

DECEMBER 2015

CHORAL JOURNAL

PROFESSIONAL SINGER

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To be successful as a professional soloist or choral singer in the twenty-first century, whether in opera, oratorio, early music, commercial recording, or other genres.

EDUCATION

Undergrad	3,371 sopranos • 1,021 altos • 1,335 tenors • 1,052 basses	2013-2014
Associate	227 sopranos • 113 altos • 135 tenors • 86 basses	
Graduate MM	714 sopranos • 183 altos • 249 tenors • 216 basses	
DMA	230 sopranos • 50 altos • 94 tenors • 90 basses	

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Changing Paradigm of Professional Singing: A Conversation with Top Singers and Conductors in the United States

CONDUCTING EXPERIENCE

Four conductors currently holding various titles and distinctions:

- **Conductor** of the Dallas Symphony Chorus
- **Chief Conductor** of the Berlin Radio Choir
- **Conductor** of the Victoria Bach Festival and Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble
- **Choral Director** of the London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
- **Music Directors** for the Santa Fe Desert Choral, the Victoria Bach Festival, and the Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble
- **Founder and Artistic Director** of Conspirare

PROFESSIONAL SINGERS

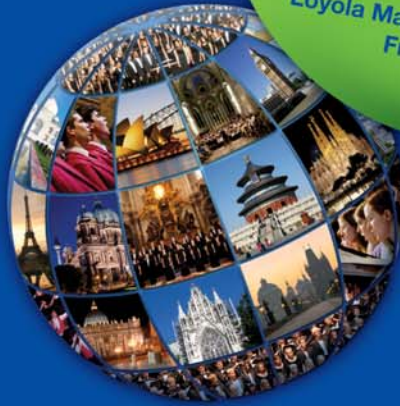
Five singers enjoying dynamic and successful careers as concert soloists, opera & oratorio singers, and as members of ensembles.

This illustrious panel boasts Grammy award winners, and performers who have graced the stages of prominent national and international venues, such as The Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, The English Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and numerous festivals from around the world.

Best

DESTINATIONS

Central/South America
Australia/NZ
Europe
Asia
UK



BEST

Only the **BEST** venues,
appreciative audiences,
local culture – helping
to assure us of a most
extraordinary opportunity
to share our music!

Loyola Marymount University,
France 2015

Greatest

FESTIVALS

Leck
Stroope
Dilworth
Hella Johnson
Sandra/Tim Peter
Buchanan
Kennedy
Loeppky
Dickson
Sailer

VALUE

The **VALUE** of what we
received musically and
culturally was far beyond
what we experience on
most tours with most
companies.

Appleton West High School,
England

**HENRY
LECK**

Distinguished
Music Advisor
Klconcerts

KlCONCERTS

Klconcerts.com
719 260 0200





On the Cover This month's cover is an illustrative display of a traditional resume that suggests the competitive nature of finding work as a professional singer in the twenty-first century.

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From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tim Sharp

The articulation of our goals as the American Choral Directors Association resulting from our strategic planning process has brought new energy and optimism to the specific work by which our members

engage in the choral profession. I urge ACDA members to usher in the constitutional changes that will provide the mechanism by which we do the work and mission of ACDA in the years to come by voting for this new structure in January. ACDA President Mary Hopper's column in this month's *Choral Journal* speaks to the grassroots possibilities of this new structure, and the last two volumes of *Choral Journal* outline the new direction and makeup of our Standing Committees to

better align with our mission and purposes.

Over the course of this past year, our Salt Lake City National Conference continued its role as an iconic event, demonstrating ACDA's commitment to excellence in choral music education, performance, composition, and advocacy. In this coming year, several new conferences, retreats, and symposia are being supported by ACDA, in addition to our seven biennial division conferences and the very exciting America Cantat VIII International Choral Festival, an event ACDA is producing in collaboration with our South, Central, and North American choral colleagues.

My work as your executive director continues to focus on providing the resources that will help propel all of this work. I am thrilled by the initial response to our *Fund for Tomorrow*, ACDA's initiative to raise money to be solely used to stimulate the growth of choral music participation throughout the United States. One hundred percent of the funds gathered in the *Fund for Tomorrow* will be used



Help grow choral singers
and develop new choral conductors
with a gift to the

American Choral Directors Association's

Fund for Tomorrow

Your donation to this new fund will help to encourage new children's choirs, support ACDA student members and chapeers, provide national conference scholarships to honor choir students, and mentor talented youth into new choral conductors and teachers.

With a gift of \$1,000 or more, you become a member of the Podium society,
*a very special group of people who invest significantly
in our programming for children and youth*

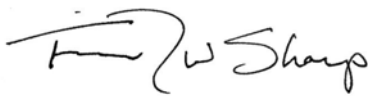
More information at www.acda.org/fund4tomorrow

*Give online or mail your contribution to ACDA, 545 Couch Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2207.
The American Choral Directors Association is a 501(c) tax-exempt organization.
Your gift to this fund is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*


to seed grassroots choral music education and performance projects.

Just as we pursued strategic planning over the last three years toward program development for our work, in the coming year I will be concentrating more and more on the topic of developing a strategic philanthropy architecture for ACDA. My goal is to continue to line up the building of ACDA's mission with its resources and fund balance.

The opportunity for exponential growth in ACDA's impact in the world is nearly unlimited, given the power of song and music to change lives and communities, and given the breadth and depth of our penetration and influence in the choral world. Building on the earned income baseline and modest endowment now in place for ACDA, there is great opportunity to develop the missing components of a sustainable financial model and the opportunity to integrate all of the elements into a strong platform for perpetual growth in the delivery of our mission. I look forward to working with all of our membership and leadership in the development of this comprehensive financial architecture.



 TimothySharp

 American Choral Directors Association

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?



Dec 5-6 "Home for the Holidays"
Tulsa Oratorio Chorus
Tulsa, OK

Dec 17 ACDA Executive Committee
Chicago, IL

WHAT'S ON TIM'S IPAD?



If You Want People to Listen, Stop Talking
Peter Bregman

All In: How the Best Managers Create a Culture of Belief and Drive Big Results
Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton

WHAT'S TIM'S LATEST APP?



HBR Tip
(Harvard Business Review
Tip of the Day)

WHAT'S TIM LISTENING TO?



The Hear and Now
Christopher Theofanidis
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
and Chorus (Telarc)

Requiem for the Living
Arthur Gottschalk
St. Petersburg Chamber Choir
and State Symphony (Navona)

*Choral Music of Rene Clausen
and Stephen Paulus*
The Choir of Royal Holloway
(Hyperion)

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

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From the PRESIDENT



Mary Hopper

During the recent Sing Up! Campaign, there was a lot of buzz about the many benefits of being an ACDA member. Our organization

provides numerous opportunities for performance, connection with the international choral scene, and publications of scholarly pursuits, but the benefit that I value most highly in ACDA is the wealth of **resources** that have been available to me at every stage of my career. "Resources" is part of the new name of the standing committee that will represent all areas of choral music at every level. The Repertoire

& Resources Committee will continue to provide professional development through our conferences, special events, journals, and online materials. You will be able to find information about historical and contemporary repertoire, make connections with composers, get new ideas for warm-ups and tone building, and keep up-to-date on performance practice.

At the national level, all areas will be represented by national chairs, but at the state and division levels each president will have the freedom to appoint R&R chairs at their discretion with a minimum of four representing Youth, Collegiate, Lifelong, and Repertoire Specific. For example, if a smaller state has few jazz choirs, the president may chose to not fill that spot. Another state may have a large representation of Contemporary/Commercial (Show Choir and Pop a cappella) and may choose to appoint a representative on the board. Giving autonomy to the states and divisions allows for flexibility. The intent is to provide grass roots opportunities for leadership and at the same time streamline the process of board appointments.

Having been a member of ACDA for almost forty years, I can testify that there are resources available for student choral conductors, new teachers, those in the middle of their career, and those of us who have been around for a while. I am always inspired when I see retired choral conductors attending conferences and seeking to learn new things. My only regret about leadership in the last few years is that I have not been able to attend all interest sessions or concerts at our conferences or watch the gifted honor choir conductors work with our young singers. I hope that you are taking advantage of the resources of ACDA, no matter what stage of your career you are at.

The national leadership has been working on the restructuring of the R&S area for many years. Through the leadership of Karen Fulmer and Amy Blosser, the R&R proposal was put forth and voted on unanimously by the National Board last June. In January you will be able to vote for this exciting change. I look forward with great enthusiasm to moving ahead with a new paradigm for ACDA.

From the NATIONAL R&S CHAIR



Amy Blosser

Repertoire and Standards: The Heart of ACDA

Think back to your first experience with the American Choral Directors Association. Was it participating in an honor choir at a conference? Was it knowing a colleague who encouraged you to join? Was it perhaps your college professor who suggested you learn more about this organization? However you came to ACDA, you have found a resource which you most likely use on a regular basis. Whether it is networking, learning from a mentor, exposure to high quality repertoire or reading the Choral Journal online every month, ACDA is essential to many Choral professionals.

The examples listed above most likely have been connected with some member of the Repertoire and Standards committee as it is imbedded in the framework of the organization. Honor Choirs, the promotion of high quality literature, networking and a chance to be a servant leader are all ways R&S is integral to the ACDA. Most members first learned about ACDA through an event which had an R&S leader's fingerprints on it in some way. Almost all of the current National Board members previously served as an R&S chair at some level. The Repertoire and Standards Committee provides invaluable resources to members across the country. It is the heart of the American Choral Directors Association.

Our Constitution states the following in regards to the Repertoire and Standards Committee:

“The Choral Repertoire and Standards Committee shall seek to improve the quality of choral performance and literature in the United States”

~Article XII, Section 4 ACDA Bylaws

The following describes the Repertoire and Standards Committee Purpose and Function:

R&S Committee Purpose and Function

The fourteen R&S committees, established by the national board of directors, provide support, vision, and resources for every major area of choral works within the ACDA.

R&S committees play an important role in serving their respective choral genres. R&S committees provide:

- Leadership
- Information
- Networking
- Excellence among colleagues
- Professional growth
- Choral music in the lives of people

NATIONAL R&S CHAIRS

NATIONAL CHAIR

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R&S chairs, appointed at the national, division, and state levels, serve conductors, teachers, composers, and constituencies who share similar interests. Chairs possess demonstrated expertise in a specific choral area and serve as leaders in the three primary efforts:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Commitment

The R&S committees have a vital role in the ACDA. R&S chairs and their members provide resources that promote excellence in all aspects of the performance of choral music.

At the 2012 Leadership Conference in Dallas, the discussion focused on the results of the recent Strategic Planning membership survey and how to move our organization forward. It included work on the ACDA mission statement and what it would mean to have all aspects align with our mission. Another part of the discussion included looking at all of the Standing Committees, including R&S, to see what improvements might be needed to keep ACDA relevant and moving into the future.

The discussion continued at the 2014 Leadership Conference in Salt Lake City, and the R&S committee had the opportunity to vision what an updated committee structure could look like. Many of the proposed changes below came from this session. The following changes have been unanimously approved by the Executive Committee and National Board and will go to the membership for a vote in January 2016:

- **Change committee name from Repertoire and Standards to Repertoire and Resources.**

Members currently serving in leadership positions feel “Repertoire and Standards” doesn’t state one of the most important responsibilities of the committee – serving as a resource for high quality materials, literature, performance standards and professional development offerings.

- **Change the names of the following R&S Areas:**

- Youth and Student Activities to Student Activities
- Ethnic and Multicultural to Ethnic Music
- Show Choir to Contemporary Commercial
- Male to Men

Current R & S leaders believe these names more closely reflect what is current in their respective areas.”

- **Three Coordinators will be named at the National level, one each to oversee Youth Choirs, Collegiate Choirs, and Lifelong Choirs.**

A diagram of this change is on the right.

- **Each division and state shall name divisional R&R coordinators for not fewer than the four categories of Youth, Collegiate, Lifelong, and Repertoire Specific. It is further understood that divisions and states are encouraged to add specific R&R chairs of categories at their discretion. Suggested positions include (but not limited to):**

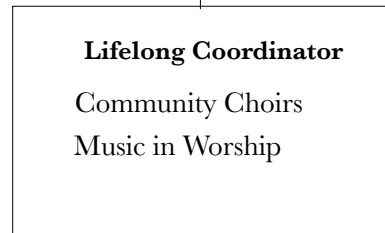
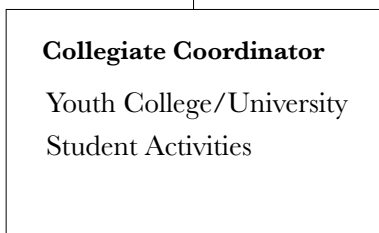
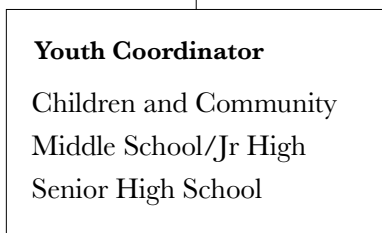
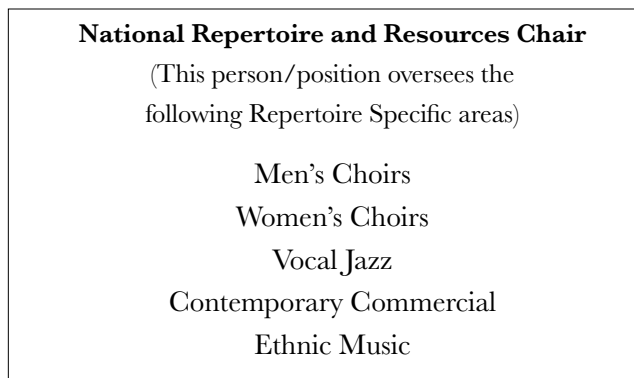
- Boychoir
- Children’s and Community Youth Choir
- College and University
- Community
- Contemporary and Commercial
- Ethnic Music
- Junior High/Middle School
- Men’s Choirs
- Music in Worship
- Senior High Choirs
- Student Activities
- Two-Year College
- Vocal Jazz
- Women’s Choirs

At the division and state levels this gives more ownership by providing opportunities for certain areas which are flourishing. For example, if a state or division has a strong need for a barbershop R & R chair or another genre particularly important to the state or division, an additional R & R subcategory can be added.

- **The R&R National Committee Chair will have oversight of the category of “Repertoire Specific”. The R&R National Committee Chair will continue to have oversight over the entire R&R committee including the three other coordinators.**



National

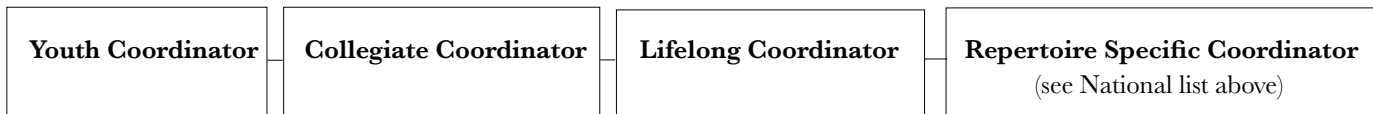


Division



R&R positions at the discretion of the Division President

State



R&R positions at the discretion of the State President

2015 ACDA Bylaws Revision

At the 2015 ACDA Board of Directors meeting in June the ACDA National Board unanimously approved revisions to the Bylaws of the Association to be submitted to the membership for ratification.

As part of the strategic plan developed as an outcome of the 2010 national membership survey and input from the subsequent Leadership Conferences, the priorities of ACDA included Excellence in Repertoire and Performance, Mentorship, Outreach to Society, Lifelong Opportunities to Sing, Diversity and International Initiatives. To address the area of mentorship ACDA built the online Mentorship Program. The restructuring of the organization's standing committees will allow us to attend to these other areas.

The driving force behind all our discussion was to reflect in our working structure the mission statement of ACDA: To inspire excellence in choral music through education, performance, composition and advocacy.

Please note that NEW language is in blue and deleted text appears with a strike through.

The four standing committees listed in the bylaws will be replaced by the following seven committees:

International Activities: This committee shall oversee the International Conductor Exchange Program, National Youth Choir activities, International Chapters of ACDA, and International Symposia offerings.

Research and Publications: ACDA now supports several publications and this committee brings all research projects, research awards and publications under one committee. The *Choral Journal* Editorial Board will be a subcommittee.

Composition Initiatives: This committee shall foster and encourage the creation of quality repertoire through commissions, awards and other projects.

Advocacy and Collaboration: This committee shall seek opportunities to promote choral art and develop collaborations with other arts organizations as beneficial to the association.

Education and Communication: This committee shall oversee ACDA website content and contribute resource materials to enhance the user experience.

Diversity Initiatives: This committee shall foster and promote projects that serve a broad representation of choral singers and conductors.


Repertoire and Resources: This committee provides support, vision and resources for every major area of choral work. The 12 areas of this committee (formerly Repertoire and Standards) will be represented by four major themes; Youth, Collegiate, Life Long and Repertoire Specific. The Youth R&R Area will include the R&R Chairs for Children and Community Youth (which will now contain Boy Choir), Middle School/Junior High and High School. The 2 Year College and College/University R&R Areas will be combined and along with Student Activities (formerly Youth and Student Activities) will come under the Collegiate area. Life Long will include Community Choirs and Music in Worship. The Repertoire Specific areas of Men's Choirs (formerly Male Choirs) Women's Choirs, Jazz Choirs, Contemporary/Commercial (formerly Show Choir) and Ethnic Music will be overseen by the National R&R Chair who will help these areas have a unique identity and infuse all the other areas.

Each division and state will name divisional R&R coordinators for not fewer than the four categories of Youth, Collegiate, Lifelong, and Repertoire Specific. Divisions and states are encouraged to add specific R&R chairs of categories at their discretion.

Per the current Bylaws of the Association:

Article XX Amendments

Section 1. Amendments and/or revisions to these Bylaws may be initiated by the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, the Past Presidents Advisory Council, or by a petition signed by ten percent of the national membership from no fewer than three of the divisions of the Association.

Section 2. These Bylaws may be amended by an approving vote of two-thirds of the active members who cast ballots in accordance with stipulations of the Bylaws, provided, however, that in any case sixty days notice of such contemplated amendment or revision shall be given to active members. 

**Constitution and Bylaws of the
American Choral Directors Association**

2015 Proposed Revisions

CONSTITUTION

Article I

Name

This organization shall be known as the American Choral Directors Association, Incorporated.

Article II

Purposes

1. To foster and promote choral singing which will provide artistic, cultural, and spiritual experiences for the participants.

2. To foster and promote the finest types of choral music to make these experiences possible.

3. To foster and encourage rehearsal procedures conducive to attaining the highest possible level of musicianship and artistic performance.

4. To foster and promote the organization and development of choral groups of all types in schools and colleges.

5. To foster and promote the development of choral music in the church and synagogue.

6. To foster and promote the organization and development of choral societies in cities and communities.

7. To foster and promote understanding of choral music as an important medium of contemporary artistic expression.

8. To foster and promote significant research in the field of choral music.

9. To foster and encourage choral composition of superior quality.

10. To cooperate with all organizations dedicated to the development of musical culture in America.

11. To foster and promote international exchange programs involving performing groups, conductors, and composers.

12. To disseminate professional news and information about choral music.

Article III

Membership

Section 1. There shall be nine membership classifications: (1) Active, (2) Associate, (3) Industry Associate, (4) Institutional, (5) Contributing, (6) Paid Life, (7) Honorary Life, (8) Student, and (9) Retired.

Section 2. Membership eligibility, methods of admission, privileges, tenure, and dues shall be as prescribed in the Bylaws of the Association.

Article IV

Autonomy and Organization

Section 1. This organization shall be constituted as a non-profit, educational association.

Section 2. The fundamental authority and responsibility of the Association shall reside in the corporate active membership and shall be exercised by the free expression and vote of each individual member, by representative legislative powers vested in the Board of Directors, and by the executive powers delegated to officers.

Section 3. Neither any member of the Board of Directors, nor any appointed officer or representative of the Association, nor any member shall be required to accept financial responsibility for duly authorized activities of the Association carried on in good faith and in pursuit of the purposes and activities prescribed or authorized by the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4. No official action involving ACDA membership may be taken without a regularly constituted or specially invoked meeting of the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors.

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 divisions of the United States. The divisions, as defined in the Bylaws, shall be named: Central, Eastern, North Central, Northwestern, Southern, Southwestern, and Western.

Section 6. Any state with three hundred or more ACDA members may be organized as an Affiliate State Association of the ACDA if this is the desire of the membership in the state. Any independent and previously established state choral directors association may become an Affiliate State Association.

Section 7. 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 Board of Directors of the ACDA.

Article V

National Officers

Section 1. The National Officers of the Association shall be as follows: President, Vice-President, President-Elect, President-Elect Designate, Treasurer, Chair of the Past Presidents Advisory Council, and National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and [Standards Resources](#).

Section 2. The President-Elect Designate shall be elected, as provided in the Bylaws. He/she shall serve a term of

one year beginning on July 1 of even-numbered years as an ex officio non-voting member of the Board of Directors. At the end of his/her term, the President-Elect Designate automatically assumes the office of President-Elect. In the event of a vacancy of the office of President-Elect Designate, a special election will be held to fill the vacancy for the remaining length of the term.

Section 3. The President-Elect shall serve a term of two years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of President. In the event of a vacancy of the office of President-Elect, the President-Elect Designate shall assume the remaining length of the term. A special election will be held to fill the President-Elect Designate vacancy.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be elected, as provided in the Bylaws. He/she shall serve a term of four years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. The Treasurer may be reelected for one additional term of four years, but may not serve more than a total of two terms. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Treasurer, a special election shall be held to fill the vacancy for the remaining length of the term.

Section 5. The President shall serve a term of two years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President shall automatically succeed to the office of Vice-President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President shall serve the balance of the unexpired term. The retiring Vice-President shall chair the Past Presidents Advisory Council for a term of two years.

Section 6. The National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and [Standards Resources](#) shall be elected, as provided in the Bylaws. He/she shall serve a term of four years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. The National Chair may be reelected for one additional term of four years, but may not serve more than a total of two terms. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and [Standards Resources](#), a special election will be held to fill the vacancy for the remaining length of the term.

Section 7. Elections shall be conducted as provided in the Bylaws.

Article VI

Appointed Officials

Section 1. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director is an employee of the Association who may be remunerated for services and who shall serve at the discretion of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Section 2. The National Conference Assistant Chair and Program Chair shall be appointed by the President-Elect, with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. The Industry Associate Representative shall be appointed by the National President with the approval of the Executive Committee for a two year term. The Representative may be re-appointed for one additional term.

Article VII

Executive Committee

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice-President, the President-Elect, the Treasurer, and the Chair of the Past Presidents Advisory Council. The President-Elect Designate and the Executive Director shall serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

Article VIII

Board of Directors

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Executive Committee, the Division Presidents, and the National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and [Standards Resources](#). The President-Elect Designate, Industry Associate Representative, and Executive Director shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board of Directors.

Section 2. In the event that a Division President cannot attend a Board of Directors meeting, he/she can give written authorization for the division's President-Elect to vote as proxy.

Article IX

Past Presidents Advisory Council

Section 1. There shall be a Past Presidents Advisory Council consisting of the Past Presidents of the Association.

Section 2. In the event that the immediate past Vice-President is unable to serve as Chair, the President, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint a person to chair the Council.

Article X

Division Officers

Section 1. The officers for each division shall consist of at least a President, a President-Elect, and a Vice-President.

Section 2. The Division President-Elect shall be elected by ballot, as provided in the Bylaws. The Presidents-Elect of the Central, Southern, and Western Divisions shall serve terms of two years beginning on July of odd-numbered years. The Presidents-Elect of the Eastern, North Central, Northwestern, and Southwestern Divisions shall serve terms of two years beginning on July 1 of even-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of President.

Section 3. The President shall serve a term of two years. At the end of his/her term, the President shall automatically succeed to the office of Vice-President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President shall serve the balance of the unexpired term. Division Presidents shall serve as voting members of the national Board of Directors during their term of office. The retiring Vice-President shall chair the Division Past Presidents Advisory Council for a term of two years.

Section 4. Should circumstances warrant, a Division President may be removed from office upon recommendation of the National President with the approval of the Board of Directors. Any vacancy thus occurring shall be filled by recommendation of the Executive Committee with approval of the Board of Directors.

Article XI

Division Past Presidents Advisory Council

Section 1. There shall be a Division Past Presidents Advisory Council in each division consisting of the Past Presidents of the division.

Section 2. In the event that the immediate past Vice-President is unable to serve as Chair, the Division President shall appoint a person to chair the Council.

Article XII

State Officers

Section 1. The officers for each state association shall consist of at least a President, a President-Elect, and a Vice-President.

Section 2. The President-Elect of state associations with more than twenty (20) active members shall be elected by ballot during a state business meeting or by mail as provided in the Bylaws. He/she shall serve a term of two years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of President.

Section 3. The President-Elect of state associations with fewer than twenty (20) active members shall be appointed by the national President-Elect with the advice of the State and Division Presidents. He/she shall serve a term of two years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the office of President.

Section 4. The President shall serve a term of two years beginning on July 1 of odd-numbered years. At the end of his/her term, the President shall automatically succeed to the office of Vice-President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President or President-Elect shall serve the balance of the unexpired term at the discretion of the national President-Elect with the advice of the Division President.

Section 5. State Presidents may serve no more than two consecutive terms, but may be reelected or re-appointed after a lapse of one or more terms.

Section 6. Upon recommendation of the national President-Elect and with the advice of the Division President, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to remove a state President or President-Elect from office and to fill the vacancy thus created by appointment until the next regular election.

Article XIII

Meetings

Section 1. Business meetings of the Association may be held as needed at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. An annual meeting of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors shall be called by the President to conduct the business of the Association.

Section 3. Other meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President.

Section 4. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or upon the signed petition of three Division Presidents and four other members of the Board.

Section 5. The call for special meetings must state the business to be transacted, and no business shall be transacted except that specified in the call.

Section 6. Business meetings of a division may be held as needed at a time and place to be determined by the Division and State Presidents within that division.

Section 7. The Past Presidents Advisory Council may meet in conjunction with the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors, or separately, as authorized by the President.

Section 8. An assembly of Division and State Presidents shall meet biennially at the National Leadership Conference. The meeting shall be called and chaired by the National President.

Section 9. An assembly of State Presidents in each division shall meet at the Division Conferences. The meeting shall be called and chaired by the Division President.

Article XIV

Quorum

Section 1. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be three of the five voting members of that Committee.

Section 2. The quorum of the Board of Directors shall be seven members of the Board, including two voting members of the Executive Committee, three Division Presidents, and any two of the remaining voting members of the Board.

Section 3. The quorum of the Association for the transaction of business shall consist of a quorum of the Board of Directors, as stated above, plus the active membership voting.

Article XV

Amendments

Section 1. Amendments and/or revisions to this Constitution may be initiated by the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, the Past Presidents Advisory Council, or by a petition signed by ten percent of the national membership from no fewer than three of the divisions of the Association.

Section 2. This Constitution may be amended or revised by an approving vote of two-thirds of the active members who cast ballots in accordance with stipulations of the Bylaws, provided, however, that in any case, sixty days notice of such contemplated amendment or revision shall be given to active members.

BYLAWS

Article I

Membership

Section 1. **ACTIVE.** Any person who is engaged as part-time or full-time choral director, or who is responsible for the administration of a choral program, is eligible for active membership. An active member is entitled to all privileges of the Association, including the right to vote, to hold office, and, upon compliance with registration requirements, admission to all meetings and conventions. In addition, active members shall receive appropriate

publications from the Association. Upon receipt of a completed ACDA Application Form and payment of the annual membership dues, the candidate for active membership shall be accepted for a term of one year from the date of acceptance. Membership shall be continued each succeeding year on receipt of membership dues prior to or during the month designated for membership renewal. Failure to remit annual payment during the membership renewal period shall result in discontinuation of membership. Active membership shall be renewed on receipt of the current annual dues.

Section 2. **ASSOCIATE.** Any person who is interested in the objectives of the Association is eligible for associate membership. Privileges accorded the associate member shall be the same as those for the active member, except for voting and the right to hold office in the Association. Transfer of an associate member to active may be made upon compliance with requirements and procedures for active membership. The candidate for associate membership shall be accepted on receipt of completed ACDA Application Form and payment of the annual membership dues for a term of one year from the date of acceptance. Procedures for continuing membership are the same as those stated for active membership.

Section 3. **INDUSTRY ASSOCIATE.** Any business firm associated with music and related to the choral field may become an industry associate member. Privileges accorded the representatives of each industry associate firm shall be the same as those for the associate member. Application for membership shall include an application form provided by the Association and filled out by a representative of the firm, or a letter of application from such representative, and a dues payment for one year sent to the Membership Coordinator of the Association. Procedures for continuing membership are the same as those stated for active members.

Section 4. **INSTITUTIONAL.** The following institutions, or music departments thereof, may be institutional members: schools, colleges, universities, conservatories, churches, synagogues, lodges, other professional associations, professional choruses, and choral groups from industry, business, or community. Privileges accorded to representatives of each institutional member shall be the same as those for the associate member. Application procedures shall be the same as those prescribed for industry associate members. Procedures for continuing member-

ship are the same as those stated for active members.

Section 5. **CONTRIBUTING.** Any individual, firm, foundation, institution, or other organization that has contributed \$1,000.00 or more for a given year to the Association shall be classified as a contributing member. Privileges of associate membership shall be accorded the individual contributing member or a representative of the contributing firm, foundation, institution, or other organization.

Section 6. **PAID LIFE.** Life membership shall be open to persons who are eligible for active membership and who have been active members of ACDA for a minimum of ten years. Life members shall have the same privileges as active members. Paid-up life members shall not be assessed additional dues.

Section 7. **HONORARY LIFE.** Persons who have made unique meritorious contributions to choral music and to the profession of choral directing shall be eligible for honorary life membership, designated and bestowed by the Board of Directors. Privileges of honorary life membership shall be the same as those of active membership, but an honorary life member may not vote or hold office unless he/she chooses to maintain active membership. Otherwise there shall be no dues for honorary life membership.

Section 8. **STUDENT.** Any high school or college student may become a student member of ACDA with the submission of an ACDA Application Form marked "student" and the payment of dues. Student members may attend ACDA conferences by payment of the prescribed conference fee. Student memberships may be submitted by individual students or by the ACDA sponsor-teacher for a student group. The student shall be a nonvoting member, ineligible for office except in a student capacity or in a local student chapter. Students actively engaged as choral directors are eligible for active membership in ACDA.

Section 9. **RETIRED.** ACDA members attaining retirement status may maintain membership in ACDA by payment of reduced annual dues. Privileges accorded retired members will be the same as those for active members.

Section 10. Membership classification, requirements,

and procedures of Affiliate Associations shall not differ from those of ACDA which are specified under Section 1 through Section 9 of this Article, except that the Executive Committee may make adjustments as desirable and necessary for previously established choral directors associations.

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 of Directors.

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 may charge dues for its purposes in addition to those of ACDA with the following qualifications: approval of the ACDA Board of Directors 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 III

Administrative and Fiscal Year

Section 1. The administrative and fiscal year shall be from July 1 through June 30, or such other period as may be determined by the Board of Directors.

Article IV

Membership Year

Section 1. Membership dues shall be for one year from the date of acceptance of said dues.

Article V

Fiscal Policies and Procedures

Section 1. A verified financial statement shall be prepared by the Treasurer and/or other officers of the Association who have been empowered by the Constitution and

Bylaws and the Board of Directors to handle Association funds. Such statements shall be published within the fiscal year following the audit approval by the Board of Directors

Section 2. The certification of the financial statement shall consist of an audit of the financial records of the Association by a Certified Public Account or by a Public Accountant with accompanying affidavit by a Notary Public.

Section 3. The complete financial records of the Association shall be examined and approved by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting. A budget for the following year shall be presented to the Board of Directors by the Treasurer at the annual meeting.

Section 4. Any fiscal policies and procedures needed in the administration and operation of the Association and not specified in these Bylaws shall be formulated by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

Article VI

Duties of National Officers and Appointed Officials

Section 1. The President shall preside at all national business meetings and conferences of the Association, call and preside at meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, make appointments as provided in this Constitution and Bylaws, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, be responsible for implementing the overall program of the Association, and perform other duties pertaining to the office. The President shall also serve as Chair of the assembly of Division and State Presidents at the biennial Leadership ~~Workshop~~ **Conference** and shall report all recommendations to the Board of Directors for consideration and action.

Section 2. The Vice-President shall serve as an advisor to the President, Executive Committee, and the Board of Directors. He/she shall assume all duties of the President in the case of resignation, disability, or death until the President-Elect assumes the office of President at the beginning of the next regular biennium. The Vice-President shall coordinate all international activities of the Association and shall undertake other duties as may be assigned by the President.

Section 3. The President-Elect shall assist the president as requested. He/she shall serve as the National Conference Chair for the biennial National Conference that will take place during his/her term of office. He/she shall appoint the National Conference Assistant Chair and Program Chair, with the approval of the Board of Directors. He/she shall also serve as the chief liaison officer to the Division and State Presidents and Industry Representative. In the capacity, it shall be his/her responsibility to communicate and implement any policies or decisions of the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors that directly affect the administrative procedures of division, state, and affiliate associations. It shall be his/her responsibility to see that all division and state elections are carried out in accordance with the provisions set down in the Constitution and Bylaws. He/she shall appoint State Presidents when necessary.

Section 4. The President-Elect Designate shall assist the President-Elect as requested and shall use his/her one-year term of office to prepare for his/her role as Conference Chair for the biennial National Conference that will take place during his/her term of office as President-Elect.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial affairs of the Association as governed by policies set forth by the Board of Directors. With the assistance of the Executive Director, the Treasurer shall prepare financial reports and budgets for submission to the Board.

Section 6. The National Chair for the committee on Choral Repertoire and ~~Standards (R&S)~~ **Resources (R&R)** shall, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, appoint the ~~fourteen~~ **twelve** National Chairs for each of the following choral areas:

~~1) Boychoirs, 2) Children and Community Youth 3) College and University Choirs, 4) Community Choirs, 5) Ethnic and Multicultural Perspectives 6) Junior High/Middle School Choirs, 7) Male 8) Music in Worship, 9) Senior High School Choirs 10) Show Choirs 11) Two-Year College choirs 12) Vocal Jazz, 13) Women's Choirs, and 14) Youth and Student Activities. The National Chair coordinates the work of these National Choral Repertoire and Standards Resources Chairs on behalf of the Association.~~

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

The National Chair coordinates the work of these National Choral Repertoire and **Standards Resources** Chairs on behalf of the Association.

Section 7. National Chairs of Choral Repertoire and **Standards Resources** Committees, as enumerated in Section 6, 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 **Standards Resources** may recommend removal of a National Committee Chair from office to the Executive Committee for action.

Section 8. 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 Choirs, Women's Choirs, Jazz Choirs, Contemporary/Commercial and Ethnic Music).

Section 9. Each division and state president shall appoint R&R coordinators for not fewer than the four categories of Youth, Collegiate, Lifelong, and Repertoire Specific. It is further understood that division and state presidents are encouraged to add specific R&R chairs in any or all areas at their discretion.

Section 8 10. The Executive Director shall work with the Executive Committee in keeping a complete and accurate record of all business meetings of the Association and all meetings of the Executive Committee and the

Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall assist Division Presidents in implementing division meetings and conferences. He/she shall conduct the business of the Association in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws under the direction of the Executive Committee. This officer shall also make available the proper records at all official meetings and shall submit an annual report to the Executive Committee.

Section 9 11. The Publications Editor shall serve as Chair of the Editorial Board. This person shall be responsible for the non-revenue-related content of all publications, in consultation with the Editorial Board, and for the timely publication of such. The Editor shall present an annual report to the Board of Directors.

Section 10 12. The National Conference Program Chair is responsible for the program of the National Conference and shall, with the approval of the National Conference Chair (the President- Elect), appoint all committees and clinicians necessary to implement the National Conference.

Article VII

Duties of the Executive Committee

Section 1. The Executive Committee, as the administrative branch of the Association, shall have the power to transact the general business of the Association, shall be responsible for the management and control of its funds, and shall be empowered to appoint assistants to any of the officers of the Association. It shall serve in the government of the Association as detailed in the Constitution and Bylaws. It shall annually review the performance of Association employees and determine all salaries.

Article VIII

Duties of the Board of Directors

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall serve as the legislative and policy-making body of the Association and shall serve in the government of the Association as specified in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article IX

Duties of the Past Presidents Advisory Council

Section 1. The Past Presidents Advisory Council shall serve primarily in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. Unless otherwise directed by the Board of Directors, the following services shall be performed by individuals or committees from this Council appointed by the Chair: (1) a continuing review and improvement of the Constitution and Bylaws, (2) preparation and preservation of historical and permanent records of the Association, (3) necrology and memorials, (4) nominating candidates for honors and awards.

Article X

Duties of Division Officers

Section 1. The Division President shall serve as the chief executive of the division and shall be responsible for the implementation of ACDA activities in the division. He/she shall serve as Division Conference Chair and presiding officer for the Division Conference, as determined by the division election cycle. He/she shall be responsible to the National President-Elect for matters pertaining to the Division Conference and other programs sponsored by the Association at the division level. This person shall also serve as representative for his/her division to the Board of Directors and as Chair for the assembly of State Presidents at division meetings. **He/she shall appoint R&R Coordinators and Chairs for the Division.** He/she shall endeavor to work cooperatively with other previously established choral and music education organizations within the division.

Section 2. The Division President shall be responsible for the integrity and soundness of divisional fiscal operations. He/she will appoint a Division Treasurer, whose term of office will coincide with that of the Division President. A Division Treasurer may be appointed or reappointed, upon review each time by the incoming Division President and the National Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Division President-Elect shall serve as co-Chair of the Division Conference, may appoint appropriate committees as needed for planning and executing division activities, and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Division President.

Section 4. The Division Vice-President shall serve as an advisor to other divisional officers. He/she shall assume all duties of the President in the case of resignation, disability, or death until the President-Elect assumes the office of President at the beginning of the next regular biennium.

Section 5. The Division Treasurer shall manage funds for divisional operations, including disbursements to State Presidents and R & S Chairs within the division, in accordance with established fiscal policies. Accounting of such disbursements shall be submitted annually to the National Treasurer.

Article XI

Duties of State Presidents

Section 1. The State President shall serve as the chief executive officer for the state and shall be responsible for the implementation of the ACDA activities in the state. **He/she shall appoint R&R Coordinators and Chairs for the state.**

Section 2. Each State President shall participate in meetings of the assembly of State Presidents at the divisional and national levels.

Section 3. The State President-Elect shall assist the President in the administration of the state association and assume other duties as assigned by the State President.

Section 4. The State Vice-President shall serve as advisor to other state officers. He/she, or the President-Elect at the discretion of the National President-Elect with the advice of the Division President, shall assume all duties of the President in case of resignation, disability, or death until the President-Elect assumes the office of President at the beginning of the next regular biennium.

Article XII

Multiple Offices

Section 1. No state, divisional, or national officer or chair or member of a national standing committee shall hold more than one of these positions at the same time.

Article XIII

Committees

Section 1. There shall be seven standing committees and an Editorial Board for the Association publications under the supervision of the officers listed below:

1. **International Activities**
2. Research and Publications
3. **Choral Repertoire and Resources**
4. **Composition Initiatives**
5. **Education and Communication**
6. **Advocacy and Collaboration**
7. **Diversity Initiatives**

Section 2. ~~The Editorial Board shall plan and implement publication of the Association publications. The International Activities Committee shall oversee all international projects of the association.~~

Section 3. The Research and Publications Committee shall supervise other appropriate publications, as approved by the Executive Committee **oversee all publications and research projects of the association. The Choral Journal Editorial Board shall serve as a sub-committee responsible to solicit and review submissions to the Choral Journal.**

Section 4. The Choral Repertoire and **Standards Resources** Committee **shall foster and promote the performance of quality historical and contemporary repertoire. Committee members also serve as a resource for choral pedagogy and instructional strategies.**

Section 5. ~~The Conference Committee is responsible for planning and executing the National Conference. The Composition Initiatives Committee shall foster and encourage the creation of quality repertoire through commissions, awards and other projects.~~

Section 6. ~~The Educational Technology~~ **The Education and Communication Committee shall explore uses of technological resources to enhance the work of ACDA and the continuing development of the choral art oversee the ACDA online content and contribute resource materials.**

Section 7. The Advocacy and Collaboration Committee shall seek opportunities to promote the choral art and develop collaborations with other arts organizations as beneficial to the association.

Section 8. The Diversity Initiatives Committee shall foster and promote projects that serve a broad representation of choral singers and conductors.

Section 9. The Executive Committee will appoint National Chairs of Standing Committees 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.

~~Section 7 For committees listed as 2 and 5 in Section 1, each committee shall be comprised of not more than six voting members, including the chair. The national officer having supervisory responsibility for each respective committee will serve as an ex officio member of that committee. The National Executive Director will also serve as ex-officio member of each committee. ACDA office staff members shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting committee members as approved by the Executive Committee.~~

~~Section 8. Chairs for committees listed as 2 and 5 in Section 1 shall be appointed by the Executive Committee, with approval by the Board of Directors. The chair for each of these committees will appoint the members of his/her committee, with approval by the Executive Committee. Chairs and committee members are appointed for a two-year term. A Chair or committee member may be reappointed twice, for a maximum of six years.~~

Section 10. 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 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 11. The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint other committees for which there are special needs.

Article XIV

Divisions

Section 1. The Divisions 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; 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.

Article XV

Election Procedures

Section 1. A Nominating Committee of five members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting before January 1 of odd-numbered years. The President-Elect shall serve as chair of this committee and shall present a slate of nominees for the office of President-Elect Designate to the Board of Directors at the National Board of Directors Meeting in odd-numbered years.

Section 2. Election of the National President-Elect Designate shall be completed before February 1 of even-numbered years. The President-Elect Designate shall assume office on July 1 of the same year.

Section 3. A Nominating Committee of five members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors before January 1 of even-numbered years. The Chair of the Past Presidents Council shall present a slate of officers for the office of Treasurer to the Board of Directors at their annual meeting in even-numbered years.

Section 4. Election of the National Treasurer shall be completed before February 1 of odd-numbered years. The National Treasurer shall assume office on July 1 of the same year.

Section 5. A Nominating Committee of five members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting in odd-numbered years. The Vice-President shall present a slate of candidates for the office of National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and **Standards Resources** to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting in even-numbered years.

Section 6. Election of the National Chair for the Committee on Choral Repertoire and **Standards Resources** shall be completed before February 1 of odd-numbered years, with the National Chair assuming office on July 1 of the same year.

Section 7. Nominees for Division Presidents-Elect shall be proposed by a committee that includes not fewer than three of that division's Past Presidents.

Section 8. Election of Division Presidents-Elect shall be completed before February 1 of the year in which they assume office on July 1.

Section 9. For each of the above national and divisional officers, a slate of nominees shall be presented to the membership through Association publications at least 60 days prior to the election.

Section 10. Division Presidents, in cooperation with the National President-Elect, shall be responsible for

the elections in their division and all states and Affiliate State Associations within their division. Election of the President-Elect in states with 20 or more members shall be completed as stated in the Constitution before January 1 of odd-numbered years with that officer assuming his/her post on July 1 of the odd-numbered year. Should no election take place in a state, or effort be made to elect a President-Elect by January 1, the Division President shall be responsible for appointing a nominating committee and conducting the election from his/her office. Such action shall not include Affiliate State Associations.

Section 11. Nominees for State Presidents-Elect shall be proposed by a committee that includes not fewer than two of that State's Past Presidents.

Section 12. Ballots of ACDA state, divisional, and national elections shall include two nominees for each office.

Section 13. Election procedures for Affiliate State Associations shall be determined by their Constitutions and Bylaws.

Section 14. Special elections as prescribed in the Constitution shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. A Nominating Committee of five members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors. For the office in question, the appropriate officer as designated in Sections 1, 3 or 5 shall serve as chair of this committee and shall present a slate of nominees to the Board of Directors at the earliest possible date.
2. The nominees for special elections shall be presented to the membership through Association publications.
3. Special elections shall be completed 30 days after the ballots are made available to the membership.

Article XVI

Relationships with Other Organizations

Section 1. Cooperative relationships, including conferences and other activities, may be exercised by the Association with other national and international educational institutions and/ or musical organizations as authorized by the Board of Directors.

Article XVII

Official Organ

Section 1. The official publication of the Association shall be Choral Journal.

Article XVIII

Disposition of Assets in Case of Disbandment

Section 1. In the event of disbandment, properties and funds of the American Choral Directors Association remaining after all financial obligations have been met shall be utilized only for the purpose of furtherance of choral music in the United States and shall be dispensed by the Executive Committee.

Article XIX


Rules of Order

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the authority for all questions of procedure in business meetings not covered by these Bylaws.

Article XX

Amendments

Section 1. Amendments and/or revisions to these Bylaws may be initiated by the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, the Past Presidents Advisory Council, or by a petition signed by ten percent of the national membership from no fewer than three of the divisions of the Association.

Section 2. These Bylaws may be amended by an approving vote of two-thirds of the active members who cast ballots in accordance with stipulations of the Bylaws, provided, however, that in any case sixty days notice of such contemplated amendment or revision shall be given to active members. 

From the EDITOR



Amanda Bumgarner

This December issue marks the conclusion of the 2015 calendar year. I joined ACDA's national office staff in November 2013, and it is hard to believe that I have now been at the helm of two years of *Choral Journal* issues. My goal as editor has been to continue the tradition of scholarship through features and articles that are of interest to choral conductors across all levels and areas of the profession.

The articles in this month's issue are no exception. Featured on the cover is a conversation with top conductors and professional singers discussing the

changing paradigm of professional singing. Conductors will no doubt be interested in answers to questions such as, "What skills does a singer need in order to make a living as a full-time professional musician?" and, "How can conductors better prepare young singers to have fulfilling and profitable careers in the field?"

Next, Derrick Fox presents a study on the practice of shape-note singing in the African American community in the United States. Unfortunately, African American participation in shape-note singing is on the decline due to social change and an aging population base. The author attended two singing conventions that represent remaining strongholds of this tradition and shares research on the history of shape-note development, transition to a seven-shape system, and practice of conventions, including attire, performance, and repertoire.

Finally, *ChorTeach* is ACDA's online publication, published quarterly and intended for choral conductors and music educators who are looking for practical articles pertaining to their work. This month features a sample of three articles that have been printed in past issues of *ChorTeach*. My hope is that this feature brings *ChorTeach* to the attention of members who are not aware of this publication, which is available for free for ACDA members online at <http://acda.org/page.asp?page=chorteach>. This December issue also highlights the following articles and columns: recorded sound and book reviews, an article for the On the Voice article series titled "Vocal Percussion in the Choral Classroom," and a Hallelujah column article on congregational singing.

As I begin my third year as publications editor for ACDA, I look forward to continuing to bring you the best articles for choral conductors and music educators at all levels. Many thanks to those who have taken the time to write in this year with a "Letter to the Editor." I enjoy hearing your feedback and hope you feel free to write in with comments, suggestions, or to submit an article in 2016.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



I would like to make some additions to James Gallagher's article (August 2015) on what to do with your choral interests after a long and fulfilling career. Since most of us did not work at the university level, I doubt that we will be asked frequently to adjudicate and/or perform at festivals, so what are some other options? The one that springs to mind is to serve on a board for an arts organization or a municipal committee. I have found that being part of a music festival's steering committee is immensely re-

warding. There are numerous schools in my community that are delighted to welcome volunteer involvement running a choir or assisting in the classroom. I have found offering free workshops in vocal technique and choral training to be most rewarding, along with voice training. Our new, young church organist is hungry for some choral training and repertoire suggestions. And, fortunately, my community choir has not asked me to step down yet, so I can continue to develop techniques and skills while growing musically as a conductor. ACDA has ventured into the realm of mentorship, which I would love to explore. So little time, so many opportunities!

Sincerely,

Gary Fisher
Burlington Civic Chorale
Burlington, Ontario
Canada

Dear Editor:

Regarding the article by Duane Cottrell in the October 2015 *Choral Journal* ("Building Vocal Strength with Sustained Tone Warm-Ups"). I was particularly pleased to read that Joseph Stemple's vocal function exercises were mentioned, as well as their isometric benefits for the singer. For anyone wanting additional confirmation of the efficacy of vocal function exercises and how they can be easily applied to any choral repertoire, please refer to my article that appeared in the August 2002 *Choral Journal*, "Operatically Trained Singers in the Choral Rehearsal." It was titled such because my preliminary research at the University of Arizona showed that using vocal function exercises along with *messa di voce* exercises could help so-called operatically trained singers more easily meet the varying stylistic demands of their collegiate choir repertoire. In hindsight, perhaps the title should have been "How to Avoid Vocal Fatigue in the Collegiate Choir Rehearsal." Nevertheless, the article described a specific rehearsal process that applied these exercises to a Lassus motet and a Brahms folk song setting. Thank you, Dr. Cottrell, for including Stemple's extremely beneficial exercises in your discussion.

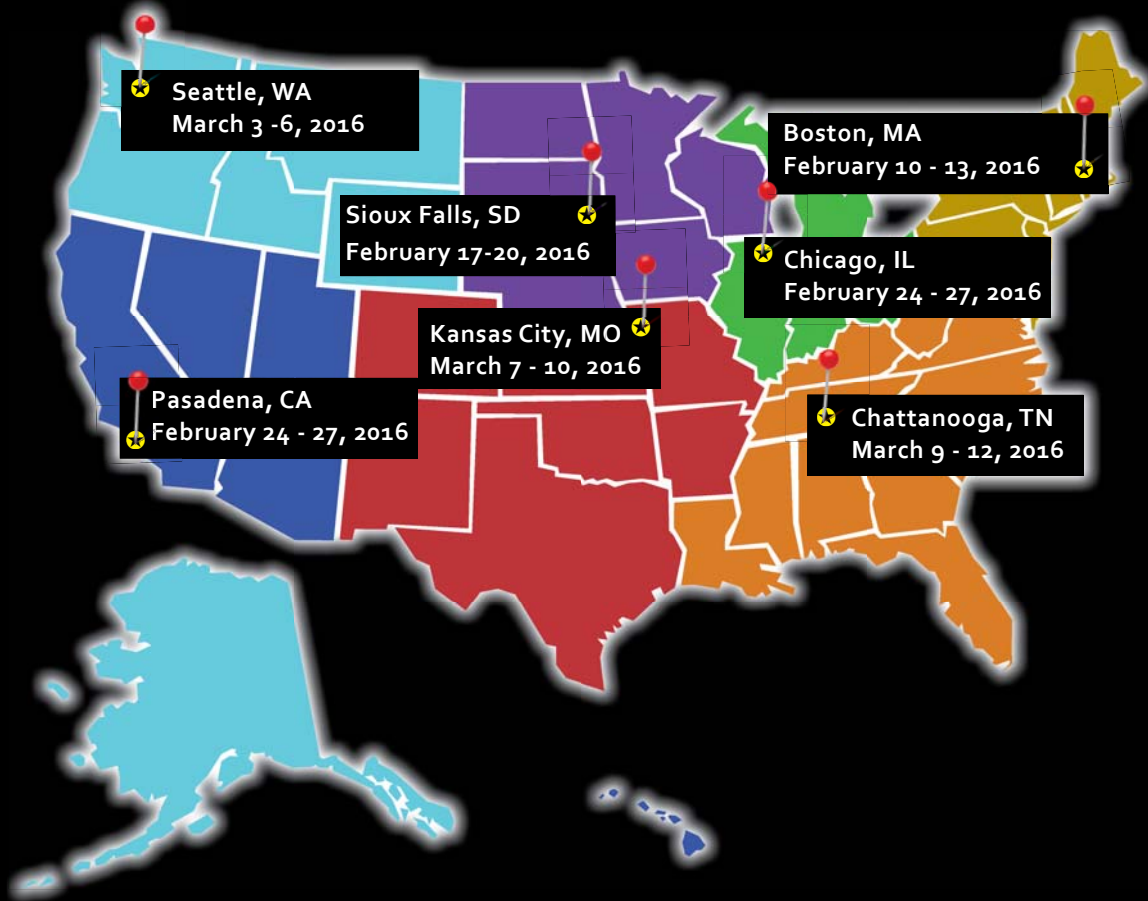
Sincerely,
John Weiss
Choir Director
Mississippi Valley State University
john.weiss@mvsu.edu

Learn and grow professionally through ACDA's mentoring program.



Open to all undergraduate and graduate students and beginning to established choral directors.
More information is available at: <http://mentoring.acda.org>

2016 ACDA DIVISION CONFERENCES



NORTHWESTERN DIVISION

Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming

WESTERN DIVISION

Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah

NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION

Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin

CENTRAL DIVISION

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

EASTERN DIVISION

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland/DC, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia



THE CHANGING PARADIGM OF PROFESSIONAL SINGING

A CONVERSATION
WITH
TOP SINGERS AND
CONDUCTORS
IN THE UNITED STATES

DEANNA JOSEPH

Deanna Joseph
Director of Choral Activities
Georgia State University
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There are currently thousands (see sidebar on page 27 for 2013-14 NASM data) of students studying vocal performance in music schools and conservatories across the United States that go on to have careers of all types. The following article is a conversation with nine of the country's top conductors and singers. These men and women share their thoughts on what is required to be successful as a professional soloist or choral singer in the twenty-first century, whether in opera, oratorio, early music, commercial recording, or other genres.

THE PANEL

THE CONDUCTORS



Simon Carrington: Yale University professor emeritus who has enjoyed a distinguished career in music, performing as a singer, double bass player, and conductor, first in the UK where he was born and later in the United States.



Joshua Habermann: Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Chorus and music director of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale.



Simon Halsey: Conductor Laureate of the Rundfunkchor Berlin, Chorus Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Choruses, Choral Director of the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus.



Craig Hella Johnson: Founder and artistic director of Conspirare and music director/conductor for the Victoria Bach Festival and Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble.

THE SINGERS



Dashon Burton: Classical bass-baritone based in New York. Burton sang in the *St. Mark's Passion* at the Oregon Bach Festival and had the role of Jesus in the *St. Matthew Passion* at the Carmel Bach Festival. He is a former member of Cantus.



Estelí Gomez: Founding member of the Grammy award-winning experimental vocal octet Roomful of Teeth. She makes her living traveling full time as a performer, collaborator, and teacher in concert, oratorio, recital, and chamber music venues.



Kathryn Lewek: Soprano who recently made debuts at the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Australia's Hobart Baroque Festival, the English National Opera, Austria's Bregenz Festival, and the Deutsche Oper Berlin.



Kelley O'Connor: Grammy award-winning mezzo-soprano who has performed in world premieres by composers Osvaldo Golijov and John Adams. She has a passion for the concert stage and has performed with many of America's leading orchestras.



Kyle Stegall: Tenor specializing in the performance of concert and recital repertoire. He has appeared as a soloist with William Christie, Simon Carrington, Joseph Flummerfelt, Masaaki Suzuki, Nicholas McGegan, and David Hill. He is also a chamber musician and ensemble singer.

What qualities make a singer marketable? Why?

Simon Halsey: So many things!

- A healthy, straightforward singing technique that will allow you to sing for forty years every day
- A flexible sound and light vibrato but with the possibility of a variety of colors
- Good ears and ensemble skills
- Good sight-reading
- An energetic and responsible attitude to work
- The desire to be professional in all good senses
- Good people skills
- The ability to graciously take direction and work in a team
- Good health and vitality
- Flexibility and fitness
- Stylistic awareness

Simon Carrington: This depends so much on the area of our profession in which a singer has ambition to succeed. In the world of opera or musical theater a strong, resilient voice and charismatic personality can help launch a career as long as the singer has enough financial resources to be able to engage a repertoire coach/accompanist to help prepare roles. In every other area, the depth of the singer's musicianship and the flexibility of the voice are essentials that enable a singer to immediately adapt to each opportunity that arises.

Craig Hella Johnson: A singer needs a grounded and healthy technique—a core vocal foundation that will serve them in a wide variety of musical contexts. A high degree of stylistic flexibility is often very valuable—to be able to step out as soloist and then return into a section of singers and understand any necessary shifts when singing back in



Estelí Gomez

the section, for example. I marvel at the singers I have the privilege to work with—they are not only beautiful artists but also remarkable athletes. They have learned how to pace themselves so that they can fully engage in the choral texture but also step out as soloist deep into the concert and sound fresh. It's really incredible. In the evolving American professional choral scene, it is important that singers learn to take care of their bodies. Many of these singers are required to travel quite a lot and are expected to drop into a new city and be able to step into rehearsal with physical and musical readiness, despite this travel and often demanding rehearsal schedules.

Joshua Habermann: Above all is flexibility. The ability to sing in multiple styles: full-throated, straight tone, classical, folk, and popular is key in the current environment. That flexibility extends also to the ability and willingness to sing both soloistically and within a section, which is really important in the professional chamber choir world. In terms of interpersonal skills, it's crucial that singers be dependable, well prepared, and positive.

Estelí Gomez: Recently I've started to give career talks at universities at which I've been either an alumna or artist in residence, so I've been thinking about this particular question quite a bit. For my first of these talks about a year ago, I began asking friends on each gig, in different cities and in different genres, about their take on "the most important qualities in a performer to ensure that they are both hired and rehired." By far, the quality that came up most frequently was: be kind. The world of pro-

OF PROFESSIONAL SINGING

fessional singing continues to be competitive, physically and emotionally taxing, and without prescriptive steps or guarantees for every individual artist, along most every step of the way. However, if both employer and colleague can be sure that a singer will show up having had enough respect for all involved to come prepared; that he or she will then be willing to adjust for changes as needed with grace and flexibility; and all in all will be secure enough in his or her own skin to treat others with utmost respect and kindness—he or she is a marketable, rehireable artist.

Another important quality I would highlight is flexibility. A big part of our job has always been wearing many stylistic hats—to sing the jazz standard at a friend’s wedding, pop arrangements at a bar mitzvah, musical theater at graduation—without having to turn a gig down since our only setting is “operatic.” This is not emphasized in school as much as the profession inevitably requires: one may still specialize in a genre, but ignoring all others is ultimately a huge detriment to one’s hire ability. Another facet of flexibility is the capacity to adjust for unexpected changes. You may well have to sight read a different line of the duet or be delayed enough that your travel day becomes a red-eye straight into rehearsals or work alongside unkind, ego-laden, insecure individuals. There isn’t much time, in these situations, to get caught up in regret, fear, complaint, or self-pity. Meeting change with grace and flexibility is a huge challenge and hugely important.

Kathryn Lewek: There are three main things that I believe make a singer irresistible to all those who observe



Craig Hella Johnson

them on (and off) stage: confidence, vulnerability, and personality.

Confidence: I don’t mean the fake kind that some people wear like an ill-fitting article of clothing. Know your stuff, know how to use *your* voice, be in full command of your craft, know your limitations and your assets, and be proud of yourself for knowing that you have done everything you possibly could do to make yourself a success. Be an island. Sustain yourself on hard work and self-discovery, experimentation and guts, and selectively learn from those that you trust to visit your island (teach-

NASM Accredited Institutions HEADS (Higher Education Arts Data Services) Data Summary of Number of Students Studying Vocal Performance, 2013-14

Undergrad
3,371 sopranos
1,021 altos
1,135 tenors
1,052 basses

Associate
227 sopranos
113 altos
135 tenors
86 basses

Graduate
MM
714 sopranos
183 altos
249 tenors
216 basses

DMA
230 sopranos
50 altos
94 tenors
90 basses

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ers, coaches, fellow singers, conductors, directors, and recordings of singers you admire).

Vulnerability: Be open with people. Be real. Care about your colleagues, and care about your audience, or they won't care about you. Leave everything on the stage. Audiences don't care for half-baked emotions—they want it all. They may have no idea what it takes for you to give it all to them out there in the lights, but that's not what it's about. Don't show them how hard it is for you to act; rather, show them how easy it is for you to communicate. This goes for the people you work with too. To a director, a conductor, a person you are sharing the stage with, nothing is more irresistible than an artist who has the willingness to open him or herself authentically.

Personality: Have it. Whatever your flavor is, have it. Maybe some people won't like you, but there will be a lot of people who will love you.

Kelley O'Connor: How relevant this question is, especially now with all of the news about singers and weight! I truly believe it is a complete package that makes the artist, and not just one element. Yes, we must sound good, and yes, we must look good. This is a visual and aural art, and we need to be able to suspend people's reality with our looks as well as our voice. I am fairly certain that what makes me marketable is my ability to express my sentiment with honesty when I am performing. I am not solely focused on the sound I am making but on the message that I am communicating. I feel that this has allowed me to go as far as I have gone. There are definitely better singers than me out there, but I know what I do best and I stick to that. For me, it is about a personal relationship with the audience. Playing a character doesn't fit me as well, and that is why I have chosen the path of a concert singer (singing primarily with orchestras as soloist). This platform is completely focused on the music and allows for intimate collaboration with the conductors and orchestras. Luckily, I was a choir nerd and learned everything I ever needed to know during those formative years.

I went from not being able to read music to being a new music specialist. Go figure! My college choral conductor still can't believe it, but I developed my ability to learn music quickly in choir and how to work in an ensemble situation. I know that I find it much more enjoyable thinking of the orchestra, conductor, and myself all creating

the product and not just me alone.

Kyle Stegall: In the relatively short time I have spent as a full-time professional singer, I have observed that what makes a singer most hireable is the degree of skill with which they use their instrument. Students often feel that what is most important is how high, loud, or fast you sing, but in reality, such a great variety of repertoire is being performed today that a singer essentially is hireable if they are using *their* voice in a healthy and solid way. Because of the individual character of each voice, singers tend to specialize in repertoire that complements their own instrument. Trouble occurs, of course, when a young singer decides that they want to sing certain repertoire before they have developed their technique. If young singers are lured into taking work that is inappropriate for their voice at that moment, it can be damaging both mentally and physically.

Conductors tend to hire singers they can trust and singers who are well versed in the performance practice of the programmed music for which they are hiring. Conductors don't have time to spoon-feed musicians in any way. Singers become more hireable by having a reputation for knowing their music backwards and forwards and for walking into rehearsals with a well-rounded understanding of the context in which their vocal line exists.

Ensemble skills are key. There will seldom (if ever) be a situation in which a singer is hired to stand onstage and sing alone. Whether you are hired as a symphonic soloist, cast in an opera, singing as part of a professional



Kyle Stegall



Simon Halsey

choir, or participating in small-ensemble music, you are responsible for making music *with* your colleagues. It is expected that you will participate in all rehearsals and performances with a careful ear for balance, tuning, and musical shaping. Collegiate ensembles are perfect environments to hone these skills. These are not bonus skills; they are expected for professional-level music making.

As in any line of business, one will encounter colleagues with varying levels of proficiency with interpersonal skills. Learning to communicate with a wide variety of personalities is one of the more difficult and crucial skills a musical artist can have. Making music is a passionate endeavor that depends on successful collaboration. There will be differences of opinion, and each artist will inevitably bring different skills to the party. Generally speaking, a genuine smile, a work ethic, and a general respect for others will take you far.

Dashon Burton: Musicians of all kinds need to be flexible in today's changing market while also maintaining a deep sense of individuality throughout all of their projects. This of course applies especially to singers who are trying to leave their mark on a project as a soloist in a busy touring schedule with different conductors and ensembles. Complementary to flexibility is preparedness. It's crucial to be so comfortable with the music that if the conductor takes a different tempo (within reason, hopefully!) you can be prepared to take on the challenge and still maintain your performance standards. Of course, being a collegial and pleasant person to be around is most important at

our stage; it's a long career, and we all want to work with talented people who make each other feel good. There are exceptions to this rule, but I wouldn't risk your career on you being one!

What skills does a singer need in order to make a living as a full-time professional musician?

Halsey: See above.

Carrington: It is important to remember that the opera stage is just one of many contexts in which a singer can make a living nowadays. Since so few of the many singers that work through voice degrees at conservatories and universities have much real chance of success on the opera stage, my answers will concentrate on all the other areas where promising singers with everything but sheer volume of voice can succeed and very profitably. The essential skills include: musicianship, sight-reading skills (it is critically important to be not only a good reader but a very quick and fearless reader), highly developed ensemble skills (the equal to those of a member of an accomplished string quartet), an unassuming sensitivity to the musicians around you, and a natural and easy collegiality.

Johnson: It is necessary that the singer have a depth of the fundamental musicianship skills: superb sight-reading, consistent intonation, great rhythm, agility, and a broad color spectrum. But equally important is that a singer has what I call a "chamber music sensibility"—a set of skills and experience in making music with others at a very high level. Developing instrumentalists are given this training often for many years in string quartets and wind quintets, etc. So, from a very early age, many of them have the orientation of this type of listening and discernment. This training and coaching is incredibly valuable for these instrumentalists and prepares them for a life of music making in many contexts. A singer needs to seek out situations that can nurture this chamber music sensibility: to develop listening, awareness, and responsiveness to a high degree.

Habermann: I prioritize excellent musicianship right along with vocal quality. There are so many fine singers now of every voice type that what distinguishes one from

THE CHANGING PARADIGM

another is often the ability to read something perfectly the first time. In many professional situations, even at the very highest levels, there isn't any time to waste. Those singers who prepare carefully and can read very fluently are the ones who get hired. The spirit and energy that singers bring to not only performance but also rehearsal is a critical component of getting hired and, more importantly, getting rehired for the next opportunity.

Gomez: Organizational skills. Independence. Money-management. Body-awareness. Each of these qualities could be described in so much detail! But yes, the ability to manage one's own small business and care for all factors involved: how to file taxes for work in many states, how to book cheap and efficient travel, how to cope when said travel becomes exhausting and lonely, and how to take care of one's body and instrument while constantly on the road and dealing with changes in environment, different sleeping situations, being under time and climate and food constraints. Remember that an unhappy body, heart, or mind make for a very compromised instrument, and it's the personal responsibility of the professional musician to account for a consistently high-quality performance.

Lewek: Here are the nuts and bolts: Sight-read well. Learn music quickly and correctly (in other words, use a coach to polish your work, not teach you the notes). Work on your piano skills. Work well with your colleagues. Keep track of everything, keep all your receipts, and get an accountant you can trust to do a good job with your taxes. Get a big suitcase that has four fully rotational wheels. Know how to keep your body healthy so you can be reliable. Always sing as well as you can, and don't mark all the time in rehearsal. Attach your emotions to your singing and support. Work every day to improve your multi-fluency in German, Italian, and French (in that order). Know everything about what you are singing. Read the sixteenth-century poem that inspired the novel that inspired the play that inspired the libretto that inspired the composer to write the notes you are going to sing. Leave no stone unturned. Be an expert.

O'Connor: You must be flexible. You must be prepared. You must know your limits. You must always be aware that you need to look the part (dressing appropriately for



Kathryn Lewek

rehearsals, donor functions, and conductor meetings). You are a product, and you are selling yourself at every moment. Every rehearsal and performance is an audition for a singer. That is just how it is. You can get hired one year and have no contracts the next. It is a very fickle industry, but that is the nature of the beast. It is okay to not be chosen for every gig. Whether or not someone likes what you have to offer is a completely personal opinion and not the opinion of the world at large. It is important to remember that and not take every hit as the final blow. You have no idea what a company or orchestra is looking for. You only know that you tried your best.

Stegall: Time-management and self-management are the two most important skill sets for the self-employed professional musician. The successful self-employed musician must be his or her own accountant, scheduler, boss (work-enforcer), and sometimes marketer and manager. In the highly structured academic setting, self-worth and accomplishment are too often gauged from the completion of assigned tasks and from singing in required concerts. In the world of the full-time performer, one must discipline oneself to work toward personal, musical, and career goals. Nobody will be cracking the whip for you, so to speak. You must always be practicing your craft, not because you have a jury coming up or because your lesson is tomorrow and your recital is just around the corner, but because you must be the very best artist you can be

own work. Being self-employed means you are ultimately responsible for your product.

Burton: To make a living as a professional musician, one needs to be organized enough to keep a tight schedule, to balance business and personal finances, and to attend to the craft as much as possible. Scheduling is difficult for all of us, but we need to make sure that we show up with plenty of time to get ready in a leisurely manner. We also need to make sure we balance enough downtime to prevent getting run down. Finances and taxation laws are difficult but critically important. Keeping good credit is important so that you're able to have an array of financial options at your disposal. Saving for retirement as a freelancer is very difficult but by no means impossible. It's better to think of it now than to wait. Investing in an accountant who can help you file your taxes may be worth your time. Find one who works with musicians; we have very specific challenges to attend to. Finally, making sure that you are able to get to your instrument every day is important. Of course I mean vocally, but remember that we have additional challenges with language, acting, and further contexts as well. So, making time to study language and read books about the historical context of the pieces you're taking on is important.

How is professional singing changing in Europe? How do singers make a living there? Is it the same or different in the United States?

Halsey: The UK is not unlike the United States, but the rest of Europe is different. In the UK, most jobs are freelance and require quick-thinking, flexible, enjoyable, reliable people-or they don't get asked again. In Germany, there are lots of full-time jobs in radio and in opera. Here, attitude, energy, vocal health, and flexibility are very important.

Carrington: The huge advantages that a freelance professional singer in Europe has over his or her American counterparts include ease of access to the different projects and vast amounts of varied opportunities available within a relatively small radius. For instance, a well-trained and flexible English tenor can be a Bach Evangelist in Holland one day, record a couple of pop sessions in Lon-

don the next, sing a Lieder recital in Cologne the next, and then go on tour with Ars Nova in Copenhagen. If your technique is secure, your musicianship well developed, and you have had plenty of ensemble experience, you can make a very good living.

Being a freelance musician in the United States is much more difficult because of the distances, the relatively small number of professional opportunities, and the lack of a national health insurance.

Gomez: I will preface this response with the admission that I spend only about a month of every season, at most, working in Europe, so my knowledge is limited as compared to many friends who are living over there making a living in music. However, I would say the main differences that I've noticed in classical singing in North America as compared to Europe are based in aesthetic. I did a competition in Poland a few years ago right out of graduate school that was specific to early music singing; the judges were kind enough to give me specific feedback after advancing to the final round. Our final program would consist of twenty minutes of music, so I chose the flashiest early cantata I could think of, Handel's *La Lucrezia*. But I was cautioned away from using too much flash: multiple judges mentioned that the aesthetic for early music in North America still involved more "very loud, very high" than they believed necessary, and that in Europe, listeners were far more interested in tasteful use of vibrato or lack of vibrato, the occasional ornament quite high or quite low, and dynamic contrast. Rather than an unspoken rule of "if you sing early music, you still need to prove [to an audience] that you can sing loud, high, and with full vibrato," I was encouraged to prove no such thing and instead be as much my own artist as possible. It was very freeing!

At any rate, from what I can perceive, the methods for making a living in Europe are as they have been for years: Fest contracts at different levels of houses for opera singers, case-by-case contracts for chamber ensembles, and word-of-mouth/agent-based solo/oratorio/recital contracts. The cost of living/work availability breakdown does seem more humane there than here, and I know there are differences in benefits, but without living there currently I can't be too sure of specifics.

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Lewek: Most successful solo singers in Europe find Fest positions at one company and have contracts that start at two to three years with benefits and security. Unfortunately, almost all companies in the United States can't support that. The closest thing to it is the American young artist program (YAP), most of which are now filled with mid thirty-somethings who haven't yet gotten onto the United States regional company circuit because they either don't have an agent who can connect them with audition opportunities, or they've just gotten caught up in the YAP culture of America and keep auditioning for a new YAP position every couple of years. It's not to say these singers aren't talented and marketable; by all means, they are. But the harsh truth of it is that at some point, young American singers simply must take the plunge and find a way to become international singers. American singers are well admired in Europe for their skills and work ethic and usually have a lot of success finding jobs there, but most of the American singers that I talk to are terrified by the idea of the unknown. Start planning your audition trip in Germany. Believe me when I say that I love singing in the United States—it always feels like home more than anywhere else in the world. But I am so grateful for the opportunities to work all over the world, in places where people still fight to get tickets to the opera, where the houses are packed to the rafters, and where there are companies that can support the business of making opera, and where I can work and then go home with a paycheck worthy of being described as “making a good living” at this singing thing.

What changes do you see happening in music (both solo and ensemble) over the next fifty years?

Halsey: I think music will move even further toward freelance work. Musicians will have a greater need to be multiskilled and will probably need to get more involved in youth and community work as well.

Carrington: I have seen great changes in styles of singing, both solo and choral in the United States over the past twenty years. There are more and more American singers who are developing their natural potential as oratorio and ensemble singers rather than being pushed in the direction of opera for which their voices will never be suitable.



Joshua Habermann

The growth in popularity of early music and the styles of singing now considered appropriate for that genre have made a huge impact. Long may this trend continue! In parallel, I see teachers of the few student singers who do have the essential golden cords to be successful in opera once again emphasizing the beauty and power of the great voices of the first half of the twentieth century for whom vibrato meant shimmering vibrancy rather than an overdeveloped wobble!

Johnson: The level of professional choral music is growing and improving consistently, and I fully expect that the results of this will be that a great many more people in more cities will be able to hear choral music making at this level. This is really great news for choral music and for all of us who love it. There has been a dramatic shift in the last twenty years as many more composers are being drawn to write choral works. Some who had never thought to compose for choirs are beginning to write choral music because the quality of performances has been consistently rising through the years and the results are satisfying.

Habermann: We have seen a growth in the number and variety of opportunities for singers, and I would expect that to continue. Whereas in the past singers trained specifically with the operatic model in mind, thanks to the early music movement and also the growth in quality and number of professional choral ensembles, now there are

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more options. Those singers who have the skills to take advantage of the variety of performance opportunities will be better positioned than their peers who put all their eggs in one basket.

Gomez: I'm excited by the possibility of big changes in the way classical singers are trained and treated in the United States. In my last lesson of my master's degree with wonderful teacher and mentor Sanford Sylvan, I was basically told, "This is yours now." The idea that young professionals are inheriting the classical music-making scene is so exciting and such a huge responsibility. We are responsible for serving as examples of informed, articulate, creative musicians whose instrument happens to be voice; we as teachers can also entirely change the stereotypes so often tied to voice faculty. These are my own big dreams for change, specific to my corner of the field. Otherwise, I do think it will become more of a challenge to travel constantly for work: commuting twice a week in a plane is, after all, not an especially sustainable way of life. I believe that new venues and opportunities for presenting fusion musical/performance experiences will continue to flourish. New York City used to be the place for young artists to live cheaply among likeminded artists; it's not as financially feasible now. There will continue to be shifts in the way performers make a living, but that has always been true and will continue to be true, as no single method functions forever without adjustment.

Lewek: This is a tough question. It is a controversial question. To be honest, I just have no idea. The landscape of this business, especially in the United States, is so rocky: companies closing, companies fighting unions, unions fighting companies, pay cuts, cancellations. I'd rather answer the question, "What changes do you *hope* to see happen in music over the next fifty years?" To which I would reply, today we need to start educating young people in music so that fifty years from now the earth will be filled with adults who have had enough exposure to all kinds of music so that they can make informed, personal decisions on what genres of music with which they want to enrich their lives.

O'Connor: This is definitely hard to say. I sing a lot of new music, and I love collaborating with composers and

giving my insight. I personally prefer to hear music with a melody. I believe that many more electronic elements will come in to play, but we have to embrace them. I have done many pieces that are amplified and have been criticized because of this. However, I find it liberating because I am not worried about projecting. I can create many more colors without worrying about the size of my voice. Change is coming, and we have to adapt. Divas are far and few between nowadays, and there is a reason for that.

Stegall: I believe the next few decades will see a significant increase in public interest in new compositions. Music has been used throughout history to make political and social statements in profound ways. Whenever a people need a voice, whenever a larger audience needs to be reached with a message of hope and change, music will be there. Music is the language that artists use when spoken word is not enough or not allowed. Music speaks to a universal audience in a language far more sophisticated, flexible, and communal than any other. New music will be a vehicle for necessary communication. All positive change starts with communication, and nothing communicates like music.

Burton: I'm not sure, because I haven't been in the field for a long time. I assume that with the global financial challenges, we'll need to be even more creative to come up with new ways of supporting ourselves as full-time musicians. I assume technology will play a huge role through music production and social media.

How can conductors teaching in university schools of music or conservatories better prepare young singers to have fulfilling and profitable careers in the field?

Halsey: Collegiate conductors must be aware of what is required of singers in the professional world.

Carrington: Conductors should challenge and foster the musicianship of their voice students, train them (oblige them!) to be as quick and as responsive as instrumentalists. They should not hesitate to be as demanding as a Julian Wachner in New York, a John Eliot Gardiner in London, or a Freda Bernius in Stuttgart! Traditional choral

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pedagogy has its limits, and those need to be breached to train singers to be ready for anything and not always in the right and expected order.

Johnson: Conductors can expose young singers to the many opportunities available when seeking to develop a career that includes a broad range of singing experiences. Singers should be encouraged to seek out coaching and teaching from pedagogues who are experienced in this broader spectrum of the art and who can help prepare them for the rigors of this kind of musical life. Also, a professional training approach provides an extraordinary opportunity for professional formation with distinguished artists.

Habermann: High-level ensemble experiences during student years can be an excellent training ground for professional-level work, but the singers have to make the connection rather than seeing them as unrelated experiences. Conductors need to talk to young singers about the opportunities that exist beyond the traditional opera path and help them make the connection between the skills required in the choral experience and undergraduate music curriculum, and those expected in the professional world. An 8:00 a.m. ear training class, for example, can be a tough sell to a college freshman who sees no purpose beyond fulfilling a degree requirement. We have to change that mind-set to make it clear that those skills are the building blocks without which professional employment in music is unlikely.

Gomez: I think a conductor's most salient, relevant job to encourage young musicians is to contribute to the conversation about careers in a truly open, supportive manner. It's so, so important for young performers to know that musicians who teach or compose or run volunteer programs or pursue arts administration in addition to (or instead of) their performing are no less valued or needed as members of the musical community. There are so very many ways to make a living in the field, and an obsession with performing and only performing can take away from very viable, meaningful other facets of the larger pursuit. Conductors can encourage young singers to pursue their passions beyond prescribed categories of what they should want or what seems to be glamorous,



Dashon Burton

exciting, or profitable. Aiding students in discovering the reasons why they involve themselves in this field, and how they may best serve one another and connect, is so much more important. No matter what role music will play in a student's life, as a career or hobby (or both, at different times), teachers and conductors can promote fulfillment by demonstrating acceptance of many paths and encouraging flexibility in goal-making.

Lewek: Love the music and show that on your face when you are working with young singers. As a singer myself, nothing inspires me more than that. Here's another idea: take one rehearsal a week and just read through new music, challenging the choir of young singers to make music while they are sight-reading. Sing through each selection twice and see how it changes. Tell your choir to communicate with you, the leader, but also with one another and see how awesome a performance you all can give one another. Several things might come from this: better sight-reading skills (I cannot stress enough the importance of this), more individual artistic decision making, more communication between leader and ensemble, more communication between singers within the ensemble, and a low-stress situation in which to experiment.

O'Connor: I believe there needs to be a combination of tough love and support. The world is not always kind, and you don't want to go from somewhere where you are completely nourished to the dry Sahara. Find ways to



Kelley O'Connor

challenge singers with different types of music and not just standard repertoire. I have found some of my most liberating vocal moments through singing world premieres because I am not comparing myself to anyone. I am making my own version. I learn so much about my own instrument during this process. Be careful to not give students big roles too early. It really forms bad habits that are almost impossible to erase (at least that is my experience). Let students explore different types of classical music and not just the top twenty arias. Concert music has changed my life, and I wasn't really exposed to it during my college years. I wish that I had found it earlier.

Stegall: Collegiate conductors and studio instructors must involve themselves constantly in field research. These mentors are the most important people in the developing musician's life. They are the professionals charged with the responsibility of making students aware of the demands of the actual performing profession; they are often the student's closest link to the profession to which they aspire. Directors of collegiate ensembles must know how professional ensembles function. Sight-reading in rehearsals of top-performing ensembles in a music program should not be tolerated. Musicians must come to rehearsals prepared. Collegiate conductors can help train their students to acclimate to this culture by maintaining similar standards in their own ensembles.

How can students glean the skills they will need in the professional world from singing in choral ensembles?

Halsey: With good conductors and voice teachers, plus touring and visiting, plus summer schools, bravery, and daring, they should be able to put together a great education *for themselves*. Be constantly questing, asking, listening, and visiting.

Carrington: A small one-on-a-part choral ensemble is its own training ground; all the members have to work at the speed of the fastest and not the slowest. There is a built-in culture in an ambitious ensemble that sets its own standard to which all members must aspire. In a choral ensemble it is the responsibility of the conductor/director to create and encourage the same demanding environment, to expect each member to be as responsible and responsive as a one-on-a-part singer or a principle wind or brass player in a chamber orchestra.

Johnson: In the best of choral situations, a singer can develop musical and vocal skills individually while at the same time gaining a tremendous amount of artistic development from the collective, shared experience. Since the greatest success in choral music making arrives as a "we," certainly there are so many things that can be learned and understood from creating music within the choral ensemble. "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." There is a certain surrender that takes place when someone commits to contributing their individual voice to the whole. Music speaks so powerfully of its own essence when we, as performers, can get ourselves out of the way and allow the music to speak through us. Choirs are a great place to keep learning this more deeply. For example, the expressive communication of professional choirs lends them power. All of these gorgeous individual voices, with all of their training and experience and their expressive gifts, come together with a shared decision to make music as one. Wow, the potential of this exploration feels endless.

Habermann: The ensemble experience offers an opportunity to sing a variety of literature in a variety of ways. Whereas in private voice lessons a student might be

exposed to thirty minutes of music for a jury, or perhaps as much as recital-length program, most choral ensembles cover several times that much music in one semester. Learning to move quickly through that breadth of literature, to work both independently and also with careful listening across a section, is all part of a high-quality choral experience.

For many instrumentalists, the meat and potatoes of their training is building musicianship and competence to get into a great ensemble, most likely an orchestra. I would wager that the percentage of instrumentalists coming out of programs who are gainfully employed in music is much greater than the percentage of singers. This is due, at least in part, to singers' historical focus on solo opera careers, which happens so rarely for so few. It is the equivalent of instrumentalists coming out of programs and expecting to play concerti right away. It may happen for one in a great number, but not for many. Now that there are more opportunities for professional ensemble singing, the next generation of vocalists needs to develop the same skills as the instrumentalists: phenomenal musicianship and the ability to play/sing both individually and in an ensemble.

Gomez: Here is one more chance to mention the importance of kindness and the "works well/plays well with others" concept. No singer is an island: even the soloist in recital or in front of an orchestra is absolutely a collaborator. Singing well with others leads, ideally, not just to high-level collaboration in performance, but to a heightened capacity for communication, which translates to nearly every field. Encouraging and facilitating self-expression, communication skills, and human connection in performers and audience members is one of the most basic aims of our profession and manifests itself not only in the professional musician community but in the world at large. We can hope that the necessary components that produce a satisfying, collaborative musical experience will lead by example and encourage young people to pursue their own meaningful contributions to society through music or another pursuit.

Lewek: I sang in a lot of professional choirs before my solo career got started. For me, the benefit of this (other than the fact that it was my alternative money-making strategy) was that it was a safe situation for me to explore

lots of different music, sing in the greatest halls in NYC for the first time without the added pressures of being the soloist, improve my language, diction, and sight reading skills, and it also provided networking opportunities and kept me singing. Also, I truly believe that you can't be a successful soloist without knowing how to work with others and communicate with them on stage, and choral singing is a fantastic way to sharpen those instincts.

O'Connor: As I touched on earlier, musicianship skills that are necessary to maintaining a high level of our craft are fostered in choirs. I developed my ability to learn music by ear. I can pick up music very quickly because of my time in choir. I learned to go by what I feel and not what I hear, which is another important learning tool and helpful in keeping yourself in check on the road. Choirs also teach us how to work well with others. There are always many different personalities in a choir, and the same goes for orchestras and opera companies.

Stegall: Ensemble skills, interpersonal skills, preparation skills, and self-discipline can all be gleaned from singing or playing in collegiate choral ensembles.

Burton: Choral ensembles teach you to trust your ears and to always go with the flow! When singing in choral settings, it's almost always the case that you're working with someone else's musical tastes and opinions. Being flexible allows for less personal frustration and in the end can mean a stronger performance if everyone comes to meet in the middle in different aspects. On the other hand, if you have to eloquently and assuredly state your case in a choral setting, you'll be able to do the same to a conductor in a solo setting. In this way, singing in an ensemble helps us express our opinions about music more clearly.

Please add any additional thoughts that have not been covered above.

Carrington: Choral conductors should test their own ears and those of their singers by dispensing with the piano at all times and by steady and consistent use of musical exercises to train the ears of their singers at the beginning of every rehearsal. These should not follow any orderly method but rather be based on real-time chal-



Simon Carrington

lenges: turn a page and drop a minor 6th, for instance! In my experience the biggest handicap young singers carry is a fear of intervals, which slows them down, allows unsteady singing in an attempt to cover for uncertainties, and encourages poor control and loose vibrato. This in turn hampers the singing of a beautiful legato line. Exercises should be different every day, have no particular pattern, and thoroughly and unashamedly encourage friendly competition between choir members to develop speed of response. Singers of all ages and all levels of training will rise to the challenge. It's human nature!


Habermann: Other thoughts about university teaching of singers: While I do see the creation of more professional singing opportunities, many of our voice majors are not likely to make a living as singers. This is something that I don't hear talked about much but is undeniably true in many if not most cases. I don't think we should discourage our students from having a dream or going into voice study even if they are not career-bound. Music, including vocal music, is a worthy field of study that teaches discipline and exposes us to extraordinary beauty. It provides meaningful experiences during our collegiate years, which are for many the highlight of their musical lives and not to be underestimated. If anything, by being honest and upfront with our students about the odds of "going pro," we serve them better than by promising, or more often tacitly implying, that there is something waiting for most of them when the truth is that there is not. The same

could certainly be said for the study of literature, history, religion, and so many of the liberal arts. While all noble and worthwhile pursuits, their study enriches the soul, if perhaps not the pocketbook. It seems to me that at the heart of it is a question of disclosure and honesty. Thanks to the incredibly active choral culture that we enjoy in the United States, music, and particularly choral music, can be a meaningful part of a student's life well beyond college. The fact that many of our majors will earn a living doing something else isn't shameful but should also be no secret.

Lewek: Finding success in this business is a little bit like treading water in the deep end of a pool for a while before a big race. There are plenty of "right place at the right time" start stories from singers. You have to be ready to follow any and all opportunities that arise, and you have to have the set of tools to make those opportunities blossom into something positive. Treat everything like it might be your big discovery.

Burton: For my friends who haven't exactly had a great start from the get-go about any of these individual elements, don't despair! I often talk with my colleagues at educational outreach events about this very topic, and I'm usually getting just as much advice as the participants! That is to say, there is no quick answer, and everyone at every level is struggling in some way. If you're trying to cut back on spending for financial health or late-night post-rehearsal snacking for physical health, it's okay! Take the changes to your habits slowly and breathe all along the way. I myself struggled through organizational and financial issues but over the last several years have had some great breakthroughs. So, even though you're reading our success stories, realize that you already do and will have many of your own!

Take your teaching responsibilities very seriously, and if you don't teach or don't want to teach, do your best to somehow return some of your energies to the field or to the world beyond yourself. Volunteer for an arts organization or even for a homeless organization. You never know what you're going to learn from someone or whom you'll meet. 📌



Much of the scholarly research regarding music in a black religious context is limited to spirituals and contemporary gospel, largely neglecting the shape-note singing tradition. As African American participation in shape-note singing declines due to social change and an aging population base, it is vital that shape-note literature and practices be included in the study of traditions that make up the landscape of African American choral practice in the United States. The following article will discuss the African American practice of shape-note singing (specifically seven-shape gospel singing) and highlight the author's visit to two singing conventions that represent remaining strongholds of this tradition in the United States.



AFRICAN AMERICAN
PRACTICE OF
SHAPE-NOTE SINGING IN
THE UNITED STATES

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Early Shape-Note Development

In 1801, William Little and William Smith's *The Easy Instructor; or a New Method of Teaching Sacred Harmony, containing the Rudiment of Music on an Improved Plan, wherein the Naming and Timing the notes are familiarized to the weakest capacity*,¹ was introduced as an innovative teaching method in which pitch and solmization were combined into one readily assessable notation system using only four shapes.² *The Easy Instructor* taught singers how to identify scale degrees without needing to understand how a key signature might alter an individual pitch. In this system, four different shapes corresponded with the four syllables that identified pitch relation for the singers. (Figure 1)

In the 1840s and well into the 1850s, white settlers moved from Georgia into southeast Alabama, spreading the shape-note tradition as they traveled and establishing singing schools and church services in local communities.³ In 1844, B. F. White (1800-1879) and E. J. King (1821-1844) published *The Sacred Harp*,⁴ a tunebook rooted in Little and Smith's four-shape shape-note notation introduced half a century prior.⁵ Slave owners often brought their slaves to revivals (camp meetings), where the slaves more than likely heard the music of *The Sacred Harp*.⁶ These camp meetings were the only truly integrated events in the United States at this time.

After the end of the Civil War in 1865, *The Sacred Harp* became a significant source of religious musical material in the African American community in the southern United States.⁷ In northern and southern Alabama, cross-cultural integration between black and white cultures was continuous during the post-war period when African Americans were cautiously free. After Jim Crow laws were enacted, most activities where both whites and blacks participated were segregated; there were, however, integrated *Sacred Harp* singings sponsored by both communities.⁸

The Henry County Convention, established in 1880; the Dale County Colored Musical Institute, established circa 1900; and the Alabama and Florida State Union Singing Convention, established circa 1922, entrenched *Sacred Harp* singing in the African American community and encouraged compositional and arranging interests among participants.⁹ Conventions continue today to serve as the structural backbone of shape-note singings in the black community. Churches and state conventions depend on printed song books, teach the rudiments, and sched-

ule small singings that progress to the larger convention singings generally held at the same time each year.¹⁰ The author's personal experience attending two major shape-note conventions is discussed later in this article.

With the continued improvement of music skills during the early decades of the twentieth century, the Dale County Musical Institute facilitated the publication of Judge Jackson's *The Colored Sacred Harp* in 1932.¹¹ At first, Jackson approached the publishers of tune books directed to white convention singers for help, but he was denied the opportunity. His entrepreneurial drive led him to self-publish a compilation featuring thirty African American composers of *Sacred Harp*-inspired tunes, including Judge Jackson, Lillie Jackson, Herbert H. Woods, and Bishop J. D. Walker.¹² Walker championed the intermingling of white and black singers for the purpose of praising God in song via shape-note singing:

"We ask your cooperation both white and colored to help us place this book in every home. That we may learn thousands of people especially the youth how to praise God in singing. See Psalms of David 81:1-4."¹³

Included in *The Colored Sacred Harp* is "Eternal Truth Thy Word" by B. F. Faust, a white banker supportive of African American business and church activities in the area;¹⁴ he personally contributed between \$1,000 and \$1,500 toward efforts to complete the compilation.¹⁵ Compositions by African Americans were not sanctioned in white *Sacred Harp* publications until 1992, when the Cooper edition accepted Judge Jackson's "My Mother's Gone" (519b).¹⁶ Influenced by the *Sacred Harp* traditions stemming from Kentucky and Tennessee, African Americans in northern Alabama continue to use Thomas J. Denson's 1936 revisions of White's *Sacred Harp*. Those in southern Alabama, via influence from Florida and Georgia *Sacred Harp* traditions, embraced the Cooper



Figure 1: Four-shape notation

Revisions.^{17, 18}

Transition to a Seven-Shape System

Although four-shape shape-note singing was the pref-

erence for those involved in the shape-note tradition, the landscape of shape-note notation was changed in 1846 when Jesse Aiken published the first seven-shape shape-note tunebook, *Christian Minstrel*. Aiken's system was modeled after the European-based seven-note system

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(do-re-mi). (Figure 2)

The seven-note tradition was most likely introduced into the black community via the use of Christian Harmony.¹⁹ After 1873, all other seven-note systems vanished from usage, and Aiken's system was favored universally by publishers of seven-shape shape-note tunebooks.²⁰

Tunebook Publication

By the 1930s, there were over twenty-nine seven-shape gospel companies publishing tunebooks in the southern United States.²¹ It was common to find hymnals and tunebooks notated in seven shapes in black churches, particularly Church of God in Christ, Methodist, and Baptist denominations. This practice of singing from seven-shape tunebooks in choir practice and church services in the African American church flourished from the 1920s into the 1950s.²² James D. Vaughan, Stamps-Baxter, and Ruebush-Kieffer were the leading publishers of seven-shape gospel

tunebooks post World War II.²³ The companies fostered strong relationships with the communities and churches in which they held singing schools, using their own tunebooks as educational learning aids. On average, one to two new books were published per year and included popular songs and new tunes composed by singers of the seven-shape gospel tradition.²⁴

The addition of new songs drove the sales of new books. Members of black singing conventions usually acquired books with the help of sponsors or from singing class monies. Because these classes were large and publishers gave discounts based on volume of purchases, the costs of books were kept low for participants. Vaughan and Stamps-Baxter books were popular among larger conventions that comprised several counties from several states; individual conventions (generally counties from one state) maintained some autonomy and could adopt any book of their choosing for singings.²⁵ As longtime singers died and the recruiting of new singers waned, the usage of older books increased and the funds for buying new books decreased. The age of the singers, their poorer vision, and deteriorating sight-reading abilities also contributed to the declining use of new books.²⁶



Figure 2: European-based seven-shape system

1. I'm bu - sy ev - 'ry day as I trav - el on my way To the ci - ty far be - yond the sky, And
 2. I need a lit - tle time to — la - bor for my Lord Be - fore the fi - nal judg - ment day, I

there is not a doubt that — time is run - ning out and — har - vest time is draw - ing night: Lord, I
 need a lit - tle time to — preach this ho - ly word to the sin - ner - man a - long life's way: Ev - 'ry

Figure 3. *Lord, Just Give Me a Little More Time*

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NOTE SINGING IN THE UNITED STATES

Seven-Shape Gospel Literature

Predominantly homophonic, call-and-response formal pattern, and an amalgamation of homophonic and polyphonic elements characterize the textures found in seven-shape gospel tunes. The first, exemplified in the popular tune “Lord Give Me Just a Little More Time,”²⁷ is predominately homophonic and homo-rhythmic. This piece is performed often and usually elicits an overwhelming emotional response of shouts and claps at the conclusion of its singing. Plagal progressions, altered chords, and extended harmonies represent the gospel music harmonic language that comprise seven-shape gospel tunes. (Figure 3)

The second identifying character is a call-and-response formal pattern, a prevalent attribute of musical practices in the black community. Tunes in this category are predominately polyphonic and begin with an anacrusis in the soprano or bass parts followed by repetition of the text delivered by the remaining parts. “It Won’t Be Long”²⁸ is a popular representation of the second category. (Figure 4)

This piece is also representative of the rhythmic alterations that permeate African American seven-shape gospel singing. In figure 5, the top line represents what is printed in the score, and the bottom line is a transcription of the rhythmic improvisation heard during Alabama-Missis-

Chorus

(8) It won't be long, no, it won't be long, 'Till I shall
It won't be long, it won't be long,
It won't be long, it won't be long,

11 join the ransomed throng; In Heav'n above with the ones I
'Till I shall join the throng, hap-py ransomed throng; In Heav'n a - bove
'Till I shall join the throng, hap-py ransomed throng; In Heav'n a - bove

14 love, Oh, praise the Lord, It won't be long
with those I love, Oh, praise the Lord, it won't be long! It won't be long!
with those I love, Oh, praise the Lord, it won't be long!

Figure 4. Charles W. Vaughan, *It Won't Be Long*, mm. 9–16.

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sippi-Georgia All-State Convention. These rhythmic improvisations tend to be more elaborate as the singers' emotional response to the music heightens.²⁹ (Figure 5)

The third style suggests an amalgamation of the homophonic and polyphonic textures. "I Am Not Alone"³⁰ is a tune from this category. The homophonic texture is usually present in the verses, while the chorus is delivered in a polyphonic manner. Anacrusis are heard in both verses and choruses. The harmonic language of such tunes is most frequently cast in a major key; the harmony does not modulate. (Figure 6)

Performance Style

Although white and black communities of seven-shape gospel singers share the same tunebooks, differences in performance style are most evident in deviations from the printed harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic elements added by black singers and their ritualistic, emotional response to communal singing. Not unlike their white counterparts,

black seven-shape singers rely on compositions rooted in the white tradition and adjust the keys of tunes according to the comfort of those present during the singings; the exclusion of printed accidentals by black seven-shape gospel singers, however, creates a distinct aural experience. The musical structure is specified in the white tradition, but melodic embellishment is an expected feature in African American singings.³¹

Unlike the ornamentation practices found in the white shape-note tradition, there are typically a number of singers simultaneously embellishing melodic and non-melodic lines and adding improvised details during African American worship. Buell Cobb outlined two categories of ornamentation in the white practice of shape-note singing: 1) passing tones and anticipations and 2) ornamental flourishes of the melodic line.³² George Pullen Jackson noted that black singers preferred more improvisatory elements than their white counterparts, freely altering and adding notes.³³ Melodic flourishes frequently occur at the end of phrases and final cadence points. The elaborateness of

(8) Chorus

Original

It won't be long_____ no, it won't be long,_____ 'Till I shall

Improvise

11

0 join_____ the ran-somed throug;_____ In Heav'n a - bove_____ with the I

1

14

0 love,_____ Oh, praise the Lord,_____ it won't be long!_____

1

Figure 5. Charles W. Vaughan, *It Won't Be Long*, mm. 9–16. Transcription of improvised performance

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As a pil - grim here be - low wan - d'ring in the pain and woe, Oft I
 When the day has come for me that I must cross o'er death's sea, I'll just

3
 feel that I'm for - sak - en and a - lone, I'm all a - lone; These times send me to my knees where I
 slip a - way and fly up to the throne, fly to the throne; Don't be sad or weep for me, for I

6
 find the cer - tain - ty; I'm em - braced in Je - sus' arms; I'm not a - lone, I'm not a - lone.
 know where I will be; I'll be with the Lord, and I won't be a - lone, won't be a - lone.

Chorus

9 I'm not a - lone up - on my jour - ney, I have the Sav - ior by my
 I'm not a - lone up - on my jour - ney, here be - low, I have the Sav - ior by my

13 side; I'm not a - lone, I have as - sur - ance, And I can
 side, close by my side; I'm not a - lone, I have as - sur - ance from a - bove.

16 face What - e'er be - tide.
 And I can face what - e'er be - tide, what - e'er be - tide.
 And I can face what - e'er be - tide.

Figure 6. Alan Mahaffey, *I Am Not Alone*.

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the flourishes depends on the tempo of the tune and the agility of the vocalists. It is not uncommon for rhythms to be swung in the seven-shape tradition. Rhythmic clapping and stomping are also staples of this tradition; they occur on beats two and four and become louder and more vigorous, eventually leading singers into a full body sway.³⁴

African American seven-shape gospel singing represents a mixture of individual voices that weave in and out of the overall texture. Each voice has its own stylized characteristics fueled by the singer's personal response to the text. The mingling of meaningful texts and well-known melodies serves as a catalyst for emotional responses by singers such as screaming, wailing, and walking the floor. This propensity for intense emotional outbursts is a fundamental characteristic of seven-shape gospel singing, one that distinguishes it from the four-shape tradition of the *Sacred Harp*.³⁵ African American seven-shape gospel singing generally takes on a character akin to the charismatic black church revival in the South. While there is rhythmic vitality in the Sacred Harp singing, it is quite unlike the richness of rhythmic details and the infusion of shouting heard at the African American seven-shape shape-note singings.

Shouting, a standard of the black religious experience, is an intense form of spiritual expression and usually consists of a high degree of individual variation among vocal, physical, and emotional expressions.³⁶ In seven-shape gospel singing by African Americans, shouting results in the repetition of verses at a fevered pitch accompanied by clapping, stomping, and arm waving that create an overwhelming surge of energy throughout the room. This highpoint is usually followed by a slowing down of the tempo and reduction of shouting just before the final cadence. This final cadence, which is marked by an outpouring of melismatic vocalisms from the singers and thunderous applause at the conclusion of the tune.

Current Practice and Repertoire of Shape-Note Singings

Singings are events where groups of people assemble to sing shape-note tunes. This term is used in black and white communities whether four- or seven-shape. There are no rehearsals, and the events are not considered performances. Singings generally occur at regular times determined by the participants. Visitors are welcomed

to attend and are often encouraged to sing. The regional West Alabama Convention and the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention represent two of the remaining strongholds for the current practice of seven-shape gospel singing in the African American community. The West Alabama singing convention uses *Mull's Singing Convention No. 5*, *Heavenly Highways Hymns*, *Singing Praise*, *Matches Grace*, and *Victory*.

This author attended the regional West Alabama Singing in 2012 and the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention and quickly became involved as a singer in this musical expression of community, faith, and perseverance. Both conventions are attended by local singers who still practice seven-shape gospel singing and by former residents who return from states outside of the region—e.g., Michigan, California, and Illinois. At the singings this author attended, there were fifteen to twenty singers at the West Alabama Convention and fifty to one hundred singers at the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention. According to Elston Driver, former president of the West Alabama singing convention, these numbers are typical for both singings.

Repertoire

African American seven-shape gospel singing repertoire tends to be more limited than its white counterpart. Although both draw tunes from the same publishing resources—such as Stamps-Baxter, Vaughn & Co., and Ruebush-Kieffer—the existing tunes heard in African American shape-note singing are limited by song leader preferences, new book compilation trends, and insufficient education in reading shaped notation. The songs selected by the leaders during present-day singings have been passed down through generations and are usually well known among all singers in attendance. As a result, a convention like that in West Alabama has the benefit of the *Parker Book* at its singings. The *Parker Book* is not available for purchase. After attending the singings, This author was given a copy of this anthology with the most popular songs in the Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia area. A by-product of this compilation is the reduction in the number of individual books singers have to carry to singings—a welcome benefit for the aging singers who represent the majority of participants. David Parker, the compiler of this book, describes it as follows:

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The songs in this book is [*sic*] intended to prolong the life of the Historical shape-note singing and to preserve the memory of those who gave a full measure of their love and devotion to the art of shape-note Singing and the uniting of people for the many reasons over the years, but most of all to sing God's praises in four part harmony shape-note music.³⁷

Novices in the tradition learn the *doremi* method via "learning sheet" or by rote when singing classes are not available. These circumstances have limited the repertoire of the tradition to favorites, as new singers are only exposed to the most popular songs of their respective conventions. New books with new tunes continue to be published but are most readily embraced in the white gospel singing tradition.

West Alabama Convention

The West Alabama convention began in 1917 and represents a collaboration of individual church choirs and community singing groups. Local singers lived and sang in a community, and they traveled to attend singings in other communities. Elston Driver explained how people traveled: "Mr. Alford Lacey had a flat-bed truck and would take people who didn't have no way of going."³⁸

The West Alabama singing convention has also adopted the "modern" concert-style setting that emerged in the practices of black singers of four-shape shape-note singing from around the late 1950s. This style is characterized by the presence of non-shape singers who may choose to actively participate in leading or singing. A loose timeframe is established, but the singings can be longer or shorter in length according to the number of song leaders and how spirited the participants become throughout the evening. Unfortunately, over the last several decades the numbers of singings has dropped. Driver explained the decline of singings:

"Back seventy years ago, when these conventions got started, everybody had enough people in their church to have their own singing class. We helped each other's singings throughout each convention. The West Alabama singing convention in Fayette started the first Sunday in April and went

through the first Sunday in October, and then you skipped Sundays along the way due to losing host churches for some singings each month. As the years went on, singings continued to be dropped."³⁹

Leadership

The leadership roles during public singings can be categorized as executive, musical, financial, and religious. In the elected position of president in the West Alabama singing convention, Elston Driver determined the order of the song leaders and secured the host churches. He was responsible for keeping the convention connected to other seven-note gospel singing conventions in surrounding states. He also played an important role in keeping the tradition thriving in Alabama by inviting researchers to participate in documenting their singing activities.

As the most skilled male singer, Driver also took on the musical role for this organization and bore the responsibility for "pitching" each piece selected by song leaders. (Photo 1)



Photo 1. Elston Driver and son representing the West Alabama Convention at the All-State Convention (October 19, 2012)

The pitch chosen may have no relation to the printed page and may be moved higher or lower to accommodate the singers present that day. Anyone may lead a song. The leader usually sings the melody while he or she is standing in front of the group. Each song leader selects a song and decides whether he or she will “sing the music” and which stanzas to sing. In this particular convention, the process of singing the shape-note names before singing the actual song text is known as “singing the music.” This practice helps singers learn the notes and rhythms for tunes that may be less familiar to the majority of singers on the day of the singing. A verse and chorus of the piece is sung using do-re-mi syllables at a slow tempo to familiarize singers with the chosen tune. For more familiar songs, this process is usually omitted.

Two to three individuals selected by the president usually take on the financial role in the West Alabama public singings and are responsible for passing the collection plates during the singings. The pastor of the host church fulfills the religious role by offering an opening and closing prayer and an additional musical selection if he desires. This musical selection performed during the West Alabama public singings I attended was not in the seven-shape gospel repertoire. I learned that it is common for the host church to offer special music from outside of the shape-note singing tradition. This seems to be a method of acknowledging other black religious music traditions and also serves to showcase talented soloists from the host church. If the pastor declines to provide a musical selection, a member of the host congregation may offer an alternative.⁴⁰

Attire

The formal attire worn by the participants accentuates the importance of this event in the lives of these singers. The women, for example, wear their Sunday morning church hats.

This custom goes back to the times of slavery, when female slaves adorned themselves with scarves to achieve individuality and to show their respect for God by coming forth in their finest. Judith Lee speaks to the significance of this tradition in her article, “African-American Women and Church Hats, What’s the Message?”:

For many of these women and their ancestors, dressing up for church was a way of sending the message; it’s time to come from behind those domestic aprons and housedresses... Now that African American women have come so far through years of struggles, pain and suffering, part of the hat tradition sends a message of celebrating their confidence and independence.”⁴¹

Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention

In existence since 1967, the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State convention is an annual event that usually occurs over three days in the late summer or early fall⁴² and includes public singings and official business meetings. During this convention, two delegates from each church or regional convention in attendance participate in the business meetings and the committee reports given throughout the day. Official business activities are kept to a minimum in order to allow time for singing. (Photo 2)

The year 2012 marked the forty-fifth annual session of the All-State Shape-Note and Sacred Harp Singing Convention: *Singing and Making Melody in Your Heart to the Lord*.⁴³ The naming of the singing is a practice taken up by Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention, and there is no evidence that suggests this is a standard practice throughout seven-shape tradition. The convention was held October 19-21, 2012, in Fayette, Alabama. Singers from the Canaan, East Union, West Alabama, and Alabama/Mississippi⁴⁴ singing conventions hosted the event; the host church was Shady Grove Baptist Church. The presence of singers from Detroit was interesting, and I was later informed that the singers were native Alabamans who migrated north and continue to participate.

The All-State Convention continues some traditions carried over from the four-shape tradition such as the opening and closing prayers; morning, evening, and night singings; and the taking of collection and “dinner on the grounds.” It does, however, exhibit characteristics unique to seven-shape gospel singing. The performance of non-shape-note music (black gospel and spirituals) and special soloists are associated only with seven-shape gospel conventions in the African American community.⁴⁵ In



Photo 2. Individual church performance at the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All State Convention (October 20, 2012)

my experiences singing with white and black shape-note groups, I have only witnessed this at black seven-note gospel singings. Black gospel music has played a major role in influencing the decline of seven-shape shape-note gospel singing, and the mainstream emphasis on spirituals as the epitome of communal music making in the black community has led to an omission of black participation in seven-shape gospel singing.

Decline in Practice

The move by younger churchgoers and clergy toward contemporary gospel music has led to the weakening of seven-shape gospel singings in most black churches. The youngest participants at the West Alabama and All-State singing conventions were the teenage son and daughter of a participating singer. Incorporating contemporary non-shape-note music during traditional singings is likely

a useful strategy to recruit young singers to shape-note singings. Their presence speaks to the continued efforts to bring in new singers and the commitment of veteran singers to preserve the tradition.

Unfortunately, many younger pastors have elected not to sustain the seven-shape gospel singings that were important to their forefathers. This lack of interest has resulted in the decline in the number of shape-note singers in black churches; as a result, congregations are no longer willing to host singings or classes. The churches that continue to host singings usually comprise families with a strong history of singing who maintain an active presence in their respective churches. Many rural clergy used to preach on a “circuit of churches,” leaving some Sundays with no church services or “off days.” Four or five times a year, on the fifth Sunday of each month, an “off day” was available for substituting shape-note classes or for singings. On rare occasions a second or third Sunday might be available for

a shape-note singing after the worship service or Sunday school.⁴⁶ This practice of “off days” still exists in many present-day African American churches.

In recent times, contemporary solo gospel singers represent a meshing of pop, rhythm and blues, and gospel that has profoundly affected the buying and listening preferences of the growing youth consumer market. The emergence of these genres in the black church has resulted in increased use of instruments (electric and percussion), the incorporation of dance, and an emphasis on virtuosic soloists.⁴⁷ Churchgoers reared in the traditional black church believe the line between sacred and secular music has been blurred; they tend to favor more conservative participatory forms of worship such as seven-shape gospel singing. These members attribute the diminishing participation in seven-shape gospel singing to the rising popularity of the solo-driven, performance-based, contemporary black church worship.

Conclusion

Shape-note singing and its role in white musical communities have been documented extensively as an enduring folk tradition in the United States.⁴⁸ This genre of song appeared in various tunebooks during the early nineteenth century and flourished as a style minimizing, to an important degree, the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic compositional techniques that had become the accepted norms in Western European musical trends.⁴⁹ Historical musicologists and scholars of religious practices in the African American community have long concerned themselves with spirituals and contemporary gospel music and their roles in the religious experience of African Americans but have overlooked African American participation in shape-note singing. As the decline of this practice continues, the need to archive this musical tradition has become one of critical importance.

Though on the decline, seven-shape shape-note gospel singing continues to be a congregational practice in the African American community, and yet it has not been appropriately woven into the mainstream discussion of black music making in the United States. Acknowledging seven-shape gospel traditions in black communities broadens the scope of the prevailing scholarship concerning African American music practices. The intermingling

of ritualistic characteristics associated with black church music and the distinct musical components of seven-shape shape-note gospel singing creates an evocative religious experience for singers and serves as a dynamic vehicle for spiritual and creative expression in the African American community. ◻

Discography

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- ¹ This book was dominated with tunes from New England repertoire (including some European anthems already printed in New England).
- ² David Alan Brock, “A Foundation for Defining Southern Shape-note Folk Hymnody from 1800 to 1859 as a Learned Compositional Style.” (PhD diss., Claremont College, 1996), 34.
- ³ Doris J. Dyen, “The Role of Shape-Note Singing in the Musical Culture of Black Communities in Southeast Alabama” (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1977), 119-120.
- ⁴ Published in Philadelphia but compiled in Georgia by B. F. White.
- ⁵ Sadly, King died only a few months before the final publication and was not able to see it completed.
- ⁶ During the Second Awakening, a Christian revival movement, camp meetings were common and influential on the repertory included in *The Sacred Harp*.
- ⁷ Barbara Hampton, “A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African-Americans,” *The Colored Sacred Harp: Wiregrass Sacred Harp Singers* (CD liner notes). New York: New World 804033, 1993.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.
- ¹⁰ Sylvester Oliver, “American Music Traditions in Northeast Mississippi” (Phd dissertation, University of Memphis, 1996), 290.
- ¹¹ Hampton, “A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African-Americans,” 6.
- ¹² Myrtice Jackson Collins and Marcia E. Hardney, “Take Note: African American Shape-Note Singing,” 770.

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- ¹³ Buell E. Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 119.
- ¹⁴ Hampton, "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African Americans," 8.
- ¹⁵ Dyen, "The Role of Shape-note," 136.
- ¹⁶ Jerrilyn McGregory, *Downhome Gospel: African American Spiritual Activism in Wiregrass Country* (University of Mississippi Press, 2010), 78.
- ¹⁷ Dyen, *The Role of Shape-note*, 123. Coopers revision is associated with Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas; Jackson's publication is associated with southern Alabama; Denson's revision is used throughout the United States, in Canada, and the United Kingdom
- ¹⁸ Hampton, "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African Americans," 5.
- ¹⁹ Stephen L. Grauberger, *Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 2: African American Seven-shapenote Singing* (CD liner notes). Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, 2002.
- ²⁰ Brock, "A Foundation for Defining Southern Shape-note..." 49.
- ²¹ Meredith Doster, "The Evolution Of Sacred Music And Its Rituals In Watauga County, North Carolina: A Comparison Of Congregational Song In Two Independent Missionary Baptist Churches" (master's thesis, Appalachian State University, 2010), 21.
- ²² Grauberger, *Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 2: African American Seven-shapenote Singing*, 13.
- ²³ Doster, 22.
- ²⁴ Doris J. Dyen, "The Role of Shape-note Singing," 103.
- ²⁵ Grauberger, 13.
- ²⁶ Elston Driver, interview with the author.
- ²⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIGik9PBdtk>
- ²⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCbOkOEmVus>
- ²⁹ The manner in which I witnessed the song leader embellish the original melodic line.
- ³⁰ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MFSpb_Cvp0
- ³¹ Dyen, 103.
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- ³³ George Pullen Jackson, *White and Negro Spirituals, Their Life Span and Kinship, Tracing 200 Years of Untrammelled Song Making and Singing Among Our Country Folk, with 116 Songs as Sung by Both Races*. J.J. Augustin, 1943, 251.
- ³⁴ As observed by the author.
- ³⁵ Grauberger, 15-17.
- ³⁶ For an in-depth discussion concerning the practice of shouting in the black church, see Marsha Natalie Taylor, "Shoutin'": The Dance of the Black Church (dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1997).
- ³⁷ David S. Parker, *Historical Gospel Shape-Note Singing* (unpublished manuscript), 2011.
- ³⁸ Elston Driver, interview with the author.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ The Sunday, July 21, 2012, singing of the West Alabama Singing Convention was held at Temple Star in Crossville, Alabama (the home church for West Alabama Singing Convention president, Alford Lacey). The pastor declined to sing, and Alford Lacey's grandchildren provided a selection on behalf of the host church.
- ⁴¹ Judith Lynn Lee, "African American Women and Church Hats, What's the Message?" *Call & Post*, April 25-May 1, 2012.
- ⁴² Dyen, 152.
- ⁴³ This is the title given by the participants for this iteration AL-MS-GA All-State Convention. The singers use the term "Sacred Harp" in their program title and often refer to what they do as an extension of the Sacred Harp tradition, although they do not sing from the song books associated with the Sacred Harp tradition (e.g., Denson, Cooper, Missouri Harmony). The repertoire selected for singing was drawn exclusively from the seven-note gospel books, with most songs chosen from books published by Stamps-Baxter and James Vaughan publishing companies.
- ⁴⁴ The Alabama/Mississippi singing convention is composed of churches on the Alabama/Mississippi border that have combined due to declining participation in their individual singing conventions or churches.
- ⁴⁵ Dyen, 156.
- ⁴⁶ Grauberger, 8.
- ⁴⁷ Portia Maultsby, "The Impact of Gospel Music on the Secular Music Industry" in *From Jubilee to Hip Hop: Readings in African American Music*, edited by Lornell Kip (Prentice Hall, 2010), 173-175.
- ⁴⁸ For further discussion about this topic, see: Buell E. Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and its Music* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978); Charles Linwood Ellington, *The Sacred Harp Tradition of the South: Its Origins and Evolution* (Ph.D., diss., Florida State University, 1970); Warren Steel, *Makers of the Sacred Harp* (University of Illinois Press, 2010); Curtis Leo Cheek, "The Singing School and Shape-Note Tradition: Residuals in Twentieth-Century American Hymnody" (Ph.D. diss. University of Southern California, 1968); Harry Eskew and James C. Downey, "Shape-note hymnody" in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25584>; Gilbert Chase, *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present*, revised edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. Inc., 1996).
- ⁴⁹ George Pullen Jackson, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands*. (1933), Reprint (New York: Dover Publications, 1965).



CHOR EACH

ACDA'S ONLINE MAGAZINE
DESIGNED TO GIVE
PRACTICAL ADVICE TO
TODAY'S CHORAL EDUCATOR

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ChorTeach is ACDA's online publication that is published quarterly and edited by Terry Barham, who also sits on the editorial board of *Choral Journal*. Each issue features five practical articles for choral conductors and music educators at all levels. The first issue was published in the fall of 2008, and the archives boast a wide range of topics. The present feature in this month's issue of *Choral Journal* is a sample of three articles from the archives that represent the types of articles you will find in *ChorTeach*.

All of the articles are available online for free download to ACDA members by visiting <<http://acda.org/page.asp?page=chorteach>>. You can also access the archives any time from the main ACDA.org webpage. Simply click on the yellow box on the homepage that says "Other Publications." From there, scroll down until you see the blue and yellow *ChorTeach* banner. Click the banner, and you will see links to all the past *ChorTeach* articles. When a new issue of *ChorTeach* is online, a preview of the current articles will appear in *Choral Journal*. You can read a preview of the current issue on page 63.



Sing Out Loud: Empowering Women's Choirs

Lindsay S. Pope
 Mount Holyoke College
 South Hadley, Massachusetts
 (Used with permission of
 Massachusetts' Mass Sings, January 2014)

It is my privilege to teach at an institution where the women's choir is the premiere choral ensemble—Mount Holyoke College, the first all-women's college established in the United States. It is also my alma mater.

I direct three choirs of varying sizes and ability. During my student days, I enjoyed singing, at one time or another, in all three ensembles. It wasn't until I attended graduate school that I became aware of how often, in a co-ed institution, the women's choir is regarded as a second-class citizen in a choral program. While I understand that this secondary status is not necessarily intentional, it is a serious and ongoing problem. As choral educators, we must begin thinking about the messages we are sending women.

Are we empowering them through language, programming, and healthy vocal development, for example, or are we furthering gender stereotypes that would make women believe they are indeed less capable, less productive, and less worthy of being recognized for quality work and outstanding effort?

Language Matters

Language is a powerful tool for establishing relationships and defining identity, both of which are integral to a choir's success. Language is also linked with social progress. Consider the role that language has played and continues to play in the Civil Rights Movement. In this same vein, we need to monitor the manner in which we address female members of our choirs.

If you conduct an SATB ensemble, address your male and female singers using terms of equality, such as men and women, gentlemen and ladies, or guys and gals. Too often I hear conductors address the tenors and basses as guys or men and the sopranos and altos as girls.

While I understand that the intention behind this gesture may be one of gentility, the conductor who uses

these terms is doing the female choir members a disservice. Before giving pitches to begin singing, the conductor is setting up a dichotomy—the solid, dependable “guys” and the dainty, dependent “girls.”

Whatever the makeup of your ensemble, be wary of employing the terms “girls” or “ladies” in addressing sopranos and altos. Addressing the women with the term “women” is easy enough. With it come associations of empowerment and self-sufficiency *a la* Rosie the Riveter, a productive and essential part of the United States work force in the Second World War.

If you have transgender members singing in your ensembles, use language that is even more inclusive—singers, sopranos, or altos, for example. We identify ourselves as choral musicians because we believe in the power of communal singing. We cannot accomplish this if we do not make our ensemble members feel that they are part of a fair and inclusive community.

Down with Unrequited Love and Flowers

One of the challenges facing women's choirs is the lack of engaging, great repertoire. One can only program Holst's *Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda* and Poulenc's *Litanies a la vierge noire* so many times. This present lack presents an exciting opportunity for conductors of women's choirs to be adventurous in their programming, not just by exposing their students to different genres, eras, and cultures, but also through gaining new perspectives.

When I first began teaching at Mount Holyoke, I frantically worked to educate myself about the breadth and depth of repertoire for women's choirs. I was disturbed to find that much of the repertoire contained texts centered on unrequited love or picking/giving flowers.

While both of these subjects offer valid insights into the human experience, they speak to antiquated expectations of what a women's choir can and should be singing. Professional female ensembles such as Norway's Cantus, directed by Tove Ramlo-Ystad, and Boston's Lorelei Ensemble, directed by Beth Willer, serve as inspiring examples of what women's choirs can program and commission.

I believe we directors should program music that features women at work. Use *kulning*, a semi-improvisational music indigenous to Sweden that imitates herding calls.

Women traditionally sang this music while they were tending their cattle. In addition to offering a view of women that is not hearthcentered, kulning also teaches vocal independence through improvisation.

Why not program works that present women in unconventional roles? “The Woman Turns Herself into a Fish,” composed by Robinson McClellan, a living composer, features a text by the Irish poet Eavan Boland. The text speaks about the Irish myth of the Selkie. In it, a seal is transformed into a beautiful woman. In Boland’s poem, however, the story is reversed so that the woman turns into a sexless, cold fish, and, as a result, feels liberated.

I do hope you will consider programming music that breaks down gender stereotypes and creates space for new views and progressive perspectives.

Women Should Sound Like Women

Always encourage and teach your women’s choirs to sing with a full, well-connected, vital tone. Too often, especially in the United States, women are taught to speak (and sing) like little girls. The movie *In a World...* (2013) illustrates this point quite clearly. I highly recommend it.

Vocalises present a fine opportunity to shape the sound of your choir through healthy vocal technique and appropriate vowel modification. In addition, the use of folk music is an effective way to teach women how to sing with connection.

My interest in women’s music has taken me to two fascinating locations to study folk music: the Republic of Georgia in the Caucasus area between western Asia and Eastern Europe and the French island of Corsica in the Mediterranean Sea. Our Mount Holyoke choirs perform works from these two countries often.

Georgian music from the Svaneti region transfers quite well to women’s voices. The music sits low in the female range and requires a well-grounded, centered physical stance and a well-supported chest voice. After I have taught our singers how to sing this music authentically and in a healthy manner, the sound can be utilized in more traditional women’s repertoire, especially when a vibrant, rich timbre is required.

Letting my students know that big, powerful sounds are achievable and within their reach with consistent practice boosts their morale and gives them ownership

of their voices.

Final Thoughts

Stigmas attached to women’s choirs need to be addressed and laid to rest through proactive, well-informed teaching. Women’s choirs should not be a dumping ground, the leftover choir for females who did not make it into the premier SATB ensemble. In addition, a women’s choir should not be a testing ground for graduate conductors. Conductors of women’s choirs should not be pigeon-holed and relegated to the musical background. Rather they should be taken just as seriously as the conductors of SATB ensembles.

Such prejudices will take time to overcome. Right now, you can and should begin building a women’s choir that takes pride in its work, one that fosters progress rather than negating it. Through appropriate language, wise programming, and dynamic, healthy vocal development, you are encouraging your women to sing out unapologetically with individual and collective empowerment.

Classical Improvisation—A Powerful and Effective Addition to Choral Warm-Ups

Matthew Potterton

East Tennessee State University

Johnson City, Tennessee

(Used with permission of the author)

From Medieval organum and Baroque figured bass and ornamentation to Classical and Romantic cadenzas, improvisation has historically been a necessary skill for being a successful Classical musician. Although still taught in jazz, today’s Classical musicians rarely work on this important skill. A common complaint from teachers is that there is not enough time to cover this concept since rehearsals are already filled with teaching basic theory and reading skills, vocal technique, plus madly rehearsing for the next concert. Below, I share how improvisation can be utilized as part of the warm-up process, therefore not adding any more time to rehearsals.

Improvisation is a skill that inspires creativity, builds

confidence and independence, and makes students acutely aware of blend and balance, listening and watching. Most importantly, students learn to be a part of something greater than themselves. Instead of warm-ups becoming a monotonous process before the act of making music, improvisation turns this valuable time into an active, creative, and artistic endeavor.

I credit Dr. Sue Williamson, one of my mentors at the University of Colorado-Boulder, for introducing me to the benefits of improvisation with choirs. She offered a clinic as part of a visitation day to CU-Boulder for high school students who were offered several sessions from which to choose. Hers was labeled “Improvisation.”

About forty students entered her room likely expecting to learn about scat or other jazz improvisation. Instead, she began with simple Classical music exercises. I watched as students turned from skeptical to engaged, some even being moved to tears by the end of the session. These

students were creating and experiencing music in a non-technical manner. There were no notes to read. The only inspiration for the music was student emotion and a vehicle for expressing it. Students worked as a team to create an ocean of beautiful sound. By the end of the session, I was also emotionally moved by the experience.

I spoke with Dr. Williamson afterward and asked why this particular session was such an emotional experience for these inexperienced participants. She pointed out that they were offered an opportunity to express themselves and be creative. Through improvisation, they could “play” and have fun. And, as she pointed out, play is a key component for learning.

During my college years, I was one of those piano students who never wanted to practice. Teachers gave me scales to learn and memorize. Lessons were often technically oriented. The teacher could often be heard saying things like, “That was wrong; play it with this other



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finger.” To me, lessons were usually tedious, monotonous, and lacking very little in artistry or feeling.

One day during my college years, I was walking by a practice room, and Ed, one of my friends, was playing what sounded like a blues piece on the piano. When I asked about it, he said he was just “playing around.” Ed was an accomplished pianist, earning awards for his playing throughout our college years. However, this particular day, he was “just blowing off steam” by improvising the blues. He asked if I wanted to join in, but, embarrassed by my playing, I declined. He was insistent and ended up teaching me a blues scale. He then showed me how to create chords in the left hand while improvising melodies in the right.

Before I realized it, I was playing what I thought were cool melodies. We laughed and began playing four-hand riffs, grooving to our creation. At some point I looked at the clock and realized that two hours had gone by. It seemed like twenty minutes, and yet I was having so much fun that time flew by.

Dr. Timothy Sullivan, composer and author of *Play to Learn*, states, “Play is, by nature, creative, and creativity is, by nature, playful. The play instinct is essentially an impulse to learn.”¹ As music educators, we sometimes forget to play. Much of our rehearsals focus on technique, pounding out notes, and perhaps some comments about historical significance. Creative moments are less frequent.

Improvisation invites creativity and allows students to “play.” Teaching through play allows students to discover, experiment, and at times, fail, but within a safe environment. Play fosters imagination and creates thinking people.

Later in college, I was introduced to a book by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi titled *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. In his book, Csikszentmihalyi strives to find what it takes for humans to find joy and happiness—a feeling experienced when one enters the “flow state.” The author describes the flow experience as “the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter, the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even a great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.”²

Clearly, I had entered the flow state that day in a practice room while “playing” with Ed. Creativity and play inspire the flow state, which I believe is Csikszentmihalyi’s

definition of joy. Shouldn’t learning be a joy?

Let’s Play!

Improvisation does not have to infringe on an already packed rehearsal. Warm-ups are a great time to incorporate improvisation. Often, warm-ups turn into a mundane process during which students passively participate. By using improvisation, students are not only getting their voices ready, but they can learn important vocal technique and musical elements in a fun, creative environment. The goal is to put students in charge of their learning.

Give Me a Beat

To get bodies awake and focused, try improvising rhythmic patterns. As one option, choose three students to lead three groups within the choir. Tell the leaders to create patterns by tapping knees, chest, hands, floor, and using their voices at the same time. Encourage the leaders to reach high and low as they create their patterns. The groups imitate the leaders. Add more groups and change leaders to build confidence for all singers. The room will soon be rocking with fun as students wake up their bodies and focus on the music for the day.

“Onahum”

I used this particular exercise for several weeks after a student asked me, “What is an onahum?” After some confusion, I realized I was not articulating clearly the words “on a hum.” At our school, the exercise will be forever known as “onahum!”

Sing a 5-4-3-2-1 scalar pattern using a major scale on a hum and change vowels as desired. Have students choose their own order of pitches within that scale. Conduct at various tempi, dynamics, with cadences at random points to hear the chords the students create. Besides activating their voices and addressing vocal issues as they arise, students are learning to follow the director’s gestures dictating tempi, dynamics, and cadences.

Composing Whitacre

Have each student choose a vowel and pitch to crescen-



do for four counts and decrescendo for four counts at his/her choice of tempo. With each new breath, the student changes the vowel and pitch. Encourage the students to explore their complete range and choose notes that add interesting colors to the chords. Of course, the singers must listen to the chords being created by the entire choir. I often joke that this is how Eric Whitacre composes his unique clusters of sound. I record this exercise at times and allow students to hear their creation. Often, the sound is so fantastic that the students wish we could notate it and sell it as a part of our next fundraiser.

Variation: Ask the students to sit back-to-back on the floor. Have them describe the experience of feeling the physical vibrations of the person behind them while also contributing to the sounds of the choir. For reasons I can't explain, this is a unifying experience. Students are "feeling" each other while listening to the "Whitacre-esque" chords.

Alleluia, Alleluia

Sing a descending major scale on the text "alleluia, alleluia," holding each syllable for two beats. The director or accompanist can improvise chords as the students sing. Choose a student or a group of students to improvise melodies to accompany the descending scale and the piano. Try altering the chords to change the tonality.

Variation: Call out different styles while students are engaged in this exercise. For example, have them sing this in the style of a Renaissance motet, a Romantic work, or a pop favorite. Listen to see how students change the sounds they use for the different musical styles. This is a great way to test whether the singers understand how to change vocal timbres to match particular styles.

Kyrie eleison

On a number of occasions, we have opened a concert with the following exercise. Play a G minor scale (natural, harmonic, or melodic), then have the students sing the text Kyrie eleison pitches using that scale. Singers should improvise their own melody, dynamic levels, and tempo. Encourage each person to explore his or her entire range to help with the warm-up process. Have students close their eyes. Then tell them to bring the music to an end

when it feels right to them.

Often a work ends with smiles and, sometimes, tears. This emotional feeling is hard to explain until one tries it. There is a strong awareness of collaboration when singers sense each other's dynamics and, ultimately, cadences together.

Variation: Try using text from the choir's literature. For example, in the early stages of rehearsing "There Will Be Rest" by Frank Ticheli, I asked the choir to improvise using the title only. Students created their own melodies while capturing the mood and color without worrying about correct or incorrect notes.

Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better

Ask a confident, self-assured student to create a short musical passage that will be repeated often. Point to new students to add a musical idea to the original student's musical line. Slowly add the entire choir, each student adding to the sound of the previous passage.

Encourage the use of various styles. For example, sing the improvised work in the style of a Renaissance madrigal or a Romantic opera. Of course, the students will love to sing this exercise in a pop or jazz style. I allow students to have fun singing in a pop style on occasion. Doing this allows me to address the differences between pop and other styles. Singers describe what they do differently to sing in the various styles. This is a great time to address vocal technique and performance practice issues.

I Can Do Anything Better Than the Composer

Try introducing new music through improvisation. For example, hand out "Sing We and Chant It" by Thomas Morley but don't teach the fa-la-la refrain. Teach students the opening section of the actual notated music. Encourage them to improvise the fa-la-la's. Then hand out the Morley version (the actual music) and ask the singers to perform what Morley actually wrote.

Which version do they prefer? Theirs or Morley's? This technique is a great way to encourage students to analyze and describe music. This approach amounts to teaching sightreading without addressing it as such. Of course, students will want to hear what the actual madrigal sounds like and will then need to focus on the actual notation.

Freedom is Coming

Ask students to improvise using any South African folk song as a musical model. I often use “Freedom is Coming” from the South African collection with the same title. I begin with the basses and add parts to create a chordal structure. I then encourage individuals to improvise above the sound of the choir.

Over time, even the shyest students begin to open up and improvise. Using this exercise has been one of my most successful techniques for building confidence. Fellow choir members are supportive and offer encouragement to those who are shy. Others cheer when a hesitant peer ultimately decides to improvise a melody.

Conclusion

I have found no better tool for helping build a creative and expressive choir than utilizing improvisation techniques such as I have described above. Students learn quickly that their individual voices make a difference in the overall choir sound. The least confident students discover success in improvisation, giving them more confidence with “normal” notated music. Shy students admit that they dislike improvisation initially because it takes them out of their comfort zone; however, these same students later say that improvisation helped them overcome the fear of singing wrong notes.

The environment created through the use of improvisation in choir rehearsals is one that supports a student who tries and sometimes fails temporarily. I believe experimenting and sometimes failing leads to substantive growth. Improvisation allows every rehearsal to be creative and enjoyable. In using improvisation as an integral part of the warm-up process, no extra time is needed to incorporate this important skill into the curriculum. Give it a try, and you will see creative things happen with your singers and your choir.

NOTES

¹ Timothy Sullivan, “Principal Themes: Creativity and Music Education—Second of a Four Part Series,” *Canadian Music Educator* 47:2 (Winter 2005), 34.

² Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), 4.

CPDL (Choral Public Domain Library)— A Gold Mine for Choral Directors

Jason Sickel
Blue Valley North High School
Overland Park, Kansas
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Kansas Contest Required List Titles Found on CPDL

The Prescribed Music List (PML) on the KSHSAA (Kansas State High School Activities Association) website states that the phrase “suggested publisher” allows directors greater flexibility where more than one edition is available for performance. This qualification opens the door for public domain music to be printed and utilized by choirs at KSHSAA-sponsored music events. Below you will find a variety of quality choral works from which you could choose music for your choirs who compete in contest each spring. Level 1 represents “easier” music. Level 4 is much more challenging. I recommend you check music you find on CPDL against published scores in your library for melodic and rhythmic accuracy and interpretative markings.

Selected Mixed Ensemble Voicings Available on CPDL

Level 1 Chester - William Billings; Cantate Domino - Pitoni; Easter Anthem - Billings; Fa Una Canzona - Vecchi;

Gloria In Excelsis from Vivaldi Gloria; Hallelujah Amen - Handel; The Heavens Are Telling - Haydn

Level 2 Achieved Is the Glorious Work - Haydn; Adoramus te - Gasparini; Adoramus te - Palestrina; Agnus Dei - Hassler (from Missa Super Dixit Maria); Cantate Domino - Anerio; Cantate Domino - Croce; Cantate Domino - Hassler; Cherubic Song #7 - Bortniansky (listed as Cherubic Hymn No. 7)

- David's Lamentation - Billings; Ecco quel fi ero istante - Mozart; Enatus est Emmanuel - Praetorius (listed as Enatus Est Emmanuel); Gloria (from Heiligmesse) - Haydn; Hallelujah from Mount of Olives - Beethoven; I Have Longed for Thy Saving Health - Byrd

- I'll Say It Anyway - Certon (listed as La, La, La, Je ne l'ose dire); Innsbruck, Ich muss dich lassen - Isaac; Die Mainacht (The May Night) - Brahms; Mon coeur se recommande a vous - di Lasso; Die Nachtigall - Mendelssohn; O Domine Jesu Christe - Palestrina; Pie Jesu - Cherubini; Regina Coeli - Palestrina

- Sanctus (from Mass in C) - Mozart; Sicut locutus est (from Magnificat)- Bach; Tenebrae factae sunt - Croce; Tenebrae factae sunt - Haydn; Vere languores - Lotti

Level 3 Adoramus te - Palestrina; Alma redemptoris mater- Palestrina; Au joly jeu - Jannequin; Ave verum corpus - Saint- Saens; Awake the Trumpet's Lofty Sound - Handel

- Cantique de Jean Racine - Faure; Crucifixus - Lotti; Dixit Dominus - Mozart; Ehre sei dir Christe - Schutz; Exultate justi in domino - Viadana; He, Watching Over Israel (from Elijah) - Mendelssohn; Heilig - Mendelssohn; Hodie Christus Natus Est - Palestrina; How Lovely are the Messengers - Mendelssohn

- Jagdlied (Hunting Song) - Mendelssohn; I Love My Love - Holst; If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments - Tallis; Il bianco e dolce cigno - Arcadelt; Io ti vorria - di Lasso; Jubilate Deo - di Lasso; Justorum Animae - di Lasso; Kyrie (Mass in C) - Beethoven



- Kyrie Eleison (Missa Brevis in C) - Mozart; Lebenslust (Joy of Living) - Schubert; Lass Dich Nur Nichts Nicht Dauren (Let Nothing Ever Grieve Thee) - Brahms; Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite - Handel; Magnificat in D - Pachelbel; Neckereien - Brahms; O Nata Lux de lumine - Tallis

- O quam gloriosum est regnum - Victoria; O Schöne Nacht - Brahms; O Vos Omnes - Victoria; Laudate Jehovaham, Omnes Gentes (Psalm 117) - Telemann; Sicut Cervus - Palestrina; Sing We and Chant It - Morley; Super flumina babylonis - Palestrina

- Then 'Round About the Starry Throne - Handel; The Trysting Place - Brahms (Der Gang Zum Liebchen); Tu Es Petrus - Palestrina; Tutto Lo Di Mi Dici - di Lasso; Verbum caro factum est - Hassler; Zigeunerleben - Schumann

Level 4 Abenständchen - Brahms; Angelus ad pastores ait - Sweelinck; Ave Maria - Bruckner; Ave Maria - Victoria; Ave Maris Stella - Grieg; Benedictus (Mozart Requiem) - Mozart

- The Blue Bird - Stanford; Christus factus est - Bruckner; Crucifixus - Lotti; Denn er hat seinen Engeln befohlen - Mendelssohn; Der Abend - Brahms; Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder - Debussy; Ecco mormorar l'onde - Monteverdi; Exsultate Deo - Scarlatti

- Haec Dies - Byrd; Hodie Christus Natus Est - Sweelinck; How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place (Requiem) - Brahms; Lasciatemi morire - Monteverdi; Laudate pueri - Mozart; Locus iste - Bruckner; How Long Wilt Thou Be Angry? - Purcell; Maria Magdalene et Altera Maria - Gabriel

- Mass in E minor - Bruckner; O Magnum Mysterium - Victoria; O salutaris hostia - Rossini; Os justi meditabitur sapientiam - Bruckner; Plorate fili Israel (from Jephthe) - Carissimi; Requiem - Faure; Salvator mundi - Tallis; Selig sind die Toten - Schütz; Sing Joyfully - Byrd

- Songs of Nature - Dvořák; Three Motets (Justorum Animae, Coelos Ascendit Hodie, & Beati Quorum via) - Stanford; Venite, Exultemus Domino - Sweelinck; Werfet panier auf im Lande - Telemann; When David Heard -

Weelkes; Warum is das Licht (Why Then Has the Light) - Brahms

Favorites—Familiar and Not-So-Familiar

Here are thirteen of my favorite Choral Public Domain Library discoveries—canons, rounds, SATB, SA, TB, TBB. See if any of this music will work with your choirs. I've included suggested recordings in several cases.

- Sancta Maria, Libera Nos - Canon a 4 - Francesco della Porta (1600-1667)

- Early to Bed (American Round) - text from Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac.

- Jubilate Deo - SATB - Orlando di Lasso (1532 - 1594) Recording by ADOREMUS Slovak Choir. *This is a Level 3 work on the KSHSAA Required List.

- Greensleeves & Round on a Well-known Text - David Ellyard. A terrific cross-curricular connection. Show this to your colleagues in math and then to your principal.

- Puer Natus in Bethlehem - SA - Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901) Recording by the Jugend Cathedral Chor of Fulda, Germany.

- Ave Maris Stella - Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) Recording by St. Johns College Choir (boy sopranos and altos) A level 4 work on the KSHSAA Required List.

- La Tricotea - S, A, and/or T, B - Anonymous - Recording by The King's Singers.

- Kyrie in F (KV 33) - SATB - Mozart (1756-1791) Research indicates that the composition year of 1766 seems to be accurate. Mozart wrote this jewel when he was ten! Not too complex. Conservative ranges. This would make a great "intro to Mozart" work. Recording by the Arnold Schoenberg Choir.

- You Stole My Love - Walter Cecil Macfarren (1826-1905) - SATB voicing. I'm certain you are familiar with the SSA version. Recording is by the OPUS Chamber

Choir, University of Southern Utah.

• **Der Gang Zum Liebchen (The Trysting Place)** - SATB - Brahms (1832-1896) - Another beautiful secular piece by Brahms. Recording by the University of Utah Chamber Singers. Level 3 on the KSHSAA Required List.

• **Tutto Lo Di Mi Dici** - SATB - Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594) a straight-forward Italian Madrigal. Fun to sing for all parts. Level 3 KSHSAA Required List.

• **Notte O Cielo O Mar** - SATB - Maddalena Casulana (c. 1544 - c. 1590) Possibly the first female to have her music printed and published.

• **Cantate Domino** - TBB - Michel Richard de la Lande (1657-1726) French Baroque composer and organist; served in the court of King Louis XIV.

I encourage you to explore and enjoy CPDL!



Below is a preview of the articles you will find in the latest issue of ChorTeach, available to ACDA members online at <http://acda.org/page.asp?page=chorteach>.

Choir Member Placement and Its Acoustic Effects by Margaret M. Woods

Discover ways to create the best possible choral sound by examining the effects of singer placement within a choral ensemble. This article offers suggestions for spacing and formation and provides practical tips for implementation in the rehearsal.

Going Global: World Music in the Choral Classroom by Jennifer Alarcon and Brian C. Murray

Multicultural music education is about providing options and opening doors to diversity within the classroom. Many educators struggle with selecting literature, knowing how to teach and perform it, and knowing whether or not the students will enjoy singing it. This article is for any choral director wanting to implement world music into their repertoire.

Guiding Music Interns: What It Entails for Cooperating Teachers by Teresa Rhyne

Successful internships take time and effort to achieve, but the positive benefits are worth it for both the cooperating teacher and the intern. Author Teresa Rhyne offers tips for establishing a harmonious relationship with your intern.

Keeping the "Community" in Community Choirs by Susan Medley

The climate of a community choir should be one in which singers feel motivated, challenged, and affirmed. This will determine whether or not singers want to return to rehearsals week after week. This article offers a list of eight principles to remember when conducting your community choir.

Planning Productive, Efficient Choral Rehearsals: Young Conductors, Take Note by Stephen Kingsburg

Choral conductors at every level want to know how to plan a successful rehearsal. The answer is found in developing an approach to achieving specific goals for every rehearsal. Find suggestions for long-term planning, score study, and diagnosing and addressing specific challenges as the choir progresses through the rehearsal process.

In Memoriam

Helen Kemp 1918–2015



The world of choral music lost a true giant when Helen Julia Hubbert Kemp passed away on August 23, 2015, at the age of 97. Dr. Kemp was recognized internationally as one of the most respected and inspirational vocal music educators working with young singers for more than seven decades. She was also a published author, composer, and pedagogue whose work mentored hundreds of thousands of singers and choral conductors. In addition to her work as a choral pedagogue, she was an accomplished concert and oratorio soprano soloist. Helen Kemp was dedicated to nurturing the development of young singers. Her pedagogy was developed from years of practical experience working with children in non-auditioned ensembles. At the core of Helen Kemp's pedagogy was a love of people, most especially children, and she understood that quality MUSIC was a means of grace to reach those beautiful souls. She was known for her mantra: "Body, mind spirit, voice—it takes the WHOLE person to sing and rejoice!"

Helen Kemp's career spanned over seventy-five years, serving in her early years in church music ministry with her husband, Dr. John S.C. Kemp. Notable appointments were over twenty years of service at First Presbyterian

Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where they developed a graded choir program that had been inspired by their mentor, John Finley Williamson, founder of their alma mater, Westminster Choir College, where they met and married as students. Later when John became executive director of the Choristers Guild in 1968, Helen became the "face" of CG as she traveled throughout the country and abroad leading workshops for people who sought to be more effective choir directors for children and youth in the church. This was a role she championed and cherished all her life!

Then she and John returned to their beloved alma mater in the early 1970s to rebuild the church music program, and Helen served as professor of voice and church music until their retirement in 1987. In the later years of her life, Helen developed a new passion for working with Singing Seniors. She conducted the "Manor Singers" at the Manor at York Town, where she lived and thrived. She was the recipient of many awards, including Eastern ACDA's The Helen Kemp Award for Lifetime Commitment to Excellence in Choral Music, established in 2010 with Helen as the inaugural awardee.



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March 8-11, 2017

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 Mp3s

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 2017 conference;
2. scanned copies of three representative programs sung by the auditioning group, one each from 2015-2016; 2014-2015; and 2013-2014. (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 30, 2016. 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. 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. 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) male voices (including changed 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

- Women's Choirs

- 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 men's), 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).

III. Screening Process

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. All auditions are "blind," that is without no 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. Each national area chair will be responsible for correlating responses from the listeners in their respective committees and will prepare a list showing the collective top ten submissions, plus five alternates, for the National Audition Committee. In areas where there are fewer than 10 auditions, the National Committee 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. After scoring is complete, the results will be tabulated, and submissions ranked by area in order of excellence. At the end of the auditions, the National Audition Committee Chair will submit audition results to the National Conference Chair, who, together with the 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 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
- The National Repertoire & Resource Chair and Conference Program Chair will be members of the National Audition Committee.

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

The ACDA National Conference Chair will notify all choirs of their audition results no later than June 30, 2016.

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 2013. 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.

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 & Standards 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 2015-2016; 2014-2015; and 2013-2014.
5. PDF #5 Title, Composer, Recording location (live, studio, rehearsal), Production (edited, unedited) for each of the submitted uploads.
6. Non-refundable application fee of \$50 submitted by credit card only.
7. 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 2015-2016; 2014-2015; and 2013-2014. The first upload mp3 must be from the current year, 2015-2016; the second upload mp3 from 2014-2015, and the third upload mp3 from 2013-2014.

All materials must be submitted in full no later than April 30, 2016 via www.acda.org. An incomplete upload of all audition materials will not be considered.

VI. Schedule of Dates

Auditions open January 1, 2016. Application available online at www.acda.org.

By April 30, 2016 Audition application, uploads, and payment completed by 11:59 pm CST

By June 20, 2016 National auditions completed

By June 30, 2016 Applicants notified of audition results



Call For Interest Session Proposals

2017 ACDA National Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota

March 8-11, 2017

We're looking for your best interest session ideas for ACDA's 2017 National conference to help America's conductors reach their full potential, be challenged and inspired, and advance their art. We encourage sessions of all shapes and sizes that address the diversity of our membership and that actively engage participations.

Approximately 30% of the 2015 Salt Lake City attendees were student members of ACDA, with choral professionals representing all areas of education and performance making up the remainder. Meeting attendees are looking for high-level content that opens their minds to new possibilities for how they grow in their profession and how they connect back to the field.

All topics will receive consideration and will be evaluated for scholarly content, variety, innovation, value, pedagogical strength, and relativity to current trends in the choral profession. We encourage submissions from members with a wide variety of experience. The conference theme will be A Life of Song to promote singing throughout an entire life span. Topics relating to this theme or focusing on issues of a particular age group, such as children or seniors, are especially welcome.

Registration And Travel Info It is understood that ACDA will not assume financial responsibility for travel, food, lodging for presenters or interest session participants. This online application implies that the above-mentioned presenter is prepared to travel and perform at the conference if accepted.

Session Presenter Expectations Presenters must be current members of ACDA, willing to grant ACDA rights to record their presentation, and allow ACDA to use such recordings to advance the mission of ACDA. Please note that all accepted presenters are expected to meet ALL posted dates and deadlines. We reserve the right to make adjustments to any session that does not meet deadlines.

Selection Process Submit your session ideas along with headshots and bios by March 30, 2016 through the online application at acda.org. At the end you will receive an automatic confirmation number of your submission. Keep this confirmation in your files. Each submission will be reviewed by ACDA national Repertoire and Resource chairs and by the conference committee. You will be notified in July 2016 on the status of your submission.

Important! We suggest that you first develop your submission proposal in Word to save your work and then copy and paste the information into the appropriate sections in the online form. The online form does not have spell check so editing your information in advance and then copying and pasting will ensure greater accuracy. View and download the RFP form [here](#). Please submit no more than two proposals. *If you are requesting to use a specific demonstration choir, that group must submit a performance audition application to the National Office for consideration (see Audition Guidelines for details).

Equipment: With the exception of one microphone, all requests for additional audio visual equipment will be evaluated by the conference steering committee on an as requested basis. AV equipment is limited. ACDA cannot assume costs for AV equipment for all proposals.

Eligibility: Presenters must be current members of ACDA. It is understood that ACDA will not assume financial responsibility for travel, food, lodging for presenters or interest sessions participants. This application implies that the above-mentioned presenter is prepared to travel and perform at the accepted conference if accepted.

Application may be submitted online at acda.org beginning January 1, 2016 Deadline: March 30, 2016 11:59 pm CST



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC

CALL FOR PROPOSALS TO HOST THE

12TH WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC IN 2020 PROPOSALS ARE BEING ACCEPTED NOW!

*Where in the world will you be in 2020?
Hopefully at the 12th IFCM World Symposium on Choral Music.
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The International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) announces a proposal call to host the 12th World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM). This triennial symposium is the peak global event in the international choral calendar. It draws together the world's leading musicians, choirs, conductors, composers, clinicians and arts administrators for a superlative experience of concerts, workshops, seminars, presentations and networking opportunities.

IFCM has held 10 symposia in 13 world-class cities over the past 28 years. The first WSCM was held in Vienna in 1987, followed by Stockholm/Helsinki/Tallinn, 1990; Vancouver, 1993; Sydney, 1996; Rotterdam, 1999; Minneapolis, 2002; Kyoto, 2005; Copenhagen, 2008; Puerto Madryn, Argentina, 2011 and Seoul, South Korea, 2014. IFCM policy states that locations will alternate between the five continents. The 11th symposium will take place in Barcelona in 2017.

Hosting a World Symposium brings high profile and prestige to the presenting city. The benefits accrue not only to the city and presenting partners, but to the musical growth and boosted economy of the region. If you and your institution are interested in hosting the 2020 symposium, please examine the guidelines [here](#), which gives essential information about hosting a WSCM, a list of requirements that will need to be considered, and details on the conference setup and the responsibilities of the host country.

The proposal must come from a national choral organization. A major partnership with other companies such as city/regional government, convention tourist bureau, is highly recommended.

How to submit

- Applications should be sent to IFCM via email at office@ifcm.net (an online form will soon be available on www.ifcm.net)
- Deadline for proposals is **31 December, 2015**.

Timeline:

- December 31, 2015:** Closing date for initial Proposal Applications
- March 2016:** Short-listed proposals announced
- April 2016:** Short-listed Proposal Presentations to the IFCM Board
- May 2016:** Announcement of winner of 12th IFCM World Symposium on Choral Music 2020



The ACDA Teaching and Conducting Priorities Survey

This research initiation helps launch a new Center for Conducting Pedagogy, a project of the ACDA Standing Committee on Research and Publications, chaired by William Belan. The survey marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of principal investigator Alan Gumm's benchmark study, "The development of a model and assessment instrument of choral music teaching styles" by profiling both the teaching and conducting priorities of current choral directors. As in the 1990 national survey, the purpose is to verify and broaden our understanding of choral pedagogy by describing the diverse skills, schools of thought, and background predictors of how choral music is taught and conducted.

ACDA members should have already received an email invitation with a link to the survey. Your participation is appreciated. Your response will help address member priorities and set new initiatives for the future. Results will be shared through *Choral Journal*.



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ON THE VOICE

SHARON HANSEN, EDITOR

Vocal Percussion in Contemporary Choral Music

By Justin Glodich

Vocal Percussion, the imitation and creation of drum sounds by one's mouth, has developed an increased interest in the past decade. With the rise of television shows like Fox's *Glee* and NBC's *The Sing Off*; Mickey Rapkin's book *Pitch Perfect: The Quest for Collegiate A Cappella Glory*; and the *Pitch Perfect* films inspired by the book, contemporary a cappella, and, by extension, vocal percussion, have become part of our mainstream society. In February 2015, I had the privilege of presenting a standing room-only session at the ACDA National Conference in Salt Lake City on "Vocal Percussion in Contemporary Choral Music," where I experienced firsthand this rise in interest. This article will relay the information presented at that session, highlighting the importance of varied musical elements (rhythm, tempo, steady beat); exploring the connection between vocal percussion and vocal health; sharing the potential benefits of including vocal percussion in the choral program; and including a variety of examples

to practice and perform.

Deke Sharon, considered the "Godfather of Contemporary A Cappella Music," notes that "a cappella was the first music, and has always been an important part of popular culture, from Madrigals to Barbershop to Doo Wop."¹ The contemporary a cappella movement of today comprises thousands of groups in high schools and universities and in the semi-professional and professional realm. Groups are no longer tied to one genre, opting to perform music in almost every genre and style imaginable. Pentatonix, a professional group that rose to fame by winning Season 3 of *The Sing Off*, focuses on pop and electronic dance music (EDM) elements in their arrangements, while Home Free, a professional group from Minnesota, focuses on country music. The House Jacks, out of San Francisco, of which Sharon was a founding member, focuses on rock and funk elements, and ARORA, a vocal group from California, uses technology to create a new sound

entirely. All of these groups have one thing in common and that is the use of vocal percussion.

Based on personal experience as a vocal percussionist and clinician with the professional a cappella rock group The Fault Line, and now as an educator in the Eldred Central School District in Eldred, NY, I have found that vocal percussion creates new classroom performance opportunities for students. Using vocal percussion allows students to experience improvisation by adding a new vocal part into a preexisting piece of music. The use of vocal percussion in my classroom has helped build rhythmic and improvisational skills at all grade levels, providing students an opportunity to increase their musical awareness and theoretical knowledge. In some cases, students have composed music that was performed in class, showcasing their knowledge and growth.

Vocal percussion also has been used as a recruitment tool for males at the middle and high school levels.

The number of adolescent males joining choral programs is often considerably less than their female counterparts.² Some teachers believe that by recruiting athletes and popular students into the choir, their overall enrollment levels may increase.³ Although this strategy may prove successful in some areas of the country, it certainly does not work for all. By presenting vocal percussion as something popular and fun, male interest and participation has the potential to grow, as it provides something familiar and appealing from mainstream society to pique their interest.

The Basic Sounds

In creating vocal percussion, one uses a variety of different consonant sounds to mimic the basic components of the drum set: bass (kick) drum, snare drum, rim shot, hi-hat, crash and ride cymbals, and the tomtoms.⁴ The goal in creating these sounds vocally is to create the aural illusion that the vocal apparatus is the drum set. Although drummers have two arms and two legs working simultaneously to perform multiple sounds, the vocal apparatus is more

limited. In any case, each sound can be modified with variations on tongue and lip placement.

Table 1 shows three unique bass drum sounds that can be practiced and performed. Consider the three unique components of a note: the attack (beginning), the duration (the sustain), and the release (ending). Each of the bass drum sounds begins (“attacks”) with a different consonant, changing the timbre and quality of each. The duration and release of a particular note value are dependent on what is notated or what the performer chooses to improvise. Although it is noted in Table 1 that the performer should create a short, accented sound, other modifications, such as breath control and articulation, can be made to manipulate the overall sound.

The first snare drum sound, “poo,” (Table 2), is similar to the bass drum sound “poo,” with the exception that the amount of air pressure used for the snare drum sound is greater than that of the bass drum sound. With the second sound, “pf,” it is helpful to begin with the “poo” sound and take away the vowel completely, closing the lips at the end. The snare drum

sounds can be varied by sustaining the notes, creating an illusion of reverberation.

The rim shot is a self-explanatory sound (Table 3). Begin with the hard “k” sound for this particular effect. Then, by adding a short vowel variation, the performer can change the timbre of the rim shot (kah, keh, kee, koh, kuh, and so forth).

Table 4 shows hi-hat sounds that can be performed in a variety of ways. The inhale sound is performed as if sipping through a straw and closing the lips at the end. This particular sound is helpful when combining *all vocal percussion sounds* together in the sense that the rhythm is being maintained continuously and there is no silence in between. The “ut” closing hi-hat sound is used in tandem with the inhale sound: the inhale through the straw serves as the “u” sound, and the “t” simply closes the air stream off. “Ut” is not intended to be performed with a full glottal attack on the “u.”

Each cymbal sound represented in Table 5 is straightforward. The variations on each sound convey the aural illusion that different cymbals are being hit or that one cymbal is

Table 1. Bass (Kick) Drum Sounds

Sound	Description
Doo	Think of lowest note you are able to sing. Create a short, accented sound.
*Poo	Similar to doo; short, accented sound with a more percussive effect due to lips pushing off each other.
Boo	Similar to poo; short, accented sound with lower lip forward.

Table 1. Bass (Kick) Drum Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 92-93.

* “Poo” Sound Example: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2022.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing.



Table 2. Snare Drum Sounds	
Sound	Description
Poo	Keep lips tight, let pressure build behind lips and explode.
*Pf	Similar set up to Poo, closing the lips to and f at the end.

Table 2. Snare Drum Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 93-94.

* “Pf” Sound Example: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2028.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing

Table 3. Rim Shot Sounds	
Sound	Description
* K	The basic sound you would hear at the beginning of words like cat or keep.

Table 3. Rim Shot Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 90.

* “K” Sound Example: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2020.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing.

Table 4. Hi-Hat Sounds	
Sound	Description
* T	Closed Hi-Hat.
Tss	Open Hi-Hat.
Tf	Variation on open hi-hat.
Inhale	Inward open hi-hat.
Ut	Closing the hi-hat.

Table 4. Hi-Hat Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 85-90.

* “T” Sound Example: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2011.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing.

Table 5. Cymbal Sounds *	
Sound	Description
Ksh	As Written
Keesh	As Written
Kiss	As Written
Kss	As Written
Psh	As Written

Table 5. Cymbal Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 95-96.

* Cymbal Sound Examples: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2031.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing.

being hit in different areas.

The tom-tom sounds in Table 6 require the performer to vocalize pitches in performance. By vocalizing pitches, the performer creates the variety of tom-toms found on a drum set. The more pitches used, the larger

the performer's "drum set" becomes.

Vocal Percussion and Vocal Health

While vocal percussion in contemporary a cappella has grown in

the past decade, vocal mimicry has longstanding, global roots. Indeed, precursors of vocal percussion can be traced back to African languages, ranging from vocal clicking to the mimicry of animal sounds.⁶ As more people attempt, practice, and per-

Table 6. Tom-Tom Sounds	
Sound	Description
* Toom	As written, with a vocalized pitch
Doom	As written, with a vocalized pitch

Table 6. Tom-Tom Sounds. Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing*, (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music Publishing, 2012), 97.

* "Toom" Sound Example: http://www.alfred.com/img/images/LandingPages/ACappellaPop/MP3s/00-38006_!~Example%2034.mp3. Sound file used by generous permission of Alfred Music Publishing.

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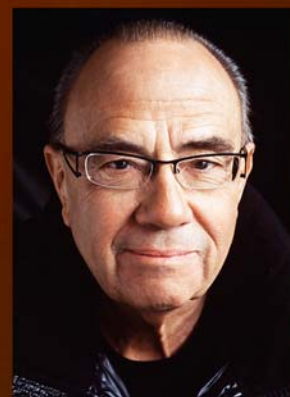
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form vocal percussion, the potential for vocal injury increases. While there are many studies devoted to vocal health for singers, there are not many for vocal percussionists. In 2013, a study was conducted by Andrew Saphthavee, Paul Yi, and H. Steven Sims exploring and evaluating the vocal apparatus to determine if vocal percussion may be a risk factor for phonotrauma (the abuse and misuse of the vocal cords) or if it, in fact, protects the vocal folds.⁷ Using fiber optic cameras and technology, four vocal percussionists were evaluated through laryngoscopy while performing sounds in isolation and in different combinations. The results of the study showed that although there are some similarities between singing and vocal percussion in what happens in the vocal tract, there are some unique differences. Most notable was their finding that the use of the entire vocal tract for vocal percussion and beatboxing may actually protect against glottal injury.⁸

A major concern with the practice and performance of vocal percussion has been the possibility of the performer developing a vocal fold hemorrhage. A vocal fold hemorrhage occurs when blood collects within the layers of the vocal fold after a blood vessel breaks.⁹ These hemorrhages can occur after athletic voice use, such as screaming and yelling, or with simple vocal overuse. It has been noted in the media that many of today's popular musicians have been diagnosed with vocal fold hemorrhages, forcing almost all of them to cancel parts of their performance tours. Artists such as Sam Smith, Meghan

Trainor, Jordin Sparks, and Adele are just a few contemporary artists who have had this diagnosis. (Ironically, Smith and Adele have been praised by the media for their unique vocal abilities, and both have won multiple Grammy Awards for their work.) According to the Saphthavee, Yi, and Sims study mentioned above, it could potentially take longer for the vocal tract to become overused because vocal percussion uses multiple areas of the vocal tract. Even so, it is important that choral conductors teach healthy vocal technique, whether it is for the purpose of singing or vo-

cal percussion, in order that students understand just how important technique—and its corollary of muscular endurance—truly are.

The Use of Microphones

When performing vocal percussion, using microphones is helpful. It is important to note that each vocal percussionist has his own preference for brand and model of microphone (e.g., Rode, Sennheiser, Shure, and so forth). If looking to purchase a microphone specifically for vocal percussion, it would be wise to test different

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ON THE VOICE

microphones until you are satisfied with the sound quality. It is also important to note that spitting directly into the microphone is not optimal. This could lead to potential damage to the microphone via saliva. I personally start with the microphone one inch away from my mouth then move the microphone toward the side of my mouth so that the sound is still being amplified yet saliva is moving forward instead of directly into the microphone.

There are some specialty microphones that can also be used specifically for vocal percussion. The first is called The Thumper.¹⁰ The Thumper was designed by Freddie Feldman of VocoMotion Studios. It is a specially designed microphone that is strapped around the performer's neck. The microphone transmits the

low frequency sounds created from the performer's throat, and creates a lower, bass sound in performance. Figure 1 shows The Thumper in use.

Another system that can work in a similar manner to The Thumper is the Soundspots microphone by the DTar Company.¹¹ Soundspots are created for acoustic instruments but have been used by some vocal percussionists, most notably Jeff Thacher of the group Rockapella. The sound spots are two small circles that the performer tapes to each side of his neck. The microphone frequency levels are set so that the lower frequencies are stronger. Figure 2 shows the Soundspots being worn.

Tips for Further Practice

If you have decided that you

would like to further pursue vocal percussion, following are some tips that I have learned from personal experience. The first is to purchase extra microphone heads and replace them when necessary. The more often the same microphone head is used, the more bacteria builds up from saliva. It is also important to clean the microphone heads during and after performance. This will extend the longevity of the microphone itself. With that being said, hydration is key.



Figure 1.

Justin Glodich using The Thumper on Season 2 of NBC's *America's Got Talent*.
Photo used by permission of Freddie Feldmann.




Figure 2.

Jeff Thacher wearing
Soundspots Acoustic Pickups.
Photo used by permission
of Jeff Thacher.



As a vocal percussionist, saliva will be depleted throughout a performance, so it is important to have water at the ready at all times.

If you are just starting out as a vocal percussionist, it is important to understand that learning vocal percussion is just like learning any other instrument. It will take time and practice to build stamina. Start slowly and build reasonable goals as you progress through a variety of patterns and sounds. If it helps, practice along with music. Listen and analyze the percussion tracks of different songs and slowly attempt to emulate those sounds in your own way. Most important, have fun while practicing and performing. 

Justin Glodich is director of choirs and theatre arts in the Eldred Central School District in Eldred, New York, and the New York State president of the A Cappella Educators Association. justin.glodich@acappellaeducators.com.

NOTES

- ¹ Contemporary A Cappella Society, last modified 01/03/2009, accessed 8/12/15, <http://www.casa.org/about>.
- ² Mark Lucas, "Adolescent Male Attitudes about Singing In Choir," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 30, no. 1 (2011): 46.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 52.
- ⁴ Brody McDonald, *A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing* (Van Nuys, California; Alfred Music, 2012), 80-97.
- ⁵ *Ibid.* Contains complete sound files to facilitate the learning of each of the percussion sounds. The author is

grateful to Michael Spreser of Alfred Music Publishing for permission to use the included sample sound files in this article.

- ⁶ Andrew Saphavee, Paul Yi, and H. Steven Sims, "Functional Endoscopic Analysis of Beatbox Performers," *Journal of Voice* 28, no. 3 (2014): 328.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 330.
- ⁹ Throat Disorder.Com, an online Resource for Patients and Physicians, copyright

© 2010 - 2013 Southern California Throat Disorder, accessed 8/12/15, <http://www.throatdisorder.com/voice-disorders/hemorrhage>.

- ¹⁰ BeatboxMics, copyright © 2015 – Vocomotion, accessed 8/16/15, <http://beatboxmics.com>
- ¹¹ Soundspots, Copyright © 2015 Seymour Duncan. Santa Barbara, California, accessed 8/16/15, <http://www.seymourduncan.com/acoustic/soundspot-classic-twin>.



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Music in Worship



Thomas R. Vozzella
National R&S Chair
<vozzella.music@gmail.com>

To Russia with Song

By Thomas R. Vozzella

Music of the Russian tradition, both Eastern Orthodox and folk, is some of the most beautiful and spiritually moving examples of choral music. Thick harmony, rhythmically driven texts, basso profundo tones (not notated), all work together to create a mystically magical experience of choral sound. Yet, to achieve this stylistic sound is a daunting task. To narrow the learning curve, I took advantage of an opportunity to sing with a Russian choir, under a Russian conductor in Russia...the three R's of Orthodox music. An opportunity such as this is a rare occurrence. However, the Patriarch Tikhon Russian American Music Institute (PaTRAM) organized a five-day, intensive master class with Russia's leading choral technician, Vladimir Gorbik. Classes were held September 2-6 and took place at the Moscow Representation Church of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery. Maestro Gorbik comes from a long line of Russian Master Conductors, including a teacher with whom we share a common bond, Boris Tevlin (1931-2012). I studied with



Tom Vozzella and Vladimir Gorbik

Tevlin for two summers in Bulgaria at the University of South Carolina's Conductors Institute, under the leadership of Larry Wyatt.

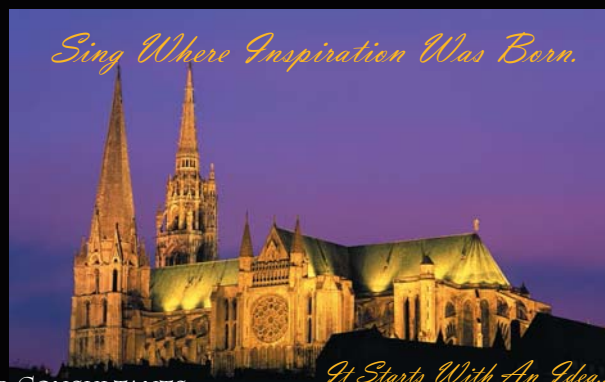
Vladimir Gorbik (b. 1970) began his musical studies in Yekaterinburg, Russia, and

continued them at the Moscow State Conservatory, completing a specialization in choral conducting in 1998 and in orchestral conducting in 2000. Since 1996 he has served as the choir director at the Moscow Representation Church (Metochion) of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery and since 1998 has been the artistic director and conductor of the professional men's chorus formed at the Metochion. With this choir he has made more than a dozen outstanding recordings of both liturgical services and concert programs. The choir has on numerous occasions sung at Patriarchal services in the Dormition Cathedral in the Kremlin, and they accompanied Patriarch Alexy II on his trip to the Holy Land in 2000. The repertoire of the Metochion's Men's Chorus cultivates the finest repertoire

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and interpretive traditions of the Moscow School and the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra. For his outstanding achievements and service, he has received an award of recognition (gramota) from the Patriarch and the medal of the Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh, 2nd Degree. In September 2012 he was appointed to the conducting faculty of the Moscow State Conservatory. (<https://patraminstitute.org/about/vladimir-gorbik/>)

Thirty-five singers and choral directors from the United States,

Canada, and Australia joined with the Professional Male Choir of the Moscow Representation Church along with students and faculty from the Moscow Conservatory. Most participants knew little to no Russian and/or sung Church Slavonic prior to this experience. Our participation included singing the Saturday Night Vigil (three-and-a-half-hours, standing) and the Sunday *Divine Liturgy* (two-hours, standing). The Orthodox tradition does not include padded pews. The music at these services was not by a single composer, as would a major work from the Orthodox tradition. Many have come to understand this literature, with limited availabil-

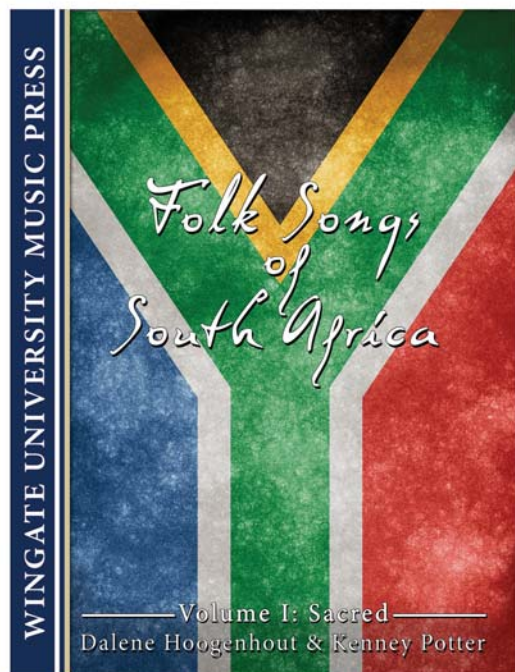
ity, through Rachmaninoff's *All Night Vigil* and other major works such as Grechaninov's *Passion Week*. Although these are marvelous works, the Russian Orthodox tradition is much more extensive.

Similar to American churches with a liturgical worship tradition, Orthodox worship includes beautiful houses of worship, exquisite liturgy and pageantry, outstanding psalms, hymns and spiritual songs by various composers. Instruments are not used in Orthodox Liturgy. Services are unaccompanied. It is music crated to the glory and worship of God. To have experienced this firsthand was transformational, both musically and spiritually.

Preparing a choir to sing Russian literature is difficult due to the complexity of the language and diction. However, the results far outweigh the preparation time. Music of this tradition is originally in Church Slavonic, written in Cyrillic. Of late, publishers such as Musica Russica (www.musicarussica.com) have published these works in transliterated editions. Musica Russica goes one step further by providing diction resources. However, if this causes one to avoid this great music, numerous English editions are available from Musica Russica and other publishers.

Attendance at an event such as this is life changing through new friendships and shared experiences. For me, new friends and colleagues enlighten my life and work. Gaining new knowledge and resources adds to the philosophy of inclusiveness for worship ministry. This opportunity opened the door to repertoire options that I otherwise would not have

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known existed. To this end, the most widely used resource for Orthodox service music in America is known as the “Green Book” or The Divine Liturgy can be purchased at St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press & Bookstore (www.svspress.com). The “Green Book” is a tremendous resource.

Now, the treasure trove of Orthodox literature can be found at www.podoben.org. There is no cost to use these resources and choral scores. Additionally, the site offers links to other resources, many of which have no cost involved. However, some are only

in Russian-Cyrillic. For those versed in Russian and Church Slavonic, you will have a field day. According to the website: “In the past half-century, individuals have undertaken the task of adapting, into English, the music which was brought to this land by the Orthodox faithful. This website, ‘Podoben,’ is an effort to make available the musical adaptations to all who find a need for English and Slavonic adaptations to accompany the services of the Orthodox Church. It will contain arrangements for all aspects of life in the Church. The scores

are arranged by individuals who have freely given their time and talent for the sole benefit of the Church...”

My goal in sharing this experience is to offer resources for concert and worship from the Russian Orthodox tradition that are accessible to those seeking accessible Russian repertoire. Additionally, when opportunities avail themselves for musical advancement, if possible, attend the event. It will be life changing and musically uplifting professionally and spiritually.

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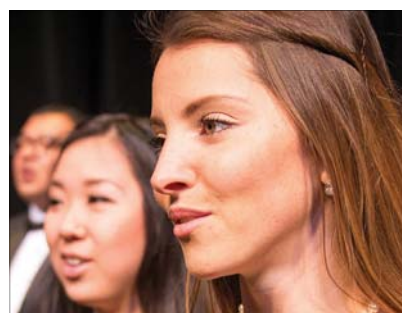
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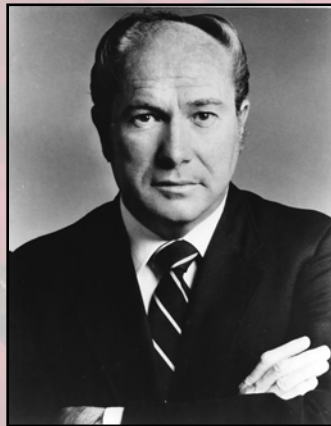


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In Memoriam

Ray Robinson 1932–2015



Dr. Ray Robinson died on October 8, 2015. He was a leader in the choral world and a dear friend to many in ACDA. Born December 26, 1932, in San Jose, California, he graduated from San Jose State University. After serving in the army during the Korean War, he earned a master's degree in viola performance and a doctorate in music education at Indiana University. He was chairman of the Cascade College Division Fine Arts, Portland, Oregon (1959-1963); dean of Peabody Institute, Baltimore (1963-1969); and president of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey (1969-1987).

He was a visiting fellow of Wolfson College at Cambridge University, England (1987-1989). In 1989 he joined the faculty of Palm Beach Atlantic University in West Palm Beach, where he led the choral program for thirteen years. In 2004 he took over leadership of the Palm Beach Symphony as music director and general manager, a post he held until the end of the 2010-11 season. Robinson was adviser to the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County, which honored him in 2012 with an Outstanding Cultural Leader Muse Award. He also hosted a weekly radio program and critiqued concerts for the *Palm Beach Daily News*.

Often collaborating with colleagues, he was author of

a number of books, notably *Up Front!: Becoming the Complete Choral Conductor* (1994); *The Choral Experience: Literature, Materials, and Methods* with Allen Winold (1992); *Krzysztof Penderecki: A Guide to His Works* (1983); *A Study of the Penderecki St. Luke Passion* (1983); *John Finley Williamson: A Centennial Appreciation* (1988); *Choral Music: A Norton Historical Anthology* (1978).

As chair of ACDA's Research and Publications Committee, Robinson brought together a wonderful team of choral musicians to create scholarly publications for ACDA. He delighted in the opportunity to help young scholar-musicians to develop their careers. More personally, Ray was a dear friend to many, both personally and professionally. He was so generous with his time and encouragement. Ray and Ruth Robinson have enriched many lives. Nothing pleased Ray more than to help students and colleagues grow and succeed. He was a devoted friend and a man we all miss greatly; we are all much richer for his time among us. He would join J. S. Bach in saying *solī Deo Gloria*.

—Donald Oglesby
Frost School of Music
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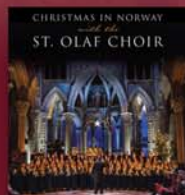
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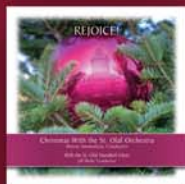


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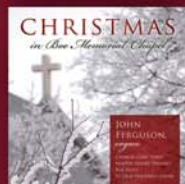


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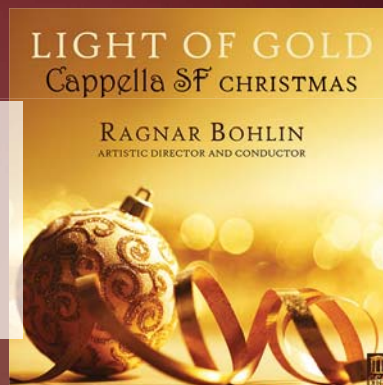
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The Church's "Big" Choir

By Greg Scheer

A Daydream

I suspect many church choir directors harbor a daydream similar to mine: one day my choral program will be so astoundingly successful that only the sanctuary's pews will be large enough to hold all the singers. Visitors and the few remaining congregation members who don't participate in the choir will have to be seated in the choir loft. Instead of conducting with my back to the congregation, I will turn to face them, give a confident smile, and with the downbeat of the baton, the whole sanctuary will reverberate with the dulcet tones of this over-sized choir.

Maybe this isn't only a daydream. Perhaps we conductors have focused so narrowly on refining the sound of our choirs that we have forgotten to attend to the congregation's voice—the church's "big" choir.

In many churches, congregational singing is dismal. This may be due to waning music education in schools or the erosion of traditional hymnody, but I suspect it has more to do with a broader shift in our culture. Ours is a culture of performance rather than

participation.

Music, like sports, is no longer a broadly shared human activity but has come to be viewed as a specialized skill. "I'm not musical," some claim, as if singing "Happy Birthday" requires an advanced degree in vocal performance. The negative cultural mind-set inevitably leaks into the church. It would be easy for choir directors to blame it on praise bands, but whether we take our cues from Katy Perry or Hubert Parry, we have all reinforced this audience/performer divide.

Can we break out? Can we utilize our choirs to support and stimulate the congregation's voice—the church's "big" choir?

Break the Frame

All art has a frame, whether a stage, screen, or literal frame. In music performance, the frame is time. What if we traded in the three-minute choral anthem frame traditionally associated with church choirs and instead understood our choir's participation as part of the larger

frame of worship?

This would entail breaking down the separation between choir and congregation, performer and audience, allowing the roles to bleed together. It may mean disrupting some of the visual performance cues that so often creep into our worship—raised choir seating, stage lighting, space for applause—in favor of a context that communicates that the choir is part of the congregation. In my own church, for example, the choir is at the same elevation as the rest of the people and wraps right into their seating. Breaking the frame may also mean scattering the choir's participation throughout the service rather



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Hallelujah!

than restricting it to the anthem.

Share Leadership

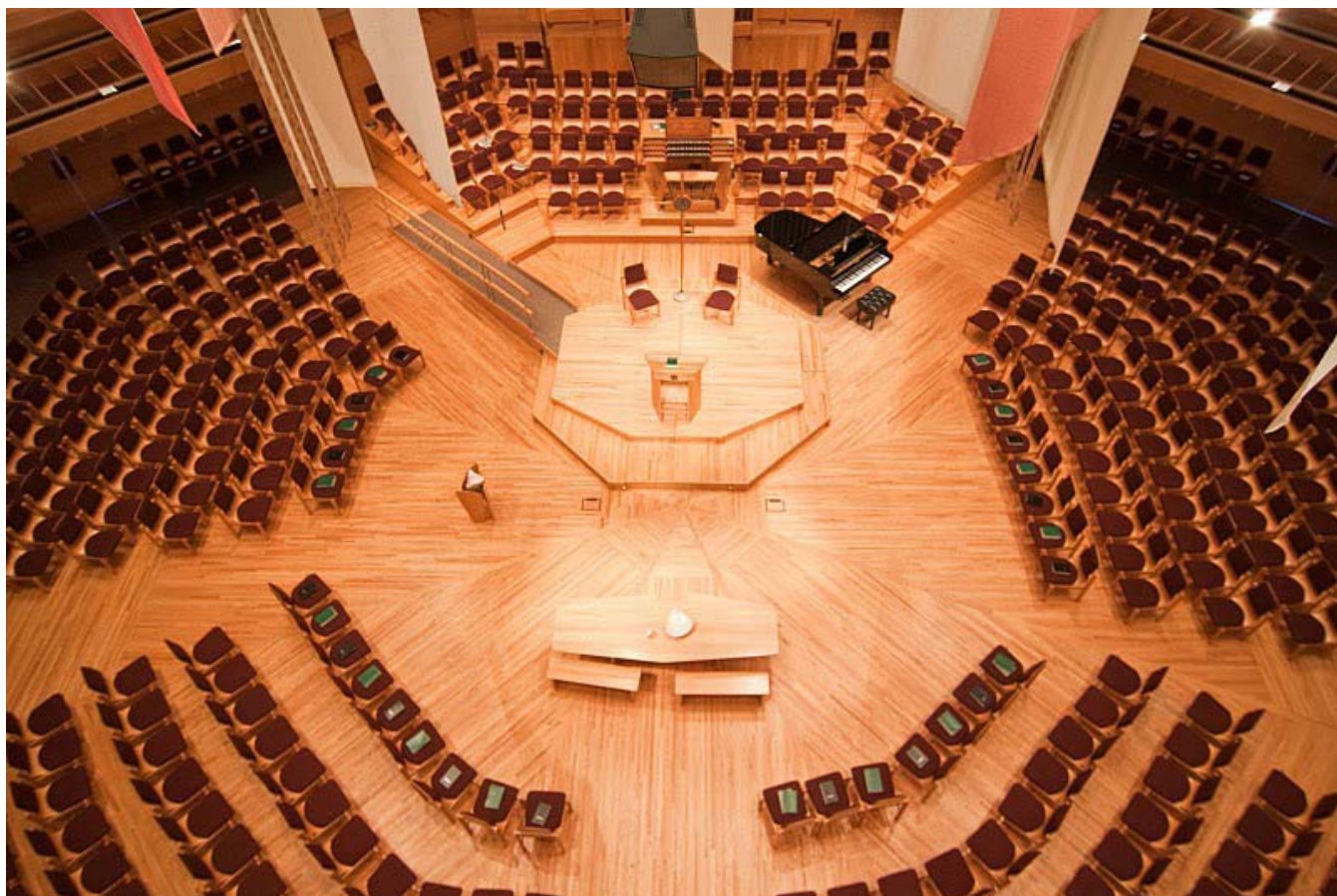
Often, our services are arranged in a way that divides the congregation into “singers” (the choir) and “non-singers” (everyone else). Could we add musical forms that communicate a shared responsibility for the singing? For example, in call-and-response or verse-refrain forms, the choir can take the call/verse and the congregation can sing the response/refrain. This distributes the musical tasks well: the choir takes the more

difficult, pre-rehearsed sections, and the congregation responds with a simpler musical role.

Choral anthems, especially the venerable hymn concertato, often have verses that can easily be sung by the congregation. The chants of Taizé frequently have verses that can be layered on top of the congregation’s repeated refrain. Similarly, choral descants are a simple way of adorning the congregation’s voice. Many congregational hymns have related choral repertoire that can be intertwined with the congregational verses. For example, Pentecost Sun-

day in my church invariably begins with the choir singing a verse of *Veni Creator Spiritus* in Latin before the congregation joins in English (“Come, Holy Spirit”). It gives the choir an opportunity to work on achieving a beautiful unison tone, and it provides a model for the congregation to follow. (It should be noted that there is no reason the congregation can’t sing a plainchant-based hymn in unison, accompanied only by a bell or drone.)

Sharing of musical leadership beautifies and encourages the congregation’s voice and sends the message, “we’re in this together.” The choir



The architecture of the Calvin College chapel allows for integration of choir and congregation.



and congregation may have different roles but share a unified responsibility for singing in worship.

Focus on Function

Choir directors focus on how their choirs *sound* but may never think about what their choirs *do*. That is, does a particular song pray, confess, bless, or proclaim? Once we become aware that every piece of music plays a functional role, it opens up a whole world of creativity for our choral programming. Why not use a Purcell verse anthem in place of the scripture reading? Indeed, there are many examples of choral anthems that are verbatim or adapted from scripture. There is no reason to relegate these to an “anthem ghetto” when they would serve so well in a more liturgically appropriate part of the worship service.

Numerous global songs can function well in worship: The Yoruban “Gbemi Jesu/Lift Me, Jesus” (#42 *Global Songs for Worship*) can be used as a prayer refrain. Jorge Lockward’s “Perdón, Señor/Forgive Us, Lord” (#642 *Lift Up Your Hearts*) can be sung as a confession. My own anthem “Abana/Arabic Lord’s Prayer” (GIA G-8488) could be sung in place of a spoken Lord’s Prayer. While these simple songs may not seem like much of a challenge, it will give your choir an opportunity to explore different vocal styles, a variety of music cultures, and perhaps even sing “off the page.” They will be better musicians for it.

Even though your church may not consider itself “liturgical,” it certainly has a pattern it follows in worship

each week. Write down each element of your service and find music to support each one. These pieces may feel utilitarian or elementary to the trained musician. However, integrat-

ing the choir into the larger patterns of your church’s worship may earn the trust needed to introduce challenging repertoire at the other end of the spectrum. Of course, much of

Resources

- *Catalogue of Choral Music Arranged in Biblical Order* by James H. Laster (Scarecrow Press, 1996; *Supplement*, 2002) remains the essential guide for directors matching anthems to Scripture. Combined with the Choral Public Domain Library (cpdl.org), it opens up a wealth of choral literature.
- Hymnary.org. You may have used this site for a quick hymn search, but if you dive deeper you will find dozens of tools for the church choir director: multiple versions of each hymn, links to published arrangements, scripture and subject search, and FlexScores for instrumentalists. (Full disclosure: This author is the co-founder of the site.)
- Even though your church may not follow the lectionary, do not overlook lectionary helps such as the online lectionary at <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> and lectionary aids like the *Presbyterian Call to Worship* (<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/calltoworship>), *Lutheran Sundays and Seasons* (<http://sundaysandseasons.com>), and Methodist <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/music>.
- Since Vatican II, Roman Catholics have led in areas of Psalmody, multicultural worship, and integration of choirs into the liturgy. Protestants shouldn’t be shy about learning from them. Among my favorite Catholic resources are *Gather Comprehensive* (GIA, now in its 3rd edition), *Glory & Praise* (OCP), *Choral Praise* (OCP), and three introductions to Gregorian chant published by GIA: *Canticum Novum* (Anthony Ruff), *Discovering Chant* (James Jordan), and *Laudate* (James Whitbourn).
- Directors hoping to utilize their choirs in leading contemporary worship songs will find vocal arrangements at <http://www.praisecharts.com> and <http://yourchartsources.com>. For a broader discussion of praise bands and their collaboration with traditional music ensembles, see my book *The Art of Worship* (BakerBooks, 2006).



Hallelujah!

this depends on how much freedom you have in your planning and how far in advance you know a service's themes.

Cross Boundaries

There are too many divisions in worship today: young versus old, traditional versus contemporary, liberal versus conservative—the list seems unending. Often, music ensembles serve as proxies for different demographics—the worship band stands up and leads a praise set for the young people, then a little later the choir

stands up to lead a hymn or sing an anthem meant to appeal to an older generation.

What if choir directors intentionally blurred these dividing lines? There is no reason, for instance, that the choir can't help lead modern worship songs. Certainly, a lead singer is a necessary aspect of the Praise and Worship genre, but there is no reason a traditional church choir can't sing the harmonies normally given to a small group of microphoned backing singers. It may require dusting off music theory skills to write out parts for the choir, but that's a small

price to pay for fostering tangible signs of church unity. The choir can take part in Black Gospel, global worship songs, or just about any other genre that has group vocals. At first it might be difficult for classically trained singers to adapt to different vocal styles, but once they take part in singing a song like "Siyahamba/We Are Marching" accompanied only by djembe, and they feel how the song catches fire, they will be excited about taking part in a diverse range of singing.

Conversely, instruments usually associated with contemporary worship

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can be blended into the choir's sound. It can be as simple as adding acoustic guitar to Marty Haugen's "Shepard Me, O God" (GIA G-5402) or adding a full band to the funky Gospel setting of Psalm 25, "To You, O God, I Lift Up My Soul" (OCP 9706). There are hundreds of choral anthems that come from Folk, Pop, Jazz or Gospel traditions; these often come alive with the simple addition of an instrument indigenous to that style: guitar, fiddle, bodhrán, or drum set.

Integrating the choir into every section and style of worship and weaving the choir's voice into the congregation's repertoire will ultimately encourage a singing culture to grow in your church. Even those of us whose primary passion is great choral literature will be well served by spending time developing the broader congregation's capacity for singing. As participation in singing increases, so does a congregation's appreciation for singing—and for the choir. As more congregation members find their voice, more people may just join the choir. You will certainly move one step closer to that dream of the entire sanctuary reverberating with the sound of the church's "big" choir. **□**

Greg Scheer is minister of worship at Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids and music associate at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. His writings include *The Art of Worship: A Musician's Guide to Leading Modern Worship* (Baker Books, 2006) and contributions to *The Hymn*, *Call to Worship*, *Worship Leader*, and *New Songs of Celebration Render* (ed C. Michael Hawn, GIA 2013).

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Rehearsal Break

Choral Music and the Acoustic Guitar

By Michael Rosewall

The guitar is one of the world's oldest instruments, with a long and celebrated history that has spanned more than four centuries and a popularity shared by lovers of both art music and popular music styles that reaches every corner of the globe. Because of this remarkable staying power and the beauty of its unique sound, the acoustic guitar—along with its relatives, the lute and the vihuela—has inspired magnificent music of composers from the Renaissance to the present day.

As a modern solo instrument, the acoustic or “Spanish” guitar commands an enormous repertoire of distinctively idiomatic and often highly virtuosic music. Though commonly taking a secondary place to band and orchestral instruments on our concert stages and within today's school music programs, the variety of styles and sheer number of pieces written for the solo guitar make it a favorite for both performers and audiences.

Its use in concerted music is equally

varied, ranging over many historical and national styles and calling upon the guitarist to play roles as both peer and accompanimental partner to a wide variety of musical ensembles and solo performers. Certainly, as a complement to solo or choral singers, the acoustic guitar is without equal. Its broad range, its capacity to provide harmonic support, and its vast spectrum of timbres uniquely enable it to mirror the flexible expressivity of the human voice.

Yet in today's choral concerts, use of the acoustic guitar is practically unknown. The average high school or college choral library typically has very few works on its shelves that might call for the instrument. It is likely that a majority of choral directors working today have rarely, if ever, programmed works for their ensembles that include acoustic guitar accompaniment.

Its electrified cousin, on the other hand, is a staple in today's choral performances—a seeming contra-

diction. Of course, there are several reasons that the use of the electric guitar is so widespread in vocal jazz and show choir settings, and that its sound is so familiar in popular choral music styles. First, most communities typically enjoy an easy accessibility to a supply of amateur players who are able to perform popular music charts. Second, there is an abundance of published choral arrangements that call for the instrument. Finally, most choral directors seem to feel that the electric guitar lacks the practical challenges presented by the acoustic guitar. For example, magnified by powerful sound systems and joined together with drums and bass in support of amplified voices, the electric guitar's ability to compete with the sound of a full swing choir is never really a worry.

In choral music that calls for acoustic guitar accompaniment, however, concerns about balance and other technical matters serve to increase the conductor's reluctance



Rehearsal Break

to program these works. Fears about sound issues, difficulties locating guitarists who can read musical notation and play traditional concert styles, or even the director's relative unfamiliarity with music written for the instrument can become roadblocks to programming the guitar with choral ensembles. Thus, a wonderful and varied literature for chorus and guitar remains largely unknown and underperformed.

Think there isn't much music available? The fact is, the variety of published works that are currently available for choir with acoustic guitar allows today's choral conductors to select music that is appropriate for a wide range of ensembles and performance circumstances.


Concerned that most of the pieces are too difficult for your guitarist? There are high-quality pieces on the

market today that are readily accessible to guitarists at all skill levels.

Still worried about balance and audibility? Of course, the best composers of the genre always address these issues through careful construction of their works. Also, the current availability of compact and effective amplification for acoustic guitars, as well as technical advances in directional and contact microphones, can help calm the conductor's performance anxieties with affordable and practical solutions.

So, the final hurdle for the choral conductor is to become more familiar with the literature. Distinguished and accessible publications of many styles can be found through a variety of sources, and the availability of modern compositions, and new editions of older works has increased substantially in recent years. Conductors

may find that some choral pieces that were originally scored for piano or harp accompaniment can also work with guitar. But of course, compositions specifically written for choir and guitar most often take full advantage of the instrument's innate expressivity and unique tonal characteristics.

The hope is that the following list will introduce readers to the depth and variety of choral music with guitar accompaniment. Though not a comprehensive inventory, it is intended to familiarize the interested choral director with this largely unexplored repertoire and to encourage more performances of this remarkable genre. 

Michael Rosewall is associate academic dean at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin. michael.rosewall@snc.edu

Concert Repertoire – Mixed Voices (Written for SATB voices, unless otherwise specified)

Composer	Title	Publisher
Anchieta, Juan de (1462-1523)	Con amores, la mi madre (arr. Chilcott)	Oxford
Barnett, Carol (b. 1949)	Cinco Poemas de Bécquer	Beady Eyes Publishing
	The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass	Boosey & Hawkes
Brandvik, Paul (b. 1937)	To Keep the Cold Wind Away	National/Hal Leonard
Brouwer, Leo (b. 1939)	Cantata de Perugia, Concierto No. 8 Dies irae; Laude; Aleluya; Gloria	Chester Novello
Carney, David (b. 1940)	The Angel Gabriel	E. C. Schirmer
Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario	Romancero Gitano, Op. 152 Baladilla de los Tres Ríos, La Guitarra, Puñal, Proce- sion: Paso/Saeta, Memento, Baile, Crótalo	Bote & Bock, Schott



Dowland, John (1563-1626)	Three Partsongs (ed., Schrock) What if I never speed; Can she excuse my wrongs; Now, O now, I needs must part	GIA
	Say Love, If Ever Thou Didst (ed., Contino)	Lorenz
Fink, Michael (b. 1939)	What Sweeter Music	E. C. Schirmer
Glise, Anthony (b. 1956)	The Blue Virgin: Stabat Mater speciosa	The Aevia Group
Graetzer, Guillermo	De Sol a Sol <i>para coro y guitarra</i>	Ricordi
Hartig, Heinz F. (1907-1969)	Perché, Op. 28	Schott
Houkom, Alf	The Rune of Hospitality	Walton
Julia, Bernardo (b. 1922)	Laudate Dominum	Berben
Korte, Karl (b. 1928)	Lullay Litel Child, from 'Carols New Fashioned'	E. C. Schirmer
Monteverdi, Claudio (1567-1643)	Concerto di Madrigali (with soprano solo, strings)	Bote & Bock
Nobre, Marlos	Yanomami, Op. 47	Editora Música Nova do Brasil, Rua Pres. Carlos de Campos, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Paulus, Stephen (1949-2014)	Marginalia	E.C. Schirmer or Paulus Publications
	Lord Here Am I	Paulus Publications
Pelz, Walter (b. 1926)	Show Me Thy Ways (with oboe & flute)	Augsburg
	Who Shall Abide? (with flute)	Augsburg
Pinkham, Daniel (1923-2006)	Come Love We God	E. C. Schirmer
	The Martyrdom of St. Stephen	E. C. Schirmer
	On the Dispute About Images	E. C. Schirmer
	Sometimes the Soul	E. C. Schirmer
	Songs of Peaceful Departure All Flesh is Grass, Lord Make Me to Know, Lord Thou Hast Put Gladness in my Heart	E. C. Schirmer
	To Think of Those Absent	E. C. Schirmer
Rahman, A. R./Sperry, Ethan	Zikr (or TTBB)	Earthsongs



Rehearsal Break

Ramirez, Ariel (1921-2010)	Misa Criolla	Lawson Gould, Alfred
	Navidad Nuestra	Lawson Gould, Alfred
Rutter, John (b. 1945)	Wedding Canticle: Blessed Are All They (with flute)	Hinshaw
Surinach, Carlos (1915-1997)	Via Crucis	Associated
Susa, Conrad (1935-2013)	Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest (with harp and marimba)	E. C. Schirmer
Van, Jeffrey (b. 1941)	The Friendly Beasts	Colla Voce
	Manger Dance (in Warland Christmas No. 2)	Hal Leonard
	O Be Joyful	Walton
	Prime	Walton
	A Procession Winding Around Me	Walton
Wetzler, Robert (b. 1932)	He Comes, He Comes	Art Masters

Traditional and Folk Song Arrangements – Mixed Voices

Barnett, Carol (b. 1949)	Cindy	Plymouth
Berg, Ken (b. 1955)	Scottish Folksong Suite 1- Road to the Isles; 2- Robin Adair; 3- Rothsay O! (SSA); 4- Wi' a Hundred Pipers; 5- Bonnie Mary of Argyle (TTBB); 6- Flowers o' the Forest	Hal Leonard
Dicie, Don Michael (b. 1941)	Cherry Tree Carol (w/flute)	Oxford
Folstrom, Roger (1934-2011)	A la Nanita Nana	Shawnee
Kittridge, Walter (1834-1905)	Tenting on the Old Camp Ground (arr. Warland)	G. Schirmer
O'Regan, Tarik (b. 1978)	Acallam na Senórach (w/percussion)	Novello
Paulus, Stephen (1949-2014)	Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella	Paulus Publications
Sosa, Pablo (b. 1933)	El cielo canta (arr. Henderson)	Earthsongs
Terri, Salli	The Blue Tail Fly	Consort Press
Van, Jeffrey (b. 1941)	El Rorro	Colla Voce
Warland, Dale (b. 1932)	Away in a Manger, in Warland Christmas, Vol. 1	Hal Leonard
	Simple Gifts	G. Schirmer
	Somerset Carol	G. Schirmer



Works for Men's Voices or Women's Voices

Adkins, Glen	Jarba, mare jarba (SA, with piano)	Earthsongs
Argento, Dominick (b. 1927)	Tria Carmina Paschalia (SSA)	Boosey & Hawkes
Bennighof, James	Silent Music (treble voices)	Oxford
Biebl, Franz (1906-2001)	Der frohe Wandersmann (TTBB)	Süddeutscher Verlag
Davison, Dan (b. 1956)	A la Nanita Nana (TB, with 2 violins)	Walton
Grases, Cristian (b. 1973)	La Paloma (SSA, with percussion)	Walton
Hatfield, Stephen (b. 1956)	Ballad of Skipper Knight (SSA, with fiddle, accordion, bass)	Boosey & Hawkes
	Best in the House (SSA, with flute, fiddle, accordion, bass and percussion)	Boosey & Hawkes
	Family Tree (SSA, with flute and synthesizer)	Boosey & Hawkes
Kidd, Richard (b. 1954)	After the Sleet Storm (SSA, with cello)	Boosey & Hawkes
Mechem, Kirke (b. 1925)	Two Christmas Ballads (SSAA) 1- Christmas Carol; 2- The Ballad of Befana	G. Schirmer
Núñez, Francisco (b. 1965)	Four Spanish Lullabies (SSA)	Boosey & Hawkes
Paulus, Stephen (1949-2014)	Whalen's Fate (TTBB, solo baritone)	Paulus Publications
Pinkham, Daniel (1923-2006)	The Lamb (Unison treble chorus)	E. C. Schirmer
	Missa Domestica (Unison treble chorus)	E. C. Schirmer
Rahman, A. R./Sperry, Ethan	Zikr, TTBB (or SATB)	Earthsongs
	Wedding Qawwali (SSAA or TTBB divisi, with percussion)	Earthsongs
Schubert, Franz (1797-1828)	Works for Male Voice Choir Terzetto, D. 80, Das Dörfchen, D. 598, Die Nachtigall, D. 724, Geist der Liebe, D. 747, Frühlingsgesang, D. 709, Naturgenuss, D. 422, Widerspruch, D. 865	GuitarNotes UK, Spanish Guitar Centre
Singh, Vijay (b. 1966)	Finnan Haddie, from 'Celtic Songs' (TTBB, with recorder)	Alfred
	Fergus and Molly, from 'Celtic Songs' (TTBB, with recorder)	Alfred
Van, Jeffrey (b. 1941)	Sleep O Lovely One (SA)	Shawnee
York, David & Bryan Johnson	Sing We Now of Christmas Holly and the Ivy, Rise Up Shepherd, Bring a Torch (instrumental), Sing We Now of Christmas	Earthsongs

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Book Reviews

Stephen Town, Editor
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The Essentials of Beautiful Singing: A Three-Step Kinesthetic Approach

Karen Tillotson Bauer

Toronto: The Scarecrow Press, 2013
\$ 44.00. ISBN: 978-0-8108-8688-9
(Paperback)

Every choral director dreams of having an ensemble that can sing with an exceptional and beautiful tone. Karen Tillotson Bauer, a performer and voice teacher most recently associated with North Park University in Chicago, has used her thirty plus years of teaching experience to formulate a teaching approach to encourage beautiful singing from her students. In *The Essentials of Beautiful Singing: A Three-Step Kinesthetic Approach*, Bauer describes her teaching philosophy and the kinesthetic (movement-based) approach that she developed over the course of her tenure as a voice teacher and vocal pedagogy instructor.

The Essentials of Beautiful Singing is separated into three parts: the first part includes the introduction and posture, part two covers the three steps of Bauer's approach, and the final part includes chapters on refinement building upon the three steps. In part one, Bauer acknowledges that fine singers and fine voice teachers are not always the same

person. In pedagogy, students need to understand the fine details of and terminology pertaining to anatomy, physiology, and acoustics. Students in applied lessons need a more individualized approach, which varies from student to student according to his or her needs. Imagery, while certainly a useful tool in individual vocal instruction, is not used in this book, since a student's understanding can vary. Bauer includes a chapter describing the precondition necessary to begin the three-step approach. Graphics and descriptors are given to ensure that the singers have proper posture before any continued work on singing is done. She includes two exercises in this chapter: one for achieving proper body alignment in a static position and one for proper alignment with body movement.

The second part of the book contains the core of Bauer's thesis: the three steps. Her approach can be

summed up by the use of an acronym one of her former students suggested to her: OOF (Open Body, Open Throat, Forward Articulation). In the first of these three chapters, she describes what she sees as misconceptions regarding breath support and engaging the body. To address these issues, Bauer includes exercises for controlling breath and air flow. She includes a number of traps that can occur when practicing these exercises and suggests ways to avoid them. The next chapter, "Open Throat and Resonance," is intended to assist the reader in understanding the physical resonators and phonation. For Open Throat, Bauer discusses the three primary contexts she considers crucial to understanding this concept: phonation, resonance, and workload. While phonation is rather inherent, the ability to understand and make appropriate use of resonators in the body is the biggest hurdle to success.

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Book Reviews

She recommends a five-part approach to ensuring effective use of resonance: posture, inhalation (both of which are covered in previous chapters but briefly reiterated here), consciousness raising, spoken tones,

and sung tones. The exercises in this chapter are aligned with the five parts mentioned, with the majority of the exercises focusing on phonation and resonating on sung tones. The concluding chapter of this section

focuses on “Forward Articulation and Enunciation.” Bauer takes great care to discuss the physical differences between the five basic vowel sounds. Consonants are discussed and grouped based on their classification as semivowels, non-nasal consonants, and noise. After these descriptors, she provides examples of phonation exercises to reinforce and complement the concept.

Part three concludes the book with three chapters offering suggestions to further refine singing skills: principles of registration, developing the upper range, and *legato* and musicality. In the “Principles of Registration,” Bauer suggests exercises to assist singers with transitioning between the high and low registers of a singer’s voice. Because of the differences between male and female voices, she separates the exercises accordingly with suggestions for negotiating the chest, middle, and head voices with primary emphasis on the chest voice. The next chapter is dedicated to developing the upper register of both male and female voices. She stresses the need for singers to understand the difference between “pushing” the sound and allowing the sound to come from a point of “engagement.”

The concluding chapter summarizes the skills discussed in previous chapters and provides exercises for connecting the voice to music. As Bauer states, “Singing...requires that all notes in a musical line be sung and connected with the same vocal instrument, a consistent source of resonance.” She suggests that *legato* singing is “a culminating refinement, one that depends on the Three

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Steps and all refinements enabled by them.” The exercises in this chapter draw upon all the previously discussed concepts with emphasis now placed on literature and creating musical phrasing with consideration of the meter, text, singing and musicality. She suggests that singers approach a musical line considering the purpose of the individual notes: a pick-up, framework note, connecting material or a tapered ending. Each requires a different approach and works together to create musical phrasing.

As Bauer states early in this book, she intends that “The Essentials of Beautiful Singing” serve as a guide for both voice teachers and choral directors. The language is intentionally kept easy to understand by a variety of instructors who may have varied experience developing sound in individual singers. There are moments where she gets into more technical language, but she takes time to explain those topics. The exercises in the book are quite beneficial, given with descriptions for their proper application and understanding of the intended outcome. In addition to the chapters of the book, Bauer includes a helpful appendix of International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols and corresponding English words employing those sounds.

The primary negative about this book is the redundancy; each chapter begins by reiterating the basic information Bauer presented in her introduction—the three steps and why they are important. Otherwise, the book is quite readable, offering both new and experienced teachers and conductors ideas for improv-

ing the sound of their singers. Her approach can be easily adapted to progress through the course of a concert season with any choir and would cumulatively progress over the course of several years. For any director or teacher looking to improve the tone of their singers and choirs, this book serves as a nice refresher and offers a different approach to sound development.

Jennifer Adam
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, KY

***The Dresden Manuscripts:
Unearthing an 18th Century
Musical Genius***

David Wilson
Scottsdale, Arizona
New Education Press, 2014. 203 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-932942-80-7
(paperback \$19.95)
ISBN: 978-1-932842-81-4
(eBook \$9.99)
NewEducationPress.Com

Over the past fifty years, American choral directors have pursued and earned graduate choral degrees from many universities. Attaining a DMA is especially challenging: mastering the diverse styles, genres, performing practices, and choral literature of the fifteenth century to the present; acquiring a reading knowledge of several languages; conducting graduate recitals; passing the formidable written and oral exams; and perhaps above all, researching and writing the doctoral dissertation. David Wilson’s highly informative book, *The Dresden*

Manuscripts: Unearthing an 18th Century Musical Genius, juxtaposes in a very unique way his “sides of life”—in essence a biography interspersed with an eight-year saga devoted to his dissertation. Unlike most of our experiences, however, researching *his* dissertation became life threatening!

The Dresden Manuscripts is a fascinating account of tenacity and exhaustive and dangerous research that was required in Wilson’s relentless efforts to unearth the long-forgotten life and works of Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783), the eighteenth-century composer, universally lauded in his day. Wilson’s experiences will remind many readers of higher degree pursuits and struggles, but only on rare occasions do we produce a dissertation with such profound musical/historical insight.

As Wilson writes in the Acknowledgements and Prelude, “I have carried this story in my head for decades... The journey began as a research project... It represented the culmination of a dream nurtured for decades.... The final chords of the ‘Amen’ echoed throughout the immense nave of the *Kreutzkirche*, the post-war spiritual home of the people of Dresden. I froze. I did not want to lower my hands so I could treasure this feeling for as long as possible. ... I had just brought to life a work not heard for almost 250 years [Hasse’s Mass in D Minor]” (pp. x-1). It is David Wilson’s highly personal account of the discovery of Hasse’s motets, cantatas, Requiem, and fifteen masses that are the subject of this book. It reads like a detective story, and this reviewer could not put it down.

Book Reviews

The search for the treasure trove of Johann Hasse's sacred works led Wilson to experience the post-war ravages of Germany and in particular the very real fear of traveling in East Germany during the height of the Cold War. He divides his book into twenty-four brief chapters traversing the multi-faceted inner web of his "life and dissertation living." It begins in the summer of 1966, his first of several summers at the University of Illinois in pursuit of his Choral DMA degree, and concludes in the summer of 1973 when he submitted his dissertation. The latter chapters describe the conditions he faced in East Germany (especially in Dresden) during this perilous era. His descriptions of the catastrophic damage caused by the bombings, the plight of the citizens of East Germany, and most especially his conversations with Dresden citizens who recounted their

life experiences to him are deeply moving.

I met David Wilson in the summer of 1966, when we both were doctoral students in choral music at the University of Illinois. Through the years I have admired his intellectual breadth, warm humanity, and deep musicianship. Generic to his book are his uncommon historical insights into the diverse richness of European culture that provide a learned backdrop for *The Dresden Manuscripts*. His style of writing is captivating and informed: intellectually, emotionally, and musically. *The Dresden Manuscripts* is an engrossing detective story during which Wilson provides an array of the fascinating relationships of Johann Hasse—ranging from his wife, Faustina, the internationally famous mezzo-soprano who sang the arias in his operas and sacred works, to the famed composers of his day with

whom he had personal associations: Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Mozart. One of the innumerable fascinating details Wilson brings to life is his description of the stylistic affinity of Hasse's *Kyrie II* of the D Minor Mass with Bach's *Kyrie II* of the B Minor Mass. Bach performed the Kyrie and Gloria (Missa Brevis) as a test piece for the highly coveted position of Court Composer of Dresden during the very time that Hasse was Kapellmeister of Dresden's Hofkirche.

Throughout the book, we see Wilson as a spectacular sleuth, uncovering clue after clue of the location of Hasse's sacred works. His uncommon expertise in German, graceful polite manners and modesty, and his deepening knowledge of Hasse's life and works allowed him to establish pivotal relationships with Leopold Novak, Direktor: Musiksammlung, Nationalbibliothek, Wien, and Wolfgang Reich, Direktor: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden. Fascinating to read is their shared respect for Wilson's research, which gained him full access to the entire manuscript collections of Hasse's surviving compositions: operas, motets, cantatas, and masses, including his *C Minor Requiem* and *D Minor Mass*, the sacred works Hasse considered to be his most important compositions. The personal stories of these esteemed musicologists who lived through the catastrophic bombings of World War II are very moving.

David Wilson's *The Dresden Manuscripts: Unearthing An 18th Century Musical Genius* is filled with insight, humor, and humanity. This reviewer recommends this book to choral mu-



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sicians, musicologists, historians, and to all who seek a firsthand account of the life and courage of the citizens of West and East Germany during the Cold War.

Jameson Marvin
Director of Choral Activities
Emeritus, Senior Lecturer on
Music (1978-2010)
Harvard University

***Managing Music Ministry:
Beyond Notes and Chords***

Stephen Petrunak and
Randal R. Phillips
Chicago, IL:
GIA Publications, 2014. 132 pp.
ISBN: 9781622771042;
G-8770 (\$12.95)

Although primarily written for musicians serving in Roman Catholic parishes, *Managing Music Ministry: Beyond Notes and Chords* is a valuable text for church musicians in all faith traditions. The authors, who have served more than forty years in music ministry and pastoral leadership, state the basis for crafting this book:

“This book is about those similar issues that seem to confront all music programs. In its attempt to give assistance, to bring understanding, and to offer solutions, this book is by no means an end-all or be-all to music ministry.... More than anything, this book is about managing: managing people, managing conflict, managing financial resources, and manag-

ing time. Those who are responsible for directing music within church communities manage on many different levels, yet music schools offer no ‘management’ degrees or programs that can help directors learn the art of managing.” (pp. xi-xii)

The authors also incorporate and consider the spiritual elements of managing, with reflections that pertain to leadership and spirituality.

The book is divided into two sections. The seven chapters in section one cover the aspects of managing the souls involved in the music ministry, including effective communication, dealing with conflict, working with difficult people, servant leadership, and motivating volunteers. The second part focuses on managing the musical and nonmusical issues. Topics are divided into ten chapters and

include conducting the ensemble, rehearsal techniques, improving congregational song, worship planning, and budgeting. Of special note are the practical tools presented in the chapters on ensemble recruiting and working with youth. Throughout the text, real-life situations are used as examples that demonstrate and/or accentuate major teaching points being made.

Managing Music Ministry: Beyond Notes and Chords is a book that brings practical and useful tools to improve the music ministries of both experienced and beginning church musicians. It is a resource that deserves consideration for the bookshelf of all who minister through the gift of music.

Gregory M. Pysh
Midland, TX



In Memoriam

Kenneth Jennings 1925–2015



Kenneth Jennings, published arranger, composer, and Professor Emeritus of Music at St. Olaf College and director of the St. Olaf Choir from 1968 to 1990, passed away on August 20, 2015, at the age of ninety. In 1968, Jennings became the third conductor of the St. Olaf Choir and expanded the choir's global reach with a tour to Asia. Two years later, the choir was one of only five in the world to be invited to participate in the Olympic Arts Festival in Seoul, South Korea.

St. Olaf Choir Conductor Anton Armstrong tells Minnesota Public Radio, “[Kenneth Jennings] was an immense influence on many of the leading choral directors of his time, both those who were able to sing under his baton or

his beautiful hands and those who experienced his performances with the St. Olaf Choir and the other choirs he conducted. We will remember him with great love and great admiration, and most of all, with great appreciation for the beauty he brought to the world of choral music.”

Jennings received his bachelor's at St. Olaf, a master's from Oberlin College, and a doctorate from the University of Illinois. Since his retirement from St. Olaf in 1990, he served as visiting professor and choral conductor at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and the University of Arizona. In addition to his music publications and recording, Jennings was the teacher and mentor of many prominent choral conductors.

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Recorded Sound Reviews

Celebration of Christmas: Lost in Wonder

Brigham Young University Choirs
and Philharmonic Orchestra
BYU Records YCD0614LIW
(2014; 55'26")

Every December, over five hundred students in Brigham Young University musical ensembles join together to present *Celebration of Christmas*. This live recording from the 2013 concerts features the BYU Philharmonic Orchestra, the university's premier orchestra, and four of the five university choirs: the BYU Concert Choir, Men's Chorus, Singers, and Women's Chorus. Musical selections range from chestnuts like Lauridsen's *O magnum mysterium* (TTBB version) and Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride* to classics newly arranged by emerging composers such as Christopher Downard's sumptuous *Silent Night* and an entrancing *Still, Still, Still* for chorus and harp by Joey Hoelscher. There is also the whimsical (and quick-as-lightning) *Fum, Fum, Fum* by Mack Wilberg, with a virtuoso performance by an unidentified piccolo player; and musical theater composer Leslie Bricusse's *December the 25th*, complete with varied shtick (and much audience laughter). With five



of the twelve choral pieces accompanied by piano, and given the need for a new but accessible program every year with an understandable tilt toward new versions of familiar works, *Celebration of Christmas: Lost in Wonder* should by no means be the only Christmas album on anyone's shelf. Still, for those interested in hearing some unfamiliar arrangements of traditional Christmas pieces and committed performances by well-trained and extremely polished university choirs in what must be a wonderful live event, this CD will be most welcome.

David Rentz
Claremont, California

Christmas from Tewkesbury

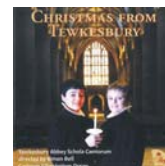
Tewkesbury Abbey
Schola Cantorum
Simon Bell
Regent REGCD440 (2014; 69'27")

Christmas from Tewkesbury is the latest album by the Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum, based at the Dean Close Preparatory School in Cheltenham, England. Under the direction of Simon Bell and accompanied by organist Carleton Etherington, the Schola Cantorum is composed of sixteen boy choristers and nine lay clerks (three altos, three tenors, and

three basses). The choir exists primarily to perform the Anglican Evensong service, and *Christmas from Tewkesbury* represents a compilation of familiar and newer Advent and Christmas anthems that are regularly performed at these services.

It is well known that English choirs of boys and men have been recording (and selling) Christmas albums very successfully for decades. *Christmas from Tewkesbury* contains many anthems that are stock-and-trade for this category. David Willcocks's carol arrangements are well represented, as are familiar works by John Rutter, Peter Warlock, and William Mathias. Listeners who are acquainted with English choirs may be disappointed in the Schola Cantorum's performances of some of these works. John Gardner's *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day*, for example, falls flat with an uninspiring tempo and lack of rhythmic energy and intention. Carol arrangements for choir and organ, including *O Little Town of Bethlehem* and *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, are performed in a routine fashion and merely seem to act as obligatory fillers.

So why might *Christmas from Tewkesbury* be a worthy addition to your holiday choral collection? For one, the rich, warm acoustics of Tewkesbury



Abbey shine, as does its magnificent organ. Organist Carleton Etherington gets a couple of solo spotlights, including heartfelt and lively performances of Denis Bédard's two virtuosic carol arrangements, *Noël huron* and *Il est né le divin enfant*. Anthems for organ and choir, such as Mathias's *A Babe Is Born*, reveal some of the best qualities of each performing ensemble: the organ's rich tones are complemented by the warmth in the choir, for example. While in general the balance is quite good, the physical distance of the organ from the singers can be sensed, with some minor tempo disparities and the occasion-

ally sloppy cutoff. Joseph Cullen's *In excelsis Gloria* is an upbeat work whose rhythmic vitality and energy is muddled and distant. The tempo for much of John Rutter's *Candlelight Carol* is overly rigid and doesn't allow for rubato at key transitional moments.

Christmas from Tewkesbury contains several works that were commissioned by the Dean Close School, including two premiere recordings: Philip Moore's *Into a Quiet World* and Thomas Hewitt Jones's *Verbum caro factum est*. Moore's work in particular is a unique addition to this album. It is a reserved, quiet anthem with long, text-influenced melodies in the

liturgical tradition of Howells. The voices are loosely paired between upper and lower parts, an effective compositional tool that unfortunately doesn't translate in this recording due to the imbalanced choir. Deserving a particular mention, however, is the superb performance of Bob Chilcott's *The Night He Was Born* for choir and organ. Chilcott's subtle yet evocative telling of the Christmas story, originally commissioned by the Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum, receives a thoughtful, patient performance.

One of the highlights of this recording is Philip Moore's arrange-



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ment of the English carol *This Is the Truth Sent from Above* (famously arranged in the opening of Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*.) The unaccompanied setting is haunting and stark, evolving from a lovely, lone tenor solo and unfolding to reveal verses set for high voices, low voices, and the full choir, respectively. It is a rare opportunity on this album to get to hear the pure beauty of each voice part in such an intimate and transparent texture, and also serves to introduce conductors to this newer arrangement of one of this season's most underserved carols. It is for this anthem, as well as the aforementioned premiere works, that *Christmas from Tewkesbury* might find its way into your holiday collection this year.

Anne Lyman
Tacoma, Washington

***Missa Conceptio tua:
Medieval and Renaissance
Music for Advent***

Schola Antiqua of Chicago
Michael Alan Anderson, conductor
Naxos 8.573260 (2012; 57'29")

The advent of historically informed practice in classical music has not only changed the way we perform and listen to early music but has also inspired ensembles to program music of lesser known composers in the genre. Naxos, a music label that began as an "off-brand" by featuring lesser-known musicians performing a wide variety of music, continues to produce fine albums of rarely recorded music (or, at least, less frequently

performed) sung by groups with great skill but without as much international notoriety. Schola Antiqua of Chicago ably meets this union in this lovely collection of Advent antiphons and English carols.

While the album's title draws the listener to the Advent season, the musical selections have a strong Marian theme, beginning with the 'O' Antiphons and the antiphon "Alma Redemptoris Mater." The plainchants are sung with superb blend and legato without losing any of the intelligibility of text. The real highlight of this album, however, is the world-premiere recording of Pierre de la Rue's *Missa Conceptio tua*. In the CD notes, Schola Antiqua's conductor, Michael Alan Anderson, speculates that the "exceptionally low range" of the piece explains the lack of recordings of la Rue's mass. The mass has many wonderful moments, from the sublime two-voice duet beginning the "Sanctus" to the immaculate full-choir blend throughout (especially the thrilling "Hosanna"). The superb richness and resonance of the bass section (Jack Parton and Wilbur Pauley), frequently singing low E-flats with ease, balances exquisitely with the rest of the group to create a marvelously warm, full sound that is remarkable for a group its size (eleven total singers, nine singing the mass setting). The disc concludes with three Marian English carols, highlighted by a rousing *Nova, nova!* that would be a welcome addition to any Advent or Christmas choral program.



The Marian and Advent themes in this disc are developed nicely from beginning to end, with lovely variety between plainchant and polyphony. This disc serves not only as a wonderful introduction to Pierre de la Rue's mass setting but also as the definitive recording of the work.

Nathan Windt
Davenport, Iowa

***Heinrich Schütz:
Weihnachtshistorie***
Dresdner Kammerchor
Hans-Christoph Rademann,
conductor
Carus 83.257 (2014; 61'38")

Hans-Christoph Rademann, who has conducted the Dresdner Kammerchor since it was founded in 1985, has undertaken the task of recording the complete works of Heinrich Schütz, the most notable composer in Dresden's history. This recording is the tenth volume in a series containing twenty-two CDs. For this recording of six pieces of Christmas choral music, the eighteen-voice Dresdner Kammerchor is accompanied by eighteen instrumentalists of the Dresdner Barockorchester.

Three trombones, strings, and continuo accompany the opening *Magnificat* (SWV 468). The choral forces require double choir and a solo quartet. When the quartet is not isolated from the ensemble, they almost serve as a third choir, with parts completely



independent from the full ensemble. In this recording, the balance of the soloists, choirs, and instrumentalists is expertly managed. The diction is clean and crisp, with the rapid repetition of words clearly articulated and emulated in the instrumental parts. The ornamentation from the soloists, and on fewer occasions the choirs, is tasteful and subtly applied.

Heute ist Christus, der Herr, geboren (SWV 439), written for three-part treble voices and continuo, is creatively performed. Three cornetti are added to the work and replace the choir on a few occasions. The tempo is brisk and lively and particularly engaging when the cornetti and singers

negotiate the fast passages of running thirty-second notes with expert clarity. Reminiscent of Marenzio's late madrigals, Schütz's spiritual madrigal *Ach Herr, du Schöpfer aller Ding* (SWV 450) includes glorious chromaticism and chains of suspensions amid occasionally unexpected harmonic progressions. In this recording, passages containing these unsettled harmonic lines are intensified by long, sustained phrases that heighten the effect before the cadential resolution.

The *Hodie Christus natus est* and *O bone Jesu, fili Mariae* (SWV 456 and SWV 471, respectively), both written for six-part choir and continuo, continue the high quality of performance

on this recording. In the *Hodie*, the *theorbo* accompaniment is supportive without being intrusive. In addition to the primarily homophonic writing in *O bone Jesu*, there are six soloists (SSATTB) that, in a variety of combinations, alternate passages with the choir. The transitions between the soloists and choir have a remarkable clarity and seem effortless in their execution.

The *Weihnachtshistorie* (SWV 435) is a little more than a half-hour long, although it occupies the majority of the CD. The story of Jesus's birth begins with Caesar Augustus's decree to count all the people for taxes, through the fleeing of the holy family into Egypt, and the return to Nazareth after the death of Herod. Written for six-voice choir with two cornetti, two recorders, bassoon, strings, and continuo, there are a variety of unique solo movements in the work. A trio of three tenor soloists represent the Wise Men looking for the newborn Jesus, and just a few moments later, the chief priests and scribes are represented by a quartet of solo basses. The balance of the soloists' voices is wonderful; no individual voice overpowers the others, and the tone quality of each singer complements the other soloists. The evangelist (tenor) and the angel (soprano) are also expertly performed.

Overall, this recording is a wonderful interpretation of these pieces in Schütz's choral *oeuvre*. There is deft evenness of the instrumentalists, choirs, and soloists, with rare questions of balance, usually when a soloist is singing in a weak part of their range while numerous instrumental-

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ists are playing. Ornamentation is used throughout the recording, never intruding upon the character of the composition. The *tempi* are fairly fast but always remain controlled. Soloists are very clear and accurate, and the choir displays exemplary articulation and expert clarity of consonants. This recording deserves a place in the library of any conductor who enjoys the music of Heinrich Schütz.

Jennifer Adam
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Sing Thee Nowell

New York Polyphony
BIS Records BIS-2099 (2014; 71'17")

With each successive recording, New York Polyphony continues to develop a style and reputation that sets it apart from the field of modern curators of early music. With the help of contemporary composers and their own proclivity for compositional innovation, they have established a signature repertory that seamlessly pairs modern harmonies with the sounds of Medieval and Renaissance literature. In December 2014, *Sing Thee Nowell* be-



came the group's second Grammy-nominated album. It is a *tour-de-force* of sorts, intended to take the listener on a journey through the various stories and themes of the Advent-Christmas season. While the album does include some virtually flawless performances of great Renaissance choral works, it is the music written

for and by the ensemble that truly comes to the forefront on this record.

The album opens with an arrangement of the advent hymn *Veni Emmanuel*, written for New York Polyphony

by Andrew Smith. From the first refrain, the piece clearly establishes the group's modern musical idiom. Peppered with close harmonies and sinuous part-writing, the declamatory



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nature of the original hymn remains intact, and the ear easily grows accustomed to the dense chord qualities by the third or fourth strophe. In the record's second vignette, the ensemble explores the Annunciation story with Philippe Verdelot's *Gabriel Archangelus* and the Basque carol *Gabriel's Message*, arranged by the group's own Craig Phillips (a.k.a. Alexander Craig). Craig's arrangement is entirely homophonic and remarkably streamlined in comparison to some of the other contemporary works on this album. Assuming it is published, this piece would be attainable and well suited for collegiate chamber

ensembles.

The following section showcases traditional melodies and hymns associated with the text "There is no rose." Countertenor Geoffrey Williams uses the "Hereford" hymn tune by S. S. Wesley to create a singularly beautiful arrangement in the warm key of D-flat major. Williams's score uses alternating voice pairings and exposed passages to highlight the unique qualities of each voice. The group takes special care in dovetailing the ends of each verse into the next, imbuing the piece with a feeling of interconnectedness. A few tracks later, the men are joined by sopranos

Sarah Brailey and Elizabeth Baber Weaver for a set of five carols by the late film composer Richard Rodney Bennett. The women's voices assimilate into the ensemble's texture quite effortlessly, matching vibrato when necessary and exhibiting the same level of pinpoint control. Although the proportions and moods of this collection by Bennett feel somewhat unbalanced, *Out of Your Sleep* and *Sweet Was the Song* represent two of the most memorable performances on the album.

The last quarter of *Sing Thee Nowell* focuses on the Nativity story and features two more exceptional arrangements from the desk of Alexander Craig. *Sleep Now*—an original setting of a James Joyce text—uses a jazzy chord scheme, perhaps alluding to some of the classic Christmas tunes from the mid-twentieth century. One can imagine the men singing this song as an intimate encore at one of their holiday concerts. Craig's arrangement of the traditional Provençal *noël Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle* showcases his proficiency in the principles of voice leading through carefully placed inversions and mixolydian inflections. New York Polyphony manages to satisfy mainstream choral enthusiasts in this section of the record with a superb performance of Victoria's *O magnum mysterium*. Their clever choices in dynamics and delicate phrasing, particularly in the "Alleluia" section, allow the listener to appreciate this masterpiece as if for the first time.

Recorded at the Chapel at the American Boychoir School in Princeton, New Jersey, *Sing Thee Nowell* is saturated throughout with long,

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cavernous reverberation. However much compression and mixing went into post-production, it does not take away from the level of performance and craftsmanship at work here. For the erudite fan of unaccompanied vocal literature, one can scarcely ask for a more well-executed recording. New York Polyphony will continue to impress and likely remain at the top of their field for years to come. Hopefully at some point the group's original core repertoire will begin to see its way into collegiate choral classrooms and not remain its closely guarded secret for too long.

John Guarente
Ocala, Florida

The Wonder of Christmas

Elora Festival Singers
Noel Edison, conductor
Michael Bliss, organ
Naxos 8.573421 (2014; 59'20")

There is a certain inexplicable something about listening to Christmas music; a magic that can occur that makes you stop and listen, even during a season when time is precious. Often, though, we listen to *The First Noel* or *What Child Is This?* for the seventeenth time at the mall or on the radio and long for something new in the old—something that highlights and uplifts the spirit and the mind. This is precisely what the Elora Festival Singers' recording, *The Wonder of Christmas*, does. As the title promises, they have brought a new life, a refreshing wonder, to some of the old stand-by tunes by infusing them

with gloriously sung descants and a delightful re-imagining of color and texture, such as in Willcocks's heraldic arrangement of *Once in Royal David's City*, *What Child Is This?* (arranged by Paul Halley, who also arranged *The First Nowell*), and Wilberg's effervescent treatment of *Ding! Dong! Merrily on High*.



Of the less familiar works there are some true gems: Britten's *A Boy Was Born*, Tavener's *Rocking*, Stuart Thompson's *The Holly and the Ivy* (which won the *London Times* Carol Competition in 2011), *I Wonder as I Wander* (in a heart-rending arrangement by Leonard Enns), and Sandström's stunning setting of *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*.

Listening to this disc is not unlike being in the midst of a service of Lessons and Carols or a Christmas Eve service, hearing a choir of men and boys at one of the great cathedrals or chapels throughout England. The soprano sound here is, however, more flexible, more moveable, and, perhaps, more soulful than the sound of young boys. One is not better than the other; they each have merits and limitations, but the Elora Singers' sopranos are able to use both their mature, adult soprano and the visceral and refined tone of a traditional boys choir.

The Elora Festival Singers sing with silvery tone, amazing blend, and flawless technique, particularly the sopranos. Throughout, the singing is clean and centered, with vibrant, ringing color that is surprisingly voluptuous for only twenty-three sing-

ers. In addition to the great singing, director Noel Edison has extracted phrasing from the ensemble that is well constructed and lovingly interpreted. Although a choir would need excellent sopranos with flexible technique, most of the unaccompanied pieces on this disc are perfect for any college choir or well-trained church choir or high school ensemble. The organ accompaniment could be substituted with piano, though on several pieces a certain ecclesiastic sonority might be lost. This recording is a delight in every sense of the word and belongs in everyone's collection of favorite Christmas recordings.

Rich Brunner
North Hollywood, California

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