged. He founded many Benedictine monasteries east of the Rhine, including the famous abbey at Fulda where his bones are buried. According to Hildegard, he effected the move of Disibod's relics to Germany. Boniface became a martyr when he was killed in 755 by a Friesian mob, and was adopted as patron of the Benedictine order. Saints Mathias, Eucharius, and Maximin were all venerated in Trier, a city closely tied to Hildegard's public voice of the church. Saint Disibod was the seventh-century founder and patron of the Disibodenberg monastery where Hildegard grew up. Finally, Saint Rupert was the patron, later, of her Rupertsberg convent.[27]

The reader is encouraged to consult Pfau's lengthy essay which precedes the contents of Volume V in the Hildegard Publishing Company's edition of the *Symphonia* for in-depth information about these saints and their importance to sacred music composers during this era.

Hildegard on Film

Hildegard von Bingen has been the topic of several documentaries as well as a full-length feature film. James Runcie's forty-seven-minute *Hildegard of Bingen* (1994) is one of the first, offering a basic but solid overview of Hildegard's life and work. Michael Conti's five-episode *The Unruly Mystic: Saint Hildegard of Bingen* (2014) provides a thorough overview of Hildegard's life and contributions to art, music, and theology with particular emphasis on her research into natural medicine, which has experienced a resurgence in Europe in recent years. Mezzo-soprano Lynn Maxwell, together with director Kerry Rasikas, produced two one-woman plays about Hildegard's life: *Hildegard of Bingen and the Living Light* in 2012 and *Saint Hildegard: Trumpet of God* in 2015. Both feature Maxwell singing Hildegard's music. Perhaps most interesting is the 2009 full-length feature film *Vision*, directed by the celebrated German auteur Margarethe von Trott. This biopic devotes special attention to Richardis von Stade, Hildegard's secretary, advisor, and close friend in later life, and speculates into the exact nature of their relationship. All of these films are worthy of viewing and widely available on Amazon Prime Video and other streaming services.

Volume VI: Chants for Virgins, Widows, and Innocents

The five chants comprising this small grouping honor different modes of purity; in particular, that of "chaste widows, penitent virgins, and inculpable innocents" (the innocents being those children slaughtered by King Herod in Matthew 2:16–18).[28] Because they personify Holy purity, these figures rank within the medieval order of Saints and serve as models for a virtuous life on earth. Pfau notes that "here Hildegard does not laud particular women, but rather the more universally meaningful states of monastic Virginity and Widowhood, as well as the condition of blessed Innocence."[29] The virtue of virginity was especially important to Hildegard's religious ethos. Pfau continues:

> The quest for a virtuous life is a dominant theme for Hildegard. She chose the monastic veil for herself, we might presume, in affirmation of a meritorious life. Such voluntary, perpetual choice for the "Kingdom of Heaven," professed in the vow of chastity, was believed to foreshadow the bliss of eternal life. Accordingly, virginity, although not the highest of virtues, was considered more excellent than other sacraments. Thus, because it strives for divine good, it was ranked above even marriage by the medieval church."[30]

Photo 6. Basilica of Saint Ursula in Cologne

Hildegard's chants in this volume include the two *symphoniae* listed above, two responsories (56. "O nobilissima viriditas" and 59. "Rex noster promptus") and an antiphon (55. "O pulchra facies").

Volume VII: Chants for Saint Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins

Saint Ursula was extremely important to Hildegard, so much so that only the Blessed Virgin Mary has more chants devoted to her. The legend of Saint Ursula of Cologne contends that she was a young woman who—along with her cohort of 11,000 virgins, was martyred by barbarian soldiers in 383 CE. A cult soon formed as a result of her death, spreading throughout Europe from its center, a church in Cologne that still bears her name. During Hildegard's lifetime, there was renewed interest in Saint Ursula due to the discovery of an old Roman burial ground near the Church of Saint Ursula that purportedly contained the bones of the slaughtered women. In addition, another visionary mystic with whom Hildegard was communicating, Elisabeth of Schönau, began receiving visions of the life and martyrdom of Ursula. However, it was Hildegard's role as an abbess that most likely was the primary reason for her infatuation with the saint. Barbara Thornton writes:

> Hildegard's strong identification with this figure goes beyond the enthusiasm demonstrated in her lifetime; as the leader of a spiritual community for women, as the model of purity and love for the Divine, as bearing up to the vicissitudes of outside opposition and the responsibilities of inspired leadership, as a *figura* for the apotheosis of the human soul within the sacred space of Ecclesia, and for the ultimate realization of that sacredness in eternal space and time, she found in the future of Ursula a thematic complex around which her fondest poetic fictions could freely pivot. Musically, she was able to achieve something like a "song-cycle" which begins with the simple image of the redness of shed blood and ends in the grand visions of Ecclesia in all the tragedy and magnificence which tradition bestows on this figure.[31] (Photo 6)

The sixteen chants in this volume—all to Saint Ursula and the 11,000 virgins—include two responsories, a sequence, a hymn, and nine antiphons, eight of which are for matins and all gathered under one catalog number (No. 63). This grouping of eight is unique to Hildegard's catalogue can be a source of confusion; some resources list thirty-seven antiphons when in actuality she wrote forty-four.

Volume VIII: Chants for Ecclesia

The eighth and final volume of the *Symphonia* contains only four chants, all of which are antiphons to Ecclesia. In Hildegard's world, "Ecclesia" is a feminine figure who represents the Church. In Greek, *ecclesia* is a place where the spirit is received. It can either be a physical building, like a temple, or within the heart of a human being. It is thus synonymous with the Hebrew *synagoga.* Although Ecclesia occupies the bottom rung of Hildegard's hierarchy, she was nevertheless an extremely important figure to Hildegard. In her *Scivias,* five of Hildegard's twenty-six visions were devoted to her, and she is always depicted as a formidable entity.

Ordo virtutum

Hildegard's *Ordo virtutum* (*Play of Virtues*) is earliest surviving example of the medieval genre known as the morality play. Hildegard's work is also often called a liturgical drama due to the fact that it combines sacred music with both narrative and ritual. Modern performances often add either an organ or harp, both of which would have been appropriate instruments for use in liturgical venues. *Ordo virtutum* chronicles the temptation and fall of a soul and her return from sin to grace. This fascinating musical drama is a sprawling ninety-minute work that is divided into eighty-seven distinct parts, eighty-two of which are set to music.

Most of the story is narrated by the seventeen Virtues; all of these roles would have been assumed by sisters living in Hildegard's convent.[32] The other five are passages spoken by the Devil, and Hildegard assigned this role to one of the priests from the monastery. Hildegard believed that since music is sacred, the act of singing is in and of itself a holy activity. Thus, the Devil, who has fallen from grace, is unable to sing. Barbara Thronton of Sequentia comments upon this:

> [Hildegard] often mentions the cosmic role of music, singing and musical instruments throughout her works. She states that the goal of Creation is that every creature unite its voice in singing the praises of the Creator—such as is done in Heaven, where choirs of angels sing to Him eternally. Before the fall of Adam, she says, when man still lived in perfect harmony, his voice expressed this harmony, and he could sing like the angels, "with the sound of the monochord." She believes that musical tone enhances the holiness of words when combined in sung speech, arousing sympathetic vibrations in the body and allowing the sense of the words to enter directly into the soul. In the *Ordo,* the devil is denied musical characterization; in his very being, he is the enemy of harmony and seeks to steal from humans. His shrill speaking, specified by Hildegard, is always experienced as an interruption of the blessed world created by music.[33]

Peter Dronke adds to this sentiment, stating that "music is at the same time earthly and heavenly—produced by earthly means, but able to evoke for mankind, at least briefly and partially, the heavenly consonance (*Stimmung*) that they possessed fully in Paradise before the Fall."[34]

Kyrie

The final composition to be discussed, Hildegard's *Kyrie,* is unique in several respects. First, it is apparently the only text that she ever set to music that does not feature original poetry of hers, the kyrie of course being a text that is part of the Mass ordinary and thus omnipresent in the liturgy. Second, the *Kyrie* does not feature original music by Hildegard; rather, she recycles the melodic content of one of her earlier chants, the responsory for the apostles "O lucidissima" (Volume IV, No. 34).[35] Hildegard's kyrie, however, is more elaborate. Like many twelfth-century kyries that have been preserved, Hildegard writes two more elaborate settings of the "kyrie" section that are intended to be sung as the fourth and sixth utterance of the "kyrie eleison" text. (Each section is sung three times for a

total of nine phrases of music.) Unlike other settings, however, is the range and complexity of these elaborated melodies: the fourth phrase spans the range of a tenth and the six phrase an octave and a fifth. In the words of scholar Michael Klaper, "clearly at work then are the principles of repetition, variation, and intensification."[36] Probably one of her later works, the *Kyrie* provides an excellent window into understanding Hildegard's compositional process and the complexity of her mature works (Figure 1).

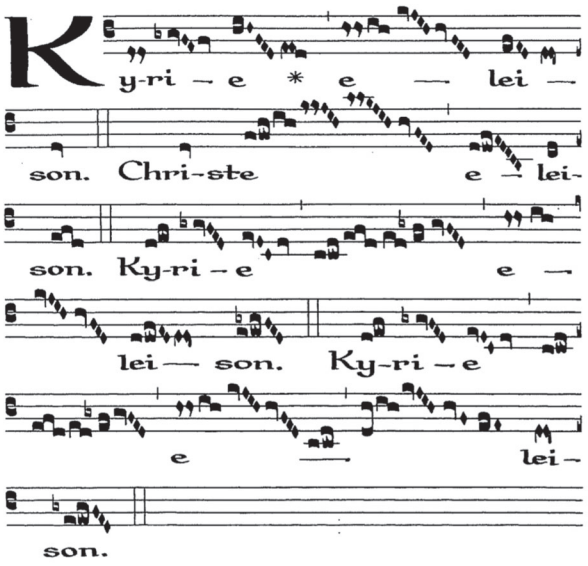

Figure 1. Hildegard's Kyrie

Listening to Hildegard: Experiencing the *Symphonia*

Hildegard scholarship and performance has proliferated over the past several decades. One of the foremost advocates for Hildegard's music has been the early music group Sequentia, founded in 1977 by Benjamin Bagby and Barbara Thornton. Beginning in 1982, they began the ambitious project of recording the complete works of Hildegard, a project they completed twenty-one years later in 2013. At the time of the writing of this article, Sequentia is the only major early music group that has recorded Hildegard's oeuvre in its totality. Their Hildegard discography, still available for purchase in both CD and digital format, is as follows:

Ordo virtutum (1982; rerecorded in 1998 for Hildegard's 900th birthday)
Symphoniae: Spiritual Songs (1985)
Canticles of Ecstacy (1994)
Voice of the Blood (1995)
O Jerusalem (1997)
Saints (1997)
Celestial Hierarchy (2013)

These seven albums on nine CDs—both *Ordo virtutum* and *Saints* are double albums—comprise all of Hildegard's compositions, making it possible to listen to and digest all of her music in a reasonably short amount of time. It is significant to note that while their groupings bear some resemblance to Hildegard's hierarchical categories in the *Symphonia,* Sequentia made the deliberate choice to explore new juxtapositions as well.

In preparation for writing this article, I pulled all of the albums except *Ordu virtutum* into a single playlist and reordered the tracks according to the Hildegard/Pfau catalog order, following along with score so I could experience the entire *Symphoniae* sequence. Listening to Hildegard in this way—while observing the wide latitude of stylistic interpretations offered by Sequentia—provides a fascinating introduction to this unique and adventurous composer. Listening to Sequentia's realization of Hildegard's music reveals the many options that performers of early music have at their disposal when bringing life to a medieval score. Some chants are performed by a solo singer throughout the entire chant with no accompaniment. Others, particularly the responsories, alternate between soloist and full ensemble. Drones or pedal tones—usually with the help of a medieval fiddle (vielle) or portative organ—are frequently played along with the chant and are sometimes joined by voices.

Occasionally, Sequentia records a chant twice, and it is fascinating to listen to the differences between each version. The antiphon "O splendissima gemma" (Vol. II, No. 10), for instance, appears on both the *Celestial Hierarchy* and *Ordo virtutum* albums. The former is a ten-minute performance that is unaccompanied throughout its entirety, whereas the latter is half the length (i.e., sung faster) and accompanied by a hurdy-gurdy. Similar differences can be heard on their respec-

tive recordings of the responsory "Spiritui Sancto" (Vol. VII, No. 60). In the case of "O Ecclesia "(Vol. VII, No. 64), Sequentia's two renditions are sung at different pitch levels and tempi. In other words, there are many choices that are left up to the performer when realizing Hildegard's music.[37]

Final Thoughts

The seventy-eight works of Hildegard von Bingen provide a rich and fascinating trove of music that is worthy of exploration and study. We are indeed fortunate that the works of this twelfth-century genius have been so well preserved, allowing us to experience her music over eight centuries later. We would be remiss not to be listening to this music, studying it, and—

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most important—*performing* it. Anyone who sings or conducts a choir has the opportunity to perform Hildegard. It is the author's hope that in the coming years we will be actively singing Hildegard's oeuvre with ever-increasing frequency and appreciation. CJ

NOTES

[1] This article is something of a companion piece to "Choral Music Composed by Women," coauthored with Linda Lister, which appeared in the May 2019 issue of the *Choral Journal.* That article began its survey with the polyphonic music of the late Renaissance era; the monophonic plainchants of Hildegard were not included. Merriam-Webster, however, defines "choral" as "of or relating to a chorus or choir." Therefore, although choral music is usually thought of as a polyphonic genre, monophonic works can and should be included on choral programs, particularly ones as interesting and sophisticated as those composed by Hildegard. It should be noted, however, that Hildegard's plainchants are just as frequently sung by soloists. With the lone exception of *Ordo Virtutum,* Hildegard does not specify how many singers are required to sing her plainchants, and it is likely that many of them—especially the responsories—were performed with some combination of solo and unison singing.

[2] Beverly Mayne Kienzle, Debra L. Stoudt, and George Ferzoco, eds. *A Companion to Hildegard of Bingen* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1.

[3] The sibyls were oracles of Ancient Greece, usually thought to be ten in number.

[4] The other three women Doctors of Church are as follows: Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), canonized in 1461, recognized as doctor in 1970; Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582) canonized in 1622, recognized in 1970; and Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897), canonized in 1925, recognized in 1997.

[5] Barabra Thornton, "The Content of *Ordo virtutum,*" liner notes for *Ordo virtutum*, by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1982, compact disc), 8.

[6] Ian D. Bent and Marianne Pfau, "Hildegard of Bingen," *Grove Music Online,* Oxford Music Online, accessed December 20, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.spot.lib.auburn.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/.

[7] Peter Dronke, "Symphoniae," liner notes for *Symphoniae: Sacred Songs,* by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1985, compact disc), 9.

[8] A typical use of antiphons within the liturgy is as follows: antiphon—psalm—antiphon (repeated)—doxology—antiphon (repeated).

[9] A typical use of responsories within the liturgy is as follows: responsory (cantor)—responsory (choir)—lesson—responsory (repeated)—doxology—responsory (repeated). Due to these repetitions, responsories often can take up to ten minutes to perform.

[10] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume II: Chants for the Blessed Virgin Mary* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[11] Christopher Page, liner notes for *A Feather on the Breath of God: Sequences and Hymns by Saint Hildegard of Bingen* (Hyperion Records, 1984, compact disc), 4.

[12] The word hymn has pagan origins, deriving from the Greek term *hymnos,* which was a song in praise of gods or heroes.

[13] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume VI: Chants for Virgins, Widows and Innocents* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[14] Alleluias are also not sung on Ember days, which are four separate sets of three days of fasting: Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. Ember Days occur between the third and fourth Sunday of Advent, between the first and second Sunday of Lent, between Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, and in the week following Holy Cross day (September 14).

[15] Translation by Mariannce Richert Pfau.

[16] Karin Pendle, *Women and Music: A History,* 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 47.

[17] Audrey Ekdahl Davidson, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Ordo virtutum* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 2002), front matter.

[18] The "D" manuscript is the Villers Codex in the Benedictine Abbey in Dendermonde, Belgium, and the "R" manuscript is the Riesencodex in the

Landesbibliothek in Wiesbaden, Germany. The "R" codex, which was compiled later, is more complete and comprehensive and is generally considered to be Hildegard's *opera omnia.*

[19] The eight antiphons for matins (catalogue No. 63 in volume VII) are grouped under one catalog number. For this reason, the total number of works is sometimes cited as 71 instead of 78.

[20] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume I: Chants for the Trinity: Father and Son* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[21] Peter Dronke, "Symphoniae," liner notes for *Symphoniae: Sacred Songs,* by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1985, compact disc), 8–9.

[22] Pfau's editorial organization mirrors that of Barbara Newman, who published the definitive critical edition of the *Symphonia*'s text in 1988. This edition is published by Cornell University Press.

[23] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum – Volume II: Chants for the Blessed Virgin Mary* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter. The Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was the most high-profile example of twelfth-century Marian structures. Although groundbreaking occurred in 1163, the cathedral was not completed until 1345.

[24] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume II: Chants for the Blessed Virgin Mary* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), 27.

[25] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume III: Chants for the Trinity: Holy Spirit* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[26] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume IV: Chants for the Celestial Hierarchy* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[27] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume V: Chants for the Patron Saints* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[28] Marianne Richert Pfau, ed., *Hildegard von Bingen: Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum—Volume VI: Chants for Virgins, Widows and Innocents* (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1997), front matter.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Barabra Thornton, "Ursula and Ecclesia: Myths and Meaning," liner notes for *Voice of the Blood,* by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1995, compact disc), 8.

[32] The seventeen Virtues are the following: Charity, Fear of God, Obedience, Faith, Hope, Chastity, Innocence, Comtempt of the World, Celestial Love, Discipline, Modesty, Mercy, Victory, Discretion, Patience, the Soul, and Humility, Queen of the Virtues.

[33] Barabra Thornon, "The Musical Conception of *Ordo virtutum,*" liner notes for Ordo Virtutum, by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1982, compact disc), 15.

[34] Peter Dronke, "Symphoniae," liner notes for *Symphoniae: Sacred Songs,* by Hildegard von Bingen, with Sequentia (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 1985, compact disc), 9.

[35] There is some debate as to which composition may have been written first.

[36] Michael Klaper, "Hildegard von Bingen" in *New Historical Anthology of Music by Women,* ed. James R. Briscoe (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994), 15.

[37] The performance practice of medieval music is a topic too complex and expansive to cover in this article, which is intended to be a survey of Hildegard's music for the choral director. A separate full-length article would be required to adequately discuss these issues. Perhaps a future article in the *Choral Journal* could be devoted to an exploration of this rich and fascinating topic.

The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore or The Three Sundays of a Poet is one of Gian Carlo Menotti's most fascinating yet unfamiliar choral works. Despite infrequent performances and little attention in the literature, two layers of subtext in the work's libretto, written by Menotti himself, offer intriguing insights into his personal struggles. The many harsh reviews of his works, the socially conservative nature of the United States during his lifetime, and his avoidance of speaking publicly about his homosexuality support underlying themes about his life as both a composer maligned by critics and a gay man living in 1950's America, although Menotti never directly addressed these subtexts to members of the press. This work provides an excellent example of a composition by an LGBTQ composer that explores themes common to the LGBTQ experience such as isolation, condemnation, and marginalization, while celebrating and encouraging the resiliency of the LGBTQ community with its message of self-acceptance and authentic expression.

According to Matthew L. Garrett, associate professor of music education at Case Western Reserve University, music educators can support diversity and strengthen inclusive classrooms by incorporating LGBTQ subject matter into their curricula.[1] Furthermore, a study completed by Joshua Palkki, assistant professor of vocal/choral music education at California State University, Long Beach, and Paul Caldwell, artistic director of the Seattle Men's Chorus and Women's Chorus, found that introducing students to the works of LGBTQ composers, especially works that explore the composers' own personal struggles, can normalize LGBTQ students' experiences and help them celebrate their own unique contributions to the musical landscape.[2] In addition, *The Unicorn* also synthesizes a broad liberal arts experience for students by incorporating music, storytelling, dance, mask work, puppetry, and costume design akin to a *Gesamtkunstwerk.*

MENOTTI'S *THE UNICORN, THE GORGON AND THE MANTICORE*

A STUDY IN ARTISTIC INTEGRITY AND SEXUAL IDENTITY

JONATHAN LEDGER

Subtitled "a madrigal fable," *The Unicorn* features alternating unaccompanied madrigals for mixed choir and interludes for chamber orchestra consisting of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, cello, bass, percussion (one player), and harp. Menotti intended the work to be staged with ten dancers who pantomime the story (delivered by the choir) and dance during the orchestral interludes. Individual dancers perform the roles of the Man in the Castle (the Poet), the Count, the Countess, the Doctor, the Doctor's Wife, the Mayor, the Mayor's Wife, the Unicorn, the Gorgon, and the Manticore. In a preface to the score, Menotti included descriptions of the three mythical beasts taken directly from *A Book of Beasts,* a translation of a twelfth-century Latin bestiary by T. H. White. Menotti noted that "the imitations of the three monsters, as sported by the townsfolk, may be lifeless and be symbolized, for example, by glove-like puppets."[3] Despite indicating the incorporation of dance into performances, Menotti gives no instructions for the choreography, leaving movements to the choreographer's imagination.

The Plot

The story of *The Unicorn* is allegorical, with the Poet's three pets representing the three stages of his life: the Unicorn symbolizing youth, the Gorgon symbolizing middle age or manhood, and the Manticore symbolizing old age.[4] Menotti sets the fairytale in a town in which residents stroll along the promenade by the sea every Sunday afternoon. They first exchange pleasantries and then immediately gossip ferociously about one another, thereby revealing the shallow and petty society in which the story is set. A mysterious and eccentric poet resides in a castle in the town; he is a prominent subject of the townspeople's gossip, and they regard him as quite "strange" at the outset of the work.[5]

One Sunday afternoon, the Poet joins the rest of the townspeople strolling along the promenade and intrigues them all by leading his pet Unicorn on a silver chain. The town's residents decry this unusual behavior, describing it in their conversations as "scandalous."[6] The women of the town soon have a change of heart, however, exclaiming to their husbands that they cannot continue living without their own pet unicorns. The men of the town acquiesce and obtain pet unicorns for their wives, who proudly stroll with them on the promenade the following Sunday. The townspeople are confused, then, when they see the Poet leading not his pet Unicorn but a pet Gorgon. When asked what became of his Unicorn, the Poet states matter-of-factly that he grew tired of the Unicorn and killed him. The townspeople are appalled and declare the Poet "ungrateful" and "out of his mind."[7] The women soon follow the Poet's lead, secretly killing their unicorns and begging their husbands for gorgons to replace the slain pets. The pattern repeats with the Manticore replacing the Gorgon as the choice pet in town.

On the following Sunday, the Poet does not appear on the promenade with the Manticore. Wondering if the creature suffered the same fate as the Unicorn and the Gorgon, the townspeople march to the castle to discover the truth, intent on arresting and torturing the Poet if indeed he has killed the Manticore. They are shocked to find the Poet on his deathbed, surrounded by all three of his pets, very much alive. The Poet chides the townspeople, calling them "foolish people who feign to feel what other men have suffered."[8] He goes on to remind them that they, not he, are "the indifferent killers of the poet's dreams."[9] The Poet's purpose in deceiving the townspeople was to teach them an important moral lesson concerning strength of conviction and remaining true to one's own thoughts and feelings.

The Independent Artist

Although Menotti found much success as a composer, especially in the world of American opera, he faced brutal criticism from detractors in the press, and his composition colleagues in the United States and abroad greatly disrespected him. Menotti once stated in the *New York Times* that he could not think of another artist who had "been more consistently damned by the critics" than he.[10] Menotti felt he had been attacked violently and with vehemence; he confided in music critic John Ardoin regarding a *New York Times* article describing him as completely devoid of talent.[11] According to Ardoin, Menotti commented that articles with titles such as "The Menotti Problem" or "The Menotti Puzzle" portrayed him as a sickness in need of a cure.[12]

When Ardoin asked him about the dichotomy between the generally warm reception he received from audiences and the often cold responses from the press, Menotti remarked that he believed he did not fit into critics' preconceived notions concerning the historical development of music. Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen represented the direction in which critics felt music should progress, and he simply did not fit into that mold.[13] Many of Menotti's critics viewed his music as too traditional because he did not use the avant-garde techniques for which his contemporaries received rave reviews and high praise.[14] Furthermore, according to Ken Wlaschin, Menotti's "musical style was not dissonant enough for the atonalists, not complex enough for the academics, too melodic for the modernists and too popular for the elitists."[15] Detractors often deemed him derivative and called him "The Puccini of the Poor," to which Menotti sardonically retorted, "better that than 'The Boulez of the Rich.'"[16] He stated to Ardoin that he felt it unjust of critics to call him derivative of Puccini and Mussorgsky when those same critics never seemed bothered by past composers' influences on his contemporaries.[17] He asserted that Puccini only influenced his fondness for writing beautiful melodies and claimed that his melodies actually owed more to Schubert.[18] He stated to Ardoin, "If some stupid critic insists in linking my music to Puccini, God bless him."[19] Menotti further commented that he felt critics too quickly judged and criticized a work without carefully analyzing or understanding the music.[20]

Joseph Kerman was perhaps the most violently outspoken of Menotti's detractors. He wrote disparagingly regarding many of Menotti's most famous works in his book *Opera As Drama,* originally published in 1956 (the same year in which *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* premiered). Kerman described Menotti as "an entirely trivial artist," only interesting because of his "highly successful exploitation of the bad old ways."[21] Furthermore, rather than equating Menotti's talents with those of his diverse contemporaries, he classified Menotti as "a sensationalist in the old style, and in fact a weak one, diluting the faults of Strauss and Puccini with none of their fugitive virtues."[22] Because of this passage in *Opera As Drama,* Menotti was perhaps referring to Kerman when he spoke of stupid critics comparing him to Puccini. Kerman reserved his harshest criticism for *The Saint of Bleecker Street,* describing it as the crudest of all Menotti's operas in terms of dramaturgy and symbolism, as "the feeblest in purely musical invention, and the most slovenly in dramatic effect," and finally as "sheer pretension."[23]

Menotti wrote *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* partially in response to the many harsh critiques his works received in the years preceding the premiere of his madrigal fable, showing once more how affected he was by scathing reviews of his compositions. Menotti boldly responded to his detractors with a subtext in the libretto proclaiming himself an independent artist refusing to follow mainstream expectations. He stressed the importance of being true to oneself and valuing one's own work, despite lack of appreciation by others. Menotti used the Poet to represent all true artists and creators as "always ahead of the crowd and [their] critics."[24] He also wished to express through *The Unicorn* the idea that artists who follow rather than lead simply mimic what they hear, adopting the latest trends, while the true artist moves on to new dreams and creative endeavors.[25]

The first of two layers of subtext in *The Unicorn* represents Menotti's response to the criticism throughout the years preceding the premiere of his madrigal fable. The Poet represents Menotti as a composer, while the Unicorn, the Gorgon, and the Manticore represent his compositions most scorned by the critics. Like his many operas, the creatures are belittled and derided by the townspeople because they do not fit the fictional society's preconceived notions concerning normal pets. Like Menotti, who stood steadfastly by his more traditional, neoclassical style of composition, the Poet similarly parades his unorthodox and antique pets through the town with no shame, despite the horrified looks and statements directed at him by the townspeople. The Poet proclaims his unconditional love for all three creatures in the "Twelfth Madrigal," rhetorically asking how he could "destroy the pain wrought children of [his] fancy" and wondering what his life would "have been without their faithful and harmonious company."[26]

Menotti noted to Ardoin that an artist should be judged by his or her entire body of work rather than

merely their most popular or well-received works.[27] He believed that truly passionate artists view their pieces of work as equal in quality, even the works deemed failures. Ardoin notes that Menotti refused to allow the success of any particular work to "bind him to a predictable formula."[28] Through the Poet and his pets, Menotti proclaimed his pride in his compositions and revealed his deep, personal connection to his body of work, despite the often harsh treatment of his music in the press.

The townspeople serve two successive purposes within the layer of subtext describing Menotti as an independent artist. First, in their initial rejection of and arrogant reactions to the Poet's three creatures, the townspeople represent Menotti's harshest critics, such as Cecil Smith and Joseph Kerman. Like the critics' responses to his works, the townspeople pass judgment on the animals without attempting to understand their purposes. Second, when the townspeople, including the Count and Countess, suddenly alter their opinions and imitate the Poet on three different occasions by obtaining the same type of pet, they represent those critics whom Menotti judges to have less conviction than he does and perhaps even his contemporaries in the compositional world who followed national and international trends deemed cutting edge and worthy of attention by the critics in the press.

Ardoin asserts that *The Unicorn* seeks to draw attention to those who lack the courage to feel and thus only mimic true emotions, rendering them unable to make their own judgments.[29] The Poet, on his deathbed in the "Twelfth Madrigal," offers the opinion that artists who conform to mainstream expectations are disingenuous and ultimately destroy true creativity and independent thought.

Ironically, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* met with enthusiastic reception from the same critics whom the work aimed to satirize. Menotti spoke to John Gruen about how the critics and New York's musical intelligentsia found the madrigal fable "entirely enchanting."[30] *Time* magazine raved over the premiere, calling *The Unicorn* "a singular and engaging combination of ancient contrapuntal harmonies and tart, modern, dramatic values."[31] The review fondly recalled the ending of the work, stating that "as the last notes died away, the tough audience of musical pros leaped to its feet and called for one curtain call after another."[32] Menotti was not surprised by the warm reception of *The Unicorn.* He said to Gruen that when he wrote it, he fully expected people who generally disliked his music to appreciate the piece.[33] He added that the work "had too many of the snobbish ingredients that attract the fastidious listener to fail with critics and musicologists."[34] Menotti noted that even Igor Stravinsky, who had never really liked his music, personally shared with him how much he enjoyed *The Unicorn.*[35]

Homosexuality in 1950's America

In addition to expressing his independence as an artist in *The Unicorn,* Menotti also carefully crafted the libretto to describe the difficulties faced by homosexuals during the extremely conservative decade of the 1950s. The Poet represents Menotti as a homosexual man living in 1950's America, while his pets simultaneously represent his partner Samuel Barber[36] and their sexual orientation and lifestyle, as well as the isolation and condemnation they faced. Like homosexual relationships in that era, the Poet's pets horrified and offended the townspeople in *The Unicorn.* Menotti's homosexuality was not a topic frequently mentioned in the press, but it was common knowledge among his peers.[37] Menotti's relationship with Barber was not described in detailed terms during his lifetime because he refused to make a public statement about his personal life to the press.[38]

The composition of *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* was not the first occasion Menotti contemplated making a statement about homosexuality in his work, nor would it be the last. Around 1946 (ten years before *The Unicorn*), Menotti told his student Ned Rorem, also a gay American composer, of his wish to write a homosexual opera based on a text by the homosexual French novelist, essayist, and critic Marcel Proust of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[39] In 1970 (fourteen years after *The Unicorn*), Menotti wrote and produced a stage play titled *The Leper,* a drama in two acts, which premiered on April 24 at the Fine Arts Theater of Florida State University's Department of Theater in Tallahassee.[40] The setting is a small, thir-

teenth-century kingdom near the Byzantine Empire.[41] A king has just died, and his son is not allowed to succeed him on the throne because he has contracted leprosy. Because he is exiled in a leprosarium outside the city, his mother rules in his stead. Bitter about not ascending to the throne, he claims the gold bequeathed to him by his father and uses it to corrupt the people in the kingdom. His mother orders him killed in order to save the kingdom, and in a vibrant speech at the end of the second act, she declares that minorities (specifically lepers) must accept their status and earn society's acceptance by making themselves useful.[42]

John Gruen describes *The Leper* as Menotti's most self-revealing work.[43] In it, Menotti asserts that "in order to function, the society must tolerate the deviant minority, but only if the minority recognizes its position as such and doesn't defy ethical and moral laws."[44] Gruen claims the minority to which Menotti refers is "the homosexual."[45] Gruen further states that this subtext in *The Leper* is the most open statement Menotti ever made about his private life.[46]

By 1940, homosexuality was officially condemned in the United States; as such, it was scrutinized, pathologized, and policed.[47] Society viewed the male homosexual as a predatory, hypersexual loner with few friends and no connection to a "civilizing" heterosexual family.[48] In *The Unicorn,* the Poet is also a solitary figure whom the townspeople describe in the "Introduction" as "strange."[49] This description offers the first clue that the Poet represents the marginalized homosexual man of 1950's America and, more specifically, Menotti. The Poet also lacks a "civilizing heterosexual family" and shows disregard for social and civil functions, such as when he shuns the Countess' parties and yawns at town meetings.[50] The hyper heterosexuality of American culture in this decade resulted in a deep distrust of the single man,[51] which perhaps explains the townspeople's curiosity regarding the Poet and their distrust of his peculiar behavior.

By the 1950s, the country was in a period of cultural panic, and citizens turned to psychologists for solutions to the "problem" of homosexuality.[52] Society saw the social and sexual freedoms claimed by both women and homosexuals as fundamentally threatening to the social structures of the day. Psychoanalyst Edmund Berger declared homosexuality a neurotic condition and placed it in a special psychiatric category.[53] The medical establishment classified homosexuality as a perversion and deemed homosexuals mentally and morally unstable.[54] Leading psychoanalysts believed that, like most other diseases, homosexuality could be cured. This belief reinforced both legal codes and everyday social biases, which resulted in discrimination against homosexuals.[55] Menotti invoked these prevalent views of homosexuality as a diagnosable disease by having the townspeople remark that the Poet will not allow any doctor to take his pulse.[56]

In post-World War II America, homosexuals commonly sought therapy to convert themselves to a heterosexual lifestyle.[57] In Menotti's subtext, the Poet likely fears an official diagnosis as a homosexual and the encouraged reparative therapy that naturally would follow. His refusal to allow a doctor to take his pulse perhaps demonstrates his rejection of homosexuality as a curable medical condition and his general distrust of the medical profession. The townspeople also note that the Poet does not attend church on Sundays,[58] a not-so-subtle reference to the view held by many religious groups that homosexuality is sinful.

The postwar era in the United States produced "what was likely the most intense homophobia of the century."[59] Television became a powerful and influential medium reinforcing the idea of the "normal" American family and the idea of conformity. Menotti's townspeople represent "normal" members of society; in the "First Madrigal," Menotti describes them as "respectable folk" who walk along the promenade every Sunday afternoon.[60] Specifically, Menotti describes "proud husbands velvety plump, with embroider'd silk-pale ladies,"[61] certainly a description of stereotypical heterosexual couples in the 1950s, which starkly contrasts with the appearance of the Poet and his Unicorn.

In the "Second Madrigal," the townsfolk stop "to stare at the ill-assorted pair."[62] Specifically, this appearance is likely an allegory for Menotti and his partner, Samuel Barber; generally, it could represent any homosexual couple struggling to live and gain acceptance. Practicing homosexuals, including another prominent homosexual couple in the musical world at the time, British composer Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter

Pears, had to live an extremely closeted lifestyle. Such situations were especially common in the arts and entertainment industries of the time.

Homophobia also was rampant in Hollywood. Studios and agents enforced a code of silence preventing actors from losing work and preventing studios from having to fire prominent stars who generated notable incomes.[63] Menotti contrasted this portrayal of practicing homosexuals with an allegorical view of the Manticore, used in the "Eighth Madrigal" to represent a gay person who chooses to remain celibate. Menotti described the Manticore as "lonely" and "afraid of love"; thus, "he hides in secret lairs and feeds on herbs more bitter than the aloe."[64] Furthermore, upon seeing the Poet and the Unicorn together, the townspeople think he is "insane," and some of them "laughed with pity," while others "laughed with scorn."[65] Their classification of the Poet as "insane" likely refers to the 1950s psychological classification of homosexuality as a mental illness, while the mixed reactions to this insanity mirror those reactions associated with the stigma of mental illness even to this day.

The townspeople further discuss the pair, stating, "What a scandalous sight to see a grownup man promenade a unicorn in plain daylight!"[66] The subtext here is likely twofold. Given the social climate of the day, homosexual couples were surely considered scandalous. A closer examination of the text, specifically Menotti's use of the adjective "grownup" to describe the Poet, reveals another layer of subtext. The text explicitly implies the pairing of the Poet and the Unicorn as even more scandalous because the Poet is a grown man. Menotti likely intended to reference society's view of gay men as "perverts," which made them prime targets for the pedophilia scare so prevalent in the country at the time.[67] At the end of the "Second Madrigal," the townspeople wonder "why would a man both rich and wellborn raise a unicorn?"[68] Here, the townspeople's views may be an allegorical representation of society's views of homosexuality as a choice, as they wonder why an otherwise upstanding man with every advantage in life during his upbringing would "choose" to raise a unicorn.

In the "Third Madrigal," subtitled "Dance of the Man in the Castle and the Unicorn," Menotti may have used the medieval description of the unicorn in *A Book of Beasts* to serve as a clever allegory for a certain aspect of homosexual life in the 1950s. The Poet warns the Unicorn to avoid the virgin sleeping under the lemon tree, because if he falls under her spell, the hidden hunter can kill him. The Unicorn likely represents a vulnerable, self-loathing gay man, while the pure virgin represents the religious establishment, which at one time sought to convince homosexuals to undergo therapy and successfully convert to a heterosexual lifestyle. Menotti, as the Poet, warns the Unicorn not to fall prey to this trick, because just as the Unicorn can be killed by the hunter, so too can a gay person's spirit and psyche be destroyed by reparative therapy.

Akin to the Red Scare of the 1950s, which sought to halt any communist activity in the country, a Lavender (or Pink) Scare led to the elimination of suspected homosexuals from government service.[69] Menotti may have made subtle reference to this movement when he described the promenade by the sea as "pink" in the "First Madrigal."[70] Pink eventually became associated with male homosexuality. Many people in the country believed that homosexuals posed a greater threat to national security than did Communists. As such, nearly six hundred civil servants were dismissed by November 1950. State Department officials boasted the firing of one homosexual per day, more than double the firing rate for those persons suspected of political disloyalty or communist associations.[71]

The "Eleventh Madrigal" allegorically represents this aspect of struggle in the lives of homosexuals in the 1950s, in which the townspeople, outraged at the thought that the Poet has killed his Manticore, declare that they "must form a committee to stop all these crimes."[72] They continue by stating that the Poet (again, an allegory for a gay person) should be arrested and perhaps they "should splice his tongue and triturate his bones."[73] They also consider torturing him with water, fire, pulleys, and stones, as well as putting him "on the rack, on the wheel, on the stake," and even in "molten lead" and "in the Iron Maiden."[74] These various possibilities for punishing the Poet for his indiscretions could also refer to the juvenile delinquent, strongly connected to the homosexual in the

1950s, which society also sought to tame and punish.[75]

In addition to the social anxiety homosexuality caused during this time period, it also generated confusion regarding gender.[76] Menotti represents society's view of homosexuality as gender confusion throughout *The Unicorn* by consistently having the men of the chorus sing the text of the Countess, the women of the chorus sing the text of the Count, and the entire chorus, not only the tenors or basses, sing the words of the Poet throughout the work. In the penultimate movement of the work, "The March to the Castle," Menotti makes the least subtle and most powerful of all his statements regarding society's view of homosexuality in the 1950s:

> We, the few elect, must take things in our hands. We must judge those who live and condemn those who love. All passion is uncivil. All candor is suspect. We detest all, except, what by fashion is blest. And forever and ever, whether evil or good, we shall respect what seems clever.[77]

Menotti's poignant, personal, and astute statement describes the difficulty of living as a gay man in the 1950s and leads directly into the closing madrigal of *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore.* This insightful and heartfelt observation of society's view and treatment of the LGBTQ community still resonates today.

Conclusion

The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore explores elements of Menotti's professional and personal life, specifically his relationship with critics and his homosexuality. Although Menotti never publicly addressed these two layers of subtext and they remain largely unexplored in the literature, the work can be seen as representing perhaps the consummate personal statement in Menotti's repertoire up to that point in his life and career. While this study has focused only on the libretto, further analysis is needed to determine whether Menotti also expressed these views in the melodies, harmonies, and overall structure.

The work is more than merely a representation or compositional vehicle for the most personal conflicts of Menotti's life; *The Unicorn* actually represents Menotti himself. The enthusiastic response the work received from both audiences and critics, therefore, validates the moral of *The Unicorn*'s story: resisting pressures to conform to societal expectations and remaining true to oneself with courage of conviction will result in a more meaningful existence and a life well lived. CJ

NOTES

[1] Matthew L. Garrett, "The LGBTQ Component of 21st-Century Music Teacher Training: Strategies for Inclusion from the Research Literature," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 31, no. 1 (November 2012): 55-62, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/8755123312458294.

[2] Joshua Palkki and Paul Caldwell, "'We Are Often Invisible': A Survey on Safe Space for LGBTQ Students in Secondary School Choral Programs," *Research Studies in Music Education* 40, no. 1 (June 2018): 37-38, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1321103X17734973.

[3] Gian Carlo Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore or The Three Sundays of a Poet* (Miami: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 1985), 4.

[4] John Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985), 111.

[5] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 5.

[6] Ibid., 29.

[7] Ibid., 71-72.

[8] Ibid., 149.

[9] Ibid., 149-150.

[10] Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti,* 15.

[11] Ibid., 233.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ken Wlaschin, *Gian Carlo Menotti on Screen—Opera, Dance and Choral Works on Film, Television and Video* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1999), 5.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti,* 12.

[17] Ibid., 37.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.
[21] Joseph Kerman, *Opera As Drama* (New York: Knopf, 1956; reprint, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981), 264 (page citations are to the reprint edition).
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 265-266.
[24] Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti,* 111.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 150-151.
[27] Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti,* 111.
[28] Ibid., 10.
[29] Ibid., 111.
[30] John Gruen, *Menotti–A Biography* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978), 124.
[31] "Madrigal & Mime," *Time,* November 5, 1956, 63.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Gruen, *Menotti–A Biography,* 124.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid., 125.
[36] Nadine Hubbs, *The Queer Composition of America's Sound–Gay Modernists, American Music, and National Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 110.
[37] Ibid., 155.
[38] Gruen, *Menotti–A Biography,* 199. Menotti said, "My life is an open book; however, I don't like to leave it around."
[39] Lawrence D. Mass, "A Conversation with Ned Rorem," in *Queering the Pitch–The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* edited by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas (New York: Routledge, 1994), 99.
[40] Ardoin, *The Stages of Menotti,* 187.
[41] Gruen, *Menotti–A Biography,* 200.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., 199.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 200.
[47] Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011), 129.
[48] Ibid., 187.
[49] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 5.
[50] Ibid., 5-6.
[51] Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States,* 190.
[52] Ibid., 185.
[53] Ibid., 185-186.
[54] Vicki L. Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States* (New York: The New Press, 2011), 87-88.
[55] Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States,* 186.
[56] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 6.
[57] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 77.
[58] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 6.
[59] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 78.
[60] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 14.
[61] Ibid., 15.
[62] Ibid., 27.
[63] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 88. Many actors and personalities such as Rock Hudson, Anthony Perkins, Tab Hunter, and Liberace were known to be gay by those closest to them, but "news or rumors of their homosexuality were quickly squelched."
[64] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 103-104.
[65] Ibid., 28.
[66] Ibid., 30.
[67] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 88.
[68] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 41.
[69] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 86-87.
[70] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 14-15.
[71] Eaklor, *Queer America–A People's GLBT History of the United States,* 87.
[72] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 136.
[73] Ibid., 136-137.
[74] Ibid., 137-138.
[75] Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States,* 190.
[76] Ibid., 129.
[77] Menotti, *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore,* 144-148.

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Audition Guidelines
for Performance at National Conferences
2021 ACDA National Conference
Dallas, Texas
March 17-20, 2021

New Coronavirus Revisions See Section II for details

Invitations to choirs for ACDA National Conference performances are based solely on the quality of musical performances as demonstrated in audition recordings (uploaded mp3 submissions).

I. Preparation of MP3 Files

ACDA will consider only mp3 files prepared in compliance with specifications listed below and accompanied by requested materials in pdf form:

1. Proposed repertoire for the 2021 conference; 2. Scanned copies of three representative programs sung by the auditioning group, one each from 2019-20, 2018-19, and 2017-2018. (For further information, see Section V. below.)

The uploaded mp3 files should contain only complete pieces. If a longer work is excerpted, several minutes should be included on the file, and the repertoire from all three years' examples should be essentially the same kind as that proposed for the conference performance.

II. Audition Procedures

All mp3, pdf, and choir/conductor information will be submitted and uploaded through the link provided at www.acda.org no later than April 15, 2020. Upon receipt, a National Office staff member will assign each submission a number to assure confidentiality until after the National Audition Committee has completed its consideration. At no time will the choir/conductor identity be known to any of the audition committee members.
Submissions must fit into the following Repertoire & Resource committee areas as clarified below:

- Children's and Community Youth

1. Children's choirs are defined as unchanged voices and may include school choirs, auditioned community choirs, boychoirs, and church choirs.
2. Community Youth choirs are defined as community groups including singers ages 12-18, pre-college level, and may include (a) treble voicing, (b) mixed voicing (including changed voices); (c) T/B or TTBB voices. Note: School ensembles need to submit in the Junior High/Middle School or High School categories.

- Junior High/Middle School
- Senior High School
- Male Choirs/TTBB/Lower Voice
- Women's Choirs/SSAA/Treble
- Two-year College: community college (2-year schools)
- College and University (4 or 4+ year schools)

- Vocal Jazz
- Show Choir (Show Choirs will need to submit both audio and video uploads.)
- Community Choirs: ages 18 and up, adult mixed groups or single gender choirs, in either category: (a) volunteer amateur groups with a maximum of one paid leader per section, or (b) semi-professional or professional ensembles with paid members.
- Music in Worship: ages 18 and up adult choirs (treble, mixed or TB/TTBB/Lower Voice) including gospel choirs, even those sponsored by a community or school organization. (Note: children's and youth church choirs can enter in the children's choir and youth categories).
- Ethnic and Multi-cultural Perspectives: groups that represent various ethnic backgrounds (excluding gospel choirs that will be considered under Music in Worship).

New Coronavirus Revisions

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, audition guidelines for performance at the 2021 Dallas conference will have the following changes:

1. The due date for submission will be extended to May 10, 2020
2. Choirs that do not have recordings for the 19-20 school year because of the pandemic may submit recordings from 16-17 rather than 19-20. All auditions must contain a recording from 17-18 and one from 18-19.
3. No re-application for materials already submitted.

III. Screening Process

(Note: All auditions will be handled via the ACDA online system to ensure a fair and unbiased review of all submissions.)

There are two levels of screening: 1. an initial or first screening level at which finalists will be selected; and 2. a final screening level at which only those recommended from the first screening will be considered. Each choir will be requested to include a brief description of the group which may include context for the ensemble (school/community, auditioned/unauditioned, etc., mission statement (if applicable) and demographics). However, it should be noted that all auditions are "blind," that is, without specific knowledge of the identity of the choir or conductor.

For Level 1, in consultation with the National R&R Chair, national chairs for each R&R area will appoint two additional people, representing different divisions, to screen the category. We recommend that auditors be chosen from among conductors who have performed at divisional or national conferences. The online submisions process automatically tabulates responses from listeners in the respective committees and generates a list indicating the collective top ten submissions in ranked order, plus five alternates for the National Audition Committee. In any area where there are fewer than 10 auditions, the National Committee (Level 2) will hear all submissions.

For Level 2, National Audition Committee members will hear only the top 10 in each category, unless fewer than ten are submitted in that area, as mentioned above. Score results are submitted to the National Audition Committee Chair and the National Conference Chair, who together with the Conference Steering Committee, will decide which eligible groups to invite, in consideration of planning the most effective conference. Every effort will be made to represent a broad range of excellent performing groups, and there is no quota in any area. Audition committee members will not know the identity of groups until AFTER final decisions are made so as to maintain the integrity

of the blind audition process.

National Audition Committee members will be selected from the following:

- Division Presidents, past-presidents and/or past divisional and national officers
- National and/or division Repertoire & Resource Chairs in the area of audition
- Outstanding choral directors of groups in the Repertoire and Resource areas being auditioned that performed at previous national conferences

No person submitting audition materials for the forthcoming conference may serve on either the first screening or final audition committee.

The ACDA National Performing Choirs Chair will notify all choirs of their audition results no later than June 15, 2020.

IV. Eligibility

Conductors must be current members of ACDA and must have been employed in the same position with the same organization since the fall of 2017. No choral ensemble or conductor may appear on successive national conferences. It is understood that ACDA will not assume financial responsibility for travel, food, or lodging for performance groups. This application implies that the submitted ensemble is prepared to travel and perform at the conference if accepted.

Co-conductors for a particular ensemble may submit an application for performance together if the following conditions apply: a) Both conductors are members of ACDA and have been conductors of the ensemble for at least three years. b) Both conductors share an equal or similar role as the shaper of the ensemble, and c) Recordings are equally representative of both conductors' work with the ensemble.

There will be one application on which both conductors will provide their complete information. Each conductor must submit recordings and programs from the previous three successive years that represent their own performance with the ensemble. Programs must clearly show that co-conductors have an equal or similar role in performance with the specific ensemble. The complete submission (6 selections) will be assessed as one performance application.

V. Items Required for Application Submission:

1. Director's name, home address, phone, e-mail address, ACDA member number and expiration date.

2. Name of institution, address, name of choir, number of singers, voicing, and age level (See Section II above for clarification regarding Repertoire & Resources area clarification of choir categories.)

3. PDF #1 – Proposed Program for Performance at the national conference. Please include title, composer, and approximate performance time in minutes and seconds. The total program time may not exceed 25 minutes including entrance, exit, and applause. The use of photocopies or duplicated music at ACDA conferences is strictly prohibited. Accompaniment in the forms of mp3/tape/CD may not be used on the audition recordings or on ACDA conference programs. ACDA encourages conductors to program a variety of styles from various eras unless proposing a concert by a single composer or genre. Only one manuscript (unpublished) piece may be included.

4. PDF #2, #3, #4 – Programs – Applicants must upload one scanned program page as proof of conducting and programming for each year represented on the recordings, i.e. from 2017-2018; 2018-2019; and 2019-2020. See item IV above regarding co-conductors, if applicable.

Audition Guidelines for Performance at National Conferences continued

5. PDF #5 Title, Composer, Recording location (live, studio, rehearsal).

6. Non-refundable application fee of $50 submitted by credit card only.

7. Conductor and choir bios (125 words each) will need to be uploaded at the time of application. You will also be asked to upload a conductor photo (must be 300 dpi minimum). Choir photos can be submitted at a later time.

8. Recordings in mp3 format based on the following specifications:

The total length of the three audition uploads should be 10 to 15 minutes, one selection each from 2017-2018; 2018-2019; and 2019-2020. The first upload mp3 must be from the current year, 2019-2020; the second upload mp3 from 2018-2019, and the third upload mp3 from 2017-2018.

All materials must be submitted in full no later than April 15, 2020 via www.acda.org. An incomplete upload of all audition materials will not be considered.

VI. Schedule of Dates

Auditions open February 1, 2020. Application available online at www.acda.org.

By April 15, 2020. Audition application, uploads, and payment completed by 11:59 pm CST

By June 15, 2020. National auditions completed

By June 15, 2020. Applicants notified of audition results

VII. Conference Application Statement

In 2017 California instituted a state law banning the use of taxpayer funds to support travel to certain states which, according to the bill, *"authorizes discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, or (2) voids or repeals existing state or local protections against such discrimination."* This ban applies to our 2021 national conference state, Texas.

In light of these circumstances, we will work directly with any choir which is

1) Funded by the state of California and

2) Ultimately invited to perform at the conference

to make such an appearance possible by leveraging the national connections of the ACDA.

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The Julius Herford Dissertation Prize: 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.

When a dissertation may be nominated: The prize **name's date** (above) 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 2019 degree can be nominated between January 1 and June 1, 2020; the prize will be awarded in 2021 (at the 2021 ACDA national conference).

The award: The winner will be awarded 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. To nominate a dissertation send, by US mail:

A) A **signed** letter **from the Dean, Director, or Chair of the music school** recommending that the dissertation be considered for the Herford prize. (Letters from the Chair of the Choral area are **not** acceptable.) The letter must include the following information: the full name of the student, the year in which that student's degree was granted, and the full title of the dissertation

B) An **abstract** of the dissertation, from which any material identifying the student or institution has been removed.

C) An **unbound copy** of the dissertation (it may be double-sided). Excepting the title page, any material that identifies the student or the institution **must** be excised from the document **before** it is submitted.

D) The full name, title and **complete contact information** for the area faculty member making the submission and the full name, current position(s) and contact information for the dissertation's author (USPS address, email address and phone number(s)).

3. The dissertation and accompanying materials must be **received** at the national o□ ce (address below) by the date announced wbelow (and in the *Choral Journal* and on the website). Faxed material will not be accepted.

4. All materials must be submitted together in **one envelope.**

If one or more of these requirements is <u>not</u> met, the dissertation will be eliminated from consideration.

Nominations for the 2019 Julius Herford Dissertation Prize must be received between Jan 1 and June 1, 2020.

Mail applications to: Sundra Flansburg, ACDA National O□ ce, 545 Couch Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2207
phone: 405/232-8161-5328; e-mail: sflansburg@acda.org

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On the Voice

Duane Cottrell, editor

Choir Size and Choral Dynamics

by Ingo R. Titze

If a priority for a choral ensemble is to have a large dynamic range (*pp* to *ff*), it is appropriate to ask how a large dynamic range is achieved. Possible approaches are to increase choir size, to train all singers to have wider dynamic ranges, or to selectively recruit stable soft voices and stable loud voices for dynamically changing the choir size within a song. These approaches will be discussed here in a quantitative fashion, verifiable with measurement. The pros and cons of alternative solutions are presented.

Choirs range in size from less than a dozen singers to more than a thousand. It is obvious that a large choir can make a louder sound than a small choir, but it is not the case that a large choir generally produces a greater dynamic range than a small choir. It has been shown that sound level range of any choir depends more on the sound level range of each individual singer than the number of singers. It also depends on the degree to which individual loudness is allowed to differ in a choral blend.[1] Ternström and Karna indicated that the primary emphasis in choral research has been on intonation, vibrato, spectral effects, spacing of individuals, and choir blend.[2] Relatively little has been written about specific factors involved in choir dynamics. Coleman reported dynamic ranges of individual choir singers to range from 11 dB to 33 dB.[3] A main difference between well-trained singers and less trained singers was the ability of trained singers to produce softer sounds.

Some singers adopt a choir mode and a solo mode. Rossing et al. compared voice use in solo versus choral singing by recording a group of singers performing in both modes.[4] They determined that in solo mode, the singers tended to produce more energy at high harmonic frequencies. Inversely, during choral singing they exhibited higher energy in the fundamental frequency region. The singers tended to match their voice levels to the singers around them. No such matching was observed between a single singer and an accompanist during the solo singing samples. The fact that choir singers are trying to match the sound level of their neighbor would appear to influence the overall dynamic levels of the choir unless the singers are very homogeneous. This assertion was confirmed theoretically by Titze and Maxfield. Ternström further investigated the degree to which singers preferred to match their level to other choral members in a live choral performance.[5,6] Results indicated that the singers' preferred self-to-other ratio (SOR) varied considerably between subjects, ranging from -1 dB to +15 dB. However, individual singers maintained their own SOR with remarkable consistency, typically within ± 2 dB.

The voice range profile (VRP) of each of thirty female professional opera singers was measured by Lamarche et al.[7] Results indicated the

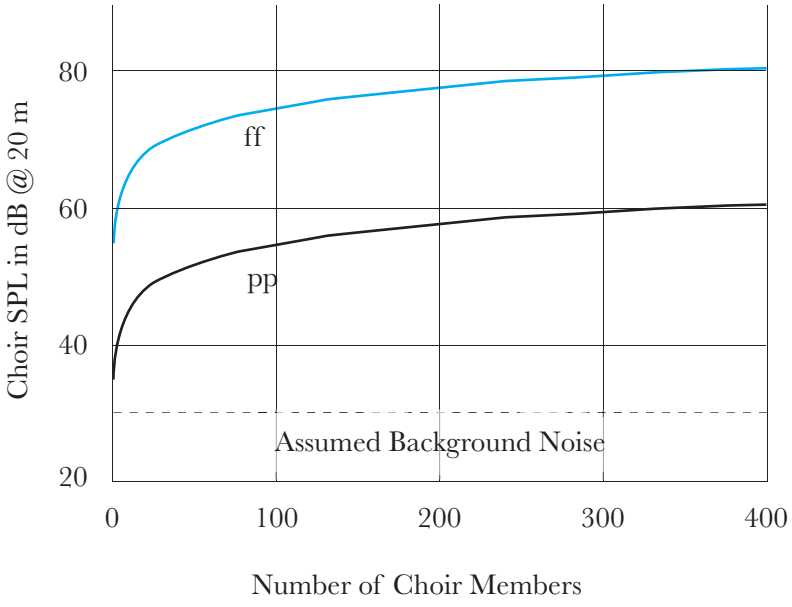
need to differentiate between the *physiologic* VRP (a measure of the all sounds the subject is capable of producing) and the *performance* VRP (a measure of the sounds the subject is willing to *perform*). While the maximum SPL produced did not appear to differ between the physiologic and performance VRPs, the size of the useable dynamic levels across frequency increased in the performance VRP. Overall, the SPL range dropped from a mean of 27.38 dB in the physiologic VRP to 17.35 dB when subjects were cued to stay within their "performance-mode" in the performance VRP.

In this article, some acoustic theoretical predictions about choir dynamics are presented. In addition, some preliminary measurements obtained on choir singers are added to validate the theory. It is shown that: (1) choir size alone has no effect on choral dynamic range, (2) the choir voice range profile follows individual voice range profiles of the singers if voices are acoustically the same (homogeneous), (3) dynamically changing the choir size within a song is mildly effective, and (4) barring logistics, acoustically inhomogeneous voices in a choir section in conjunction with dynamic size change is most effective for wideking the dynamic range.

Acoustical Findings (Methods and Results)

The first acoustic finding is that increase of choir size with homogeneous voices does not increase the dynamic range of the ensemble. If every singer has a 20 dB range from *pp* to *ff*, the choir will have the same dynamic range, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Predicted sound pressure levels (SPL) for pp and ff dynamics at a distance of 20 m with variable choir size.



Choir size only raises the overall sound level of the choir, but even that increase saturates with large choir size. In the 0-50-member range, increase per member is substantial, but in the 100-400-member range, the increase per member is very small. Sound pressure level (SPL) increases *3 dB per doubling of the choir size.* One assumption for this theoretical result is that each singer is considered an independent sound source (no coherence in the phase of the individual sound pressures produced by the singers). Another assumption is that the source-to-listener distance is the same for all singers. These conditions are generally met in normal concert hall performances. What is not considered in this calculation is the increase in sound level achieved with room acoustics (sound reflections from the walls and ceilings that enhance the total sound received by the listener).

The 3 dB per size-doubling shown in Figure 1 does not speak in favor of large choir sizes beyond a threshold for a given acoustic environment. For example, consider the performance hall to have an average background noise floor of 30 dB as shown in Table 1 (which includes equipment and audience noise).[8] Further, consider a single soft voice to produce 40 dB at a 20 m distance. The 10 dB differ-

ence between the voice and the noise would produce nearly double the perceived loudness of the voice over the background noise (an exact loudness doubling would be perceived at a 1000 Hz frequency). Two similar voices singing soft would produce 43 dB, four voices 46 dB, eight voices 49 dB, sixteen voices 52 dB, and thirty-two voices 55 dB. The progression continues in steps of 3 dB per doubling of size, such that a 256 voice choir with all voices singing softly would produce 64 dB at the 20 m distance. That would no longer be considered a soft sound. Even at a 40 m distance (almost half the length of a football field and further than the last row in most concert halls), the sound level would be 58 dB. Normal speech conversation at about 1 m distance is on the order of 60 dB, not considered soft. These calculations under-estimate the sound level in a concert hall because they do not include the reflected sound that adds to the overall SPL. Thus, for an average-size performance hall, a thirty-two-voice choir produces sufficient sound (on the order of 50 dB) for a *pp* dynamic at locations.

Now consider the sound level for dynamic markings above *pp*, approaching *ff*. In order to achieve easily distinguishable sound levels, it is important to understand the concept of just-noticeable difference (JND) for loudness variation. In a free-field environment (without the use of headphones), the JND is on the order of 2 dB.[9] As mentioned earlier, it takes on the order of 10 dB to double the perceived loudness. The 2 dB to 10 dB range suggest that there should perhaps be a 6 dB increase with every change in dynamic marking. For the example above with a thirty-two-voice choir in a normal size performance hall, the *pp-p-mp-mf-f-ff* markings would

translate to *55-61-67-73-79-85* dB sound levels. The 85 dB *ff* level would be perceived roughly as loud as a lawn mower for the person pushing it. Long-term exposure to sound levels above 85 dB can cause hearing loss. Sound levels for rock concerts reach 120 dB, which is close to the threshold of pain.

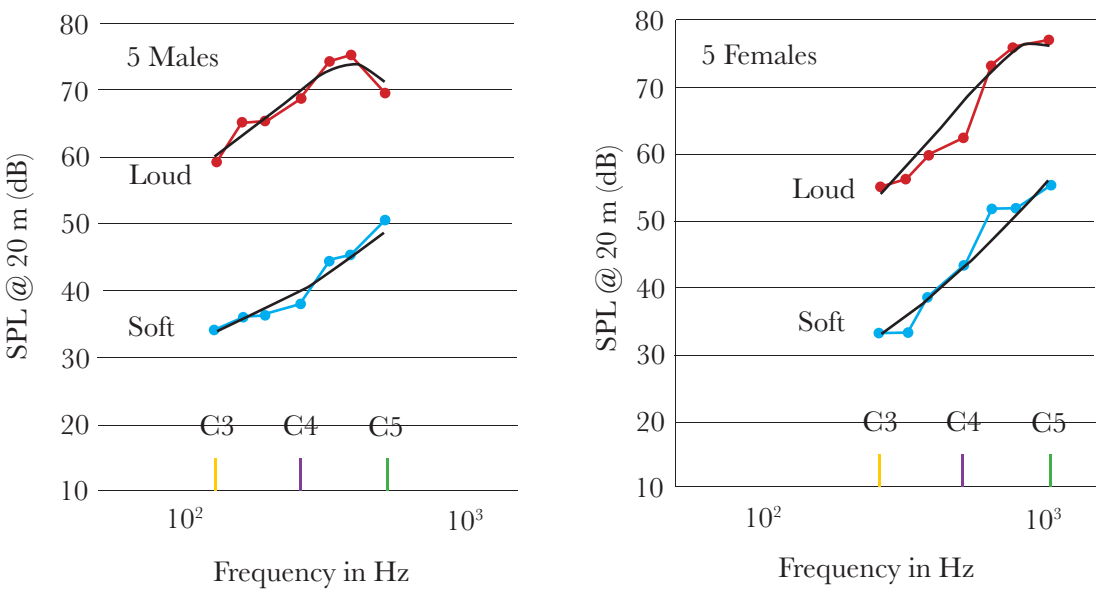
The 55 to 85 dB range for six dynamic levels requires all singers to have a 30 dB range in their voices if the choir is homogeneous (the acoustic output of all singers is the same) and all of them sing all passages of the composition. Figure 2 shows results from ensembles of male and female singers studied by Titze and Maxfield.[1]

The singers all had college-level voice training. Over a two octave range, males had about a 25 dB range while females had a 20 dB range, but the average sound levels were similar because females were singing an octave higher. Highly trained singers have been shown to have as much as a 40 dB SPL range,[10] at least over part of their pitch range. This finding suggests that vocal training is one possibility for increasing the dynamic range of a choir.

If there is a lack of sufficient SPL range of a choir of relatively homogeneous voices, there is the option of varying the choir size dynamically within the composition. Every section of the choir can have subsections. In a thirty-two-voice choir with an SATB division, the dynamic choir size can range from one per section to eight per section. That amounts to three doublings of size, adding 9 dB to the dynamic range of the choir. However, the choir would become a quartet with only one voice per section. In Figure 3 on page 59 (a), we show a 6 dB increase in dynamic range with only two voices of an eight-voice section singing soft. This strategy alone can bring the choir dynamics from amateur level to professional level, but the downside is sub-section management. Section leaders could assume this responsibility. An added benefit of dynamic choir size reduction is less vocal fatigue of individual voices who long for periodic vocal rest.

The optimal solution for choral dynamics, at least from a theoretical perspective, is to recruit a sub-group of singers who have beautiful and stable loud voices and a sub-group

Figure 2. Measured voice range profiles for 5 male singers (left) and five female singers (right) over a two octave range. Data are extrapolated to a 20 m distance from measurements at a 30 cm distance in a recording room. Solid lines are a parabolic curve fit. (after Titze and Maxfield, 2017).



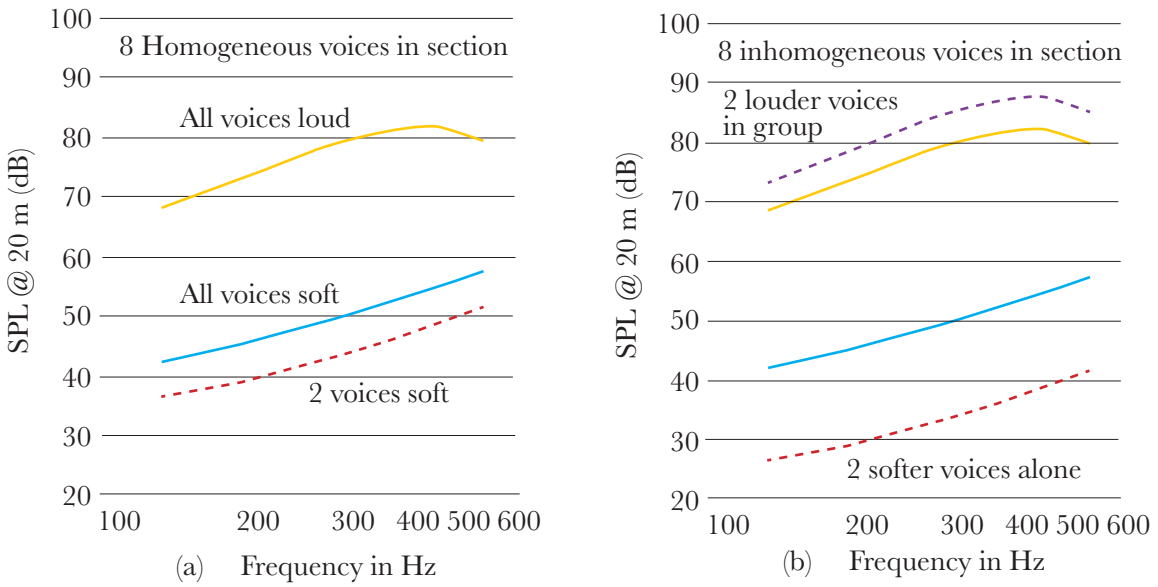
of singers who have beautiful and stable soft voices. The rest of the singers could be mid-loud. In effect, one creates a normal distribution curve of singer loudness in each section, two very soft, four medium-loud, and two very loud. It has been shown in voice voting that a few very loud voices can drown out multiple moderately loud voices.[11] On the soft end of the scale, loud voices with limited "soft" capability contaminate the *p* and *pp* dynamics of the choir. In recruitment and sub-section assignment, individuals on both end of the spectrum should be treated with equal value. Figure 3 (b) shows how two louder voices (each +10 dB above the others) in a section of eight voices can extend the choir dynamics by about 6 dB. Even more dramatic, two softer voices (each -10 dB below the others) allowed to sing alone can increase the choir dynamic range by about 18 dB. In combination, the total dynamic range of this inhomogeneous choir section is on the order of 50 dB over about two octaves. This allows a full doubling of perceived loudness for every step in dynamic marking from *pp* to *ff*.

Blend is the biggest issue, however, with an inhomogeneous choir. Loud voices often invoke more vibrato and a richer timbre (high harmonic energy). These voices can then stand out in an ensemble. Here the choral conductor needs to invoke a preference. For some artistic directors, blend is much more important than a wide dynamic range. With electronic amplification and modern sound sweetening, a lack of blend is not as easily corrected as a lack of dynamic range This is certainly the case for studio recordings, but it also applies to some live performances.

Discussion and Conclusions

The dynamic range of a choir, described in written music with a set of markings *pp p mp mf f ff,* has been quantified here in terms of steps of sound pressure level (SPL) increases. The just-noticeable difference (JND) of SPL levels in a free-field environment is on the order of 2 dB.[12] Taking 3 dB as a barely distinguishable level difference for most listeners, a choir voice

Figure 3. Predicted dynamic ranges of a 32-voice choir at a 20 m distance with (a) 8 homogeneous voices per section, and (b) with two -10 dB softer voices singing alone and two +10 dB louder voices singing with 6 normal voices in the section.



range profile should show a range of at least 15 dB between the softest (*pp*) and loudest (*ff*) notes over a wide frequency range (about two octaves per choir section). This is achievable with amateur singers or singers in early stages of training. For professional-level choirs, a 6 dB change per dynamic level would appear desirable, a little less than the 10 dB needed for a perceived doubling of loudness per dynamic step. This is virtually impossible for a homogeneous choir (all singers singing equal loudness in an ideal blend). All singers would have to be trained to have a 30 dB range individually over a two-octave pitch range. Only very gifted or well-trained singers have that ability. This result is a clear indication that vocal training and inclusion of gifted singers in a choir is a far better solution for enhanced dynamics than adding more singers with a small range.

Choir size has no bearing on dynamic range. A thousand voices, each with a 15 dB range, will produce a choir dynamic range of only 15 dB if all singers sing all passages. While the overall sound level of the choir increases by 3 dB for every doubling of size, the dynamic range does not change. Thus, increasing the choir size from thirty-two to sixty-four adds 3 dB, and from sixty-four to 128 adds another 3 dB. A relatively large choir, like the Tabernacle Choir on Temple Square with 360 voices, has an overall sound level only 9 dB greater than a forty-five-voice choir with similar voices. The perceived loudness of the 360-voice choir is less than double the perceived loudness of the forty-five-voice choir at the same distance. Thus, once the noise floor sound level in a performance hall is surpassed with the softest choir production, there is not much need for a greater choir size. The noise threshold can be met with as little as thirty-two voices in average-size

performance halls. The main motivation for choosing a large choir is the involvement of more people (if cost is not an issue) and the visual appearance of a grandiose production.

Regardless of choir size, the *pp* dynamic can be improved by reducing the number of singers dynamically in a given composition. Every factor of two reduction in the number of singers emitting sound decreases the *pp* dynamic by 3 dB. Thus, only two people singing in an eight-voice choir section will buy 6 dB in the dynamic range of the choir, an extra level of loudness. Greater range can be obtained if special "soft" singers are recruited who have stable voice production on the order of 10 db below the rest of the singers. These are premier soft singers, often not given the same respect and recognition as premier loud singers.

Premier loud singers can enhance the choir dynamics on the other end of the loudness scale. Only two singers in a section of eight voices with a 10 dB greater SPL can give the entire section a 6 dB boost, again an entire dynamic level. It has been shown that some professional singers can have a 30-40 dB SPL range over much of their f_o range. This exceeds the typical range of amateur or semi-professionals singers by 15–20 dB.

The counter-argument to recruitment of premier singers to a choir is reduction of choir blend. If the gifted singers are asked to sing mostly *mezzo voce* to blend with their neighbors, they will feel constrained and vocally unsatisfied. In this case, a choral director can give them license to sing only on the loud part of the dynamic spectrum. Muscle physiology uses this tactic. Large motor units are recruited only for maximal muscle contractions, while small motor units deal with the more delicate contractions. A somewhat similar situation exists with regard to pitch range. In Russian choral music, the very low basses are sometimes selectively recruited only for their low notes. CJ

NOTES

[1] Ingo R. Titze and Lynn Maxfield, "Acoustic Factors Affecting the Dynamic Range of a Choir," *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 142, no. 4 (2017): 2464-2468.

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[4] Thomas D. Rossing, Johan Sundberg, and Sten Ternström, "Acoustic Comparison of Voice Use in Solo and Choir Singing," *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 79, no. 6 (1986): 1975-1981.

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[7] Anick Lamarche, Sten Ternstrom, and Peter Pabon, "The Singer's Voice Range Profile: Female Professional Opera Soloist," *Journal of Voice* 24, no. 4 (2010): 410-426.

[8] M. Luykx, "Background Noise Level Measurements with and without audience in a Concert Hall," *Proceedings of the Institute of Acoustics* 40, part 3 (2018).

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Mouthing the Text: The Advantages and Disadvantages

by Micah Bland

The admonition of mouthing text is common in conducting master classes and literature. The majority of authors—including Harold Decker and Colleen Kirk,[1] Elizabeth Green and Mark Gibson,[2] Abraham Kaplan,[3] and Donald Neuen[4]—discourage the director mouthing the text. Only Max Rudolf in his popular book, *The Grammar of Conducting*, was found to encourage the mouthing of text claiming improved enunciation as a result of a conductor's textual mouthing; this text, however, is primarily designed for orchestral conductors performing major works.[5]

In order to better understand current opinions on textual mouthing, interviews were conducted with university conductors via email correspondence.[6] The participating conductors were selected in order to represent a diverse assortment of North American geographical regions, and were asked to give their personal opinion on the mouthing of text with a choral ensemble. The conductors interviewed are: Jeffery Ames, Belmont University; Hilary Apfelstadt, Professor Emerita, University of Toronto; Jerry Blackstone, Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan; Joey Martin, Texas State University; Amanda Quist, University of Miami; Richard Sparks, Professor Emeritus, University of North Texas; Tram Sparks, University of Southern California; and Carl St. Clair, Pacific Symphony and Principal Conductor of the USC Orchestras, University of Southern California.

As a conductor, what percentage of time in performance do you find yourself mouthing the words?

Jeffery Ames: 25%

Hilary Apfelstadt: As little as possible. Likely the maximum would be 15–20% of the time.

Jerry Blackstone: I'm probably the wrong person to ask about how much I mouth words, since mouthing is often unintentional. I do, however, try to not mouth words unless it is for a specific purpose, such as vowel improvement, unanimity, etc. I find that with younger singers, mouthing tends to improve the sound of the ensemble, especially large festival groups. Young singers are trained to follow the conductor's face, not their hands, so breaking that habit in the space of a few days is not so easy. I'd say, with the University of Michigan Chamber Choir, I tend to mouth very little. They are trained musicians able to ascertain the conductor's intention quite quickly from communicative gestures. Perhaps 15% of the time.

Joey Martin: The percentage of time varies from ensemble to ensemble based on their needs. With advanced university groups, I rarely mouth the words. With less experienced ensembles I mouth about 20% of the time.

Amanda Quist: This is hard to say without watching a video of myself conduct. I believe it changes with the ensemble; if I am trying to inform vowel shape, then it may happen more. Hopefully not more than about 20% of the time.

Richard Sparks: Too much, although I've never counted percentage!

Tram Sparks: Since I have been on the faculty at USC, I have not conducted an ensemble on a regular basis. However, while a choral faculty member at Temple University (1999–2009) and as conductor of several ensembles over the course of my time there (Women's Chorus, University Singers, University Chorale, Concert Choir), I found myself mouthing words on occasion, e.g. significant words or words at important entrances. As far as I am aware (I think conductors typically have an inaccurate view of their own practice unless documented by videos), when mouthing, I usually would form the vowel shape, as if to visually "place" the phrase. Personal video footage generally shows more vowel formation than mouthing of sentences or entire phrases.

Carl St. Clair: I am *not* one to do this as a matter of course and certainly do not employ this as a substitute for nonverbal conducting gestures and communications, but if there are particularly favorite moments or texts, I might sing along with a singer or chorus. I can think of a few places, such as in Mahler's *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,* or some of Hesse's incredible texts in Strauss' setting of his *Vier letzte Lieder,* when I just can't resist singing along. I am sure there are such moments in Beethoven's 9th as well. But, at this moment I am *not* "mouthing" words, I am literally *singing along* because I love it so much. I suppose that in every opera, choral work or works with singers there are such beautiful moments which I just can't escape participating. That said, I would never sing so loudly that almost anyone would hear it. No one would buy a ticket to hear my voice.

Is a moderate amount of time (20–50%) spent mouthing the words acceptable? Is more than 50% acceptable?

Jeffery Ames: A moderate amount is acceptable, and "moderate" will vary for each conductor. I believe more than 50% is unacceptable.

Hilary Apfelstadt: I think not for even "moderate" and absolutely not for more than 50%.

Jerry Blackstone: I always say mouthing words is never right and never wrong. If it's for a specific momentary purpose, then it's acceptable. If it's a conscious choice, it's probably acceptable. If it's just because I do it all the time, then it's never acceptable. More than 50% of the time seems quite excessive to me.

Joey Martin: For me, mouthing the words is used when ensembles need the visual cueing. Generally, though, I believe that mouthing should be done less than 20% of the time, and anything in excess of 20 minutes (with the exception of young singers) is not acceptable.

Amanda Quist: I usually feel that mouthing the words means that I am not listening enough. If I am trying to inform vowel shape, or potentially helping with the occasional memory slip, then I may do it more, but I generally try to avoid it, so the singers are responsible for singing and I am responsible for listening.

Richard Sparks: I think it's not helpful, simply a habit we have. If it's occasionally helpful (5% of the time), then mouthing the words too much simply means the choir doesn't pay attention when you do.

Tram Sparks: It all depends on the context. For example, is the mouthing used for a very specific *musical* purpose? Are there limited rehearsals? Is it a guest conductor situation? Is the mouthing predictable? The more predictable (thus, possibly indicating habitual), the more problematic it is for both conductor and ensemble. Habitual mouthing is a detraction from expressive conducting in that the conductor is presumably relying more on mouthing than expressive movement to communicate. In this situation, mouthing is a distraction for the ensemble in that they are focused on an element that is, at best, minimally expressive and cannot express articulation, dynamics, character, line, or a reliable tempo, to name a few. Is more than 50% acceptable? In light of my responses above, I would say, no.

Carl St. Clair: I am not sure what is acceptable or not as far as "mouthing" in percentages, but I do know that a number shouldn't be attached. As long as a conductor does what he/she can to inspire a better performance and to bring greater respect for the composer and their work, that seems like it should be permissible or, at least, allowable.

Mouthing the Text: The Advantages and Disadvantages

What are some of the advantages to mouthing the words?

Jeffery Ames: Memorization.

Hilary Apfelstadt: Perhaps if the group is uncertain in a homophonic texture, it could be helpful to mouth as a reminder.

Jerry Blackstone: Mouthing can improve vowel formation, and can facilitate conductor/ensemble connection, especially with younger singers. Mouthing is simply another tool for conductor/ensemble communication. Used too much, it loses its effectiveness.

Joey Martin: Mouthing can be a visual reminder of appropriate vowel shapes for developing ensembles. It can also be crucial for reinforcing memory of text (or lack there of…). I've found that the younger/older the membership of an ensemble, the more mouthing is needed to achieve ideal results.

Tram Sparks: One advantage of mouthing could be the *perceived* security and increase in empathic connection between conductor and ensemble. I say "perceived" since it is usually merely a perception on the part of the conductor, and not an expressive or musically effectual connection that actually elicits a corresponding sonic or emotional result. That said, very specific, limited, and intentional mouthing could help a conductor to feel a stronger rapport in a given moment of music making.

Carl St. Clair: Not quite sure that there are any. Having an orchestra or chorus watch your mouthing of words could detract from their focus on your body and hands, which are communicating the essence of the music in one's heart. Mouthing certainly does nothing to add to the quality of the sound or musical output of an ensemble, choral or otherwise.

What are some of the disadvantages to mouthing the words?

Jeffery Ames: In my opinion, mouthing the words, without any apparent need, prohibits proper preparation for the cue. Oftentimes, I see my choral conducting students mouthing the words. When this happens, they cannot properly execute the shape of the vowel needed in the following word. Of course, the "prep" prepares the next beat by indicating inhalation, vowel shape, dynamic, and character. But one or more of these elements will be missed when mouthing the words, which occurs as a 'real-time' event.

Hilary Apfelstadt: The biggest is that the group does not watch the gesture but rather focuses on the conductor's mouth. It becomes a crutch, I think.

Jerry Blackstone: Mouthing words in polyphonic music is counterproductive. Conductors who mouth and mess up the words are headed for potential disasters. Mouthing distracts from expressive and communicative gestures.

Joey Martin: Excessive and/or overuse of mouthing can have unintended outcomes including a lack of independence and responsibility for the members of the ensemble. Additionally, the conductor will be unable to concentrate on elements that require their attention.

Amanda Quist: The singers are watching your mouth, instead of your hands. Also, I find if I am mouthing the words with them, I am not truly listening to what they are doing.

Richard Sparks: If the music is at all contrapuntal, you can't mouth the words of all parts—likely confusing, not helpful. Often conductors exaggerate, which can lead to tension from singers.

Tram Sparks: One of the greatest disadvantages to mouthing is the "watering down," over time, of the meaning between the conductor's gesture and sound. One caveat to this statement is a situation where a conductor has extremely limited rehearsal time with an ensemble, or where a conductor is a master teacher and has spent months, even years, with an ensemble. In the latter situation, if a discrepancy is observed between gesture and sound, often it is a result of an understanding that is developed between conductor and ensemble that gesture is less musically "important" than the masterful instruction that has occurred over the course of many rehearsals. As a result, the sonic product in a performance is more directly tied to rehearsal preparation and frequently, guidance by mouthing, than "in the moment" music making.

Carl St. Clair: Usually, when one

sings along or mouths words, that is the very thing—sometimes, the *only* thing—the conductor is hearing or listening to at that moment. It is the old adage that when one is speaking, one can't also be listening. This is one of the main reasons I don't try to sing or mouth the words, and certainly don't encourage it in young conductors. It is also a bad habit that is very difficult to break when it sets in.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The general consensus is that mouthing the text is not preferred and should be minimized. However, a *minimal* amount of textual mouthing may be appropriate in specific situations. While the term minimal lacks specificity, based on these interview responses, mouthing the text up to approximately 20% of the time may be considered acceptable. All the conductors interviewed considered more than 50% to be unacceptable. It is also interesting that while many of the conductors consider a minimal amount of textual mouthing to be acceptable, their goal continues to be the minimization of this mouthing. In addition, for many of the conductors this percentage varied among types of ensemble.

The decision by a conductor to mouth the text presents a number of advantages and disadvantages. One of the leading arguments against the mouthing of text is that it distracts from a conductor's gesture. In the case of conductors who exaggerate the enunciation of text, this argument seems plausible, yet its rationale is questionable. If the mouthing of text truly distracted from a conductor's gesture, would not a conductor's facial expression be equally distracting? The argument also infers that a performer cannot interpret multiple sources of visual stimuli at the same time.

Conductors may also develop a number of habits that result in the conscious and unconscious mouthing of text. The habit of singing with the ensemble during rehearsal can easily manifest itself as mouthing during performance. In addition, although beneficial during score study, the speaking or singing of vocal lines during a conductor's individual practice can potentially become habitually reinforced, appearing in performance.

In contrast to the disadvantages, a number of potential advantages can be observed in the mouthing of text. The most frequent reason for the mouthing of text is to support the singers in memorization. This is an understandable necessity when the ensembles preparation time is limited, or the ensembles age elicits additional support. While this support at times may be necessary, a conductor should seriously evaluate the ensembles needs. Frequently memorization support from a conductor is unnecessary and results from a more concerning lack of trust in the ensemble.

Although varying among conductors, and experienced only as a sympathetic response, a conductor may perceive a heightened emotional connection with the music through the mouthing of text, resulting in improved facial expressions. In other words, as the conductor mouths the text, their internal connection with the emotion of the music is improved. In April 2019, the University of Southern California's Choral Artists performed Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna* at Walt Disney Concert Hall. During rehearsal and performance, Maestro St. Clair made the expressive decision to mouth the text of every word in the third movement ("O Nata Lux"). In response to questions about his textual mouthing in this work, St. Clair said, "*O nata lux* is a text which has a deeply personal and intimate meaning to me. As a devout Catholic, this text reaches and touches my spirit… When I would sing along with the chorus it allowed

me to become even more close to the performers and them to me." Because the emotional connection is solely experienced by the conductor, the effectiveness of this argument for the benefit of the choir is questionable; however, there is clearly an emotional benefit for the conductor, which can be valuable.

As previously discussed, according to Max Rudolf, the mouthing of text promotes improved enunciation from the ensemble.[7] This may or may not be true. It is possible that singers are reminded to enunciate as they observe the director mouthing the text. However, this over enunciation and constant mouthing of the text can lead to undesired vocal tension in the singers. It should also be cautioned that, similar to a conductor frequently mirroring the beat in both hands, mouthing the text for an extended period of time diminishes its effectiveness. Instead, the inclusion of textual mouthing is likely to be more effective at planned limited moments in the performance.

Finally, the mouthing of text may provide additional information to the singer, such as vowel shape. Throughout a performance, the ensemble's sound can quickly be adjusted through the shape of the vowel, as demonstrated by the conductor. While this method may not be necessary for more advanced singers, it may significantly support developing ensembles.

Conclusions

A minimal amount of textual mouthing may be acceptable but is accompanied by a number of advantages and disadvantages. Just like any other conducting choice, such as gesture, dynamic, or tempo, the mouthing of text is a tool that can be utilized by the conductor. The incorporation of mouthing may be most appropriate for memorization support, shaping the vowel, critical climatic moments, as an enunciation reminder, and emotionally expressive moments in performance. All of these examples, however, should be utilized in moderation as to incorporate the mouthing of text as a purposeful expressive gesture and not diminish or distract from the conductor's physical gesture. CJ

NOTES

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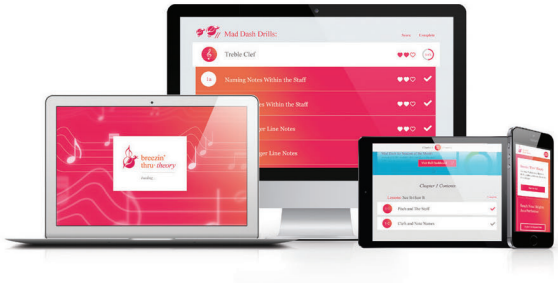

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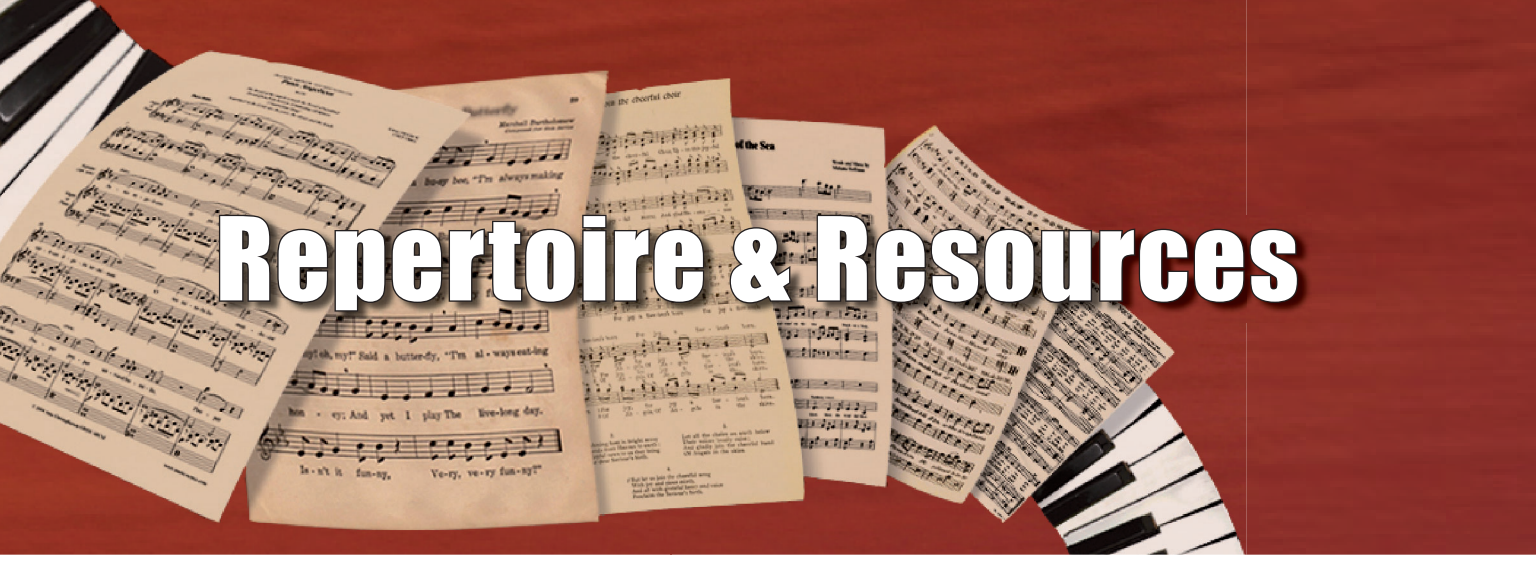

Repertoire & Resources

Children's Choirs

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Children's and Community Youth Choir Directors' Retreat

by Joy Hirokawa and
Emily Williams Burch

The biannual Children's and Community Youth Choir Directors' Retreat has become the go-to professional development opportunity for those who work with young singers, and the recently completed retreat in Atlanta was no exception. The Retreat was started in 2010 by Robyn Lana, then ACDA's R&R Chair for Children & Community Youth Choirs. Robyn recalls:

> With a great team of regional chairs at the national conference in 2009, we held a focused discussion on how ACDA could better serve our children and community youth membership. Many were hoping for more focused sessions relating to children's choral singing. Others recognized the importance of having those of us working with youth interacting with conductors of all aged ensembles. We realized we needed a special event, held in opposite years of the national conference, and not so cost prohibitive that it would deter members from attending regional conferences. Thus, the Retreat was born.

RISE Chorale perform at the 2020 ACDA Children's Coir Conductors' Retreat. Photo by Dan Biggerstaff Photography

Cheryl Dupont continued the tradition and is to be particularly commended for deftly navigating planning for the 2018 Retreat in Houston, held just months following Hurricane Harvey. She notes the importance of the event, saying:

> Our community is vibrant and talented. The Retreats provide great opportunities for making and deepening friendships, and promoting networking, collaboration and sharing. Every session relates to what we do, and so many talented artist/teachers contribute their time and talents on behalf of our community.

Recognizing that there were many approaches to leading children and youth choirs, the founding committee wanted to bring all parties to the table to cross pollinate ideas and "support, inspire, and encourage

others in their work" (from the Vision Statement for the Retreat). The Retreat's Mission Statement goes on to say:

> The ACDA Children's Choir Conductor Retreat will create a gathering of directors and teachers committed to supporting the work of colleagues and nurturing conductors/educators new to the children's choir profession.

The goals developed by the committee are to:

- Collaborate in the spirit of cooperative sharing
- Provide an opportunity to network with conductors across the country
- Offer opportunities for problem solving
- Mentor young conductors and each other

These ideas have guided the planning for every Retreat. Collaboration and collegial support are key elements to the Retreat's success. Survey results clearly indicate that one of the most valuable aspects of the Retreat is the friendly, open, and welcoming atmosphere, as well as the presenters' generosity and willingness to share their expertise.

With this philosophical basis, a structure for the Retreat emerged that was flexible and responsive to the needs of the attendees. The Retreat would be held biannually on Martin Luther King weekend in even numbered years, as January is generally a quieter month for music educators and a time when they may be seeking fresh inspiration. Ending the Retreat on Sunday allowed time for attendees to return home for special MLK observances on Monday. The registration fee was kept low to encourage more participation.

Atlanta Young Singers under the direction of Millie Turek. Photo by Dan Biggerstaff Photography

The Performing Choir Conductors - Millie Turek, Martha Shaw, Emmy Williams Burch, and guest accompanist, André Thomas. Photo by Dan Biggerstaff Photography

This year's retreat in Atlanta far exceeded expectations in numbers of attendees, with 190 in attendance from thirty-three states and Washington DC. Over ninety were first-time attendees. The retreat hosted four new friends from

Canada, who promised to return with more Canadians in two years. A special acknowledgement goes to Minnetonka, Minnesota, Public Schools, which sent an entire cohort of teachers to the retreat. We had the added bonus of overlapping one day with the Atlanta Chapter of the Chorister's Guild Mid-Winter Workshop on Saturday. Some of our attendees arrived on Friday and attended the Chorister's Guild evening concert, and at least one Chorister's Guild member attended both events, joining the ACDA retreat on Sunday.

The schedule has evolved over time in response to feedback surveys. Attendees were particularly eager to have more time to exchange ideas with their colleagues. As food is a great way to bring people together, much of this was accomplished in Atlanta not only through longer meal times but also activities such as a welcoming gathering at the hotel bar, roundtable discussions on a focused topic over lunch, breakfast provided as part of the retreat activities, and a post-concert reception.

Interest sessions over the years have touched on a wide variety of topics from pedagogy to organization, reading sessions to conducting. Sessions for Atlanta included:

- Susan Brumfield: From Classroom to Chorus Building on the K-5 Foundation
- Pam Burns: Healthy, Beautiful Tone Production in the Children's Choir
- Stefanie Cash: Use of Movement to Enhance Choral Rehearsal and Performance
- Maria Ellis: Ease on Down the Road

- Sandy Holland: Steps to Musical Independence: Working with young singers.
- Melissa Keylock: No Spandex Required: Yoga Stretches for Your Choirs
- Karol Kimmell: Children's Choir in Sacred spaces
- David Langley: Reflections on Motivation and Retention in New Choirs
- Angee & Rick McKee: Where Do We Begin? Developing Choral Artistry in the Elementary Choir
- Tim Powell: An Introduction to Emerging Digital Publishing Alternatives
- Tim Sharp: Children Make Glorious Music: Music Makes Glorious Children
- Tom Shelton: What are my hands doing??? Conducting for the Elementary Chorus Teacher
- Cuffy Sullivan: A Well-Oiled Machine: tips for (almost) touch-free organizational management
- John Tisbert: Sight Singing Fun with Tiz

Maria Ellis during her interest session.

The retreat has intentionally rotated around the country to highlight the activity of children and youth choirs in the various ACDA regions, raise awareness within various regions of the work going on in children and youth choirs, highlight strong programs, directors, and clinicians across the country, and learn about regional cultural differences. The Atlanta Retreat highlighted Southern Hospitality (with a capital H!), music that carries a Southern identity, and presenters and composers from the region. Food for the reception featured Southern cuisine, and presenters particularly highlighted their work and programs in Georgia.

In addition to interest sessions, each retreat features children or youth choirs from the hosting region on a Saturday evening performance. The performing ensembles for the Atlanta Retreat were invited to intentionally represent choirs along a developmental lifespan. RISE Young Women's Chorale, Savannah, GA (Emily Williams Burch, Director), is only in its fourth year of existence; Atlanta Young Singers (Millie Turek and Paige Matthis, Directors) was established in 1975; and Spivey Hall Children's Choir (Martha Shaw, Director) is in its twenty-fifth anniversary year. In a new addition to the concert program, the performing choirs combined, presenting a thrilling rendition of André Thomas's "I Dream a World," with Dr. Thomas at the piano. This song provided the inspiration for the overall theme of the retreat.

As ACDA Vice President, Dr. Thomas also presented an inspiring closing session that captivated everyone present. In it, he shared some of his personal life story and reminded us of the importance of the work choral directors do with children and the difference choral singing can make in a child's life.

The theme, "Dream a World of Song: Connections, Community, Creative Thought," carried through every aspect of the retreat, intentionally referencing the fact that we were in Atlanta on Martin Luther King weekend. Comments from attendees suggest that the weekend inspired them to connect with those with expertise to share, celebrate their new friends across the country, and think

creatively about possibilities for their choristers:

> "The resources that each presenter shared were excellent. I have a fabulous choral reading list now thanks to everyone's detailed citations. Also, all the attendees were so welcoming and eager to share their experiences and expertise."
>
> "The group of people at this event was unbelievable. I have made so many wonderful connections and friendships. The presentations were fantastic. I wish I could have seen them all!"
>
> "I'm an 'old dog' and learned many new tricks! The connections that I made were incredible and reconnections were wonderful."
>
> "This retreat had some of the best professional development learning I have experienced in my seven years of teaching music. I gained so many useful tools to bring back to my students!"
>
> "This was one of the most inspiring weekends for me as an educator. To begin, the 'approachability' of all presenters, hosts and attendees was unlike many conferences I've attended. Being able to sit down with people who were both at the same points in their journeys as well as people just starting and people who have been doing this for many years was so very important. My team and I left with new ideas, goals and pathways to achieve our goals."

We would be remiss if we did not profoundly thank Robyn Lana and the original committee for their vision to design an event that so perfectly meets the needs of children and youth choir directors; Cheryl Dupont for her tireless work on multiple retreats; Alex Gartner who was the administrator behind the scenes making everything run smoothly; Tim Sharp for consistently supporting children and youth choirs; the three performing choirs and their directors for their inspiring performance; our fantastic clinicians, reading session conductors, roundtable discussion leaders, student helpers, and presiders for contributing their time and energy; and especially the attendees who carved out time from their busy, busy schedules to spend the weekend in Atlanta with the goal to improve their practice.

We sincerely hope that, after reading this, you are inspired and wishing you had attended. Please put January 15-16, 2022, on your calendar for the next retreat in Phoenix, Arizona. We look forward to seeing you there! CJ

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Rehearsal Break

Diction and Textual Artistry: Successful Communication When Singing in English

by Donald Neuen

The reason the arts exist is to express feelings. They begin with the creator of an artistic endeavor and proceed to the performer, listener, or observer. The arts include sound, design, movement, form, writing, film, and pictures. As vocal performers, we refer specifically to vocal or choral composition, vocal pedagogy, choral conducting, and singing. The reason for the existence of singing, therefore, is to expressively communicate the feelings of a composer in a manner that stimulates an emotional response from the listener. This is the antithesis of only performing accurate pitches and rhythms.

This entire process is based on the singer's ability to freely and successfully express innermost feelings. These can be serious or light-hearted. They may be based on religion, patriotism, love, peace, joy, nature, justice, inalienable rights, humor, or anything else within the wide range of human emotions.

The responsibilities of the choral conductor are to:

1) Select music that has expressive potential.

2) Perform in a manner that successfully transcends that potential through the minds and voices of the singers to the minds of the listeners.

In my many years of studying with, performing with, and working for Robert Shaw, his most important admonition to me was: "90% will never be good enough." I encourage each of us to heed his advice and apply it to textual artistry: *understandable English diction and singing with direct personal communication.* Both are crucial to the success of a choral performance and are especially true with compositions that tell a story or have a very significant meaning. Singing should be a direct, personal, and expressive reflection of text.

In most instances, the voice teacher, soloist, choral conductor, and chorus will know the song and its text very well. They may not be aware, therefore, of the necessity for emphasis on understandable English diction. The challenge for each of us is to enable listeners to understand every word—*upon first hearing.* The following outline of English diction techniques, if consistently and thoroughly practiced, will guarantee the listener success in understanding the words of an English text.

Seven Important Rules for Clearly Articulated English Diction (listed according to their importance):

1) Employ a very slight glottal attack on most words that begin with a vowel. This is singularly the most important technique in articulation when singing in English (and German). We do not speak with this clarity. To ac-

complish it when singing, therefore, takes patient, relentless, and repetitive teaching, as well as total commitment.

"Come all," not "cuh-mall"; "God of our," not "Gaw-duh-vour"; "I always am," not "I yal-weh-zam"; "It is," not "Ih-tis;" "way over," not "Weh- yover"; "Many of us are," not "many-yuh-vuh-zare."

Admittedly, this may be impractical in very fast tempi, and to exaggerate the glottal attack can be harmful to the voice. Consultation with an otolaryngologist, who was also a baritone oratorio soloist, resulted in his assurance that doing as is recommended here will not be harmful to the voice—even if done over a lifetime of singing.

This method can be practiced by singing the sustained vowels "ah, ay, ee, oh, oo," repeated several times, with only a very slight glottal attack on each new beginning vowel. Breaks in the continued tone and accented glottal attacks should not take place. Musical line is not interrupted. This technique is the first (major) step when singing in English, with the message clearly understood.

2) Make use of the percussive effect of final consonants. They are seldom heard. The echo of the preceding vowel and/or the accompaniment usually covers them up. Both are often louder than a final consonant. To help the clarity of the final consonant, add a slight vowel sound: "Said" = "Sai-duh," "Lord"= "Lor-duh," "Love" = "Lo-vuh," "Meek" = "Mee-kuh," "Will" = "Wi-lluh." In softer (and a cappella) music, "ih" may suffice, rather than the more vocal "uh." The minimal "dh," "vh," "kh," and "lh" are seldom sufficient and usually inaudible.

Caution: This will seem over-done and unnatural to the singers. Teach them to understand why they are doing it (see previous paragraph). Explain that it will not sound over-done nor unnatural to the listener. The text will simply be understood. Do not exaggerate this technique in an attempt to do it well. Exaggeration often negates function and distracts from the music.

The best way to achieve this technique is to instruct singers to make the following changes to the text: "Love my" would be "Luh v'my"; "Meek shall" would be "Mee k'shall"; "Will my" would be "Wi l'my." Placing the final consonant with an apostrophe prior to the following word will remind the singers to sing it as explained above. Obviously, not all final consonants need this reenforced help. You be the judge. Let common sense and understandability be your guide.

3) **Th and V:** Involve the tongue for "th," and the lower lip and upper teeth for "v." For "th," slightly stick the tongue out, then draw it back touching the upper teeth. Do this for actual tone with a voiced "th" as in "the, they, these, thy, that," etc., and for extra breath for voiceless "th" as in "think, thought, throughout, throw."

"Is thy" is often heard as "izz-eye," instead of either "is thy," or even better, "ih-z'thy." "Deep thought" is often "Dee-ought," instead of "Deep thought," or better, "Dee-p'thought."

Clarify "v" as in "live, dive, voice, victory," etc., by tucking the lower lip under the upper teeth, and pull the lip out for the voiced "v". As with the voiced "th," the "v" should have audible tone.

4) **W vs. Wh:** For words that begin with W, start with a slight, quick "oo," as in "oowe, oowill, oowin." "Wh" begins with extra breath: "what, where, why, when," etc. Singers tend to sing both "w" and "wh" as though they were all anemic "w's."

5) **The word "our" is a triphthong:** "ah-oo-wur" (although pronounced quickly), but certainly not pronounced as "are," which often happens.

6) **In classical music, double consonants such as T's or D's, should both be slightly articulated:** "Night to," "God did." In pop, country, and other music, in which we emphasize a natural speaking style (as opposed to a bel canto singing style), we would employ the stop-consonant, which is a very brief staccato/stop on the first word: "night" immediately followed by "to" = "nigh-to," as though it were one word.

7) Take advantage of the second sound of diphthongs (for greater over-all vocal and word color/sound): "Thy" = "thah-ee"; "they" = "they-ee"; "Thou" = "thah-oo"; "though" = "tho-oo"; "Joy" = "jaw-ee." The second sound should not be approached earlier, nor last longer than a "t." Consider the second sound indicated above as unique and vital, which may be more effective than a passive, neutral "uh" or "ih."

Although the first four rules are the most important, all seven will successfully clarify the message in our music. They will clean up nearly all English diction problems. Granted, it is logical to assume that in lighter music such as ballads, country, folk, show, and pop styles, lesser attention to some of the previous suggested techniques may be appropriate. It is up to the conductor to make those decisions. One thing, however, is absolute: the text must be clearly understood by the listener upon first hearing, and it must *mean* something.

We might call this effort to achieve understandable English a "commitment to perfection." This, by the way, is the exact definition of Robert Shaw's overall contribution to choral music in America. Perfection is greater than excellence. Granted, no one can be—nor is expected to be—totally perfect. However, with great teaching, inspiration, and 100% commitment, most singers can attain perfection most of the time—which will result in the ensemble consistently achieving collective perfection.

The "trilogy" of successful choral teaching/conducting:

- Know what perfection is.
- Know how to teach it.
- Know how to inspire singers to want and commit to it.

Then, with patience, compassion, respect, and love…demand it!

Syllable and Word Inflection

Syllable inflection: For words with more than one syllable, emphasize those normally emphasized when speaking articulately, and de-emphasize those normally de-emphasized.

Somehow, when singing, singers are so concerned with correct pitches and rhythms that all syllables result in a manual production with exactly the same emphasis. Nobody speaks in that monotonous way, but choirs often sing in that manner unless specifically taught to do otherwise.

Many soloists also lack consistent syllable inflection. Unless the tempo is too fast to effectively do it, logical syllable inflection should be a way of life for all singers, greatly *beautifying* the natural sound of text. For example: the word "anticipation" would have a slight crescendo during "antici," plus forward motion added to the syllable "ci," followed by an appropriate emphasis on "pa," and a gentle-softness on "tion." Similar attention should be given to most words with more than one syllable.

There are, of course, exceptions. These are instances in which the composer or arranger has indicated a constant *forte* or continuous *marcato* markings. This may make syllable inflection impractical. Very fast tempi or the placement of important syllables or words on off-beat positions may also make syllable inflection difficult or impossible. Normally, however, this concept of syllable inflection is absolutely crucial to the success of expressive singing. Without it, text becomes meaningless and monotonous.

Like other techniques that bring professionalism to our singing, consistent employment of syllable inflection takes time. Consider two thoughts:

1) We should never be in a hurry for anything in the arts. Take time to do things right.

2) If need be, do fewer songs, and do them well.

Word inflection is a similar emphasis/de-emphasis concept concerning continuous words within a phrase. Some words are logically more significant than others. Some may actually be insignificant—except as they serve as the vehicle to move (with forward motion) toward a word with special meaning. Such insignificant words might be "and, the, be, of, to, on, from, for, am, at, in, a," etc.

The following is an example of syllable and word inflection analysis within a phrase.

"From *all* falseness, *set* me free."

One way in which this phrase might be interpreted:

1) Primary emphasis on the words "falseness" and "free" (underlined).

2) Next, slightly less emphasized, are the words "all" and "set" (italicized).

3) The least emphasized words are "From" and "me" (regular font).

4) In addition, syllable inflection is necessary for the word "falseness," de-emphasizing "ness" to the level of "From" and "me."

In the above example, there are three levels of *dynamic intensity* within only one indicated dynamic level. Additional (different) interpretations might be based on melodic rise and fall, harmonic intensity, rhythm, and/or dramatic impact. It is at the discretion of the conductor to determine which best fits the music and the composer's intent. *How* it is done is not as important as simply *doing it! Do something.* Beautifying the sound of words is a crucial part of interpreting and teaching choral music.

It is important to remember that

composers rarely—if ever—draw attention to inflection with their markings. The same may often hold true with other interpretive markings. Igor Stravinsky said, after hearing the Robert Shaw Chorale recording of his *Symphony of Psalms,* "I didn't know my piece was that beautiful."

Composers seldom know the potential beauty and message-impact of their composition. It is their job to simply create a musical work that has never been previously heard. That's it. It is the conductor's responsibility to take the work, study it thoroughly, and determine what can be done to fully realize its potential while preserving it as the composer's, avoiding making it "the conductor's composition."

Figures 1 and 2 are examples of syllable and word inflection and are taken from Handel's *Messiah,* Nos. 9 and 23. Some measures, involving rests or repetition, have been omitted or condensed to focus only on points of inflection. The markings (< - >) should flow naturally and unobtrusively.

Reminder: Syllable stress and word inflection should flow naturally, never being over-done, which will draw attention to the technique itself.

Word-Meaning Emphasis

Many words have a very definite meaning and are important to both the singer and listener regarding the full communication of the song's message. It is up to soloists and conductors to identify these words and see that they are performed with the full dramatic intent of their meaning—exactly the same as a great actor would speak the word.

That special meaning must come from the depth of the actor's or singer's heart. It is that important aspect of passion—the ability to freely and convincingly express innermost feelings—with which great artists consistently rehearse and perform. We are all capable of varying degrees of passion, and with coaching/teaching by the choral conductor or voice

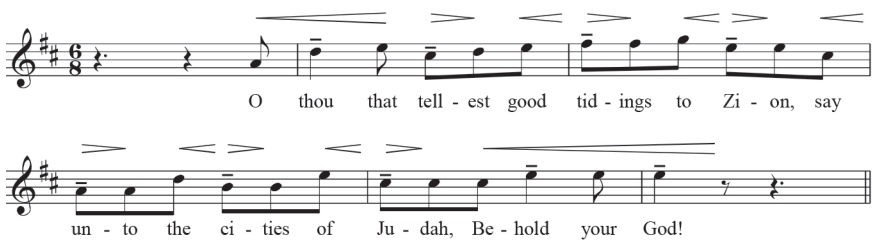


Figure 1. George Frideric Handel, *Messiah,* No. 9.

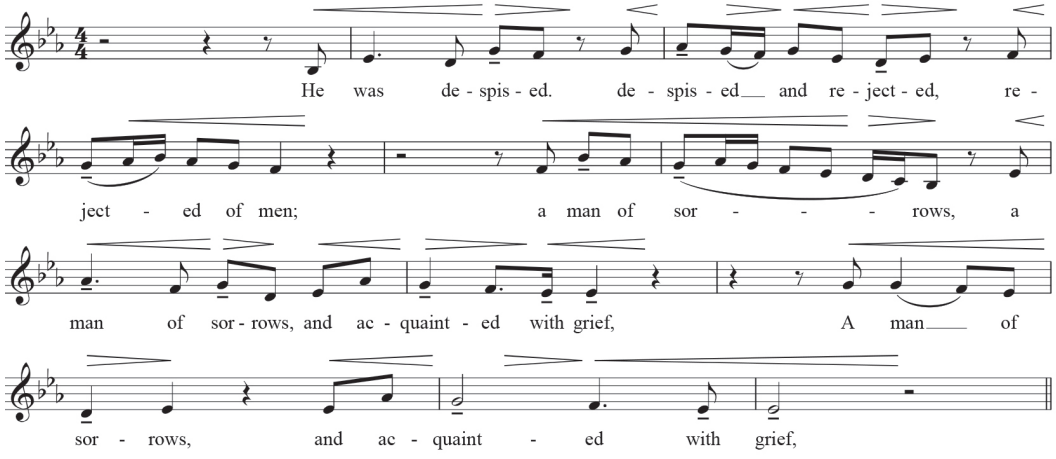


Figure 2. George Frideric Handel, *Messiah,* No. 23.

teacher, greater degrees of passion can be developed. Passion is crucial to artistic success—at all levels and areas of the arts. Singers of any age are capable of experiencing joy, sorrow, love, and anger. These, and other emotions, can be transferred to musical passion through the example and teaching of a creative and inspiring conductor.

The conductor, in her/his teaching, example, conducting gestures, and facial expressions is the source of everything—every expression and all passion. The conductor must freely demonstrate, teach, and motivate this passion. Simple accuracy of the-right-note-at-the-right-time, without expression, is lifeless. It is passion that brings the math of music into expressive, musical, art.

Language is filled with words of expression and specific meaning. The following are just a few. First, speak the words as a dramatic actor, then sing them in a similarly expressive manner as a great soloist.

"Love," "Sing," "Joy," "Sincerely," "Anger," "Fight," "Destroy," "Burn," "Live," "Passion," "Great," "Peace," "Tenderly," "Caress," "God," "Shine," "Light," "Happiness," "Beautiful."

Doing this will enable a conductor to have personally experienced the process of word-meaning interpretation, enabling her or him to effectively teach it. The meaning must be felt by the conductor, taught to the singers, and intentionally communicated to the listeners. This is particularly true if the message of the song (as has been previously mentioned) is potentially impactful or tells a story.

Search every phrase microscopically (meaning the thorough study of one word, one beat, one measure, and one phrase before moving on to the next), finding every opportunity to employ syllable and word inflection, word-meaning emphasis nad our seven rules of English diction. Mark your score accordingly, and ask the singers to similarly mark their music. Then, teach it—relentlessly!

Let us establish a new "choral golden rule." If we interpret a composition musically, carefully observing the inflection of syllables and words, and solidly establishing word-meaning emphasis, our "golden rule" will quite naturally evolve: There will seldom, if ever, be two consecutive notes, words, or syllables performed with equal emphasis. Each will have a special function: 1)

those that actively lead to the most important note, word, or syllable; or 2) the one that is the most important; or 3) those leading away from it with less emphasis.

In Closing

Great singing is an inspiration to all concerned: composers, musicologists, voice teachers, conductors, singers, fellow musicians, and listeners. It can be achieved by any chorus that is willing to be taught and ready to work hard through the relentless efforts of a knowledgeable and inspiring conductor.

A chorus will never surpass the ability and knowledge of its conductor. The conductor, therefore, must seek knowledge until the day he or she ceases to conduct, and develop an inspirational manner of continually leading the chorus to further heights of greatness and beauty.

Beautiful singing, combined with the artistry of motivating text, may be the ultimate experience within the arts. The voice is the only instrument that speaks *directly* (through music and text) to the listener's mind. The human voice is the only natural instrument in music. It is the only instrument of total human involvement.

For most people, there are no limitations regarding beautiful singing except those they place on themselves. Encourage and inspire singers to always grow, expand, and be better this week than last, in every area of singing. Teach *beautiful* singing! Be free to be great! Prioritize perfection! CJ

Don Neuen is a distinguished professor of music emeritus of UCLA. Previously, he was director of choral activities for The Eastman School of Music. dneuen@ucla.edu

PROJECT : ENCORE™ *NEWS*

A Catalog of Contemporary Choral Music

ProjectEncore.org

QUARTERLY ENDORSEMENTS

ANTHONY ESLAND

The Bee Carol

- SATB, a cappella; English (Carol Ann Duffy)
- 1′30″. A delightful, strophic setting of a poem set on Christmas Eve, yet absent of overtly sacred text. The "winter cluster of the bees" serves as the poetic metaphor for the eternal. Lilting compound meter, easy a-minor and chordal writing make this reasonable for most mixed choirs. - a sparkling little gem!
  ProjectEncore.org/anthony-esland

NICHOLAS RYAN KELLY

Now Boarding

- SATB; some S, A divisi; piano; English (James Iwasuk)
- 5′. Clever and evocative tribute to the less-than-glamorous icon of the open road, the Greyhound Bus. The composer cites both minimalism and rock music as influencing the driving piano part. Humorous descriptive writing: passengers′ conversations, torn road maps, sounds of the vehicle itself. Not easy. A showpiece, and worth the work!
  ProjectEncore.org/nicholas-ryan-kelly

ANDREW JACOBSON

La Mort Des Amants

- SSAA; minimal divisi; a cappella; French (Charles Baudelaire; from Les Fleurs Du Mal)
- 3′45″. A lush, romantic setting of this poem made popular by Debuussy's setting of it for solo voice. In a nod to Debussy, Jacobson includes several chromatic and octatonic passages, suggestive of a dreamlike state. Not for the faint of heart, though commissioned by a high school choir! Requires superb intonation. Worth the work!
  ProjectEncore.org/andrew-jacobson

SARAH RISKIND

Mi Y'malel

- SATB; S and B divisi; piano and violin; Hebrew (trad. Jewish; based on Ps 106:2)
- 3′. An original setting of the well-known and Popular Hanukkah song. The new melody is fitted with a Klezmer-inspired accompaniment. Occasional imitative writing, a lyrical middle section, a key change and a strong tempo drive to the end make this an exciting setting! Accessible for most mixed ensembles. Audience pleaser!
  ProjectEncore.org/sarah-riskind

PROJECT : ENCORE™ is an online catalog of post-premiere, new choral music, reviewed and endorsed by an international panel of prominent conductors.

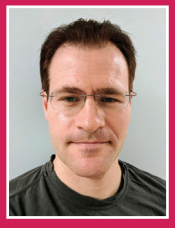
Four times each year, P:E adds newly accepted scores to its catalog. Score submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July, and October.

RICH CAMPBELL

In Those Years, No One Slept

- SATB; a cappella; English (Claudia Serea)
- 4′ 10″. The text is a scene from a time of war, written by a Romanian-American immigrant, and speaks to loss and fear of loss that keep family members from sleeping. Unsettling in the ways it should be, and rhythmically dynamic. Requires rhythmic precision of a very good high school group and above. Worth the work! ProjectEncore.org/rich-campbell

NICHOLAS WEININGER



Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away

- SSAATTBB; a cappella; Hebrew (Song of Solomon 2:10-13)
- 4′ 10″. Lush and compelling, this setting of the familiar Hebrew love poetry draws upon the full expressive potential of vocal ensemble. Both imitative and full chordal writing, shifting meters to honor speech rhythms, differing tempi for new thoughts - all combine to make this fresh and bold. University/semi-professional level. ProjectEncore.org/nicholas-weininger

Trends in choral music, 2009-2020

As PROJECT : ENCORE approaches the completion of its tenth full year of quarterly score evaluations and selective endorsements, we turn to our (anonymous) reviewers for their observations on trends they are seeing in choral music during these past ten years, and their projections for the next ten!

Where do we go from here?

Our reviewers are men and women whose work as a conductor reveals a strong commitment to contemporary music, represents a high quality of performance, and who is neither a composer nor an arranger, him-/herself. Who better to ask about trends in choral music!

Watch for "PROJECT : ENCORE News" in the June/July issue of the *Choral Journal*.

DEBORAH SIMPKIN KING, PHD.
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View full submission guidelines at acda.org

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