

CHORAL JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2018

Choral
Composition
Today

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Oak Harbor High School Choir (OH)
Russell Exlos-Raber, Director of Choral Activities



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Jonathan Griffith, DCINY Principal Conductor
November 26, 2017, Carnegie Hall

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On the Cover The cover of this November issue is a subtle nod to music notation with staves inside the geometric block structure.

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Since 1959, the *Choral Journal* has been the refereed, international journal of the American Choral Directors Association. Each issue features: scholarly articles, anonymously peer-reviewed by the editorial board; refereed articles on pedagogical or scientific issues for the choral conductor; refereed articles with practical advice and ideas for the choral conductor; reviews of books, recorded sound, and choral works by choral experts; and editorials from association leadership. The January issue previews each year's regional or national conference offerings. Articles from the *Choral Journal* can be found in the following online databases: JSTOR (Arts & Sciences XI Collection); ProQuest (International Index to Music Periodicals); University Microfilms International; NaPublishing; RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale); EBSCO music index; and WorldCat. Advertising options are available for members and nonmembers. Cover art by Efrain Guerrero. Interior art by Tammy Brummell. Musical examples by Tunessmith Music <www.Tunessmithmusic.com>. Copyright 2018

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ADVOCACY STATEMENT

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

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

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

From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tim Sharp

One of the four pillars of our Mission Statement as the American Choral Directors Association is our collective commitment to excellence in choral composition. This issue of *Choral Journal* focuses specifically on this aspect of our mission.

Everything we do in the choral art centers on choral composition. Every area of our Repertoire and Resources Standing Committee and, for that matter, the focus of every other Standing Committee of ACDA

returns to the touchstone of the choral composition in all that we do.

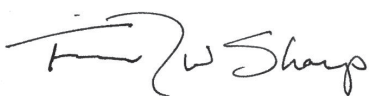
This year, a team of choral experts assembled and analyzed a database of over 5,000 choral pieces performed at National ACDA Conferences from 1960—the first year of ACDA's institutional life—through our 2017 National Conference in Minneapolis. The data reveal some fascinating program insights. A few of those findings are the following:

- Music by African and Australian composers first appeared in 1987 and averaged between 3 and 4 selections total on each conference program through 2017. This music represents 4% of repertoire performed.
- South American composers appeared for the first time in the 1970s, mostly from Brazil. They reappeared with more diversity in the late 1980s and have remained on each conference program since, representing 2% of the conference repertoire overall.
- Two selections by Asian composers appeared in the 1980s, and then Asian composers gained more popularity into the 2000s, twice making up 6% of the conference repertoire.
- Johannes Brahms is by far the most performed composer in the history of National ACDA conferences with 140 selections performed.
- The music of North American composers includes several prolific Canadians such as Stephen Hatfield and Ruth Watson Henderson, and a wide array of composers from the United States. Frequently performed US composers include Leonard Bernstein, Norman Dello Joio, Kirk Mechem, and Randall Thompson.
- Thirteen female composers enjoyed frequent performances of their work over many years: Carol Barnett (5), Eleanor Daley (15), Emma Lou Diemer (5), Dede Duson (8), Ruth Watson Henderson (13), Hildegard von Bingen (7), Libby Larsen (6), Alice Parker (41), Rosephanye Powell (6), Linda Spevacek (9), Joan Szymko (12), Gwyneth Walker (13), and Chen Yi (6).
- African American composers continue to grow in representation. Since the groundbreaking performance by the Moses Hogan Chorale in 1995,

Hogan's arrangements have been performed dozens of times. Other African American composers who have enjoyed multiple performances over the years include William Dawson, Nathaniel Dett, Rollo Dilworth, Duke Ellington, Stacey Gibbs, Adolphus Hailstork, Jester Hairston, Undine Smith Moore, Rosephanye Powell, Byron Smith, and André Thomas.

This information, along with many more fascinating facts, appears in Marvin Latimer's forthcoming book *Excellence in Choral Music: A History of the American Choral Directors Association*. Latimer says the following about ACDA's signature commissioning program: "The Brock Memorial Commission and the Brock Student Choral Composition Contest became a signature series that arguably constituted one of the more far-reaching contributions on the part of the [ACDA] endowment's many supporters. It was responsible for creating a significant body of choral music penned by some of the most prominent composers in America, including Daniel Pinkham, Gian Carlo Menotti, René Clausen, Morten Lauridson, and Mack Wilberg, to name only a few."

The invigorated work of ACDA's Composition Initiatives Standing Committee is another example of our Association at work to inspire excellence in choral composition. We applaud their splendid performance.



sharp@acda.org

THE 12 PURPOSES OF ACDA

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

—ACDA Constitution and Bylaws

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LOG

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR SEPTEMBER



- National Conference Planning (Kansas City, Feb 27- March 2, 2019)
- Membership Campaign Analysis
- IFCM Executive Committee
- Standing Committee Projects and Funding

WHAT'S ON TIM'S IPAD?



New Power: How Power Works in our Hyperconnected World
Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms

The Evolving Singing Voice: Changes Across the Lifespan
Karen Burnnsen

WHAT'S TIM'S LATEST APP?



MusiciansKit

WHAT'S TIM LISTENING TO?



Mass for Double Choir
by Frank Martin
Westminster Choir

There is an Old Belief
by Hubert Parry
Choir of New College Oxford

Three Nocturnes
by Daniel Elder
Baylor Bella Voce

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

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From the PRESIDENT



Tom Shelton

“Music is, for me, like a beautiful mosaic which God has put together. He takes all the pieces in his hand, throws them into the world, and we have to recreate the picture from the pieces.”

—Jean Sibelius

The focus of the November issue of the *Choral Journal* is on Composition. ACDA's Composition Initiatives Standing Committee, chaired by Dominick DiOrio, is highly creative and has worked incredibly hard over the last few years to make significant changes that will benefit both composers and choral directors. A few of these opportunities include:

- Creating the Diverse Voices Collaborative Grant. The Composition Committee has collaborated with the Diversity Initiatives Committee to create this opportunity. Choirs of all age groups, sizes, and varieties (community, school, church, etc.) are invited to submit an idea for a commissioning project in partnership with a composer from an underrepresented minority to benefit their organization and ACDA. For the purposes of this call, we would like to focus on underrepresented minority groups representing diverse races, ethnicities, and genders.
- Working with Lynne Gackle to provide a wide array of offerings for composers and choral conductors at the 2019 National Conference in Kansas City.
- Expanding the Raymond W. Brock Competition to include one for students and one for professional composers.
- Putting together a major survey to collect information about ACDA Commissions.

As choral conductors, we are indebted to composers for the beautiful works we are given to interpret and perform with our choirs. Wonderful compositions have the power to evoke a multitude of emotions, build community, and allow us to transcend our current situation and transport us to a better place. In the words of Georg Frideric Handel, “I should be sorry if I only entertained them. I wish to make them better.” Thank you to all the composers that are creating beautiful works to “make us better.”

From the EDITOR



Amanda Bumgarner

I am pleased to present this November focus issue, which is a spotlight on Composition. Dominick DiOrio and the members of ACDA's Composition Initiatives Standing Committee have taken great care with the following articles, and it is our hope that this issue fosters an ongoing conversation toward one of ACDA's 12 Purposes: "To foster and promote significant composition of superior quality." I thank Dominick and his committee for their work.

From the Guest Editor



Dominick DiOrio

Greetings from the Composition Initiatives Standing Committee! Now that we've been working hard for two years, I have the privilege of sharing some of our recent projects and updates with you. First of all, we present this focus issue, which embodies our committee's unofficial goal of making new music less scary and intimidating. We do this with articles that deal with repertoire selection, the ins-and-outs of traditional publishing, the commissioning process, and

particular ways composers have responded to tragedy. We hope these articles serve as an enduring resource for the profession.

You'll also notice some changes at the National Conference in Kansas City. We listened to our composer members, and we've done away with the Composer's Track in favor of sessions that bring composers and conductors together. You'll see this embodied in our new Composer's Fair and Happy Hour, a two-hour pop-up event where you can come and chat with any composer who reserves a table. If you're a composer, reserve by Dec. 1!

We also listened to our many composer members who no longer qualify as "young" but still desire competition opportunities. We are now inaugurating the Brock Competition for Professional Composers, and the winning composer and work will be presented at the coming National Conference. The Brock Competition for Student Composers will continue, alternating on opposite years with performances at our regional conferences.

Last January, we started collecting data on ACDA's many commissioning activities. We knew that ACDA had to be one of the most prolific commissioning organizations in the world, and now we have the data to prove it. ACDA has commissioned over three hundred new works in the last two decades. Wow. Soon you'll be able to access the database of these works on our website and even add to it yourself. Watch the ACDA website and ChoralNet for more information as this begins to go live over the next year.

ACDA is clearly a powerful engine for the creation of new music, and we have one more program we are inaugurating to encourage the creation of new music by composers from specific underrepresented minority groups. It's called the "Diverse Voices Collaborative Grant," and we are honored to partner with the Diversity Initiatives Standing Committee to make it happen. You can read about it more on page 20.

(Continued on the next page)

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Friends, the future of our profession is very bright, and I am honored to serve as your standing committee chair as we explore, enliven, and enrich each other through the choral music of today. I am also delighted

to introduce my committee members below, who share equally with me in the joy of this work.

Dominick DiOrio

About the **COMPOSITION INITIATIVES** **NATIONAL STANDING COMMITTEE**



Dominick DiOrio (chair) is an innovative young composer and conductor who has won widespread acclaim for his contributions to American music. He has been hailed for a keenly intelligent, evocative style. In 2014, he won the American Prize in Composition. He is the youngest-ever tenured member of the conducting faculty at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he serves as associate professor of music and director of NOTUS, a select chamber choir that specializes in new music. NOTUS has performed at both regional and national conferences of ACDA. In addition to this leadership role, he is also a member of the Chorus America Board of Directors and president-elect of the National Collegiate Choral Organization.



Andrew Crane is an associate professor in the Brigham Young University School of Music, where he conducts the University Singers and administers the graduate program in choral conducting. Choirs under his direction have appeared by invitation at conferences of ACDA and NAfME, and have won top prizes in international competitions. In 2017, Crane conducted the BYU Singers in an invited performance at the biennial conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization. He appears frequently as a conductor of honor choirs, a clinician, a guest lecturer, and a professional tenor. He edits his own choral series through Walton Music and serves as president-elect of Utah ACDA.



Susan LaBarr is a composer and choral editor living and working in Springfield, Missouri. Her compositions are published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Walton Music, and Morningstar Music. LaBarr has completed commissions for choirs worldwide, most notably Seraphic Fire, the National ACDA Women's Choir Consortium, and the Texas Choral Director's Association's Director's Chorus. She served as the Missouri Composer Laureate for 2012 and 2013. Her arrangement of "Quem pastores laudavere" appeared on New York Polyphony's 2014 Grammy-nominated album, *Sing Thee Nowell*. Central to her musical vocabulary is the knowledge she gained from studying with Alice Parker at her home in Hawley, Massachusetts, in 2012 and 2013. She and her husband, Cameron, reside with their son, Elliott, in Springfield, Missouri, where Cameron is the director of choral studies at Missouri State University and Susan works as editor of Walton Music.



Nancy Menk holds the Mary Lou and Judd Leighton Chair in Music at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, where she is professor of music, director of choral activities, and chair of the music department. She also teaches graduate conducting at the University of Notre Dame. She is founder and conductor of the South Bend Chamber Singers, an ensemble of thirty-two select singers from the Michiana area. Both the Saint Mary's Women's Choir and the South Bend Chamber Singers regularly commission, perform, and record new works. Menk is also conductor of the 110-voice Northwest Indiana Symphony Chorus. She has conducted All-State Choirs in seven states. In October 2016, she became the first woman to program and lead a subscription concert of the South Bend Symphony Orchestra, conducting works by C.P.E. Bach, Antonio Vivaldi, and Igor Stravinsky. In March 2019 she will make her sixth Carnegie Hall appearance conducting a program of music for women's voices and orchestra with DCINY.

Mission Statement:

The ACDA Composition Initiatives Standing Committee shall foster and encourage the creation of quality new music for choruses of all sizes, ages, and abilities by actively supporting the work of living composers through commissions, awards, projects, and other avenues.

Goals:

1. Work actively with the National Conference Planning Committee to encourage interest sessions and programming which emphasize composition initiatives;
2. Provide recommendations to the Executive Committee for composers to be considered for the Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission;
3. Organize and administer the Brock Competitions for Professional and Student Composers;
4. Consider proposals for future endeavors in the composition area from ACDA members;
5. Foster an online interactive community for composers and conductors; and
6. With the support of ACDA staff, catalog all past commissions of the Association at the national, region, and state levels.



Composer Fair & Happy Hour CALL FOR COMPOSERS

The National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association will feature our first-ever Composer Fair & Happy Hour, a meet-and-greet opportunity for ACDA members to have quality face time with composers from across the world. Distinct from the exhibit hall area, the Composer Fair will be a two-hour “pop-up” experience, where members can all gather in the same space and move from table to table, interacting with and conversing with composers of many ages, backgrounds, and traditions. Members will gain valuable time with composers of the music they love, and composers can meet directors to forge new partnerships for mutual benefit. Attendance at the Composer Fair is free to ACDA members who have registered for the National Conference.

The Composer Fair is open to any composer who is also a current, dues-paying member of ACDA on a first-come, first-served basis. Once the available space has been filled, no more Composer Fair registrants will be accepted. All Composer Fair registrations should be complete by December 1, to allow time for the list of composers to be printed in the Choral Journal conference issue.

Composers may register for the Composer Fair online at acda.org. More specific registration and fee information will be available in upcoming issues.

All participating composers are encouraged to bring their own complimentary materials to distribute to anyone in attendance. ACDA will not pay for duplication of materials for composers at the Fair, nor will Composers be allowed to sell hard copies of their scores. (Composers may encourage attendees to purchase their works online, but they may not set up a point of sale at the Fair.)

ACDA reserves the right to limit the number of composers taking part, if necessary, due to space limitations. A/V equipment and hookups will not be provided as part of the reserved space; those wishing for A/V etc, should reserve an exhibit hall booth space.

Questions about the Composer Fair may be directed to Dominick DiOrio at ddiorio@indiana.edu

International Calendar of CHORAL EVENTS

8th Šiauliai Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Šiauliai, Lithuania, Oct 4-7 2018. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories.
Contact: Lituania Cantat,
Email: info@lchs.lt
Website: <https://lchs.lt/>

Nordic Choral Directors Conference, Trondheim, Norway, Oct 5-7, 2018. Concerts by several famous Norwegian choirs, seminars, workshops, lectures. Sessions with presentations of new Nordic choral repertoire.
Contact:
Foreningen Norske Kordirigenter,
Email: fonoko@fonoko.no
Website: www.fonoko.no

Singing in Seville, Spain, Oct 14-19, 2018. A week of music for experienced choral singers in a church in the historic centre of Seville led by Gabriel Díaz. Program rehearsal of Spanish Renaissance music for a public concert.
Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek
Email: avdb@lacock.org
Website: www.lacock.org

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2018, Spain, Oct 15-21, 2018. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Workshops directed by Trent R. Brown (USA), Victor Alarcón (Chile) and Elisenda Carrasco (Spain). A common workshop for all

singers on the Requiem in D minor, K. 626, (Mozart) will be conducted by Jordi Casas i Bayer.
Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona,
Email: info@corearte.es
Website: www.corearte.es

1st International Choral Conducting Competition, London, United Kingdom, Oct 20-21, 2018. Six conductors from France, Russia, United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden and New Zealand secured a place in the Grand Final. Two gala concerts including a world premiere of a commissioned work by Janet Wheeler, some pieces composed and conducted by Jaakko Mäntyjärvi, and the Competition Grand Final. A Young Conductor Day will be part of a choral leadership training organised by the Association of British Choral Directors.
Contact: London International Choral Conducting Competition
Email: info@liccc.co.uk
Website: <http://www.liccc.co.uk>

International Choir Competition of Tolosa, Spain, Oct 31-Nov 4, 2018. Its aim is to bring together the best choirs in the world: exchange of styles, interpretation, choral literature, vocal education and ways of each country and information about the musical and cultural traditions of the Basque Country. Contact:
Centro de Iniciativas de Tolosa
Email: cit@cittolosa.com
Website: www.cittolosa.com

Cantapueblo International Choral Festival, La Fiesta Coral de América, Mendoza, Argentina, Nov 7-10 2018. Great Latin American festival open to mixed choirs, equal voices, mixed youth choirs, chamber ensembles and other vocal groups.
Contact: Cantapueblo Artistic Director: Alejandro Scarpetta,
Email:
cantapuebloargentina@gmail.com
Website: <http://cantapueblo.com/>

Nafplio-Artiva 5th International Choral Festival, Nafplio, Greece, Nov 7-11, 2018. For all non-professional choirs from all over the world. Contact: ARTIVA Cultural Management & Advertising
Email: info@artiva.gr
Website: www.nafplio.gr/en/

6th Jeju International Senior Choral Festival, Jeju Island, Korea (Rep. of), Nov 13-16 or 19-22 2018. Festival for all kind of choirs, including receptions, workshops, rehearsals, concerts, masterclasses, sightseeing tours, talent shows. Part 1 is vacation oriented and part 2 is learning oriented.
Contact: Joongang Art J&A Music,
Email: hyoweon@jnamusic.co.kr

Sligo International Choral Festival, Ireland, Nov 16-18, 2018. Competitive and non-competitive events for mixed choirs, male voice, female voice, youth folksong, madrigals, sacred music, gospel choirs and barbershop.

Contact: Sligo International Choral Festival,
Email: info@sligochoralfest.com
Website:
www.sligochoralfest.com/

Tlaxcala Canta 7th International Choral Festival, Tlaxcala, Mexico, Nov 23-29, 2018.

Festival for mixed, female and male choirs including workshops led by prestigious choral directors, gala concerts, extension concerts and conferences, exhibition and sightseeing tour of the Cacaxtla archeological site.

Contact: Israel Netzahual, Coordinador General,
Email:
informes@tlaxcalacanta.org or
coordinacion@tlaxcalacanta.org
Website: www.tlaxcalacanta.org/

9th Winter Choral Festival, Hong Kong China, Nov 28-Dec 1, 2018.

A festival targeted at Youth Choirs with workshops, masterclasses and choral competition. Round off the festival with a performance in Hong Kong Disneyland Park as part of the Disney Performing Arts Programme. Organised by Rave Group and SourceWerkz.

Contact:
SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng,
Email: info@sourcewerkz.com
Website:
www.winterchoralfestival.com

**A VERY SPECIAL
WORLD CHORAL DAY 2018**

In 2018, a special anniversary makes the World Choral Day even more valuable—the 100th anniversary of the end of the WWI extends the timeframe of this global action and makes possible the virtual participation of choirs around the world for more than one month, from November 11th to December 16th.

Participating choirs are encouraged to register all events dedicated to the World Choral Day and to upload their materials (photos, videos, concert programs, etc.) on <http://worldchoralday.org/>.

**JOIN THE
VOXPOPULI VIRTUAL CHOIR**

An extraordinary opportunity for all singers from around the world. This virtual choir will be presented in collaboration with an initiative honoring the founder of the world choral day, maestro Alberto Grau.

As a commemoration of the end of World War I (WWI), IFCM and Fundación Aequalis invite all singers from all over the world to be a part of the VoxPopuli Virtual Choir, which will perform the winning composition of the 2018 “Concurso Internacional de Composición Coral Alberto Grau” (“Alberto Grau” International Choral Composition Competition, <https://www.ciccag.org/en/>) entitled “Nada Te Turbe” by Carlos Alberto Cordero.

This composition has three sections. As a statement of remembrance, the middle section will be performed by ensembles from the countries that suffered the biggest losses during WWI: Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Ensembles invited to perform this section will be selected by IFCM and its network. Choirs belonging to these countries, who wish to be considered will find more information at <https://www.ciccag.org/en/virtual-choir-voxpopuli/>.

As a statement of global peace and unity, the first and last sections of this composition will be performed by individual singers from all around the world. Singers interested in participating in this global event will need to submit individual recordings by October 7th, 2018. For more information, please visit <https://www.ciccag.org/en/virtual-choir-voxpopuli/>.



COMPOSERS RESPONDING TO TRAGEDY

A CONVERSATION

NANCY MENK

Nancy Menk
Professor and Department Chair
Saint Mary's College
Notre Dame, Indiana

“This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before.”

—Leonard Bernstein,
Monday, November 25, 1963,
in response to the death of
President John F. Kennedy

How often have we seen Leonard Bernstein’s quote posted on our friends’ Facebook pages in the last several years? American composers are increasingly drawn to respond to social issues and tragic events in our country through the composition of new works. Some are intended to provide solace, some to draw public attention to a crisis or social situation, and some to educate.

One of the first major works in recent years to serve as a response to tragedy is Craig Hella Johnson’s *Considering Matthew Shepard*, based on the October 1998 murder of a young, gay student at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. Much has been written about this work, and it is finding its place on concert stages across the country. Another recent work is Steven Sametz’s *A Child’s Requiem*, an oratorio composed to help ease the pain of those whose lives were affected by the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings in 2012.¹

The present article focuses on seven more recent works by American composers who have crafted choral music in response to societal issues or tragic events. These works range from short octavos with piano accompaniment to lengthy works with orchestra. Topics range from gun violence and suicide prevention to Alzheimer’s and dementia. Each composer discusses the genesis of the work and any personal connections to the subject, text selection, and formal structure. Information about duration, forces required, and score availability is included for each work presented.

COMPOSERS RESPONDING TO TRAGEDY

Mass for the Oppressed

Composer: Emerson Eads

Year of Composition: 2016

Forces Required: SATB choir, SATB soloists, strings, piano, percussion (1 player)

Duration: 32 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: Private publication (available by contacting the composer:

www.emersoneads.com)

Performance Link:

www.massfortheoppressed.com/soundcloud.html

Menk: Was this a commission?



Eads: *Mass for the Oppressed* was written without a commissioner. I wrote it as a response to the injustice to four Native Alaskans who wrongfully spent eighteen years in prison for a murder they didn't commit. It was debuted by Houston Symphony Assistant Conductor Robert Franz at the Alaska Summer Arts Festival in the summer of 2016, with the festival orchestra and festival soloists.

Menk: What made you want to compose a work addressing this topic?

Eads: These four men were sentenced and incarcerated in 1998, the year I graduated from high school. Eighteen years later, the Alaska Innocence Project interceded on their behalf, securing their release but with the terms that they could not sue the state for remuneration. Both the joy of their release and the bitterness of the terms of their release made my musical response a complicated one. I decided that a setting of the Mass was the perfect vehicle for my expression.

Menk: Do you have any personal connection to this topic?

Eads: The personal connection is a powerful one for me. This murder of a white male happened in my town of Fairbanks, Alaska, and these men are my age. While I didn't know the Fairbanks Four personally, I reached out to them while I wrote, and they made themselves available to me. I believe the premiere of this work, with

these four men and their families in attendance, started a healing process in my hometown, which is fraught with racial complexities not unlike many towns and cities in our country.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Eads: The choice of text was the first decision I made regarding this work. The Ordinary of the Mass became the structure of the work, with interpolations of poetry from my brother Evan Eads, and a diary entry from Pope Francis, which takes the place of the *Credo*. This diary entry from Pope Francis was written while he was a seminarian, and it uses as a trope "I wish to believe..." rather than the typical "I believe..."

I consulted a *Newsweek* article on the Fairbanks Four, diary entries from their families, and writings from University of Alaska journalism professor Brian Patrick O'Donoghue, who broke the initial story about the plight of the four men.

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Eads: I learned that the Alaska Innocence Project consists of only one attorney, and there is no possible way one man can effectively do this job, although William Oberly does valiant and superhuman work. I also learned that Alaska is one of eighteen states without compensation statutes, making it possible to release innocent prisoners without any remuneration whatsoever.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Eads: The choice of using the five-movement form of the Mass was made for me when I chose to set the text of the Ordinary. However, my decision to add additional texts altered the form by essentially adding "scenes," which unfolded in and around the text of the ordinary.

Menk: Did you encounter any problems during the composition of this work that would be of interest to potential performers, and how did you address these?

Eads: I encountered many problems, but that is the

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nature of composition. One problem was the desire to keep the forces to one percussionist to cut down on orchestra costs. This led to some compromises in the percussion part. Also, I was faced with decisions regarding the role of the choir. Are they just onlookers? Are they part of the action? The answer became clear—the choir is all of these things. They begin the opening *Kyrie* as a congregation and then become indignant protestors, lamenting family members, and even fellow prisoners.

Menk: Did you revise the work after its premiere? If so, were any of these revisions based on the conductor's, the performers', or the audience's reactions to the work?

Eads: I did revise the work after its summer 2016 premiere. Most of the changes were dynamic ones for the orchestra. There were essentially no changes to the overall structure of the work. Maestro Robert Franz promoted the work, studied the work, and interpreted it even better than I was capable of doing at the time. He had many suggestions about orchestral colors and changes, which made my recording in the fall so much easier.

Menk: Are there excerpts from this work that you feel can stand alone in performance, and if so, which ones?

Eads: I think the *Agnus Dei* is a stand-alone piece. It was the first movement I composed, and from the opening of the solo soprano to the *tutti* conclusion, it represents the entire work rather well. I eventually built the entire Mass after having written the *Agnus Dei*, so in many ways the entire work comes out of the final movement.

Menk: Do you have or are you planning any other works that address topics of social justice or societal problems?

Eads: Music of social concern has become my main area of interest as a choral conductor and as a composer. I recently performed Haydn's *Stabat Mater* and paired a new cantata of mine, "...from which your laughter rises" for mezzo soprano, oboe, SATB chorus, strings, and piano. This piece uses texts from the Bible and from my brother, Evan Eads, which deal with the pain and suffering of the mother. While I was in Fairbanks at the premiere

of my *Mass for the Oppressed*, I met Hazel, the mother of Marvin Roberts (one of the Fairbanks Four). It was that interaction with her, meeting her steely gaze, that made it clear I had focused on the pain of the innocent victims with my Mass but not on the innocent mother. So in the tradition of the *Planctus Mariae* and settings of the *Stabat Mater*, I chose to add my voice.

365

Composer: Daniel Elder

Year of Composition: 2016

Forces Required: SATB choir, piano, bass drum, chimes (tubular bells). The percussion is written to be easily playable by members of the chorus.

Duration: 2 and 1/2 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: Free if you contact the composer directly (www.danieleldermusic.com)

Performance Link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGd2gZasj9o

Menk: Was this a commission?



Elder: No, I was inspired—say, compelled—to write this on my own time. I planned to publish and/or sell it at first, but in the past few months I reached a decision that, in this particular case, it is not appropriate to limit its reach to those with a budget. Instead, I would like to give it away to any and all conductors who would like to share it with their audiences. We must all do our part to make the world better, and hopefully I'll do mine.

Menk: What made you want to compose a work addressing the topic of gun violence?

Elder: It's the way we see our politicians—the empathetic ones, at least—react each time an incident of gun violence occurs. They're helpless. You can see it on their faces, and I feel the same way in my heart. It seems as though there is nothing I can do about it except draw awareness in as broad and non-polarizing a way as possible. Music is my mouthpiece, and so I chose to express myself through a piece for choir.

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Menk: Do you have any personal connection to this topic?

Elder: My inspiration involves the pain I feel around me more than it does my own life personally. However, yes; a high school classmate was gunned down in a car-jacking in 2008 at her university. She was the (much-loved) student body president of her institution. It's stories like this that prove the topic really reaches everyone, not just those directly involved in viral-newsworthy incidents.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Elder: I sat in a café, mind abuzz with this paradox of violence vs. liberties, etc., and I just wrote the text. One draft, done in probably five minutes. It is simple and straight to the point, as that's how I believe we must approach this topic.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Elder: There's a style I like to return to whenever I have a text that needs a treatment that's as far from "flowery" as possible. Ugly, harsh truths are among these ideas. In these circumstances, I set the texts bluntly, usually with an unaltered speaking rhythm, calling the ear directly to the words without allowing any distraction by the music. I was first inspired by the power of this type of setting when I heard David Lang's "Little Match Girl Passion" in 2010.

Menk: Did you encounter any problems during the composition of this work that would be of interest to potential performers?

Elder: I have not heard the work rehearsed or performed. However, I've tried carefully to avoid all pitfalls in interpretive vagueness or other subtleties requiring additional information from the composer. Therefore, I believe the score should come off effortlessly by itself.

Menk: Do you have or are you planning any other works that address topics of social justice or societal problems?

Elder: I hope to write a long (20+ minute) work for advanced unaccompanied chorus. Right now my idea is to center on the "When David Heard" text to focus on a much larger theme of parents who have lost their children. By coincidence, it was originally this potential theme that inspired me to write "365" as a possible movement; however, once I completed it, I knew it should exist separately.

Consent

Composer: Ted Hearne

Year of Composition: 2014

Forces Required: 16 voices (SSSSAAAATTTTBBBB)

Duration: 7 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: Project Schott New York (PSNY) (www.eamdc.com/psny)

Performance Link: <https://soundcloud.com/cantaloupemusic/ted-hearne-the-crossing-consent>

Menk: Was this a commission?



Hearne: *Consent* was commissioned by the Yale Choral Artists, Jeffrey Douma, director. Jeff asked me to write this piece as a "response" to a piece of early music. I chose *Loquebantur Variis Linguis* by Thomas Tallis, the incredible seven-voice motet about the Apostles speaking in tongues, and I used that piece as a jumping off point to think about the obfuscations and hidden meanings in language.

Menk: What made you want to compose a work addressing your personal relationship to gender inequality and our connection to language that justifies sexual violence?

Hearne: I had found some old love letters that my father had written in the early 60s, and I was struck by some similarities to letters I myself had written. At the same time, I was considering my connection to/convenient use of/complicity in the institution of marriage, wondering how possible it really was to separate it (and our culture at large) from its deeply patriarchal history. I began to see more clearly my own complicity in patriarchy and rape culture, and to see these forces as stron-

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ger than my own individual intentions. I felt like a work for individual voices intoning overlaid texts on top of one another could be an interesting way to evoke the insidiousness of these patterns through generations. The piece is, in some ways, about highlighting the grey areas around consent and power dynamics in our culture, and I don't know anyone who doesn't have some sort of personal experience around this topic.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Hearne: The text comes from five sources: love letters my father wrote in 1963, love letters I wrote in 2006, excerpts from the Catholic Rite of Marriage, excerpts from the Jewish Ketubah, and text messages used as evidence in the Steubenville Rape Trial of 2013.

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Hearne: I was struck by the way language from each of these different sources similarly objectified and stripped agency from women.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Hearne: Yes, the piece is built around the idea of different types of text bleeding into and being laid on top of each other—that powerful societal forces and cultural traditions are present in the language we use and help perpetuate themselves. This plays out in the form of the work, in that gradually and in turn text becomes less intelligible, and at the climax of the piece all sixteen singers are relaying different texts simultaneously. What does the sound of all these texts at once communicate, even if all intelligibility and meaning of individual words is lost?

Menk: Did you revise the work after its premiere?

Hearne: I only made very small revisions. The work was first recorded by the incredible choir, The Crossing, under the direction of Donald Nally.

But a Flint Holds Fire

Composer: Andrea Ramsey

Year of Composition: SA voicing (2016);

SATB voicing (2017)

Forces Required: SA or SATB choir and piano

Duration: 4 and 1/2 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: Hal Leonard

Performance Link: <https://youtu.be/chtSEG4K6-8>

Menk: Was this a commission?



Ramsey: The original SA work was part of Chorus America's fundraising consortium whereby a composer agrees to donate a new work to Chorus America, and Chorus America invites choirs to be part of a commissioning consortium

for a nominal fee. In exchange, the choir and conductor are included on the dedication in the score and gain access to the work before it is made available to all. The fee is less expensive than commissioning on one's own, and all the money raised serves as a fundraiser for Chorus America.

Menk: What made you want to compose a work addressing this topic?

Ramsey: Having lived in Michigan from 2010 to 2013 during my doctoral studies at Michigan State University, I watched closely as the Flint Water Crisis unfolded in 2014. I felt sadness, anger, and frustration; but mostly, I felt like there was nothing I could do. One day, I put those two worlds together and realized I could use my Chorus America work to create awareness and raise money for Flint.

The humanitarian crisis of over 100,000 people without clean drinking water from 2014 until now, paired with the environmental crisis of the daily waste from so many plastic water bottles, is overwhelming. Much of the media has abandoned Flint, leading the general public to believe the crisis was resolved. For the residents on the ground who are still living with toxic water and eroded pipes, this is far from over. I wanted to help effect change for a community that has been wronged, overlooked, and left to tend to a mess they did not create. No one should be without clean drinking water.

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At the outset of the project, one Flint student shared gut-level advice for me:

“I think you should include the facts: corrupt government who think little of the residents, paying for water we can’t use... There is no cure for lead poisoning. No need to sugar coat it. You can make it poetic and artistic, but include the facts.”

Galvanized by her request, I tried to create an honest work—presenting the facts and harsh realities, yet also honoring the persistent optimism of this community of caring, intelligent people who still hope and believe in the best for their city. Half the royalties from the sale of the work go to Flint Rising, and the score contains a QR code for conductors to put in concert programs so audience members can link to the donation site.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Ramsey: The text was created from two sources: a poem by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), and writings by choir students in Flint and Flint Township, Michigan, who were personally impacted by the water crisis. Dr. Karen Salvador, associate professor of music education, made connections to the schools, and we asked the students to share how the water crisis had impacted them, to offer their thoughts on the Rossetti poem, and to also share all the great things about Flint they wished more people knew about the city. I then sifted through their writings and winnowed their words down to the current phrases used in the piece. Many of the phrases are spoken, but some of the shorter phrases are sung (e.g. “we can’t use the water”). I looked for recurring themes and well-articulated experiences and feelings.

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Ramsey: I had my eyes opened to far more than I anticipated. Some things I almost wish I could unlearn. People began to contact me after the various premieres were happening. I learned that Flint is not alone. All over the US there are communities like Flint with toxic or unsafe drinking water situations. I now filter my water at home. In researching the opening contextual narration, I came

face-to-face with the intersection of politics and art. I had hoped to avoid politics and simply create an artistic response to a humanitarian crisis. However, the deeper I went into research the harder it was to overlook a sizable government role in covering up many parts of this crisis. Spurred on by that student who reminded me to “include the facts,” I decided I had to be honest, even if that meant making some people uncomfortable. I included the facts—some of which do not shed favorable light on certain politicians involved.

I was also reminded of the responsibility we have as artists in making sure our work is not exploitative and that it honestly represents the voices of those whose stories we are sharing. We vetted the work with grassroots organizations in Flint to ensure no one was offended and to make sure I had my facts straight. We made sure that the students who wrote for the project understood what was involved.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Ramsey: Certainly the text sources impacted the form, as did some of the imagery surrounding the crisis. For the two Rossetti stanzas, I used similar melodic ideas. In setting the words of the students, the music differed from phrase to phrase. I painted water images throughout the piano—sometimes dripping, sometimes running, sometimes murky. There are cries of rage and frustration in the voices, and eighth-note alternating octaves in the right hand of the piano to mimic medical equipment when the topic of lead poisoning is addressed. There is also a shift to major tonality and an increase in tempo as we reach the text where students share all that is good about Flint. That concluding section feels primarily hopeful and uplifting until the very end where three low, unsettling chords precede the final spoken phrase, “I still keep hope that Flint has a brighter future ahead of it.” For me, I felt the conclusion needed to be unresolved—to acknowledge that this crisis is still unresolved and unacceptable.

Menk: Did you revise the work after its premiere? If so, were any of these revisions based on the conductor’s, the performers’, or the audience’s reactions to the work?

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Ramsey: After the SA voicing premiered, Dr. Karen Salvador at the University of Michigan-Flint contacted me about doing a residency the following year, which included a festival of area high school choral students. She hoped to feature the work at the festival, but I shared two concerns with her: 1) How did we know the water crisis would still be an issue in a year's time? 2) The two-part work didn't seem well suited to mixed-voice high school students.

She responded that there was no way the crisis would be resolved in a year's time. Saddened to hear that, I told her if it proved to be true, I would create an SATB version for free and be there for the residency. I still wish we had a different outcome, but she was right. I visited Flint in October 2017. The crisis is still a crisis.

We added a phrase for the SATB premiere at the Flint students' suggestion during our time of sharing. They wanted to include the phrase: "Who can we hold accountable for this?" It was only included in the spoken narrative of the premiere performance and not revised in the notation. This message is becoming increasingly centric in their community as the crisis drags on and different governmental entities shift blame while the citizens suffer.

Menk: Can you share a bit more about your residency experience?

Ramsey: Things became very personal. I saw a vibrant downtown area and met wonderful people. While my hotel in Flint was unaffected by the crisis, the church where we rehearsed was very much affected. Stacks of cases and jugs of water lined the hallways and stairwells.

I shared my fears with the 200+ students in attendance, mostly that they wouldn't want to sing a song about the tragedy they'd been living since April 2014. They encouraged me—eager to be heard, to tell their story, frustrated and concerned that people were no longer paying attention to Flint. In one of the rehearsals, we opened a space for sharing. I learned that for many students, three years later, the crisis was exactly the same in their home as it was in April of 2014 and maybe worse—because the water distribution had stopped and the media focus had shifted. Unaffected students expressed feelings of guilt and shared how they would allow their friends and their friends' families to come use

their showers, collect water, or wash their clothes. Students from neighboring communities expressed shock that the crisis was still this bad. Even *they* didn't realize it. Some neighboring-city choirs spoke of organizing water donation drives for their new choir friends in Flint.

While conducting, the text of the work became even more jarring to me. Everything was now in first person. As students were singing the phrase "We all had to get tested" I realized that for most of them, this was true, and that many of them even had lead poisoning. Some of the student speakers read the very words they had contributed to the original SA voicing the year before. It was hard to stay in the music at times because things were so gut-wrenchingly real. It was a day I will never forget.

Please Stay

Composer: Jake Runestad

Year of Composition: 2016

Forces Required: SATB and piano, soloist

(SA, TB, Unison, and SAB voicings also available)

Duration: 6 and 1/2 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability:

JR Music (jakerunestad.com)

Performance Link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=17Ywn3ImcYE

Menk: Was this a commission?



Runestad: This work was commissioned by a consortium of twenty-four colleges and universities sponsored by the Ohio Choral Directors Association.

Menk: What made you want to compose a work addressing the subject of suicide prevention?

Runestad: Mental illness has a widespread presence in our culture, yet conversations surrounding it are often suppressed or carry a stigma. My hope for "Please Stay" is to provide an opportunity for meaningful conversation about depression, to let those with mental illnesses know they are not alone, and to support efforts for suicide prevention.

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Menk: Do you have any personal connection to this topic?

Runestad: I have friends and family members who have dealt with depression, two family members who attempted suicide, a friend in college who attempted suicide, and another friend who completed suicide.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Runestad: To Write Love on Her Arms is an organization that works to support efforts for suicide prevention. Each year they have a campaign that includes t-shirts, public events, and engagement on social media. This past year, they encouraged their Twitter followers to share reasons they chose life instead of suicide using the hashtag #IKeptLiving. I read through hundreds of these powerful tweets and adapted them for the text used in “Please Stay.”

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Runestad: As with many of the more sensitive topics explored in art, there are helpful and hurtful ways to address them. Mental illness and suicide are serious issues, and I wanted to adhere to guidelines set forth by mental health professionals in order for the piece to be a positive approach to the topic. I researched best-practices for dealing with mental illness and consulted organizations such as the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Runestad: I wrote the piece with the intention of speaking directly to someone in the audience who has mental health issues or is considering suicide. The opening plea of “No, don’t go!” is followed by a calming melody inviting the listener to “please stay.” The piece is constructed so that it can have practical applications—sung by a single voice to a friend or with a full chorus and piano.

Menk: Do you have or are you planning any other works that address topics of social justice or societal problems?

Runestad: “We Can Mend the Sky” (8:30, SATB choir & percussion) sets a poem by fourteen-year-old Warda Mohamed, an immigrant from Somalia, that explores the experience of leaving one’s home and moving to a new place. A Somali proverb, “If we come together, we can mend a crack in the sky,” is also a central theme of the work.

“Dreams of the Fallen” (25:00, solo piano, SATB choir, & orchestra) explores the impact war has on an individual, especially once she/he returns from the experience, and includes poetry by veteran poet Brian Turner.

“Into the Light” (17:00, SATB choir & chamber orchestra) commemorates 500 years since the Reformation by considering what needs reforming in our world today. The work explores the control of fear and how it leads to racism, xenophobia, and ignorance, and how we can fight fear with love. The text is drawn from reformers throughout history including Helen Keller, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Frederick Douglass.

“Rise Up” (5:00, SSAA choir & piano) features empowering words from speeches and writings by Susan B. Anthony—a proponent of women’s suffrage and advocate for equality and justice.

Shadow and Light, an Alzheimer’s Journey

Composer: Joan Szymko

Year of Composition: 2016

Forces Required: SATB choir, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and soprano solos, speaker, and chamber orchestra (2222-2200-2) perc, timp, harp,

Duration: 70 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: Joan Szymko Music/
www.joanszymko.com

Menk: Was this a commission?



Szymko: I was contacted early in 2014 by Dr. Diane Retallack, Artistic Director of Eugene Concert Choir (ECC), who was intending to apply for a grant to fund the creation of a major work for the choral/orchestral repertory on the theme of Alzheimer’s dementia. Both her mother and grandmother had died with severe dementia. Diane had

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an up-close and deeply personal experience with Alzheimer's and a strong desire to call attention to this profoundly tragic disease and make it a shared experience through the power and grace of art. She asked if I would be interested in being named the commissioned composer. To compose a commission for chorus and orchestra is a great opportunity, no matter the subject, and so of course I agreed!

Menk: How did you feel about the request to address this topic musically?

Szymko: While I didn't choose this topic, as my research progressed, I soon came to see universal aspects of the Alzheimer's story that I very much wanted to address. I wanted to approach this topic not solely as a human tragedy but also as a great love story. I hoped that people hearing this work might be able to look Alzheimer's in the face—without fear and with a great deal of empathy. I do think this work accomplishes its intended purpose: it bears beautiful, loving witness to a growing population that feels largely invisible and ignored.

Menk: Do you have any personal connection to this topic?

Szymko: Alzheimer's dementia has not shown up in my immediate family, thankfully. You know, there is often just one degree of separation between most people and someone whose life has been profoundly touched by Alzheimer's. I have good friends and several singers in my choirs who have cared for parents with dementia, and so I've seen the emotional toll it has taken on their lives.

Menk: What were your text sources?

Szymko: I was commissioned not only to compose but to also create the libretto for this work—no small task! My libretto is a carefully ordered collection of poems and texts from various sources including Scripture, contemporary poets, poems by care partners, journals of people living with Alzheimer's, and my own lyrics. As a choral composer, I am always extremely text focused, and I felt a great deal of pressure to get this one right. I spent several months just reading about Alzheimer's—clinical books that explained and explored the

ongoing frustrations of the medical/scientific world trying to crack this puzzling disease. I also read personal memoirs of those caught in the web of dementia and of those loved ones left in its wake. I was alert to articles in the media on the subject and spent a lot of time searching the internet. I had interviews with four people with Alzheimer's (in various stages of the disease) and their care partners. These meetings were arranged for me by ECC and were all filmed for the documentary (a beautiful forty-minute film that won Best Documentary at the 2017 Oregon Independent Film Festival—you can view "The Story of Shadow and Light" at www.aofilms.com). I also attended a rehearsal of the Be Here Now Choir, an ensemble for those with memory loss and their care partners. My interviews with the director, a singer with early onset Alzheimer's, and a Q & A with the whole choir were a significant turning point in my process of creating this work.

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Szymko: I could talk about this for a really long time! Probably the most surprising thing I learned was that we don't know how Alzheimer's disease (AD) works—what causes it, how best to treat it; the medical research community is not in agreement. While much is known about how the brain functions, much about the brain remains a mystery. And, as AD progresses, every person's brain compensates differently, hence the widely divergent symptoms in those afflicted with dementia. What we do know for certain is that the brain cell death associated with AD cannot be halted or reversed. There is no viable treatment, nor is there a cure. Alzheimer's marches along an observed pathway through the brain ravaging memories, executive function, spatial awareness, and, in its final stages, muscle memory. One loses brain function in the exact opposite direction it was gained from birth to adulthood. In the beginning stages, I got caught up in all this brain science, which I found really fascinating, and at one point thought I would use it as a compositional device for this piece.

The most profound learning was of the deep fear and anxiety suffered by those facing a diagnosis of Alzheimer's. The fear felt by those in early stages of AD—of losing control, independence, indeed of one's "self-

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hood”—is debilitating and devastating. Having AD is also very stigmatizing. Some describe AD as having 7 stages, or 3 stages. One could reasonably say there are just 2 stages: the first being where the person afflicted is still painfully aware of their cognitive impairment; the second being the stage where the disease has progressed so much that that awareness, along with its inherent suffering, is gone.

And then there is the hidden toll AD has on the lives of the loved ones of the afflicted. The emotional stress is acute. Friends go away. Jobs are lost. Finances are depleted. Caregivers, two-thirds of whom are women, are at a greater risk of depression, isolation, and illness. The most unsurprising thing I learned over the course of my research was that our cultural reluctance to acknowledge aging and death only makes AD more devastating, as

ANNOUNCING THE ACDA DIVERSE VOICES COLLABORATIVE GRANT

The Composition Initiatives Standing Committee, in partnership with the Diversity Initiatives Standing Committee, invites proposals for the inaugural Diverse Voices Collaborative Grant.

Choirs of all ages, sizes, and varieties (civic, school, church, professional, etc.) are invited to submit a proposal for a commissioning project in partnership with a composer from an underrepresented minority, so to actively encourage the creation of new music for the benefit of both their organization and ACDA. For this first round of grant proposals, we will focus on underrepresented minority groups representing diverse races, ethnicities, and/or genders.

Choirs are invited to submit a proposal with the following information:

- Information about the composer
 - o Name, headshot, and short bio (200 words)
 - o Two representative PDF scores (recordings not required, but encouraged) of the composer's recent work for chorus (within the last five years)
- Information about the desired new commissioned work:
 - o Performing forces desired (e.g. SATB a cappella, SSA & piano, etc.)
 - o Desired length of piece
 - o Statement from the composer, outlining the scope of the commission, to include details such as text, theme, ideas, etc.
- Statement from the organization about how this specific project will benefit your organization, community, and ACDA more broadly. Please reference your organization's mission, goals, or values as appropriate.
- A signed letter from both conductor and composer stating that, should they be awarded the Diverse Voices Collaborative Grant, that they agree to work together to create a new work, and that the full grant amount will go entirely toward the composer's commission fee.

The initial amount of the Diverse Voices Collaborative Grant will be \$2,500. Multiple awards may be granted. Proposals will be judged by an anonymous jury of both conductors and composers. Winners will be announced on or before April 15, 2019. Awarded organizations and composers will be recognized in the Choral Journal. One year after receipt of the award, organizations will be required to submit a one-page progress report to ACDA detailing the results of their project.

Deadline to apply: **December 15, 2018**

Send proposals to: ddiorio@indiana.edu

A CONVERSATION

those who have AD and their care partners feel largely invisible. (Stories about those afflicted with early onset AD appear much more in the media, as these stories are viewed as more tragic—old people, already unseen, are not so newsworthy). This unwillingness to face the reality of AD cannot go on, because with the aging of the Baby Boomer population, the predictions are that Alzheimer's will reach epidemic proportions with the number of cases in America tripling to 16 million by 2050. In the future, many more will spend their retirement years either with Alzheimer's or caring for someone who has it.

And finally—and this was a guiding light as I composed the work—I learned that we now know for certain that the best way to care for those with dementia is to be with them where they are. To not emphasize all the loss but focus on the human connection that remains.

Menk: Did the topic itself have an impact on the overall form of the work?

Szymko: Yes, absolutely. Three major segments provide the structure for a “universal” story of Alzheimer's. Part I is told from the perspective of a person diagnosed with dementia and features the mezzo-soprano soloist. Part II focuses on the perspective of the loved one/care partner (soprano and tenor). Part III maintains that the person with dementia has not “disappeared”—is not “the disease”—but a person still capable of feeling love, beauty, and music, and remains capable of connection. Throughout, the chorus performs the role of storyteller, care partner and witness.

In my research, I came across the Mini Mental Exam. This is a verbal exam of cognitive function that someone with Alzheimer's will take multiple times. I used one of the questions as a connective device: “I'm going to give you three words, can you repeat them?” In Part I, when the off-stage narrator first says this, she gives words comparable to what you would hear in an actual exam. Later in Part I, the three words express what the AD patient is feeling: shame, fear, stigma. In Part II, those words are addressed to the caregiver: “heartbreak, stress, resilience.” Finally, in Part III, the narrator says, “I'm going to give you three new words: Be - Here - Now.”

While I was composing the work, many people asked if I was aware of all the recent news about how music, especially favorite songs, can “bring people back”

and improve cognitive function. I was, and I did shine a light on this aspect of care in No. 15: “I sing to you / songs you taught me when I was small / not knowing the words would someday hold / more meaning than we could ever imagine.” This movement leads into perhaps the most poignant moment in the score.

Menk: Did you encounter any problems during the composition of this work that would be of interest to potential performers, and how did you address these?

Szymko: The main problem is that there is not just one Alzheimer's story. As I prepared the libretto, I soon realized that I couldn't remain within the intended scope of a thirty-minute commission and communicate the universal story I wanted to tell. I absolutely wanted this work to be a comfort for anyone in the concert hall who has been touched by AD. So what was to be a “second half-of-a-concert” thirty-minute work, became a sixteen movement, seventy-minute work. My plan moving forward is to produce an edition for reduced accompanying forces so that “Shadow and Light” can be more accessible to choruses with budget constraints.

Menk: Are there excerpts from this work that you feel can stand alone in performance, and if so, which ones?

Szymko: Yes. No. 8, “Lead Kindly Light” (the hymn text) and the final movement, “Love Bears All Things” (1 Corinthians 13:7-8). “Love Bears All Things” is very tender, a heartfelt expression of the enduring love that prevails when all else—all words, all memory, all function fails. I also scored this final movement for simple forces: SATB, soprano and tenor soli, piano, and violin.

Menk: Do you have or are you planning any other works that address topics of social justice or societal problems?

Szymko: In January 2019, I'm delivering a donated consortium commission to Chorus America that deals head-on with bullying, which is of course, a major and potentially lethal problem in our society right now.

Seven Last Words of the Unarmed

Composer: Joel Thompson

Year of Composition: 2014

Forces Required: TTBB chorus, two violins, viola, cello, bass, and piano

Duration: ca. 15 minutes

Publisher or Score Availability: MusicSpoke.com

Performance Link: <https://youtu.be/zdNXoqNuLRQ>

Menk: What made you want to compose a work focusing on the deaths of unarmed men (Kenneth Chamberlain, Trayvon Martin, Amadou Diallo, Michael Brown, Oscar Grant, John Crawford, and Eric Garner) at the hands of the police?



Thompson: This was not a commission; it was a personal project. It was an exorcism of my grief and a way to process my emotions after a Staten Island grand jury failed to indict the officer whose actions led to the death of Eric Garner.

Menk: While the text for each of the seven movements is literally the victim's last words, did you use any other sources in your research?

Thompson: I was inspired by the #lastwords pictogram series by the NY-based Iranian-American journalist, Shirin Barghi. I modeled the piece after the liturgy of the Seven Last Words of Christ. For example, Amadou Diallo's last words, "Mom, I'm going to college," are the basis of the third movement of the piece because of the maternal nature of the third saying in the liturgy. Before each movement, I watched the filmed death of the individual, if it was available, and read at least five different articles about each death.

Menk: What did you learn about this topic while composing the work?

Thompson: I learned that, without fail, in the aftermath of every death of the young black men whose last words I set, there was always a very transparent attempt to justify their demises in an effort to deny society's com-

licity in their deaths. Personally, I found that composition provided the perfect outlet for me to explore all the nuances of these emotions I had kept inside for years. The very process of composing the piece was an exercise in mindfulness that I've continually practiced since.


Menk: Did you encounter any problems during the composition of this work that would be of interest to potential performers?

Thompson: Some people believe the piece is anti-police and feel very uncomfortable singing the work. I think it is really important to have raw and guided discussions concerning race, police brutality, and the universal nature of loss in tandem with rehearsal of the piece.

Menk: Are there excerpts from this work you feel can stand alone in performance, and if so, which ones?

Thompson: Yes, the 3rd movement, "Amadou Diallo."

The ACDA Composition Initiatives Standing Committee invites other composers of works written in response to societal problems or tragic events to promote their works on the ACDA Composition Initiatives Facebook page.

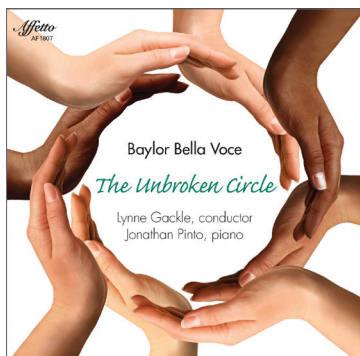
Other resources for finding socially conscious choral music include the Empowering Silenced Voices Database for Socially Conscious Choral Music, curated by Chorosynthesis founders Jeremiah Selvey and Wendy Moy (<http://chorosynthesis.org/esvdatabase/>), and the Justice Choir Songbook (<http://www.justicechoir.org/songbook/>) by co-editors Abbie Betinis, Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, and Ahmed Fernando Anzaldúa. 

NOTES

¹ An article by Lisa Graham on this work can be found in the October 2017 issue of *Choral Journal*.

THE UNBROKEN CIRCLE

Baylor Bella Voce • Lynne Gackle

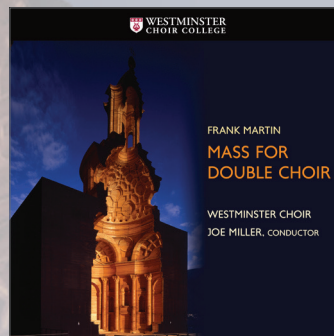


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MASS FOR DOUBLE CHOIR

Westminster Choir • Joe Miller

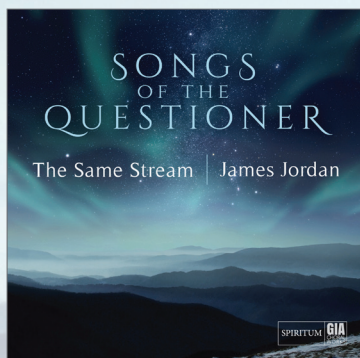


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Rutgers University Kirkpatrick Choir
Patrick Gardner



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A (SOMEWHAT) BRIEF GUIDE TO COMMISSIONING NEW MUSIC

Dominick DiOrio

It is exciting to bring a new composition into the world, not just for the composer, but also for the performers who premiere the work and for the listeners who witness its birth. As conductors, we are often the catalyst for that creative process by initiating the conversations with a composer that lead to the commission.

In May 2018 at the ACDA Leadership Retreat in Kansas City, I heard from regional and state leaders who told me that many of their members are confused about how to begin the commissioning journey, what it entails, and what it might cost. To that end, I've prepared a short primer to help demystify the process.

Dominick DiOrio
Associate Professor of Music
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music
Bloomington, Indiana

The Basics

In its simplest form, someone (the “commissioner”) invites a composer to create a new work (the “commission”) in return for a fee. The terms of this commission are then laid out in a legal agreement or contract between these two parties.

Often, a conductor will approach a composer to begin discussions about a new commissioned work. While the conductor is usually the commissioner, it is also possible for the business side of the commission to be finalized with another member of the conductor’s organization (such as an executive director, academic dean, or finance officer).

Commissioning a new work is similar to buying bespoke clothing: if you want a custom garment tailor made to your body, you pay a premium instead of buying a cheaper garment off the rack. In music, too, the commissioner pays a premium to have a new piece of music designed specifically for their ensemble and its needs.



A (SOMEWHAT) BRIEF GUIDE TO

STEP 1: Choosing a Composer

This part may seem self-explanatory, but it's worth mentioning because the wrong choice at this stage can negatively impact the entire process. When looking for a composer for your organization or ensemble, there are many avenues to explore, and it may be helpful to categorize them based upon relative level of experience:

- A young, emerging composer (potentially a student)
- A member of your community (or even a member of your ensemble)
- A locally or regionally known composer with a developing reputation
- A nationally known composer with an established record of success
- An internationally known composer regularly writing music for highly visible opportunities at the highest levels of the profession

In general terms, the more well-known and active a composer is, the more expensive it will be to commission them and the further in advance you may need to plan to get on their schedule. So even though an internationally known composer may be flashy and exciting, it may be the wrong choice for your organization based upon your budget, your needs, and your mission. And while a student composer may come with additional challenges—for instance, not much experience writing works for chorus—they would likely be grateful for a commission early in their career.

A few more important tips:

- 1) It goes without saying, I hope, but listen to the works of any composer you are interested in commissioning prior to approaching them. If you like what you hear, chances are you will be happy with your eventual new work too.
- 2) Seek out recommendations of colleagues you trust. If you know that Composer X has written recently for

Choir Y and Conductor Z, call up Z and ask how it went. You might be surprised what you learn.

- 3) If approaching a composer of greater stature and experience, be prepared to pay for their work at the level they can demand. (More on appropriate pay scaling follows below.) If you know you can't afford to pay Superstar Composer Q at \$25,000 for a new work, it's best not to reach out to her agent and hope for a \$500 special deal.

Once you've decided whom you want to commission, then you can move on to Step 2.

STEP 2: The Initial Conversation

For me, commissioning is a holistic process and should begin with an honest and open conversation between the conductor and the composer. This conversation usually takes the form of an in-person coffee meeting or a 30-45-minute phone call. As we are all likely to have preconceived notions about what we "want" from a new piece of music, this conversation helps both people to be on the same page.

As a composer, I seek to learn as much as I can from the conductor about the ensemble. This includes general questions about an organization's mission, history, and aspirations. I may ask questions like:

- Do you have a mission or vision for your ensemble/organization that you could share? (Or if not, are there shared values that your singers embody?)
- What are some concerts or themes you've programmed recently?
- Which recent pieces have your singers enjoyed performing and why?
- Are there any stories or moments you can share with me about your organization or ensemble that have been watershed moments?

I will also ask about some of the nitty-gritty details

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that are critical for delivering the piece (and if you want to commission a new work, it's helpful to think about these details before talking to a composer):

- How long would you like the new piece to be? (3-5 minutes? 6-8 minutes? It's good to work in approximate ranges.)
- What are the forces you are looking to employ? (SATB? SSA? With piano or *a cappella*? A larger group such as chamber orchestra or wind ensemble?)
- How does your ensemble deal with divisi? (Is writing in 8 individual parts SSAATTBB okay, or is it better to be mostly SATB with occasional divisi?)
- What are your reliable high notes in sopranos/tenors and reliable low notes in altos/basses? (You may wish to differentiate between those notes that can be sustained and those that can be briefly touched, and also possible dynamic ranges for each.)
- Are there any soloists in your ensemble you hope to feature, and which parts do they sing?
- Do you have a theme in mind for the concert where the work will be premiered?
- When are you hoping to premiere the work? (2 years from now? 3 months from now?)
- What kind of text are you looking for? (Sacred or secular? An older text by a poet in the public domain or a text by a living poet? If the latter, do you have permission from the poet or their publisher to set the text? Are you interested in commissioning a new poem for this work in addition to music?)

The conductor may also forecast their desires in statements like:

- I'm worried about getting a work that is too "difficult" or "esoteric."
- I'm really looking for an up-tempo work that is exciting

and fresh.

- The sopranos are great this year, but all of them are seniors who are graduating. Can you write a soprano part appropriate for my developing singers?

The conductor should also ask at this stage about the composer's fee scale and share any budgetary constraints:

- What do you usually charge for a piece of this length and scope?
- What other costs might there be if we would like you to attend the premiere?
- Are you available for in-person rehearsals or Skype sessions with the group (and what does that cost)?
- I only have a budget to pay for about half of the fee you've described. What solutions might there be? (In short: budget over two years to pay for the work instead of one; ask for a work half as long; work with a less-experienced composer whose fee scale is more manageable for you; or hope that the composer accepts a lower rate because they really want to work with you.)

Once this conversation is completed, both parties have a good understanding of how to proceed and then it's time to put it all in writing.

STEP 3: The Contract

At this point, it is appropriate for me to issue a disclaimer: I am not a lawyer and this article is not dispensing actual legal advice for you to use. I am offering options based upon my own experience as a composer who has been commissioned by more than fifty different organizations. I wholeheartedly advise you to seek out the advice of a legal professional when reviewing a contract for a commission. With that said, here are my two (or three, or four) cents.

The composer (or occasionally, the commissioner) will prepare a contract based upon the details that were

A (SOMEWHAT) BRIEF GUIDE TO

discussed in your conversation. After naming and identifying the two parties, the contract should include the following sections (examples in italics):

1. AGREEMENT TO COMMISSION: This spells out exactly what you are asking the composer to do and all of the parameters of the new work.

X Organization (“Commissioner”) commissions Y Composer (“Composer”) to compose an original choral work (“Work”) within the following parameters:

- *Length: 3-5 minutes*
- *Text: Secular public domain text (poetry or prose) to be chosen mutually by Commissioner and Composer*
- *Scoring/Instrumentation: SATB and piano (SA divisi ok, no TB divisi)*
- *Timeline:*
 - June 1, 2019: Text to be chosen by this date*
 - October 1, 2019: Draft score provided to Commissioner*
 - October 15, 2019: Commissioner provides feedback*
 - November 1, 2019: Final score delivered*
- *Due Date (for delivery of all final scores and parts): November 1, 2019*

2. FEE: This details the amount to be paid to the Composer and how it will be paid. This section will also include any separate fees for performance parts, for rush delivery, etc.

Commissioner will pay the Composer a fee of \$5,000 in two equal installments. The first (\$2,500) will be due upon the signing of this contract, and the second (\$2,500) will be due two weeks after the Due Date listed above.

3. FIRST PERFORMANCE RIGHT: This section describes the details of the first performance of the work, and usually includes a clause stating how long the Commissioner has been granted the right to the first performance.

Commissioner will have the right to give the first performance of the Work and make best efforts to premiere the Work in February of 2020 at a location of their choosing. If Commissioner is unable to perform the Work at the referenced time, they will retain the right to perform the world premiere, provided it takes place before December 30, 2020, after which—if no premiere performance has occurred—the Work may be premiered by another organization.

4. ADDITIONAL PERMISSIONS/RIGHTS: In this section, the Commissioner and Composer each grant some limited rights to the other. Some of the rights that the Composer grants the Commissioner include:

- The right to duplicate the scores/parts for rehearsals and the first performance
- The right to create an archival (non-commercial) audio/video recording of the Work
- The right to use Composer’s name and likeness in media materials surrounding the premiere to market the Work
- The right to assign a dedication to the Work (which will be included on all future scores, including those eventually published more broadly)

In return, the Commissioner provides the Composer with the following:

- A premiere performance of the Work, within a given timeframe
- A video and/or audio recording of that premiere performance for Composer’s non-commercial use, usually provided within ninety days of the premiere
- The right to use the organization’s name and likeness in media materials for Composer’s own marketing purposes
- Travel expenses to attend the premiere performance (to include airfare/mileage, lodging, meal per diem, and ground transportation)

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- An agreed-upon number of complimentary tickets to the premiere and any subsequent performances of the Work

5. COPYRIGHT: There is usually a statement in the contract that makes explicit that the Composer retains the copyright in the Work, and that is it not “work made for hire.”

Both parties attest that the Composer is not an employee of Commissioner; thus Composer retains the copyright of the Work and all other rights associated with the Work not mentioned herein; and that this agreement is not “work made for hire” as determined by the United States Copyright Act of 1976.

6. FULFILLMENT: This section describes what happens if either party does not hold up their side of the agreement. It usually takes the form of a statement like:

If, for any cause beyond the control of the Composer, Composer is unable to fulfill the terms of this agreement, their sole liability to Commissioner will be the refund of all monies paid to date.

If, after executing this agreement and paying the Composer the first payment, Commissioner decides to withdraw from the agreement, Commissioner will forfeit any monies already paid to Composer.

7. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: Maybe you want to make a commercial recording in addition to an archival recording? Maybe you want the composer to attend a certain number of rehearsals prior to the premiere? Great. All of those details should also be spelled out in the contract, and you can add them anywhere you want after the items above. You can also explicitly state that those items would be subject to a new agreement. A few examples:

Commercial Recording: If Commissioner wishes to record the work for commercial release, a separate agreement will be drawn up between Commissioner and Composer detailing the apportionment of those rights and any associated fees.

Rehearsals/Clinics: If Commissioner wishes to have Composer attend rehearsals, workshops, or clinics (including Skype sessions, etc.) to work with the performers, this will incur separate clinician fees of \$75 per hour.

8. THE LEGAL STUFF: Finally, before the agreement is finished, it should touch upon items that are typical in contracts of this nature, such as indemnification clauses, liability, construction, binding effect, etc. This is where a lawyer is necessary and helpful.

9. THE AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURE: Most contracts of this nature end with a statement similar to the one below, followed by signatures, printed names, and dates by all parties involved.

This agreement embodies the entire understanding of the parties hereto with respect to the commission and may not be modified except in writing, signed by duly authorized representatives of both parties hereto.

And there you have it! Once this agreement is drawn up, it is typical for the parties to have a chance to suggest amendments, revisions, and changes before signing. This negotiation stage can and should include any adjustments to the fee structure, if it has not yet been worked out. This bears discussing in greater detail.

STEP 4: Negotiations and Fee Considerations

Ah, the money. This is the part that tends to stymie even the best of us... and for good reason! The real costs of commissions tend to be veiled in secrecy. Many professional composers are unwilling to discuss their rates, and emerging composers may not know what to charge. I hope to alleviate some of that anxiety.

It is important to understand the many factors that can impact the cost of a commission. They include (but are not limited to):

1. DURATION/length (in minutes or, less frequently, measures) It may seem obvious, but in general, longer pieces cost more than shorter pieces. Many

A (SOMEWHAT) BRIEF GUIDE TO

composers operate on a dollars-per-minute scale. The industry standard scale often cited is \$1,000 per finished minute of music, but even this is a bit overly simplified, as this varies by experience, geographical region, and instrumentation of the score.

Example 1: A young composer may charge \$500/minute for a 3-5 minute a cappella SATB work, for a total fee of \$2,000.

Example 2: An established composer with a national reputation may charge \$1,000/minute for a 3-5 minute a cappella SATB work, for a total fee of \$4,000.

Example 3: A superstar composer may charge \$3,000/minute for a 3-5 minute a cappella SATB work, for a total fee of \$12,000.

While these rates vary widely, no amount of money is too small to create an agreement in writing. This serves to protect both the composer and the commissioner, as there are many stories in the world of late and never-received payments and/or scores. Naturally, the higher the fee and the larger the work, the smarter it is to have an agreement in place.

2. SCOPE/size of performing forces A work for chorus and orchestra will generally cost more than a work for chorus a cappella. Please note that this refers to the base commission fee (which is distinct from additional fees for the creation of piano-vocal scores and orchestral parts).

Example 1: That same young composer may charge \$1,000/minute for a 3-5 minute choral-orchestral work, for a total fee of \$4,000 + costs for the creation of parts and vocal score.

Example 2: That same established composer may charge \$2,000/minute for a 3-5 minute choral-orchestral work for a total fee of \$8,000 + costs for the creation of parts and vocal score.

Example 3: That same superstar composer may charge \$5,000/minute for a 3-5 minute choral-orchestral work for a total fee of \$20,000 + costs for the creation of parts and vocal score.

3. COMPOSITION TIMEFRAME (rush fees, etc.)
The typical commissioning agreement for an active

composer begins over a year before the eventual due date for the work. In the event of a major work such as an opera or symphony, a commissioning discussion may begin years before the premiere.

Asking a composer to write a new work with less than six months before the due date necessitates a rush fee, often equivalent to about 20-30% of the original commission fee.

Asking a composer to write a new work with less than three months before the due date necessitates a more substantial rush fee, often equivalent to about 50-100% of the original commission fee.

Example 1: The rush fee for a \$4,000 work due in less than six months might be an additional \$1,000 (for a total of \$5,000).

Example 2: The rush fee for a \$4,000 work due in less than three months might be an additional \$2,000-\$4,000, depending on the composer's schedule (for a total of \$6,000-\$8,000).

Remember: When you are paying a composer a commission fee, you are essentially reserving time in their schedule for them to write your music. If you ask a composer to compose something with a tight turnaround window, they may be giving up other things to do that for you (like family time, work-life balance, vacations, weekends, sleep, etc.), so please do not be offended if the composer asks for a rush fee. That is the real cost of the time that they are rearranging for you.

4. FEES FOR PERMISSION to set texts not in the public domain This is critical: if you want a composer to set a text to music, but the copyright in that text is owned by someone currently (and not in the public domain), you cannot legally set that text without a letter of written permission from the copyright holder.

If this is a living author and the text is not published, a simple signed letter from the author will suffice. Often, a text's copyright will now be owned by a publisher. In either case, the publisher and/or the author are within their rights to:

1. Charge you for the non-exclusive right to set that text;
2. Give you permission to set the text free of charge, if they wish; or

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3. Deny you permission to set the text.

If they deny you permission to set the text, you're stuck. You can't use it. But if they do give you permission, they have the right to ask for a fee if they so choose. All publishers will ask for a percentage of the royalties on all sales of the musical work (which is standard), but some may also ask for an additional flat fee (\$50, \$200, etc.).¹

If the commissioner is asking for a specific text to be set, it's typical for the commissioner to pay this flat fee, when applicable. If the composer chooses the text themselves, then the composer usually pays the fee.

Example: Commissioner wants to set an E. E. Cummings text and the copyright holder asks for a fee of \$100 for the permission to set it. Commissioner is responsible for this cost above and beyond the Composer's commission fee.

5. ADDITIONAL COSTS for piano-vocal score and/or instrumental parts Composers are busy people, and they are often juggling multiple projects at once. To this end, many of them outsource the creation of piano-vocal scores and instrumental parts to engravers for a fee. For this reason (and because the creation of parts and vocal scores is not "composing" in the same way as the creation of the original score is), the cost to create parts and vocal scores is considered separately from the commission fee.

In general, this does not apply to the vast majority of choral music written today, as most choral works are for voices alone or voices with piano/organ, so there is no necessity for the creation of any separate scores. In this instance, there would be no additional fee.

However, if a substantial work is being created for chorus and instrumental ensemble, it is typical for separate fees to be a part of the contract for the creation of the instrumental parts and piano-vocal score. These are usually a percentage (10-25%) of the original commission fee.

Example: An established composer may charge a \$20,000 commission fee for a 15-minute choral-orchestral work plus a \$2,000 fee for the creation of the piano-vocal score (10%) and a \$2,000 fee for the creation of the instrumental parts (10%), resulting in a

total cost of \$24,000.

Nota Bene 1: If a choral work has a small instrumental component (less than five additional instruments), the composer will usually create the instrumental parts *gratis*, though they may still ask for a fee for the piano-vocal score if it entails creating a piano reduction from which the choir will rehearse (especially if there is no piano part in the chamber instrumentation).

Nota Bene 2: Rush fees may also apply to the creation of instrumental parts and vocal scores, if the commissioner is asking for them in an expedited timeframe.

6. TRAVEL EXPENSES to attend the premiere

As mentioned above, if the commissioner desires to have the composer present for the premiere, it is typical to pay the composer's expenses (airfare or mileage, lodging, meal per diem, and ground transportation). These expenses do not come out of the commission fee and are usually processed after the fact as reimbursements (or paid as direct costs by the commissioner). These costs may vary widely, depending on the composer's point of departure, from a few hundred dollars to several thousand. It's important to budget for these costs at the outset, even if they aren't explicitly enumerated upfront.

Example 1: A local composer was paid a commission fee to write a new work for SSA and string quartet. As the composer lives locally, there is no need for lodging, airfare, or any other travel expense beyond complimentary tickets.

Example 2: A composer is flying across the country to be present for the premiere of your new commissioned work. After the premiere, the composer submits receipts for airfare (\$450), lodging (2 nights hotel at \$320), taxi to and from the airport (\$65) and 5 meal receipts (\$115). Note that even with this composer's modest and conservative taste, the cost for reimbursement is still \$950.

STEP 5: Staying in Communication

Well, now that the contract is signed and the agreement is in place, you're done, right? Not quite. It's important to stay in contact with the composer through-

out the composition process, especially if circumstances change on your end in any significant way (i.e., a change in the premiere date, a sudden loss of funding, a soloist who can no longer sing at the last minute, etc.). Be upfront about possible issues and seek to resolve them amicably. Conversation is crucial not just at the beginning of the process but from start to finish.

Likewise, if the composer is behind on their obligations (late to choose a text, late to get you a draft score, etc.), be friendly but stern in your admonition that you really need the scores according to the timeline you agreed to. Make the point this way: the longer it takes to get the score to you, the fewer rehearsals you will have with the ensemble, and the less successful the premiere will likely be. There is a sad reality in the composing profession of composers missing deadlines. It's terribly outdated and non-professional behavior. If a composer is late, let them know that it is unacceptable (and let them know that this reputation will follow them). At the same time, be grateful if you find the rare composer who is not only on time but early. They deserve your repeated business!

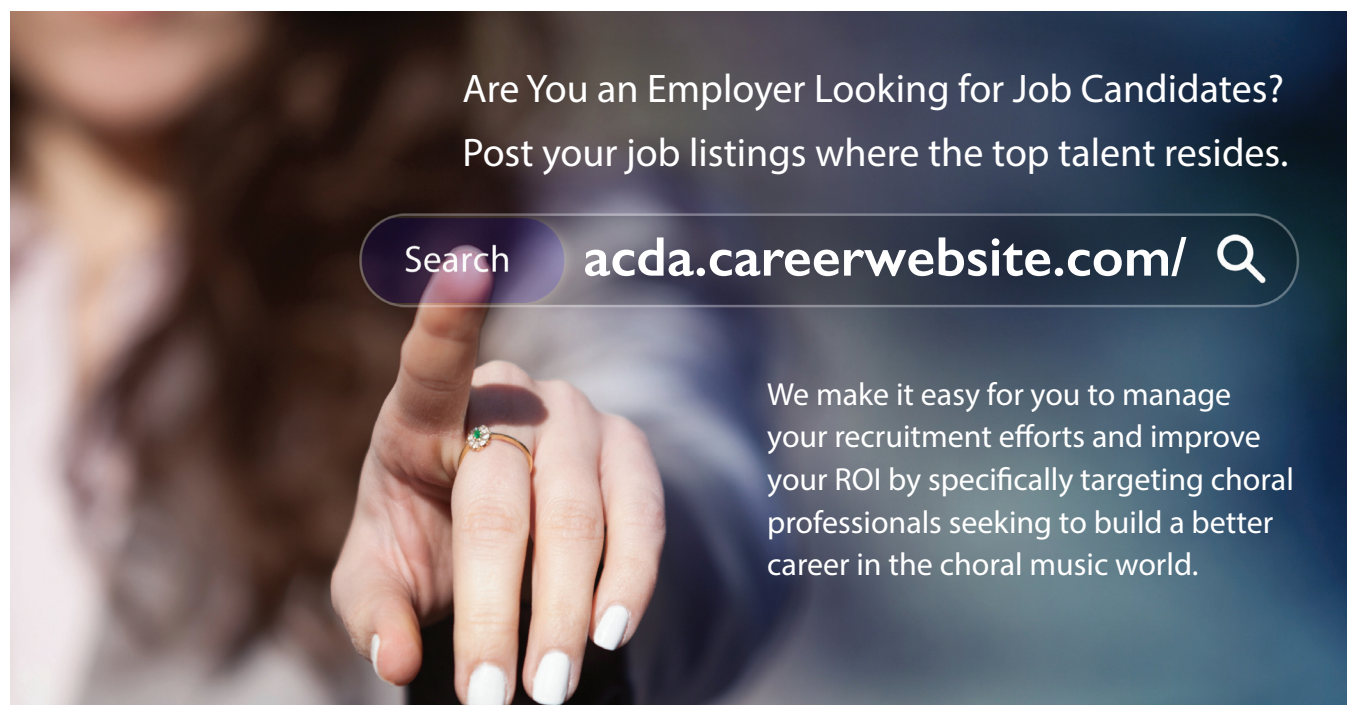
In the best of all possible worlds, going through this process of detail-oriented planning at the front-end will give you confidence that you're ready for any eventuality. It will also allow you, your partner composer, your singers, and your greater community of listeners to be set up

for a life-changing collaborative experience together. 


The author is indebted to Craig Carnahan, Andrew Crane, Brandon Elliott, Susan LaBarr, Nancy Menk, and Dale Trumbore. These individuals served as crucial early readers of the article and offered valuable editorial comments and insights.

NOTES

- 1 It's worth mentioning that the composer and the author of the text are also each entitled to an equal share of the writer-portion of performance royalties from a performing rights organization (such as ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, etc.), and the publisher of the text and the publisher of the music are also each entitled to an equal share of the publisher-portion of performance royalties. Discussion of performing rights organizations goes beyond the scope of this article, but conductors should know that it is a critical part of every composer's compensation. If a composer has asked the conductor for a PDF copy of the program, this is often so that the program can be submitted to a performing rights organization as evidence of a performance, and so the composer can be compensated.



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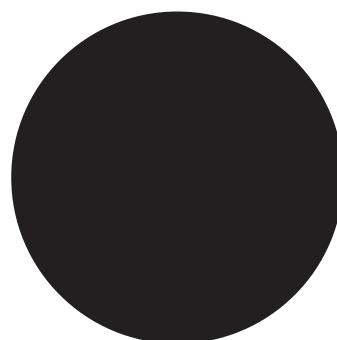
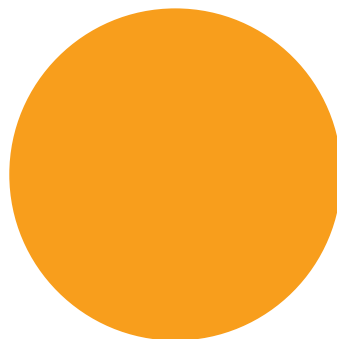
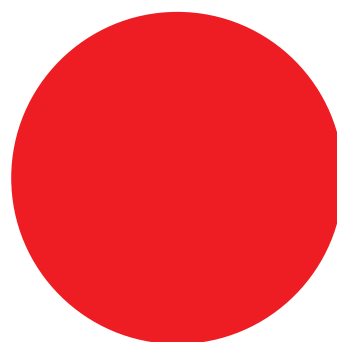
TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR COMPOSITION FOR PUBLICATION

Susan LaBarr

Navigating the world of traditional music publication can be complicated, especially if a composer is new to the publishing process. This article outlines some tips for submitting your composition for publication, including both administrative tasks and “insider” tricks from the point of view of a choral music editor.

This article applies to traditional music publishing only. Today, there are many non-traditional options for selling music including self-publishing websites, choral music marketplaces, and co-ops. All of these are fantastic options for many composers and even for varying works of one composer. By diversifying how music is sold, there can be a place in the market for ever-expanding types and levels of music. Composers are encouraged to research the best options for their works.

Susan LaBarr
Composer and Editor
Walton Music
Springfield, Missouri





I. KNOW THE PUBLISHER'S CATALOG

Ask any publisher the number one reason a work is not accepted for publication, and they will likely say that the work doesn't fit the needs of their customers or the style of their catalog. For example, if a publisher's market largely consists of elementary or middle school ensembles, an advanced SATB divisi work wouldn't be the right fit for their catalog. Or, if a publisher produces strictly sacred works, they probably wouldn't publish a composition with a secular text.

It is important to understand the basic workings of a publisher's catalog before submitting a work for publication consideration. One of the easiest ways to do this is to simply study a publisher's website. Most publisher websites have sample pages and recordings for their published works (at least for new works published in the last five to ten years). Spend some time studying the works in a publisher's catalog. Look through the sample pages to get a sense of the difficulty level and compositional style that seems to be successful for the publisher. Read through the texts and poems that have been chosen. Listen to the posted recordings to see which kinds of choirs tend to perform and find success with the works. If you feel that your music is way out of the box in comparison, maybe a different publisher would make a better home for your compositions.

Some publishers have subscription programs where customers can sign up to receive printed catalogs or ocatavos. This is another great way to spend time with the music. Sit down at the piano and study how the works are constructed. You may start to notice similarities in the way accompaniments are structured or the way voice leading is approached. This is good insight into the types of compositions that the publishers' customers purchase.

Attend concerts, participate in reading sessions, and visit publishers' booths at conferences. Gaining exposure to different catalogs can help a composer to identify where their works will be the best fit.

2. HAVE YOUR WORK PERFORMED AND RECORDED

Getting a work published can tend to have an underlying sense of urgency for the composer. However, many of the most prolific published choral composers are extremely patient and meticulous when it comes to publishing their works. Many of these established composers hear their work once, make edits, hear it performed a second time (possibly make more edits), make a recording (either professional or amateur), and then begin the process of submitting the work for publication.

I often receive composition submissions at Walton where the submission email begins with something to the effect of, "I *just* finished this composition, and I had to send it straight to you." This raises a red flag for some editors. This statement implies that the work has probably only been played back by MIDI sounds in a notation program, and that it hasn't yet been sung by real singers or played by real instrumentalists. Everyone knows that there is much to be learned by having actual people sing and play a work. Voice leading issues can be resolved, awkward accompanimental passages can be adjusted, incorrect harmonizations can be fixed, and mistakes in the typesetting or notation can be corrected.

It isn't always feasible for a composer (especially young, new, or student composers) to line up a professional performance or recording of their work. There are a few good options if a professional performance or recording isn't possible:

1) Enlist a group of friends to have a brief rehearsal/read-through of the work. Schedule thirty minutes to

have the group sight read through the work, and then make a simple recording on a smartphone or some other recording device. It is important to be open and honest about what works and what doesn't during this read-through. If a passage is particularly difficult for the choir, perhaps it could be re-voiced or approached differently. Be willing to make changes, and don't assume that just because the work is on paper it is in its final form.

2) Ask a conductor if he or she would be willing to take five to ten minutes of a choir's rehearsal time to read through the work. Not only will the work be sung by a real choir, but the composer will also get a conductor's perspective and be able to receive the conductor's suggestions and critiques.

Note: It is not recommended to have a rehearsal track recording service make a recording of a work for publication submission purposes. While rehearsal track recording services are useful for making rehearsal tracks for groups that need extra individual practice time, it is not necessarily a helpful representation of what the work will sound like with a real choir. The end result often comes across the same as a MIDI file due to the high skill of the singer making the recording, the perfection of the edited recording, and the sound of one person's voice being multiplied.

3. FOLLOW THE PUBLISHER'S SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Publishers who accept unsolicited submissions (there are only a few publishers who do not accept them) almost always have their submission guidelines posted on their websites. The guidelines are usually posted either in the main menu bar, in the "contact us" section, or in the footer of the website's homepage. It is imperative that these guidelines be followed when a work is submitted for publication consideration.

Often, the submission guidelines will include the following elements:

- The score
- A recording (with the name of the choir and the conductor)



- Performance and background notes about the work
- Composer biography
- Text (with translation and pronunciation guide if not in English)
- Documentation of any copyright permissions for the text or music

Here are a few tips for preparing these elements of the submission process:

The Score

- Submit the score in PDF format unless the publisher specifies otherwise. This protects the score from being altered in any way, either intentionally or unintentionally (which would not be the case with a Finale, Sibelius, or other notation files).
- Make sure the score has been edited and perfected.
- Ensure that the text uses correct spelling and punctuation and capitalization that upholds the integrity of the original poem or lyric, and that the syllables of each word are hyphenated using industry standards (e.g., for a word with the suffix “-ing,” the “ing” should always be hyphenated separately from the beginning of the word, like “sleep-ing.” For more on this and other music engraving rules, see Elaine Gould’s book *Behind Bars*).
- Correctly notate all tied and slurred notes.
- Make sure all word extenders extend through the full passage of notes that apply to the word.
- It is a good idea to sing through each voice part and make sure there are opportunities for the singers to breathe, either through the use of rests or breath marks.
- Include appropriate dynamic markings and pedal markings (if applicable).
- If unaccompanied, create a piano reduction.

- Take some time to achieve optimal spacing of the staves and systems on each page (i.e., make sure your score isn’t unnecessarily thirty pages long due to there only being one system per page). The first impression of your score does count.

The Recording

- It is often better to be patient and wait until a good recording is in hand before sending a work for publication consideration. A good recording (whether professionally made or recorded on a smartphone) gives the publisher an idea of what the work sounds like with a real ensemble and shows that the work has been successful in a real setting.
- Be mindful of the file format the publisher requires for recordings. If the publisher requires an mp3, make sure to convert your file to mp3 format before sending. This can be done through iTunes or through free online file converters (simply perform an internet search for “convert to mp3”). WAV and other files—while great for demo CDs—are large and usually require the use of a file-sharing platform like Google Drive or Dropbox. This creates an extra step for the publisher and takes up a lot more storage space.
- Take time to listen to the recording and make sure it is a good representation of the work. If the choir is out of tune, obvious mistakes are made, or if it is of extremely poor quality, this can have an adverse effect on the person or people judging the work. It gives the impression that the work was not successful, even if it is purely because the choir was of low skill. In this instance, it is probably better to wait until a better recording is made to submit the work. It is possible that a publisher would accept a MIDI recording of your work. However, no recording is better than a very bad recording.
- If the recording includes extra space at the beginning, applause at the end, or includes other music before or after, it is a good idea to edit this extra material out of the recording before sending it for publication consideration. Again, the first impression of the work is important.

- Check with the publisher before sending a YouTube link in place of a recording. Some publishers work with editorial boards who help to evaluate the publication submissions, and while a YouTube link may seem simple, it can sometimes complicate the submission evaluation process.

Performance/Background Notes

If the publisher requires performance or background notes for submission, below are some ideas of what to include. Keep these notes concise and make sure they are edited carefully.

- Information about *why* the work was written (for a commission, in honor of someone, in response to an event, etc.)
- Information about the premiere of the work
- The history of the text/poet/lyricist
- Information about how the text was set, certain musical moments, overall structure
- Performance ideas and suggestions that are not obvious from the first glance at the score.

Composer Biography

Ensure the composer biography is concise (for example, if it is to be printed inside of an octavo, consider how much room there would be on the page, or check to see if the publisher gives a word count limit) and that it is carefully edited.

Text

- Even if it is not required, it is a good idea to include a PDF or Word document (or something similar) of the text in its original form, including the poet's credit and dates. This could be helpful to the publisher as they consider the work.

- If a translation and pronunciation guide is required for texts in lesser-known languages, make sure to provide one, as they could inform the publisher whether or not the subject matter is right for their customers.

Documentation of Permission

Before beginning the composing or arranging process, research the copyright of the text or music and make sure it is either in the public domain or that permission to set the text to music or arrange the song has been obtained. Some contemporary poets do not allow their texts to be set to music, and some publishers, songwriters, or composers do not allow their music to be arranged. Once documentation of permission is acquired, keep that documentation and include it with the publication submission.

4. KEEP YOUR SUBMISSION PROFESSIONAL

Once all materials are edited and ready for submission, it is a good idea to include an email of introduction or a cover letter with the materials. In the email or cover letter, address the recipient in a professional manner (with his or her name or "To Whom It May Concern"), stick to the facts about the work, and keep it brief. It isn't necessary to state how the piece makes the singers feel or how much the audience liked it. While those thoughts are likely true, they aren't helpful in the publication consideration process. Also, it's a good idea not to mention if the submitted work was already rejected by another publisher. The sidebar on page 39 shows two examples of cover letters: a "do" and a "don't."

5. A FEW MORE TIPS

Here are a few more dos and don'ts to help prepare for the publication submission process:

- Don't "RE:" to a rejection email. This scenario happens often: the publisher sends a rejection email to the composer, and the composer immediately hits "reply" with a new submission. This is not recommended for a few reasons. First (and most obvious), it reminds the publisher that the last work was not accepted for publica-

tion. Second, it causes the subject line to be disconnected from the materials included in the new email, which can cause issues later in searches and tracking the progress of the submission. Always start a new email thread when submitting a new work.

- **Do** send one work at a time. (Some publishers may accept more submissions than this, so be aware of their submission guidelines.) Most publishers do not have the capacity to publish a composer's entire catalog at one time, and most do not have the time to look through hundreds of works to try to sift out what would work for their market. Choose one or two *best* works, make sure they are edited and recorded, and send those for publication consideration. In addition to making the submissions more manageable for a publisher, if the works are accepted for publication they tend to sell better when a composer doesn't have too many new works competing with one another.

- **Don't** send an email to the publisher asking if a work can be submitted if the submission guidelines are clearly posted on the website. If a publisher has guidelines posted, it can be assumed that works may be submitted according to those guidelines.

- **Do** look up the titles of possible poems or texts on a music dealer's website. Take note of other settings of the same text (are there already twenty SATB settings of "i carry your heart"? Does yours offer something new or different? Is there room or a need for *another* setting of this same text?)

- **Don't** send your work to more than one publisher at a time. If a work is sent to two publishers at once and both accept it, the composer is left to tell one publisher "never mind." This can make the publisher feel as if their time was wasted and can cause the composer to gain a questionable reputation.

- **Do** feel comfortable checking in with the publisher if questions arise at any time. If a publisher hasn't confirmed receipt of a submission, don't hesitate to send a follow-up email. If the publisher gave an estimated date that a decision should be made and that date has come

Sample Cover Letters

Do

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to submit my attached SATB composition, "Alleluia," to be considered for publication. I have included the audio, the choral/piano score, and a document containing the program notes, composer bio, and composition information.

I am very familiar with your catalog, having purchased many pieces for my past and current choral positions. It would be an honor to have my work considered by the viewing committee. Please let me know if anything further is needed.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Composer

Don't

Hey! I *just* finished writing this song yesterday, and some of my friends told me they loved it and that I should submit it for publication.

You might remember I sent a piece last year, but you guys rejected it. Hoping I have better luck this time!

I also have several other pieces that I've written over the years, so I've attached ten of them here as well, in case you are interested.

Thanks,
Kim

sent from my iPhone

and gone, it is perfectly acceptable to check in with the publisher. Most publishing companies are small, and everyone working at a publisher is human, so things can get missed. But every publisher is filled with good people who want to help composers succeed, so composers shouldn't hesitate to keep the communication lines open during the submission process.

- Don't hand a publisher representative a packet of compositions at a conference, workshop, or concert. It's better to wait and follow the submission guidelines on a publisher's website. These days, most submissions are handled electronically, and giving a publisher a packet of hard copies may cause unnecessary confusion or trouble. While most publishers would love to be able to accept music this way, it isn't the best way to ensure that the music makes it all the way through the official submission process.

- Do ask for feedback from the publisher. Surprisingly, many composers don't prefer to hear the opinions of the publisher if their work was rejected. If feedback is desired, feel comfortable following up with the publisher. Be open to constructive criticism, be prepared for honest opinions, and most importantly realize that the feedback is the point-of-view of one publisher. Their opinion does not represent the worth of the composition but simply why the work isn't right for that publisher's market.

In summary, we are fortunate to work in a time where there are many options for publishing and purchasing choral music. Once again, composers are encouraged to research the options for publishing their works, whether that is through traditional publishing, self-publishing, or other avenues. The traditional publishing route is still very fruitful, and the tips and tricks outlined here should give a composer's work its best chance possible and will keep the exchange between composer and publisher professional and efficient. ■



2019 ACDA National Conference
February 27-March 2, 2019
Kansas City, Missouri

The ACDA Student Conducting Awards were initiated during the 1993 ACDA national conference in San Antonio, Texas. We again offer this highly successful event at the 2019 ACDA national conference in Kansas City, Missouri. The ACDA Student Conducting Competition and Undergraduate Master Class are funded by lifetime sponsor, Manhattan Concert Productions.

The objectives of the ACDA Student Conducting Awards are threefold:

1. To acknowledge and reward outstanding graduate and undergraduate student conductors.
2. To encourage score preparation and advancement of conducting and rehearsal skills.
3. To promote student activity at the ACDA national conference.

First Prize, Graduate Level: \$1,000

Second Price, Graduate Level: \$500

Guidelines and Application link are available at acda.org/awards.

Deadline for application is 4:00 p.m. Central on October 31, 2018.

Call for Research Poster Sessions

The American Choral Directors Association will sponsor a research session at the conference in Kansas City, MO, February 27-March 2, 2019. The intent of the research poster session is to bring current research to light that impacts and informs our profession and to encourage our colleagues in the choral world to stay in touch with research in choral music, applying what they learn to rehearsal techniques, performance practice, repertoire choice, etc. Of particular interest are papers about repertoire, performance practice, conducting pedagogy, rehearsal pedagogy, vocal development, critical editions, analysis that will illuminate performance, and research on vocal or compositional practices in contemporary choral music.

A poster session is a research report format used widely in the natural and social sciences, and increasingly in the humanities. The poster session space will include an easel that will accommodate up to a 36" x 48" poster. Your poster should be a single full color document no larger than 36" x 48" inches in size light enough to be pinned on the display board with push pins (the conference venue will have pins available).

1. Abstracts submitted for presentation must comply with the following guidelines:

- (a) If the data have been presented in whole or substantive part in any forum or at previous research sessions, a statement specifying particulars of the above must be included with the submission; and papers presented at other conferences will be considered only if the audience was substantially different (e.g., a state meeting or a university symposium). A statement specifying particulars of presentation and venue must be included with the submission.
- (b) The paper may have been submitted but must not be in print or in press prior to the submission deadline of the conference.

2. The research may be of any type, but a simple review of literature will not be considered for presentation.

Manuscript style of articles representing descriptive or experimental studies must conform to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition, 2009). Authors of other types of studies may submit manuscripts that conform to either *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (K. L. Turabian, 7th edition, 2007) or *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition, 2003).

3. The following items are required for submission: An abstract of no more than 3000 characters (including references) summarizing your research purpose, method, results and conclusions. The name(s) or affiliation(s) of anyone involved in the submission must not appear in the abstract. Incomplete submissions (e.g. those discussing proposed research without any findings) will be rejected.

Presenters must be current members of ACDA and all persons whose work is selected for inclusion on the program are expected to register for the conference. It is understood that ACDA will not assume financial responsibility for travel, food, or lodging for poster session presenters. Your submission implies that you are prepared to travel and present at the conference if accepted.

4. The submission portal will be open as of October 1, 2018.

Submissions must be uploaded to: <https://cmt3.research.microsoft.com/ACDANRPS2019> by November 1, 2018. Extensions will not be granted.

5. All submissions will be blind peer-reviewed by a committee of scholars.

Applicants will be notified of the status of their submission via email by December 1, 2018.


HUNTING CHORAL TREASURE: HOW CONDUCTORS FIND NEW REPERTOIRE

ANDREW CRANE

With modern digital technology, conductors now have more resources than ever at their fingertips to find newly composed repertoire for their choral ensembles. The digital age has brought us near instantaneous accessibility.

I see this as both a blessing and a curse. While I can now simultaneously read a score and listen to a recording of a brand-new piece without leaving my desk, I still often feel overwhelmed. I tend to select repertoire for my choir during the summer months and look through hundreds of scores in the process. Rather than simply program what my colleagues in the profession have already successfully done, I am always in search of that new “diamond in the rough.” I love the feeling of discovering something fabulous and the excitement of sharing

Andrew Crane
Associate Professor of Choral Conducting
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah



it with my choir. But with so much out there that is so easily obtained, I have to now sift through so many more haystacks to find the occasional needle. I have programmed many choral works on the recommendation of colleagues, and I will continue to do so. However, I always wonder: where did they find that excellent repertoire? At some point, the excitement of the unearthing/discovery process has to be done by someone.

This line of inquiry led me to even more questions: How have these technological advances affected a discriminating conductor's ability to zero in on the very best compositions? What tried-

and-true best practices exist? Does the age and experience level of the ensemble affect how we search for repertoire? I wanted to see what my colleagues were doing in the hope that it might help further refine my repertoire seeking. For this article, I interviewed six conductors who represent a wide spectrum of choir types. My aim was to both discover new and evolving methods for repertoire selection and to unearth the practices that conductors use that have stood the test of time. I hope this information may prove helpful to composers, publishers, and conductors alike, as we all work together to advance the choral art.

HUNTING CHORAL TREASURE:

Interviewees



Ken Berg

Music Director of the Birmingham Boys Choir



Edith Copley

Director of Choral Activities at Northern Arizona University



Patrick Freer

Coordinator of Music Education at Georgia State University



Joshua Habermann

Artistic Director of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale and Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Chorus



Karen Kennedy

Director of Choral Activities at the University of Miami



Chris Maunu

Head Choral Director at Arvada West High School

To what sources do you most often turn when selecting repertoire, particularly new compositions?

Berg: It is hearing choirs at festivals or reading sessions where I most often find new repertory. Other than that, I refer to word of mouth from other conductors.

Copley: Many publisher websites provide scores and sound files that make new repertoire more accessible, but these websites don't necessarily make the conductor's selection process easier due to the quantity of new music released each spring/summer. That said, I often begin by searching large internet vendors where I can sort new releases by genre. Second, I contact respected choral colleagues and inquire about recently performed and newly commissioned works that were rewarding for their students to prepare and well received by audiences. Third, I go to a composer's self-publishing website to see what they have recently created. Lastly, I view international choral competition videos to discover repertoire from all over the world.

Freer: I use three types of sources most frequently: 1) trusted composers who I know write particularly well for young voices; 2) the websites of publishers that specialize in high-quality literature for young voices, particularly those that include recordings of real-life adolescent choirs; 3) concert programs for adolescent singers chosen by conductors I trust; I'll then seek copies/recordings of the pieces I don't yet know. My use of "high-quality" does not only refer to "vocally appropriate" repertoire, it refers to all aspects of the composition.

Habermann: Recommendations from trusted conductor colleagues.

Kennedy: Several sources work for me, the first being YouTube. Also publisher sites, composer sites, my colleagues' choirs from all over the world, and watching all kinds of choirs from professional choirs to All-State groups. I also regularly reach out to my professional network when I need something to fill a specific "hole" in a program.

HOW CONDUCTORS FIND NEW REPERTOIRE

Maunu: I enjoy perusing online sources that have the entire recording of a piece, while also having the full perusal score. I also find that visiting the individual website of a composer is effective. After finding a composer I respect, I'll go directly to their page to see what else they have.

How has your approach to finding new compositions changed over the years?

Berg: I used to peruse catalogs or samples sent via post with single copies. That ended about ten years ago... Now almost any research I do is digital and online, and I also attend festivals or conventions.

Copley: For many years, I would drive hours to a music store, sit down at an electric piano with headphones, and play through every new score from every publisher that sent their new releases to that vendor. It typically took a couple of days and yielded a relatively small stack of music. The selection process now takes place at my office computer and typically takes several weeks before everything is solidified for the next academic year.

Freer: While I once relied on publisher packets distributed at conferences, I now do almost all of my searching online. I use YouTube extensively, often searching for programs of choirs like the ones I'm scheduled to conduct. I will often "follow the trail" by searching for a composer who wrote an interesting piece, then look for whatever that composer has newly released. Web sources like MusicSpoke are often very helpful. I almost never look for publishers' "recommended" repertoire any longer, as I want to make the decisions myself. I also follow several Facebook pages for choral conductors-teachers and find interesting leads that way. Again, all of this is completely online. One side benefit is that I no longer feel that I need to maintain file cabinets full of single octavos for reference purposes. I now only keep what I've previously conducted or know that I want to program in the future.

Habermann: With technological advances, it has become easier to browse things online. I still start with recommendations from friends, though, and only then

start browsing.

Kennedy: I've been lucky to meet wonderful composers through both conducting and singing with diverse ensembles. When I find a piece that speaks to me by a composer unknown to me, I immediately go to his/her site and study the entire output, looking for an underperformed future classic. I'm also an advocate of fostering student composers and recently started a competition for new works through the University of Miami ACDA chapter.

Maunu: When online sources and choices were more limited, I would just go to the large distributors and see what was new. The challenge is navigating through their browser. Unless you know exactly what you are looking for and search for it directly in the search bar, it is difficult to find all of the compositions in a particular category. If you browse through "Collegiate Repertoire," for example, all that shows up are whichever pieces that publisher is promoting at that time. Thousands of titles can be missed.

Is there anything you wish composers and/or publishers would do differently with regards to how they advertise their works?

Copley: I wish all publishers would have scores and sound files available. It may be helpful for publishers to add a link that identifies "New Composers," rather than including their works in the long list of "New Releases." The link could include composer bios as well as commissioning information such as performance ensemble, conductor, premiere location, etc.

Freer: One of my favorite moments in the quest for new literature was when I received a packet of repertoire from a then-unknown composer, Braeden Ayres. Braeden saw I was a frequent guest conductor for all-state choirs and simply sent a packet of his most relevant compositions for those types of ensembles (via the old-school approach of printed repertoire sent through postal mail). The packet sat on my desk until I had need to look through it when programming a concert; I was immediately taken with the text choices and appropri-

HUNTING CHORAL TREASURE:

ate voicing for young choirs. I felt as though I had been handed a gift of fresh, new repertoire. Braeden's tactic was very successful... He simply provided the repertoire and did nothing further. Had he followed up or pushed me, I probably would never have responded. I appreciated his approach, simply, "I've written a few pieces that I think will fit the types of choirs you are known for conducting. Have a look." It worked, and I've programmed his pieces on multiple occasions. So, my advice to composers is that the personal approach works, provided that composers only provide potential conductors with repertoire specific to the conductor's needs. Flooding conductors with unsolicited, inappropriate (to the situation) repertoire likely means that nothing will be considered for future programming.

Habermann: I am appreciative of those publishers that instead of dumping their entire catalogue of new releases on me, select the kinds of compositions that are most likely to interest me given the kind of choirs I work with. As for composers, I receive a lot of "here's my new piece" emails. I think the democratization that email and other technologies has provided is a good thing, but it's not possible to keep up in a thorough way with the volume of music that comes in. I put the submissions in a folder and try to get to all of them over time, but I've noticed the folder is getting more backed up each month. I try to prioritize those composers who come recommended by friends, so it's really about relationships.

Kennedy: A good website is crucial, along with sample scores. My least-favorite approach is the email "cold call"—that rarely results in a connection on my end, as I'm inundated with well-intentioned composers from every possible background trying to get play. If I have met the artist or have a personal connection, I am happy to receive emails with the latest output. Just not unsolicited emails, please!

Maunu: Don't be afraid of shameless self-promotion. It doesn't bother me at all when someone posts on the "I'm a Choir Director" Facebook group about needing a composition with a specific theme or voicing and composers suggest their own piece. I often find myself

clicking on the link or visiting their website. If I like their stuff, then I gain new quality repertoire and they gain a customer. Win win.

Is there a certain type/style/genre of piece that you often wish more composers would write? Is there a kind of piece with which the market is already oversaturated?

Copley: In recent years, I believe publishers have made a conscious effort to balance new sacred and secular works in their catalogue, but I often see more slow music than up-tempo selections. There's definitely an increase in world music arrangements, which diversify our programs in a very positive way.

Freer: Yes, three points here. 1) The genre of "academic choral repertoire" (i.e., music for secondary school use) is oversaturated with contemporary settings of brief Latin texts (*Kyrie, Sanctus, Dona Nobis*) that all sound identical to one another. I understand the desire to provide repertoire that leads toward unified vowels and musical phrasing, but please write/find brief English texts that employ the same principles. 2) Consider the audience when writing pieces. We know that adolescent boys, especially, are often reluctant to sing in front of audiences. One of the reasons is embarrassment about the types of repertoire they are asked to perform. I feel that composers of "academic choral repertoire" are so focused on the curricular components that they forget about the audience experience in the concert that concludes the learning process. Kids think about repertoire with the performance in mind, and composers should too. 3) Many conductor-teachers of school choirs are not able to rely on piano support in their rehearsals. Please write pieces that sound good without piano accompaniment yet are accessible enough to be learned with a minimal amount of keyboard support. This does not mean that the pieces are written for a cappella performance, but rather that the piano is supportive of rather than integral to the composition.

Kennedy: I feel saturated by pretty, non-melodic, chord-based pieces with an abundance of added 4ths and 9ths in suspension. I'm happy to see more and more

HOW CONDUCTORS FIND NEW REPERTOIRE

pieces that let women's choir be aggressive and full with their sound and emotional range—keep it coming!

Habermann: Despite the heterogeneity of contemporary music, we seem to be in a period in which the prevailing style in choral music is a nice melody and pretty chords. There's definitely nothing wrong with that—I can think of many pieces in that style that I love. That being said, as I look at new music, I'm more interested in composers with a unique voice and something inter-

esting to say that is not already being said by already established composers who are likely doing it as well or better. I also feel drawn to great texts, so the words, whether sacred or secular, really matter.

Maunu: It's always a challenge finding quality literature that's up tempo. I'm not sure anyone has an accurate figure on this, but it seems like 80-90 percent of all choral literature out there is slow. I love the slow, beautiful stuff, but audiences need variety to stay engaged. ■

Practical Teaching Ideas for Today's Music Educator

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ChorTeach is ACDA's quarterly online publication, designed for those who work with singers of all levels. A full annotated ChorTeach index is available online at acda.org/chorteach. Over 160 articles are organized into seventeen categories. For submission information, to view the index, or to read the latest issue, visit acda.org/chorteach.

Volume 11, issue 1, is a special tenth anniversary issue for fall 2018 that highlights six previously published articles:

Dynamic (and Effective) Teaching with Junior High/Middle School Singers by Karen Sims, Fall 2010

This article contains a list of tips for effective and dynamic teaching at the junior high/middle school level.

Creating and Sustaining Choral Programs in Today's Churches by Greg Zielke, Spring 2010

This article is a "thank you" to those who lead a church choir and an encouragement for those who want to consider starting one.

Recruiting Boys into Choirs - Techniques that Work by Jonathan Krinke, Summer 2014

This article focuses on four target groups—MS boys, HS boys currently in choir, HS boys not currently in choir, and HS boys who have sung in the past but are not now singing—and provides recruiting suggestions and encouragement for recruitment.

Communicating with Parents - Help for Music Teachers by Susan Dill, Winter 2015

This article includes communication strategies to help choir directors initiate and foster constructive communication with parents.

The Shy Non-Singer — Elementary Teachers Take Note! by Michele Hobizal, Spring 2016

This article shares activities and suggestions for vocal exploration that will turn even the shyest singer into one who auditions for next year's school musical.

Relationships: Their Power and Importance by Jason Sickel, Fall 2017

The author of this article, named 2017 Kansas Teacher of the Year, shares advice for how to build strong and lasting relationships with students and colleagues, including tools, ideas, and activities for the classroom.

Proposed ACDA Constitution and Bylaw Changes

1. A proposed change to the Constitution Article X are to have officers in the Central, Southern, and Western Regions elected in even years.

2. The proposed changes to the Bylaws Article I are to update the Associate member description to reflect current practice, as well as updating Institution and Industry descriptions to remove the previous link to Associate member privileges.

CONSTITUTION

Article X

Region Officers

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

Section 2. The Region President-Elect shall be elected by ballot, as provided in the Bylaws. ~~The Presidents-Elect of the Central, Southern, and Western Regions shall serve terms of two years beginning on July of odd-numbered years. The Presidents-Elect of the Eastern, North Central, Northwestern, and Southwestern regions 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.~~

BYLAWS

Article I

Membership

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.~~ **limited to online access to association publications, resources, and communities. Associate members may not attend ACDA events, hold office, or vote.** 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 associate **Industry** member. Privileges accorded the representatives of each associate ~~firm~~ **industry** shall be the same as those for the associate member **include the option to advertise and exhibit at conferences, upon compliance with registration requirements. In addition, Industry members shall receive appropriate publications from the Association. Candidates for industry 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.** 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~~ **include the option to advertise and exhibit at conferences, upon compliance with registration requirements. In addition, Institutional members shall receive appropriate publications from the Association.** Application procedures shall be the same as those prescribed for Industry associate members. Procedures for continuing membership are the same as those stated for Active members.

E- ballot will be open January 3– 31, 2019.

Current active, retired, life, and paying life members will receive email notifications when it opens.

National President-Elect Candidates

The winner will take office July 1, 2019



SARA LYNN BAIRD currently serves as Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Music at the University of North Alabama. She has held positions at Auburn University and at Louisiana State University where

she served as Stephanie Landry Barineau Professor of Choral Studies in the School of Music and Interim Dean of the College of Music and Dramatic Arts at Louisiana State University. Previously she was Associate Dean for the college and Director of Graduate Studies for the School of Music at LSU. There, she founded and conducted the LSU Schola Cantorum, a mixed choir, and the LSU Select Women's Ensemble, both groups that grew out of her work with the Men's, Women's, and University Choruses. In 2002, the LSU Select Women's Ensemble under her direction was selected to perform at the Southern Division Conference of ACDA in Charlotte, NC. In 2003 she was awarded the Tiger Athletic Foundation Teaching Award at LSU.

Baird served as President for Southern Division ACDA and in a variety of other positions for regional and national conferences. ACDA's scope of influence, initiative, and inspiration has dramatically increased over its 60-year history. As an organization we have the capacity to continue to shape and encourage the growth of choral music in all its diversity and for all ages around the world as we progress in our quests for musical excellence and inclusivity. The potential over the next sixty years for ACDA to engender unity, quality, and inspiration through our art is exhilarating and promising.



DAVID FRYLING is director of choral activities at Hofstra University, where he conducts the select Hofstra Chorale and Hofstra Chamber Choir, teaches choral conducting, and supervises student teachers in the field. In the fall of 2014,

David was inducted into the Long Island Music Hall of Fame as the "Educator of Note," and he is the winner of the 2016-17 American Prize in Conducting in both the community chorus and college & university categories.

He is also the founding conductor of the eVoco Voice Collective, a nonprofit organization that presents a yearly concert series, community outreach and education opportunities for high school students, music educators, and the community at-large, and a multi-generational recital that awards young artist scholarships.

David's invitations as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator include all-state and regional honor choirs, master classes, workshops, and adjudications across the country, including most recently as the conductor of the 2018 ACDA Eastern Region HS Honor Choir in Pittsburgh. From 2007 to 2013 he served as conductor and coordinator of the World Youth Honors Choir and Festival Choir & Orchestra at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan.

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Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service (Avodath Hakodesh) in Contemporary Context: A Personal Commentary on the Music and Its Legacy

by Nick Strimple

Editor's note: This article is the third in a series that highlights themes and programming that will be part of ACDA's 2019 National Conference in Kansas City. Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service will be presented as the opening concert by the Kansas City Symphony and Chorus, Maestro Michael Stern, Conductor.

During the 1960s when I was a university student, Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) was presented in music history class as an important composer of the second rank whose attractive and often powerful music was worthy of study and, occasionally, performance. His music was based on old modes, and he was, therefore, lauded by musical conservatives for having managed to avoid all of the gimmicks defining the various then-current attempts to break with the nineteenth century: the rhythmic and tonal complexities of Igor Stravinsky and Charles Ives, the serialism of Arnold Schoenberg, the polytonal jazz of Darius Milhaud, and so on. On a superficial level, his music sounded a little like Ralph Vaughan Williams (the occasional augmented seconds notwithstanding) and his *Concerto Grosso No. 1* was acclaimed, correctly, as a primary example of Bloch at his very best. He was also the only major

composer to have set the Jewish Liturgy in the same way that composers had been setting the Ordinary of the mass for centuries.

I will always be grateful to my professor for including this last piece of information in his lecture. But I am still bothered by his slight discomfort with the inevitable questions that followed: Why have Jewish composers not composed for their liturgy; and, perhaps more important: who are the Jewish composers?

I have come to understand that his reluctance with the first question was the result of benign ignorance. After all, until very recently virtually no one outside the Jewish community (including musicologists) knew any of the journeymen composers who were writing for Jewish services, just as people in the Jewish community (including composers and other musicians) knew nothing about Flor Peeters, Martin Shaw, Jane Marshall, Gordon Young, Carl F. Mueller, Pietro A. Yon, or other composers writing for churches. In the 1960s, Solomon Sulzer and Max Helfman were unknown names to most musicians, and Louis Lewandowski's justly famous *Hallelujah* was so frequently performed in English by American high schools,

colleges, and churches that most people didn't know the composer was Jewish. It was relatively easy to assume that Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh* was, in fact, the only unified setting of a Jewish liturgy.

My professor's nervousness with the second question was, I believe, rooted in a desire to keep the discussion within established norms of public discourse in order to avoid opening a can of worms. Of course, no one knew what that can of worms might be, but in those days all things Jewish were definitely outside the realm of normal civic discussion. Even though Jews had been accepted as important and vital members of American society since the colonial period, they were still definitely outsiders.

While Jewish communities in the United States were generally respected, in spite of some lingering antisemitism, it should be remembered that the Holocaust was not directly confronted on American television until a live NBC broadcast of *This is Your Life* on May 27, 1953, some eight years after the end of World War II. Salamone Rossi was promoted as a master of the late Italian madrigal and an otherwise leading-edge composer who was among the first to utilize figured

Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service (Avodath Hakodesh) in Contemporary

bass. Who knew that he was also the first to compose polyphonic works in Hebrew? The hyphenated surname of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (created at the insistence of his father in order to add credibility to his church compositions) was not discussed. The ancestries of Fromental Halévy, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Gustav Mahler, Aaron Copland, and others were simply ignored, as was Richard Wagner's rabid and unrepentant antisemitism. In other words, any mention of Jewishness was discreetly avoided.

The situation in the United States had been much the same prior to World War II: the Jewish community was respected but definitely held at arm's length; what happened in their synagogues (including music) was their own business. So the idea, hatched around 1929 by Gerald Warburg—a wealthy philanthropist, cellist, and founder of the Stradivarius Quartet—and Reuben R. Rinder—Cantor at Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco—of a large Jewish work designed for presentation to the general public

seemed boldly original, perhaps even provocative.

But both men were products of American Reform Judaism, which at that time was the most vibrant and energetic form of Judaism in the United States. The American descendant of a liberal Jewish movement that became established in Vienna and Berlin in the early nineteenth century before spreading throughout Europe, the Reform Movement sought to present itself, like its European predecessor, as a sort of first cousin to Protestant Christianity: its services were in the vernacular; choir and instruments were introduced into worship and new synagogues (now often called "Temples") were built in a manner resembling churches, with stained-glass windows and lofts for choir and organ.

Warburg and Rinder certainly knew the Jewish liturgical repertoire. They knew that, at least as far back as the publication in 1901 of *Sabbath Evening and Morning Service* by Max Spicker and William Sparger (which borrowed some music from

Gounod's *Faust*), numerous composers in America had written unified settings—or, portions, at least—of the Friday evening and Saturday morning liturgies. And European composers, not including Salamone Rossi's virtually isolated examples published in 1623, had been doing so since about 1840. They also knew that the cantatas of Bach and the great masses of Mozart, Haydn, Bruckner, and others had essentially become concert works and were no longer, as a rule, performed as part of a liturgical service. It seemed, therefore, only logical to commission someone to compose a large, orchestral setting of the Jewish liturgy that could also be presented to secular audiences outside the restrictions of a synagogue. Late in 1929, Warburg talked Ernest Bloch into it and the rest, as they say, is history.

The Music

It is clear that from the beginning Ernest Bloch saw this as an opportunity to bring people of all faiths together. In *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* (Amadeus Press, 2002), I paraphrased Bloch's comments to the audience prior to the first performance at Temple Emanu-El (which, incidentally, was not the premiere): "Bloch told the audience that the work encompassed the totality of his experience, that he was endeavoring to deliver a message of faith and hope in life, and that, while it was presented from a Jewish perspective, it was written for the entire world." To say that he succeeded admirably is an understatement.

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Context: A Personal Commentary on the Music and Its Legacy

From the first notes, listeners are ushered into a most evocative sound world that is both slightly exotic and yet warmly familiar: as if we have known this music on some subliminal level all our lives. Or, to put it another way, that we are hearing music by a composer who may actually have known God. By the time the cantor enters with “Ma Tovvu” (“How beautiful are Thy tents, O Jacob”), we are hooked.

A quick glance at the score seems to reveal exceptionally complicated music. This impression is caused primarily by the frequently changing meters and large, elaborate orchestration. But, in fact, the writing is very straight forward and the chorus parts grateful to sing. At no time does the meter stray from a basic quarter-note or half-note pulse, so meter changes look more complicated than they are because Bloch uses an old-fashioned notation requiring double bars whenever a meter change occurs.

Harmonically and melodically, Bloch relies heavily on Jewish modes that are identical to church modes, especially the Aeolian (natural minor). This, of course, increases the comfort level of non-Jewish performers and listeners because it lends a haunting familiarity to the music. The prevailing diatonicism is occasionally relieved by chromatic alteration in melodic lines that are usually given to the soloist. The so-called “Phrygish” modes—or modes with augmented seconds—and other middle-eastern sounds are used sparingly and with great care, most notably at the end of Part II and throughout the “Adon

Olam” section of Part V.

Structurally, each of the five Parts is divided into smaller, text-driven, quasi-independent sections. Formal unification is achieved through use of brief melodic motives—the

most important of which comprises the pitches G-A-C-B (often transposed)—which permeate the work, and reliance on call-and-response technique, in which the cantor either sings a phrase that is then re-



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Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service (Avodath Hakodesh) in Contemporary

peated by the chorus, or the cantor sings the first half of a phrase that is then completed by the chorus.

The musical climax of *Avodath Hakodesh* is the final chorus of Part III, which comes immediately after the “Sh’ma,” often referred to as the Jewish “Credo” (“Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one”). This chorus, textually comprising a great Doxology (“And Thine, Lord, is the greatness and all dominion, and Thine the majesty and the glory and the power, for all things in heaven and earth are Thine”), is the most contrapuntally elaborate section of the work. It is also two of the most thrilling minutes in all of music.

The final two parts comprise a long and rich denouement and include another climax, perhaps more profound and certainly more mystical and chromatic than the end of Part III. Here, still within the confines of the liturgy, Bloch has the opportunity to drive home his vision of universality. But, paradoxically, it is here that the music sounds most Jewish.

Part IV ends with a “Peace Song” and Part V continues with a long prayer, in English, sung or recited by the rabbi (“May the time not be distant, O Lord, when thy name shall be worshipped in all the earth”). Bloch seems to have been particularly concerned with this section because he tweaked the text to more closely align with his purpose. Beethoven, of course, had added an emphatic “O” to the text of *Missa Solemnis* just over a century earlier; unlike Beethoven, however, Bloch was not censured for this. Bloch was also exceptionally meticulous with instructions as to how the rabbi’s part should be performed. While the composer wrote specific pitches, he also gave numerous instructions for “spoken voice,” “almost singing,” and so on. But in his own recording Bloch seems to have settled on singing the whole thing.

Not long after the rabbi’s prayer, the cantor and soloist tackle “Adon Olam” with music that seems simultaneously Jewish and otherworldly. The text is one of the greatest hymns ever written:

The Lord of all, who reigned
supreme
Ere first Creation’s form was
framed;
When all was finished by His
will
His Name Almighty was pro-
claimed.

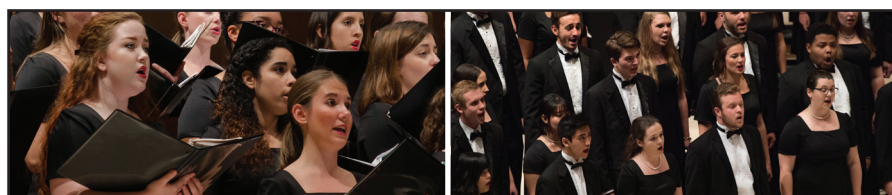
When this our world shall be
no more,
In Majesty He still shall reign,
Who was, who is, who will for
aye
In endless glory shall remain.

Alone is He, beyond compare,
Without division or ally;
Without initial date or end,
Omnipotent He rules on high.

He is my God and Savior too,
To whom I turn in sorrow’s
hour—
My banner proud, my refuge
sure—
Who hears and answers with
His power.

Then in His hand myself I lay,
And trusting, sleep; and wake
with cheer;
My soul and body are His
care;
The Lord doth guard, I have
no fear!

Attributed to the Spanish mystic Solomon ibn Gabirol (eleventh-century, CE), it is usually sung by the congregation to melodies that are bold, upbeat, and triumphant in nature. But Ernest Bloch chose to focus on the mystery of creation as presented in the first stanza of text and



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the subsequent gulf between God and humanity, and he lets the congregation silently observe his struggle. This is not creation as imagined by Haydn in the “Description of Chaos” that begins *Der Schöpfung*. Instead, Bloch gradually comes to an understanding of humanity’s place in the scheme of things, rather like the “Sanctus” of *Missa Solemnis*, in which Beethoven realizes that the majesty of God is not the majesty of earthly monarchs. After this, there is really nothing left to say, and Bloch rounds off his masterpiece with a hopeful setting of the Aaronic Benediction, based on music from the

opening measures of Part I.

Legacy

Until the early 1970s, *Avodath Hakodesh* remained a curiosity item in American concert halls. The composer’s own recording in English had been available since 1950; and Leonard Bernstein’s, in Hebrew, since 1960. But it was still essentially unknown outside music libraries and the living rooms of Bloch aficionados. While it was well known in large Reform and Conservative synagogues through occasional performances of excerpts (with piano

or organ), the only section really known by the general public was the opening of Part III: “Silent Devotion and Response,” which was published separately. In its English version (“May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable...”) this little gem had become standard repertoire for many high school, college and church choirs. And, as in the case of Lewandowski’s *Hallelujah*, many of those who sang it did not realize its origins.

But throughout the sixties Leonard Bernstein’s controversial recording picked up steam as people out-



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Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service (Avodath Hakodesh)

side the Jewish community became aware of it. Bernstein's ensembles were the New York Philharmonic and the choirs of New York's Metropolitan Synagogue and Community Church (institutions that happen to share a facility on E. 35th Street in Manhattan). Robert Merrill was the cantor, and both he and Bernstein were at the height of their powers. Even though the composer's family complained bitterly about certain liberties taken (for instance, Bernstein has the rabbi speak his part), the resulting performance was still an astonishing eye-opener to everyone who heard it.

The result was that by the early 1970s *Avodath Hakodesh* was definitely emerging from the ghetto. And Bernstein's immensely popular *Chichester Psalms*, composed a few years earlier (1965), helped the situation because enterprising conductors began to see the two works as collegial program companions. As interest in this pairing increased, conductors also began reconsidering Jewish-themed compositions by other major composers such as Darius Milhaud, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Ernst Toch, Kurt Weill, Eric Zeisl, and Arnold Schoenberg.

Not only did the newly acquired popularity of *Avodath Hakodesh* increase awareness of Jewish music among non-Jewish musicians and concert goers, but its success also increased the willingness of composers of various backgrounds to 1) write Jewish liturgical music, 2) look beyond the Bible and embrace more recent Jewish history

and literature as potential sources for new compositions, and 3) to set Hebrew texts. Works like Judith Lang Zaimont's *Sacred Service*, Eric Whitacre's *Five Hebrew Love Songs*, Thomas Beveridge's *Yiskor Requiem*, Samuel Adler's *Candles in the Dust*, Stephen Paulus's *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, and numerous other works (many of them Holocaust-related) might not have been viable without the example of Bloch's groundbreaking masterpiece.

In addition, some churches—recognizing the life-affirming power of the music and realizing that the text contained virtually nothing in conflict with Christian doctrine—began utilizing portions of *Avodath Hakodesh* other than “May the words of my mouth.” I remember clearly that when I first performed Parts I-III at Beverly Hills Presbyterian Church (1980) the immediate and sustained reaction of the congregation, choir, and clergy was that they wanted to hear it again as soon as possible. Over my thirty-five years as director of music at that church, I developed a list of large works that had become favorites of the congregation and choir. Included on that list, in addition to Bloch, are Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's “Coronation” mass, Haydn's “Lord Nelson” mass, Vaughan Williams's *Five Mystical Songs*, Jan Hanuš's “Glagolitic” mass, and Duke Ellington's *Sacred Concert*. So *Avodath Hakodesh*, I would say, is now in pretty good company.

Lastly, Ernest Bloch is to be applauded for presenting the Jewish Liturgy to general audiences as something to be appreciated, with-

out partisanship, simply for what it is: an acknowledgement of God's sovereignty and greatness; an admission of humanity's shortcomings, neediness and mortality; and an expression of unabashed joy in thanksgiving for God's blessings and for the gift of life. This aspect of *Avodath Hakodesh* is what all peoples and religions have in common and justifies Bloch's stated hope that his work would be for the entire world and not just for the Jewish community. It seems that this is especially important now in America, where our affluent, materialistic, fragmented, and superficially religious society finds it very difficult to admit—in the midst of arrogant and continuing insistence on “correct” dogma—that there is something greater than we: that God is God and we are not. ■

Nick Strimple is professor of practice of choral and sacred music in the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, affiliated faculty in USC Dornsife College's Jewish Studies Program, and music director of the Los Angeles Zimriyah Chorale.

CJ Replay

Readers might also be interested in the following related article: “Universalism and Particularism in Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service,” by Joshua R. Jacobson (November 2009).



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Hallelujah!



Richard Stanislaw, Editor <rstanislaw@comcast.net>

Rural Sacred Choral Music of Post-Colonial America

by Richard Stanislaw

Note: The following is the last offering from Richard Stanislaw as editor of the Hallelujah! column. He started in this position in 2010, and, along with editing this column, he has been a unique and helpful voice on the Choral Journal editorial board assisting with article reviews and other items.

In the years immediately following the American Revolution, urban art music in our young country turned increasingly toward Europe for inspiration. In those same years, the rural areas and growing frontiers preserved a distinctly American style of singing. Choral societies, for example, performed Handel and Haydn in Boston and honored Mendelssohn in New York. Philadelphia developed a resident orchestra, and Charleston opened an opera repertoire theatre. An imitative sophistication set in—a sophistication that was embarrassed by American idioms. City churches began programs of cultural upgrading, often to the exclusion of familiar local hymnody and colonial Psalmody. America had become independent, and her choral directors in the cities felt a conscious need to demonstrate European-style maturity. The sturdy music of New

England traveling singing school teachers and their tune books was forgotten or intentionally purged.

Only about one American in sixteen lived in cities during the early nineteenth century. Singing schools that had been the backbone of church music and choral singing now shifted to serve rural and developing areas of Kentucky and Tennessee, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania. Musical style in those schools was deliberately anti-European. Even the four-syllable four-shape method of instruction was a unique (and effective) system, with its three-voice design, gapped scales, open fifths, and consonant fourths. Around this same time, revivals were sweeping the rural south and west. Methodists Francis Asbury and Peter Cartwright, Presbyterian maverick Barton Stone, and hundreds of now-forgotten circuit-riding ministers penetrated frontier life. The visible aspect of revival was the camp meeting. Rural folk with varying levels of Christian commitment traveled from miles around to gather for preaching and singing. The camp meetings were a weekend social and musical event.

Sometimes secular songs had a few important words modified to turn worldly values heavenly. Or, new texts were written to promote a particular idea, as in this hymn, cheerfully sung to an English folk tune:

David B. Mintz, *Spiritual Song Book*,
Halifax, N.C., 1805

*I am a soldier of the cross,
I count all earthly things but dross:
My soul is bound for endless rest,
I'll never leave the Methodist.*

...

*The world, the Devil and Tom Pain
Have try'd their best, but all's in vain;
They can't prevail; the reason's this:
The Lord defends the Methodist.*

The revivals were used most successfully by the Methodists, but they had begun among more staid denominations. Richard McNemar was a Presbyterian who later turned Quaker. Speaking of Presbyterian reaction to the free spirit in the camp meetings, he wrote harsh words:

The people among whom the



revival began, were generally Calvinists; and although they had been long praying in words, for the outpouring of the Spirit; and believed that God had “fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass”; yet, when it came to pass that their prayer was answered, ...they rose up and quarreled with the work because it did not come to pass that the subjects of it were willing to adapt their soul-stupefying creed.¹

The camp meetings first used small song books containing only texts. The tune was “lined out,” the leader singing a single line and the group answering. Here is the account of one itinerant musician who later published some of the tunes:

An old man...gives out the hymn, of which the whole assembled multitude can recite the words—and an air, in which every Voice can join. We should deem poorly of the heart, that would not thrill, as the song is heard, like the ‘sound of many waters’ echoing among the hills and mountains.²

contain the people the camp was exlenonined by candles furnished by the congregation which was in a thick grove of beach timber the appearance of itselfe gave a solem appearance but ad to that preaching exorting singing praying sinors rejoicing publickly.

Although this revivalist music later became the content of singing school books, the first use of folk hymns and spirituals was informal. A New England Congregationalist, who was part of an already well-developed more formal liturgical tradition, observed this about the revivalist groups:

That technique of lining out led to the call-and-answer style of many black and white spirituals. The camp meetings were integrated pre-Civil War events. Indeed, theological discussions about Christian brothers and sisters who were slaves led many into an abolitionist understanding, a beneficial side-effect of the setting and the shared music.

Diaries and biographies from this era tell of the spirited singing—from the tents, between services, among small groups, and most particularly at the evening services. Thousands gathered in an open area to sing. Some brought candles, but most meetings were lit by fires built on platforms around the group. Col. Robert Patterson, in a letter dated 1801, speaks of 4,000-8,000 people attending a camp meeting in “Estern Kentuckeye”:

The meeting houses could not

The Methodist, and the strict Presbyterian, have no separate choirs. They have not yet succeeded so far in the division of spiritual labor, as to delegate to others the business of praise, or to worship God by proxy. I have often witnessed a congregation of one thousand Methodists, as they rose simultaneously from their seats, and following the officiating minister, who gave out the hymn in portions of two lines, joined all together in some simple air, which expressed the very soul of natural music. I could see no lips closed as far as I could direct my vision, nor could I hear one note of discord uttered... It did not offend me that they sang with all their might, and all their soul, and all their strength, for it was evident that they sang with all their heart.³

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Singing was a bedrock of revival activities—Hymns and Psalms that later found their way into widely circulated singing school books, those end-bound books of instruction and three or four-part harmony, such as *Sacred Harp*, *Southern Harmony*, and Lincoln’s favorite, *Missouri Harmony*. Even the titles emphasized the intent: learning to sing in harmony. Those books documented the new American part-song repertoire—often an old text married to a folk tune, “Amazing Grace” or “How Firm A Foundation,” for example. The books included fuguig tunes of New England, quaint new repertoire, and European hymns in Amer-

ican harmonic settings.

So, while American church music in urban areas was becoming increasingly dignified (that is, European), the rural majority kept colonial musical style alive and expanded it to include an enthusiastic repertoire of folk hymnody and part singing. Rural music was strongly associated with the second great revival. It was popular in developing western United States among people who were the primary movers in that century for civil liberty, human rights, and education.

It is that music that was written down by the new wave of singing teachers, the traveling proponents of

part singing. It was the music used in frontier singing schools, usually in the shape-note system, the community choirs of that day.

NOTES

¹ Richard McNemar, *The Kentucky Revival* (Cincinnati, 1808).

² Timothy Flint, *Condensed Geography of the Western States* (Cincinnati, 1828).

³ Samuel Gilman, *Memoirs of a New England Village Choir* (Boston, 1829).



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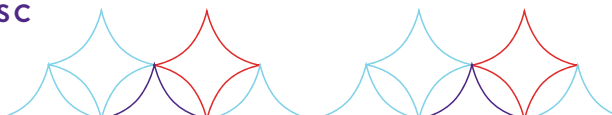
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Coming to America: Differences between the UK and US Choral Systems

by Christopher Gabbitas with Simon Carrington and Gabriel Crouch

For the past fifteen seasons, I have had the privilege of singing as the Second Baritone in The King's Singers, the British ensemble that has, perhaps in many ways, defined the world of a cappella performance for the past five decades. In 2016, I decided that 2018 would be my final year in the group, for personal and professional reasons. On the personal side, I found that having a wife and three young daughters and being on the road for over 200 days each year was not a great recipe for success! On a professional note, I felt that fifteen years with the King's Singers was the right amount of experience to take what I'd learned and apply it elsewhere. In addition, I felt it was good for my professional development to move on. The King's Singers works collaboratively, with all six members contributing equally (in theory) to both on- and off-stage discussions. I had picked up so much from my colleagues since I first joined, and once I became the longest-serving singer I felt that I'd gleaned enough to want to direct an ensemble on my own rather than by committee—and also to hand down the knowledge about ensemble singing I'd been fortunate to absorb.

During my time with The King's Singers, I had always compared and



Christopher Gabbitas.

contrasted the UK and US systems of choral education. Having grown up with the former, I knew I wanted to teach and work in the latter if I could. Initially, this seemed an impossible task! At Cambridge I took a degree in Law, despite being a Choral Scholar at St John's College, so on paper, at least, I am not an obvious choice to be a music professor. I quickly realised that, particularly for State Colleges in the United States, I would have to return to college, gain a Master's and (preferably) a Doctorate in choral direction, and then

apply for entry-level faculty jobs. I respected the system but found it frustrating: after all, by this stage I'd spent well over a decade teaching master classes across America, including at some of the top colleges across the United States. Practically speaking, it was going to be extremely difficult for me to go back to college at this stage of my life. I took advice from former King's Singers including Bob Chilcott, who recommended I research universities where I had directed master class sessions and approach those that stood out to me for the quality of the teaching, enthusiasm of the students, and where I felt I would fit into the existing faculty. I am fortunate and delighted to be taking up a position at the University of Redlands, California, as artist professor in the fall of 2019.

I am often asked what I perceive are the main differences between the UK and US choral systems. I wonder this myself, to be honest, and in fact I am not the only King's Singer to go down this route: all three long-serving Second Baritones in the group—founder member Simon Carrington, Gabriel Crouch, and now myself—have taken this path. I contacted both Simon and Gabriel and asked them what they found

Coming to America: Differences between the

so attractive about American choral education and how they could add value to the system. First, however, I asked them to talk about their personal and professional reasons for leaving The King's Singers.

Carrington: At some point during the group's twenty-third year, Alastair Hume and I, the two surviving founder members, decided we would try and make it to the end of the group's Silver Jubilee year and then step aside, we hoped with voice and dignity still reasonably intact! We were both fifty-one by the time of our 3,000th and last concert on December 13, 1993. That was stretching the limit for used ensemble singers for whom the daily obligation of pinpoint accurate entries on pianissimo high notes was becoming ever more troublesome! Opera singers can change their Fach and their character roles as they age; ensemble singers have to remain forever youthful. The fact that David Hurley later managed twenty-six years singing on the top of the ensemble, rather than tucked away safely one in from each end, remains a source of wonder and admiration!

Crouch: You know, I was so happy in The King's Singers that, even after completing eight years and turning thirty, I would very gladly have committed to another decade with the group and sung with them until my voice gave out. But after getting more closely involved in the group's educational work in my later years, I started to see another career path for myself—the path I'm now on—and I was acutely conscious of just



Gabriel Crouch.

how much there was to learn about conducting, teaching, music making, and leadership before I would be truly ready for that career. As a thirty-year-old, I felt still-young enough to learn all these new things, and crucially, as a (then) single man, I could comfort myself with the knowledge that, were I to mess it all up, the only life that would be affected would be my own.

For the three of us, directing an ensemble seemed like a logical extension to our careers as a means of inspiring other singers to experience the joy of performing in the same manner as we had—if not in terms of touring, then at least in terms of communicating the music and text to whatever audience was in front of them. Working in education offers the best way forward for any musical director, as it's only there that you can be guaranteed eager, open-minded students who can

absorb your teaching like sponges. I asked Simon and Gabriel why they chose this path, and Gabriel offered a shrewd differentiation between “directing” and “conducting” that all directors may find interesting.

Crouch: To be honest, it was never “conducting” that pulled me towards this career... it was teaching. Conducting is just one of the ways I now communicate with my students, but it's by no means the most important way. Those master class experiences with The King's Singers were absolutely crucial, and of course they brought me into contact with great educators like Simon Carrington, whose career (and whose life) has always inspired me. I also got to learn from the example of great senior colleagues who were in the group when I arrived—David, Nigel, Bob, Phil, and Stephen. As a professional singer, I occasionally caught myself being grumpy, entitled, and critical; but as a teacher I have always found it much easier to be patient and pos-

UK and US Choral Systems



Simon Carrington.

itive whilst still being musically demanding... I guess that might mean that it makes me... happy?

Carrington: I spent several years in the early days of The King's Singers playing double bass in orchestras around the world, conducted by some of the world's greatest maestri. Unfortunately I never dreamt then about becoming a conductor or I might have paid more attention! I had conducted choirs a few times at summer schools but never really taken the art very seriously. However, I was attracted by the idea of finding a steady job after twenty-five years on the road. During our many tours 'round the United States. I had long admired an education system that provides full-time permanent university positions for so-called Directors of Choral Activities. I shall always remain grateful to The Uni-

versity of Kansas (KU) for giving me the chance, sight almost unseen, to plunge straight into the task of organizing a huge choral program of seven choirs and eager graduate students anxious to learn the tools of the trade. I felt I had assimilated a certain amount of knowledge by experience, but I swiftly found I needed to learn how to pass this on in an orderly and convincing fashion. I had to acquire some technique and fast!

But what was it specifically about the American system that drew each of us to working in the United States? Here, we all have the same answer! Singing is so ingrained in American collegiate music programmes that the motivation for students to join ensembles and work

hard to improve is second to none. Americans are often surprised that we don't have the same system in the UK; although we have wonderful elite choral programmes at Universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, the depth of the American collegiate system is the envy of the world.

To give examples: a boy-chorister in an English Cathedral (or one of the great College Choirs at Oxford and Cambridge) may rehearse for an hour each day before school, then re-group with his colleagues after school to rehearse for another thirty minutes and sing Evensong. There may be one day off each week, but other than that it's a lot of singing—and all this from aged just eight. It teaches huge discipline, time management, incredible sight-reading skills, and an appreciation of the incredible body of Anglican music written from 1500 to the present day. Popular author Malcolm Gladwell has posited a "10,000 hours" theory: that to be highly proficient in any given discipline, 10,000 hours ought to be devoted to its study. For an English Chorister, they have their 10,000 hours by the time they reach around age sixteen, whereas many post-doctoral students in the United States probably won't have reached that level of experience upon graduation. It's no wonder that the world is overrun with English Choral Directors! Most of them started out as Cathedral Choristers.

Yet, outside the hallowed cloisters of these top choirs, most English children receive little or no musical education at school. If their parents aren't determined to have their children take extra classes outside the

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school day, they simply won't be exposed to music. It wasn't always that way, but budget cuts and a succession of short-sighted educational policies mean that music is now seen as a luxury as opposed to part of the core curriculum. In the United States, my experience is different. Many schools (though of course not all) have decent budgets for instruments, credit is given for attendance and participation in ensembles, and there is (by and large) an appreciation for music instilled in every student. You are lucky indeed!

When I asked Simon and Gabriel what it is that makes American choral education so special, they described it well:

Carrington: The fact that singing in choirs is recognised as an integral part of the core academic curriculum is special. To the surprise of many of my wonderful choral colleagues in the US, this arrangement is very rare and hugely admired around the world. Students from all disciplines earn a "credit" in their transcripts for singing in choir. This in turn demands a rigorous training for their choral directors through to the masters and doctoral levels, which contrasts with a rather more haphazard system where musicians, particularly organists, develop their skills by experience alone. I am delighted to see that various courses for choral conductors are now being steadily introduced in conservatoires and universities in the UK.

Crouch: That's easy. It's the fact that in the United States, anybody who is prepared to make a commitment to



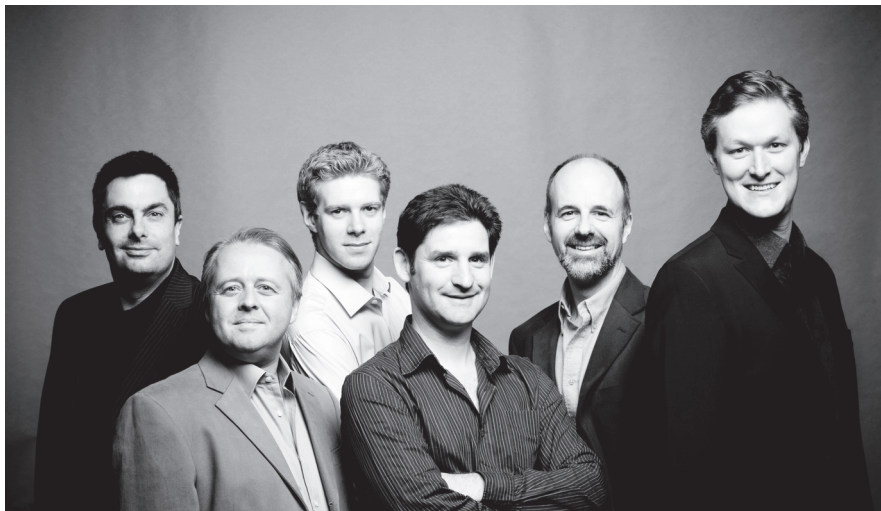
1968 (L-R) Martin Lane, Alastair Hume, Alastair Thompson, Richard Salter, Simon Carrington, Brian Kay.

a choral ensemble has a good chance of finding a choir they can contribute to, and derive satisfaction from participating in, whilst being led by somebody capable. The United States may not have quite the "elite" scene of the UK, but I find that less and less important nowadays.

As I spoke about earlier, when I was considering moving to the United States to teach, I found that some educational institutions barred their doors to me because I don't have a doctorate in music or choral conducting. Worse still, even my bachelor's and master's degrees are in law, of all things! I don't have a single official qualification in music beyond high school, so what gave me the right to apply for teaching positions at a university? And yet, I thought

back to over 500 master class experiences around the world over my time in The King's Singers, and realised that I wanted to find a way to share my passion and expertise with a new generation.

Many university choirs in America have the luxury of long hours of rehearsal and are always incredibly well drilled. This is a source of envy for those of us in Europe who are used to swift rehearsals followed by a service, concert performance, or recording session. But while being well rehearsed is a virtue, any choir can sometimes lack a spontaneity, energy, or conviction in performance because they fall into the trap of being over-rehearsed. There were occasions when the King's Singers led master classes in the United States and we found it almost impossible to shape a performance or change anything about its delivery because



2004–09 (L-R) Stephen Connolly, David Hurley, Christopher Gabbittas, Paul Phoenix, Philip Lawson, Robin Tyson.

the choir was chiselled into a specific interpretation. Occasionally I will anticipate the things I will say to an ensemble even before they sing their first note. The most common comments are:

- Performances from memory must not fall into the trap of being inflexible or lead to an ensemble being unable/unwilling to change.
- Lack of scores means no ability to amend markings or to see the music in context.
- Blind focus on the conductor can lead to a “glass wall” between performers and audience and little communication beyond the stage.
- Odd and unmatched vowel sounds are acquired through repetition rather than blended, clear vowels honed through vertical listening.
- Rigid application of tempo and rhythm can discourage rubato or

sensitivity.

- An emphasis on *watching* the conductor as opposed to *listening* to the performance itself and living within it can lead to merely singing the words rather than truly delivering and communicating the text.

The top choirs are truly excellent, and if you want your choirs to join them, try to avoid the factors above, which add up to performances that are at best “correct” without being truly moving. In part I believe it’s due to the prevalence of choir competitions and conventions, which all look for certain empirical markers within performances. These events are important and wonderful in many ways but can also deter directors and choirs from daring to be maverick and trying something new. It’s refreshing in a master class scenario to be able to encourage singers to work together for the joy of music rather than to tick boxes. However,

whilst it is enjoyable to get a snapshot of a choir and work with them for an hour or so, I wanted to move into a position where I would have my own singers and be able to work with them seamlessly across weeks, months, and years.

I asked Gabriel and Simon what it is about our experience in The King’s Singers that makes us qualified to be educators, and in many ways their responses mirrored my own feelings:

Crouch: Two things: 1) The King’s Singers taught me something that is too often ignored in the world of vocal music making: that it possible to sing and listen simultaneously. I think when you break everything down, that’s the essence of what The King’s Singers do. They work harder at it than anyone else, and they do it better than anyone else. I’ve simply tried to pass on to my students the lesson that the more deeply you listen to your colleagues, the better your contribution will be. 2) I learnt to love words in The King’s Singers—poetry, liturgy, language, and the very process of forming vowels and consonants... these things are now obsessive passions of mine that feed my choral work immensely, and I learned it all from the careful and incredibly natural way that The King’s Singers shape their texts. In the US, it can often feel like singers “superimpose” their text upon notes that have been previously learned (in fact, with the often problematic practice of count-singing, this is the primary route to learning a new work for some choirs). I try my best to teach music so that its rhetorical

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possibilities are explored at the same time as the notes themselves.

This excited me. I have always been taught, since being a boy-choirist at the age of eight, that the music is only as important as the words it serves. In other words, music is a conduit for rhetoric. Accurate, mechanical performance seldom garner gushing reviews; truly great performances are the ones that are sublime in their communication of the message behind the music.



The King's Singers 2018.

Carrington: I suspect it helped me keep an open mind, to be flexible and adaptable, and to deal with the myriad challenges facing educators ambitious for their students. An ensemble like The King's Singers moves fast musically, and by contrast I had to learn to be patient, to be demanding but not intolerant, to set the highest standards and then find ways to help students who had not benefited from my many years of immersion in music to reach the goals set for them. The King's Singers only began to give workshops toward the very end of my career, but I had done enough for me to realise that I was passionate about passing on what I knew (or thought I knew!). This passion has driven me ever since, which is my excuse for continuing even at my advanced age!

When comparing the American and British systems with Simon and Gabriel, it became clear that the

main appeal of working in the US centred on the rehearsal time and the availability of choral programmes to all students in a university, no matter what their major or minor. We all grew up in a system where we'd have around forty minutes of rehearsal for every "performance" (in our case, services in cathedrals and colleges around the UK), and in the US we can enjoy many, many hours of rehearsal for each single performance. To us, this sounds like heaven! The chance really to flesh out a piece of music, to hone and fine-tune (literally!) each measure, chord and melody, blows our minds. Even in The King's Singers, our rehearsal/performance ratio of is around 1:1 if we're lucky.

Finally, I asked both Simon and Gabriel what had made them most proud in their career as educators. Their answers were fascinating:

Crouch: There's still so much to do and the job isn't finished... But I've

tried hard to create a choral program here at Princeton where every single student who wants to sing can find something appropriate to their needs and musical proclivities... from those who see a future as professional singers, to those who have never sung before. And because of the way things are set up here, with full-time qualified choral faculties commonplace in schools and universities, this is a realistic and attainable goal. And... I'm certainly proud to be a small part of what I consider to be a healthy positive and inclusive musical culture here in the United States.

Carrington: While reluctant to blow my own trumpet, looking back I have to admit to some achievements of which I am proud! The teaching of quick sight-reading by handing out copies of the Tallis 40 part motet and leaving the singers to get on with it (!), the reaction to the renaissance and baroque music sung I hope styl-

UK and US Choral Systems

ishly and flexibly by the KU Chamber choir at our first ACDA National Convention, the live broadcast on NPR's *Performance Today* of all 350 singers in the KU choral program singing the first broadcast of Morten Lauridsen's soon-to-be famous *O Magnum mysterium*, Yale Schola Cantorum's standing ovation at the first NCCO convention, my two *Souvenirs de la France Profonde* CDs recorded first by KU and then by Yale live on tour in France.

Conclusion

If I can achieve even half of what Simon and Gabriel have achieved since moving across the pond, I'll be delighted. What is clear is that

America has a choral education system that is the envy of the world and can attract educators from the top of the choral profession without any hesitation. My advice to choral directors would be to direct with what I call the "whole work" philosophy: each individual line, phrase, and chord should be seen in the context of the whole. Teach vertical thinking within a score—it improves harmonic understanding and thereby will improve tuning. Encourage singers to understand the rhetoric and convey the meaning of the text fully and organically. Finally, always include sight-reading in every rehearsal, and you'll be surprised how quickly your ensemble's ability will improve. You have the time, the resources, and the

motivation to create exceptional musicians, and I look forward to joining your ranks in 2019! 

Christopher Gabbitas has been a member of The King's Singers since 2004. He is artist professor at The University of Redlands, California, commencing 2019.

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Simon Carrington was a founding member of The King's Singers (1968-1993). He is emeritus professor of choral activities at Yale.

Gabriel Crouch was a member of The King's Singers from 1996 to 2004. He is currently director of choral activities at Princeton.



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- 4'40". A mix of chant-like, homophonic, and occasional imitative textures set this most sensual of all biblical texts, as lovers delight in the dark beauty of their skin. Expansive message: value of every individual. Very tonal even in dense chordal portions. Concludes with "Alleluia." Compelling; manageable by excellent HS choir. (ProjectEncore.org/michael-bussewitz-quarm)



GERALD COHEN (NEW to PROJECT : ENCORE)

V'higad'ta L'vincha (And You Shall Tell Your Child . . .)

- SSA (also SATB avail); S solo; piano, clarinet, cello; Hebrew (Passover Haggadah)
- 16'30". Central theme is that of deliverance from slavery that all must know as if personally experienced; story to be handed down to children. Six distinctive sections within the story. Challenging rhythmically. Requires capable treble choir and instrumentalists, good child soprano voice. Worth the work! (ProjectEncore.org/gerald-cohen)



JENNIFER J. DURHAM

O Stately Forest

- SSA; S solo; piano accompaniment; English (Joan E. Thomas)
- 3'05". Beautiful poem of gratitude for the comfort offered by "the splendor of thy might" - that of trees. Statement of unity with nature - Earth Day, Arbor Day, etc. Gentle homophonic choral setting with arpeggiated piano accompaniment makes this a successful concert addition for many treble choirs. (ProjectEncore.org/jennifer-j-durham)



DAVID FAWCETT (NEW to PROJECT : ENCORE)

A garden inclosed is my spouse

- SSAATTBB; S solo; a cappella; English (Song of Solomon)
- 3'59". Sensuous setting of words from the Song of Solomon, employing the allegory of a garden of spices and fragrant flowers for the passion between lovers. Character scoring (treble, men) for the two lovers. Substantially chordal, yet with intricate rhythms and chromatic shifts; worth it for a skilled college/pro ensemble! (ProjectEncore.org/david-fawcett)

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CHRISTOPHER LEE FRALEY

The Plains

- SATB; occasional SATB div; a cappella; English (Adela Florence Nicolson)
- 3'30". Choral tone poem on the concept of longing, explored poetically through the vast expanse of nature, musically through extensive, and effective word painting. The third movement of "India's Love Lyrics," on Nicolson poetry. Tonal, with compelling chord clusters; sustained lines require secure voices. Very good HS and above. (ProjectEncore.org/christopher-lee-fraley)



JESSICA FRENCH

Refuge and Strength

- SSA; S divisi; piano accompaniment; English (Psalm 46)
- 6'. Focus on a search for strength and comfort amidst suffering, using metaphors of calm and tumult found in nature. Use of repeated motive, undulating melodic line and dynamics depict comfort; contrasting, intensifying tempi and rhythmic motion suggest adversity. Beautiful addition to treble rep; good HS and above. (ProjectEncore.org/jessica-french)



CHRISTOPHER HOH

Hosanna, Son of David

- SATB; S divisi; a cappella with obbligato handbells; English (Matthew 21:9)
- 3'10". Exuberant "hosanna" opening and closing sections set in compound meter; motif drawn from Gregorian chant for Palm Sunday. Middle section is a homophonic setting of "Blessed is the one who comes . . ." Handbell obbligato makes it work out of doors. Lovely addition to Palm Sunday options for competent church choirs. (ProjectEncore.org/christopher-hoh)



RYAN HOMSEY

Aftermath

- SATB; a cappella; English (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)
- 3'. Atmospheric story of life after autumn harvest; expansively, the transition into latter stages of life. Sustained, single-line opening by each part, followed by lush harmonic writing that takes on more bite toward the end. Compelling partsong for ensembles with ability to sustain clear tone. (ProjectEncore.org/ryan-homsey)





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Recorded Sound Reviews

David Puderbaugh, Editor david-puderbaugh@uiowa.edu

if there were water

The Crossing

Donald Nally, Conductor

Innova 998 (2018; 53:08)

The Crossing, a professional choir led by Donald Nally and based in Philadelphia, has been stunning listeners worldwide for over a decade. Dedicated to the performance and recording of new music, The Crossing has been recognized for its excellence, having won the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance and for recording Ted Hearne's "Sound from the Bench," a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music that same year. Other awards include the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence and multiple ASCAP awards. In addition to their zeal for new music, Donald Nally and The Crossing are also committed to collaborations with artists from multiple disciplines.

Released in 2018, *if there were water* contains two newly composed sets for choir. Both sets, though vastly different from one another, were commissioned by The Crossing and are centered around the topic of diaspora. The first set, *Crossings Cycle*, was written by the Greek composer Stratis Minakakis. Set for unaccompanied choir, this cycle sets text from



the ancient Greek poets Homer, Sophocles, and Euripides, and selections from T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Clearly a challenging piece of music to master, this set is also an exciting journey for the listener. Employing microtonal tuning, rapid and drastic dynamic shifts, and dense harmonic textures juxtaposed with moments of incredibly stark singing, this set aims to capture and communicate elements of the human condition.

The second set, *un/bodying/s*, represents a very different style of twenty-first-century choral composition. Composer Gregory W. Brown and librettist Todd Hearon examine the Quabbin River Valley and the populations that have been displaced from this Massachusetts region throughout history. The populations explored in this work include Native Americans, native animal life, and the residents—living and deceased—who were displaced by the flooding of the region to create a reservoir to provide fresh water to the people of Boston, Massachusetts. (Over seven thousand graves were exhumed and reinterred in a new location during this process.) This set undulates between sections of calm and serenity, with placid imagery and comfortable harmonic language and sections of intense dissonance and extreme drama. It also employs multiple languages interwo-

ven seamlessly with one another and even sections of hymns.

Donald Nally and The Crossing have masterfully recorded this challenging new repertoire. While these are certainly not sets that will be accessible for performance by all ensembles, these works are stunning and deserve to be experienced by as many people as possible. While unarguably compelling and challenging for the performer, these sets provide the listener both with an equally compelling journey of self-reflection and an exploration of our relationship to the world around us.

Kevin Dibble

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lux Memoriaque:

Light and Remembrance

Harmonia Sacra

Peter Leech, conductor

Nimbus Alliance NI 6349

(2017; 59:23)

Lux Memoriaque: Light and Remembrance is the third recording by English choir Harmonia Sacra, which was founded in 2009 by conductor Peter Leech. Here the ensemble offers a unique collection of contemporary, unaccompanied English works by Peter Leech, Jonathan Lee, Robert Hugill, David Bednall, and

Lawrence Whitehead. Selections include settings of Latin and English liturgical texts, in addition to *In Flanders Fields*, *Do not stand beside my grave and weep*, *Set me as a seal*, and a work titled *Meditation for Holy Week*.

From the first moments of this recording, Harmonia Sacra establishes a clean, robust sound. The ensemble effectively conveys the theme of “light” through abundant vocal energy and harmonic clarity on the first three tracks (*Christe, redemptor omnium* and *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* by Lawrence Whitehead, and *Populus Sion* by Robert Hugill). Here, the ensemble’s command of a kind of urgent, text-driven ho-

mophony—which also has ethereal moments—is enjoyable and compelling.

The energy and drive of the first set of pieces gives way to introspection in the next group, which is based on the theme of remembrance. The choir succeeds in creating a more subdued mood for this set. Peter Leech’s setting of “In Flanders Fields” is notable both for its timely inclusion during the centenary of World War I, and for its moving treatment of the text, which is given special emphasis through the use



of simple rhythmic patterns. The work’s intense, polytextual climax is one of the stunning moments on this recording, and impressively, the choir manages the considerable harmonic dissonance in this section without sacrificing warmth. *In Flanders Fields* is sensitively juxtaposed with Leech’s beautiful settings of *We will remember them—Per mare, per terram* and *Do not stand beside my grave and weep*; the choir sings these works exquisitely, their sound infused with both tenderness and strength.

David Bednall’s setting of *Pater superni luminis* is another notable inclusion on this recording. Bednall offers an elegant treatment of this office hymn, alternating verses of plainchant and full, colorful choral textures. Harmonia Sacra effectively highlights the contrast embedded in this work, which eventually explodes into a bright, cacophonous “Amen.” The final track on the recording, *Meditation for Holy Week* by Jonathan Lee, ties all of this music together with its profound text and prayerful harmonies. This recording is both a contemplative offering and a study in musical texture: in much of the music, texture and text declamation dominate, while the rhythmic dimension is comparatively static. The result is a kaleidoscopic, frequently meditative musical effect that brings text to the foreground.

Laura Wiebe
Columbia, Missouri

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NOTUS

Dominick DiOrio, director
Innova INN002 (2018: 73:19)

NOTUS was founded in 1980 as the Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and was renamed in 2013 when Dominick DiOrio became its fourth, and current, director. One of the cornerstone ensembles of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, the group commissions, programs, and records new works and second performances—over 150 at the time of this recording. The disc features five new works commissioned from active and emeritus members of the IU composition faculty (and from DiOrio himself), three of which are their composers' first major compositions for chorus. The sound of the ensemble is mature and assured, even as it navigates a thorny array of styles, characters, and vocal demands. It is also remarkably consistent, given the roster turnover from piece to piece—only two singers (out of an average ensemble size of around twenty-five) appear on all five recordings.

The disc opens with Claude Baker's *Hor che'l ciel e la terra*, a reimagining of Monteverdi's work of the same name, from the latter's eighth book of madrigals, *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi*. Written for four percussionists and a chorus of twenty-four voices, which acts both as a traditional vocal ensemble and as part of the percussion battery, it includes intermittent, extended direct quata-

tions from Monteverdi with percussion outbursts, exclamations, and rumblings. Sven-David Sandström's *The Giver of Stars* follows. One of two works for unaccompanied chorus on this disc, it exemplifies Sandström's madrigalistic approach to text setting, rendering into music the vivid, passionate words of the poem. DiOrio elicits a particularly wide expressive and gestural range from his singers on this track.

In the short, highly effective *Virginia: The West*, Aaron Travers gives the three primary stakeholders in Walt Whitman's poem their own distinct musical identities: the South, a quasi-medieval, organum sound; the North, a more imitative texture with a more contemporary tonal language; and "the Mother of All"—the entire nation—two solo sopranos undergirded by and eventually sweeping along the rest of the chorus to an ending somehow perfectly appropriate in its abruptness.

In *In Flight*, John Gibson sets five wildly divergent poems by William Carlos Williams, Linda Allardt, Ted Kooser, Margaret Atwood, and Elizabeth Bishop all dealing with some aspect of flight and both hard and soft landings, from the mythical Icarus to birds, stars, and airplanes. Scored for chorus and electronics, *In Flight* forms the centerpiece of the album. In over thirty minutes of music, Gibson explores the potential and pushes the limits of vocal-electronic synthesis. Paradoxically, the combination of live performers and electronics can sometimes play more clearly in performance than as a recording, but, thanks to Gibson's keen ear for texture and his fierce



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dedication to expressing the poetic texts along with excellent audio engineering, this work captivates from beginning to end.

The transition to Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for String Quartet*, expertly played by the Zorá String Quartet, is jarring, but sets the stage for the last choral piece. Amy Lowell was inspired by the Russian composer's trio of short pieces to write Stravinsky's *Three Pieces 'Grotesques', for String Quartet*, and DiOrio was, in turn, inspired by Lowell's poem to write *Stravinsky Refracted*, for chorus, organ, percussion, and string quartet. Subtly bookending Baker's homage to Monteverdi by quoting musical ma-

terial from the Stravinsky, the composer-conductor engages in further artistic alchemy, offering a flight of fancy that manages to stay connected to the source material while also expressing his own uniquely imaginative voice.

As NOTUS's first commercial recording and a collection of significant new music, this disc will be a welcome addition to the collections of choral aficionados, and a reminder of the benefits (and challenges) of encouraging "non-choral" composers to write for our ensembles.

David Rentz
Claremont, California

Saint Louis Firsts

Saint Louis Chamber Chorus
Philip Barnes, conductor
Regent REGCD472 (2016;75:37)

The name Philip Barnes is known worldwide in choral circles. Educated at the Manchester Grammar School, the University of Manchester, Bristol University, and King's College in London, Barnes's extensive experience is admirable. Since 1989, he has been the conductor of Saint Louis Chamber Chorus, embracing literature for unaccompanied choir, and has ensured that St. Louis audiences have regular access to the masterpieces of the reper-



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toire, from the Renaissance to present-day compositions. Barnes has led the choir in the performance of more than 1250 works performed in the original language and to the highest musical standards.

Saint Louis Chamber Chorus' latest recording, *Saint Louis Firsts*, contains eleven works—all by living composers (at the time of the recording). Nine are newly commissioned works never before recorded.

A dissonant and gripping work, Trevor Jones's *Psalm 23* uses the colors of the Latin language to illustrate and develop the text in a demanding way—demanding of both the performer and listener. Written for a television miniseries based on the 2005 novel *Labyrinth* by Kate Mosse, the gripping music served as accompaniment for a scene depicting martyrs marching to their death on a funeral pyre.

Australian composer Clare McLean's *Slow Gold* for double choir uses a combination of texts including Psalm 23, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the poem from which the piece derives its name, Emily Dickinson's *Slow Gold*. The work possesses a definite hymn-like quality that strongly predominates while allowing contemporary flexibility in both meter and interpretation.

Bob Chilcott's passionate *Before The Ice* is a commissioned work that definitely pushes the Chamber Chorus to its dynamic extremes. The raw emotion of the text "That which sings so—speaks so—when there's no one here—will the frock I wept in answer me to wear?" masterfully demonstrates Chilcott's

careful molding of the text. The chorus performs with uninhibited passion and clarity. The shift to the closing *Alleluiah*, however, is a bit jarring and incongruous to the rest of the composition, both textually and musically.

American composer Howard Helvey's *An Evening Song* uses text of Civil War poet Sidney Lanier in this lush commissioned work. Lanier's text, "O night! Divorce our sun and sky apart; never our lips, our hands," evokes much passion and longing. Sasha Johnson Manning's *Ode to Love* is a stunning work performed exquisitely by the chorus. Definitely dark and challenging, the work's ultimate climax on the word "love" is breathtaking. The chorus relishes the resolution and performs it sublimely.

The crowning compositions on

this recording are Judith Bingham's *Solomon and Love*—a cantata in four movements—and *Aquileia*. The *Solomon* cantata, beginning with a strident men's chorus, is compelling and violent, while the second movement contrasts with a haunting and seductive sense of temptation, enticing the main character. The third movement addresses the death of King Solomon, and it is during this movement that Bingham's writing for voices is extraordinarily and masterfully displayed. The tension expressed in this work is nearly palpable. *Aquileia* is equally as compelling. Bingham relishes the text with a mesmerizing quality and builds tension in her writing that is unparalleled. This is present-day composing at its best.

The recording's final work is the stunning *Le Dernier Voyage* by Sydney Guillaume. Commissioned by the chorus in 2012, Guillaume's own



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father wrote the text for this beautiful composition, which describes life as a journey at sea. This is a work definitely worth consideration for performance. Included in the recording are also several additional commissions and works, such as *A Contemplation Upon Flowers* by Richard Rodney Bennett, the jubilant and buoyant *Iam Ver Egelidos* by Ugis Praulins, and *Good Day, Sir Christemas!* by British composer Francis Pott. All are performed with the utmost delicacy and verve.

Alan Denney
Estes Park, Colorado

The Road Home

Santa Fe Desert Chorale
Joshua Habermann, conductor
Jeff Lankov, piano
Avie-Records AV2377 (2018, 59:58)

The Santa Fe Desert Chorale is already well known to audiences interested in choral music. In its thirty-six-year history, the Chorale has produced over a dozen CDs. This new recording explores the theme of “home and homeland,” and the road leading home, viewed from several angles and at different times. The idea of home is special for each one of us.

The CD is a kaleidoscope of contrasting styles from America’s singing culture past and present, and includes hymns, folk tunes, choral arrangements, and new compositions. American optimism and varied expressions of faith are present in many of its sixteen tracks. It opens with some simple settings; the opening track, a song in praise of and admiration for the fair beautiful land, is a pleasant arrangement of Joseph Webster’s hymn “In the sweet By and By.” The next two tracks are graceful solos representing the Shakers’ monodic tradition. Simplicity and tunefulness are observed in *The Lark and The Nightingale Song*, while *Deal gently with Thy Servants*, in a similar style, uses a simple harmonization that sets the melody in the tenor part. More variety is heard in *Encouragement*, where the tune sounds first in the soprano voices, then in octaves in tenors and sopranos.

Composer Shawn Kirchner describes his *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs* as “a virtuosic ‘bluegrass’ setting of well-loved nineteenth-century spiritual songs.” In his arrangement, the middle verse of the first song, “Unclouded Day,” is “an energizing ‘bluegrass fugue.’”

A central place on the CD is given to Morten Lauridsen’s *Mid-Winter Songs*. Composed in 1980 to texts by Robert Graves, they depict feminine mystery, energy, and beauty. The composer’s bold and expressive harmonic language illustrates a text rich in references to Greek mythology. The extensive and equally effective piano part was also arranged for orchestra later. “Lament for Pasi-



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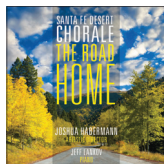
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phaë” is driven by its prominent dotted rhythm and by the harmonically striking refrain, “Dying sun, shine warm a little longer.” The concluding meditative song, “Intercession in Late October,” sets warm vocal tone clusters against the piano part. The chorus’s plea “spare him” gradually returns to unison singing. Slightly more expressive vocal lines would have added even more sophistication to this composition, matching better the animated, nostalgic piano part.



Stephen Paulus’s *The Road Home* (2001) provides the title for the CD. It is based on a traditional tune from William Walker’s *Southern Harmony* (1835), but its new text about “returning” and “coming home” was written by Michael Dennis Browne. The composition is very popular, as its theme resonates with many choirs in the United States and around the world.

The music of young composers Shawn Kirchner, Sydney Guillaume, and Jake Runestad demonstrates current trends in America’s choral musical language. *Dominus Vobiscum* by the Haitian-American Sydney Guillaume uses texts by his father, and is sung in Haitian Creole. The central theme of this gentle yet persuasive prayer is God, “in the depth of our hearts.” The opening baritone solo is supported by airy choral texture, and gradual rhythmic intensification leads to the climax “Today let us all sing ‘Dominus Vobiscum.’” The joyful rhythmic layers of the last verse illustrate the text “search, seek, ask: He is among

us.” The work’s peaceful and calm ending well reflects the line “He is there, yes, he is there.”

Jake Runestad’s *Reflections* is a masterfully written composition with a prominent piano part. Its two contrasting sections depict different moods: the hurried life on the one hand, and serenity and calmness on the other. Both moods are well portrayed by the singers, but the listener needs more clarity in the last few text lines. Phil Mattson’s simple jazz arrangement *I’ll be seeing you* concludes the CD.

Simplicity in singing and phrasing is the prominent feature of the CD, together with precise intonation and well balanced vocal parts. Joshua Habermann, conductor of Santa Fe Desert Chorale, has selected beautiful solo voices, and Jeff Lankov’s exquisite piano playing is a

treat. In the CD notes, Habermann has written informative comments on the music, while Jake Runestad shares insights into his compositional process. Containing a delightful variety of music that will satisfy the curious listener, this CD is an enjoyable historical journey through American song. Consequently, it could be used successfully in the general music classroom or as part of a course of lectures on American music. It will give pleasure to anyone interested in America’s vocal music tradition and will be a valuable asset for any library.

Nelly Matova
Urbana, Illinois

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Lynnel Joy Jenkins, MM '00 *Artistic Director, Princeton Girlchoir:* Former Assistant Professor of Music Education at Westminster Choir College, Resident Training Choir Conductor at the American Boychoir & Associate Music Director of the Temple University Children's Choir. Awards include the Elaine Brown Conducting Award from Westminster and Temple; Westminster's Alumni Merit Award; and Westminster Music Education Alumni Hall of Fame.

James Jordan, MM '77 and PhD '86 *Professor, Westminster Choir College:* Director of the Westminster Conducting Institute, Co-Director of the Choral Institute at Oxford, Grammy-nominated conductor and published scholar. His choirs have performed in Carnegie Hall and throughout the US, Canada, Europe & Australia. Recently inducted into the Temple University Hall of Fame.

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Choral Reviews

Kevin Dibble, editor kevin.dibble11@houghton.edu

Thy Little Ones

SATB, piano

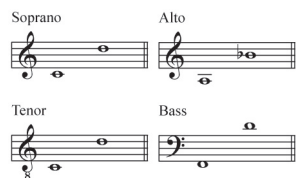
PROSPECT, Southern Harmony
(1835)

arr. Brian Edward Galante and
J. Edmund Hughes

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Thy Little Ones was written in memory of Maari Dickerson, a young child who lost her life to cancer. The piece uses the hymn text “Thy little ones, dear Lord, are we,” which was translated from the original Norwegian hymn *Her Kommer Dine Arme Små* by Danish bishop Hans Adolf Brorson (1694-1764). Brian Galante and J. Edmund Hughes set the text to the tune “Prospect,” a well-known melody from the 1835 Southern Har-

mony shape-note collection.

Rooted firmly in F major throughout, the opening unison (optional solo) presentation of the tune in m. 5 is quickly harmonized in SAA (optional soli trio). Tenors and basses enter in m. 19 to join the altos in harmonic support of the soprano tune to conclude the first stanza. The hymn tune shifts for the second stanza to an entirely unison tenor and bass accompanied by relatively stepwise counter melodies in the sopranos and altos. The use of 4/4 meter in the second stanza causes the tune to appear faster rhythmically. The spacious sonority of the pitch content for the final six measures of both the first and second stanzas is identical. A running chordal accompaniment adds depth to a gentle vocal texture that supports these first two stanzas. In the third stanza, the piano stops sounding for eight measures and the voices proceed in a chordal homophony indicative of the hymn and shape-note style. The piano accompaniment resumes as the vocal parts reprise the final line of text in unison, “That we may hold Thee in our heart.”

Thy Little Ones is gorgeous in its understated lyricism, and the arrangers’ treatment of text is sure to inspire singers to meaningful-

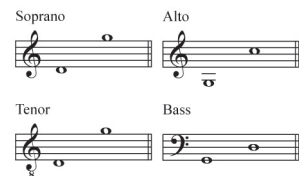
ly connect with their audiences. Pending registration considerations, this predominantly diatonic work is certainly accessible to junior and senior high school ensembles and is also available in SSAA voicing (WW1564). The royalties from the sale of this music continue to be donated to programs that assist families fighting childhood cancer.

Thomas Lerew
Nashville, TN
Tennessee ACDA R&R Chair
for Community Choirs

Look Up, Look Down

John Wykoff

Traditional American Song



At the hand of John Wykoff (b. 1982), folk-based literature is guaranteed to receive care of the highest quality. Wykoff has given us a set, *Five American Songs*, of which we will examine “Look Up, Look Down.” The set is part of a string of works written for the Tennessee Chamber Chorus

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in 2015, formerly under the direction of Cameron LaBarr (Wykoff's friend and colleague). From Walton Music, this piece is in the Amanda Quist choral series, and their website provides both a score and audio recording of the work.

During a personal conversation, Wykoff remarks about the origins of his setting:

I was pouring through libraries and online databases, singing through hundreds of songs...I chose that [specific version] because the tune was so compact, yet perfectly formed. I took it as a challenge to see what treasures could be drawn from such a seemingly small tune without damaging it, without clever harmonization and of course, without meaningless modulations. Just the tune, the text, and whatever

could be drawn from it... I tried to refrain from clever counterpoint or harmonic effects. Let the song itself do the work. It was at once the easiest and the hardest composing I've done recently.

Wykoff's SATB a cappella setting of this famous American song is simultaneously outstanding and accessible. While Wykoff has a preference for "historically conscious" writing, his style remains original and refined.

"Look Up, Look Down" was originally written for a chamber chorus of advanced forces, but this piece is quite accessible for amateur groups, even high school groups. Any choir of changed voices could find success with this piece. Rhythmically, it is straightforward and simple. Preserving the integrity of the sustained musical lines may

challenge some groups, as well as coordinating the interweaving lines and tuning the open harmonies.

Constructed with four stanzas, Wykoff sets the first stanza like a solo with some choral echo effects. Stanza two is a duet, again with echo effects now expanded. Stanza three is set homorhythmically, initially with the tenors/basses in duet then with the full choir. This is the climax of the piece, both textually and musically. The final stanza starts as a duet, and the echo effect returns with text from the first stanza.

Directors will find substantial pedagogical value in this work. Once a sustained, vibrant melodic line is established with nuance and subtlety, those performance principles will apply to the various contrapuntal lines. Some choirs may find the changing meters at this tempo to be challenging. Having each section audiate phrases from the other voice parts will improve intonation and confidence. The piece is deceptively easy, with the tuning, phrasing, diction, and exposed lines presenting the most difficulty. The ascending/descending arc of the line means that singers must execute wide ascending intervals and small descending intervals.

Jonathan Rodgers
Cleveland, TN



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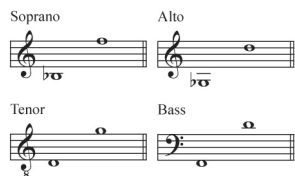
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The Composer

Music: David Conte

Text: John Stirling Walker



David Conte (b. 1955) has given us another unique and tasteful setting—this time using a text by John Stirling Walker (1962-2011), *The Composer*. Originally composed in May 2002, ECS Publishing released the work in 2004 under its subsidiary, E.C. Schirmer Music Publishing. Commissioned for the thirtieth anniversary of the Walden School in Dublin, New Hampshire, Conte wrote *The Composer* for Patricia Plude, Director of the Walden School, and for Leo Wanenchek, Conductor of the Walden School Chorus.

Conte and Walker were friends for many years, collaborating on numerous works. In *The Composer*, Conte remains rooted in his stylistic language as he employs non-traditional harmonies and unexpected chord progressions that stretch the listener's ear and expectations. His use of melody is progressive and, at times, not as melodious as listeners may prefer; however, this practice is offset by the beauty and originality of the harmonic underpinning and his treatment of the text. Though progressive and outside the bounds of tradition and expectation, Conte keeps the listener and singer engaged with occasional chord semi-clusters and extended tertian harmonies within a diatonic framework.

From a technical standpoint the piece poses a few challenges. The most obvious difficulty is the a capella texture; however, Conte limits the choral texture primarily to four parts with some divisi in the sopra-

no and bass parts for six to eight measures at time. The composition assumes the presence of developed voices, such as those in advanced high school, college, or adult community groups. The piece was written



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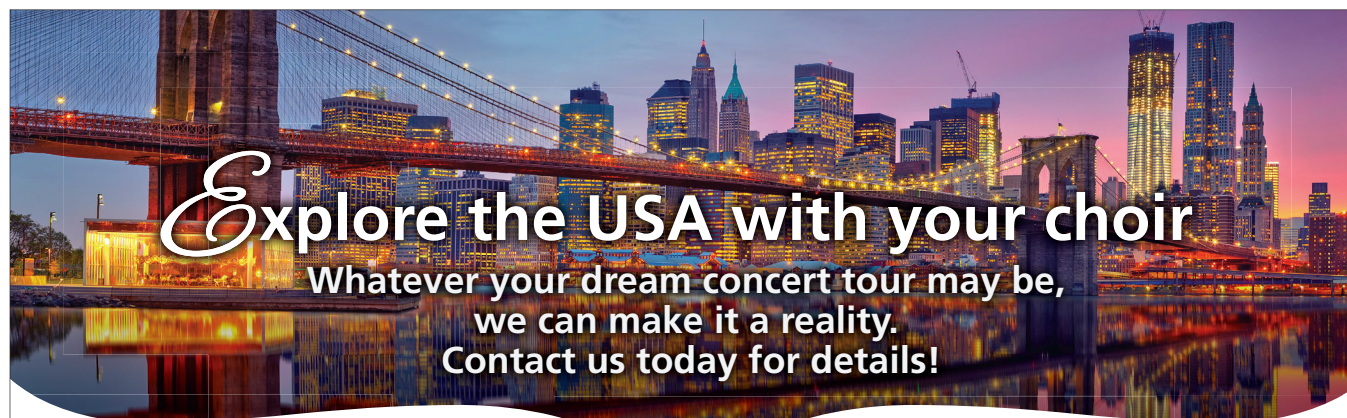
for a high school choir, but the music requires moderate to advanced musicianship and vocal development to deliver the extended vocal lines and perform a wide range of nuanced musical expression. Smaller, less experienced choirs will have difficulty maintaining tonal consistency and depth while delivering such a broad spectrum of dynamics. Additionally, an even distribution of voices on all parts will help ensure appropriate balance and blend and independence of vocal line.

Conductors should be aware of the range of each voice part. At a minimum, each part extends an octave and a third, with the ten-

ors stretching over an octave and a fourth and the sopranos an octave and a fifth. Each part does touch the top and bottom of its appropriate range: sopranos reaching to F5, altos down to Gb3, tenors up to a G4, and basses down to F3. In regards to tessitura, however, Conte keeps the voice reasonably within the accepted range for moderately advanced singers. He may approach the extreme ends of the range for brief moments, but he does not linger there. The piece does present a few minor textual challenges. For example, Conte frequently uses “ah” as a harmonic support mechanism, and the word “music” appears repeatedly. Produc-

ing the vowel glide on the opening syllable of “music” and generating a clear, warm “ah” vowel will likely pose a challenge to some choirs.

Other challenges to consider would include solidifying the non-traditional harmonic progressions, establishing the pitch security at entrances, maintaining the independence and equal presence of each vocal line, and blending within the a cappella texture—all within a wide dynamic range. All of these challenges impact the greatest difficulty: accuracy of intonation. Were a choir to memorize this piece, the sectional nature of the work expedites this process. Yet, the through-com-



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posed nature of the piece means that it is devoid of any repetition to aid in memorization. Any conductor (and choir) interested in a worthwhile four-and-a-half-minute challenge would be wise to explore Conte's *The Composer*. It is sure to be a tutorial in many of the fundamental skills required in the choral experience. For PDF and audio samples, visit: www.ecspublishing.com

Jonathan Rodgers
Cleveland, TN

Missa in C Minor K. 427

Completed and Edited by Frieder Bernius and Uwe Wolf
Carus 51.651 and 51.651/01

After dying at the young age of thirty-five, the master-composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart left behind a significant body of works. His *oeuvre* contains symphonies, operas, chamber works, works for choir, and choral-orchestral masterworks, among others. As is common knowledge, several of these choral-orchestral masterworks remained unfinished at the time of Mozart's death. Over the last 200 years, his students, historians, modern editors, and conductors have frequently undertaken the process of completing these works, they are performed and enjoyed in their completed forms. One such work is the *Große Messe KV 427—The Great Mass in C minor*.

This fascinating masterwork has again been examined, completed, and published in a new form by Carus-Verlag. In a collaborative project, conductor Frieder Bernius



WSCM2020 in New Zealand – the choral experience of a lifetime!

Planning continues in earnest for the 12th World Symposium on Choral Music, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand, July 11-18, 2020.

The Symposium is the flagship event of the International Federation for Choral Music and is regarded as the showcase for the best the choral world has to offer. Up to 2,000 delegates gather to enjoy a week of concerts, lectures, workshops, and master classes given by many of the top choirs and presenters on the planet. There is a large music trade expo and ample opportunity to exchange information, ideas, and repertoire with choral practitioners from a host of other countries.

WSCM2020, as we're calling it, will contain all this and more. New Zealand has a rich and proud choral tradition, deriving from a cross-pollination between the indigenous Māori and colonial Europeans, with more recent influence from Polynesian and Asian migrants. Delegates will experience elements of this exciting cultural mix throughout the Auckland Symposium, including a moving, traditional welcome.

New Zealand singers and choirs have participated in many overseas festivals and had considerable success on the international stage. The WSCM2020 team hopes to build on this experience, and on the successes of past Symposia, to create the most dynamic, innovative, and memorable World Symposium yet!

Buy a 2020 diary now and write across the week of July 11-18, "Auckland, NZ"!

The Artistic Committee (of which ACDA's own Tim Sharp is a key member) has decided to extend the closing date for choirs and presenters to October 31, 2018, to apply to be part of the Auckland Symposium program. This is to allow Northern Hemisphere applicants, in particular, more time after their summer break to prepare a submission. See the Call for Choirs & Presenters section of the website (wscm2020.com) if you are interested in applying.

Choral Reviews

and musicologist Uwe Wolf have endeavored to produce an edition of this work that “attempts to produce a performing version while maintaining the greatest respect for the available material, and without obscuring Mozart’s musical manuscript with their own contributions.” Simply referring to this as a “performing edition” does not do the work justice. As we have come to expect from Carus, this is indeed an edition containing incredibly thorough scholarship and research. Included in the full score are roughly ten pages of front-matter and hundreds of notes identifying the decisions that were made in each movement.

The primary challenges faced in attempting to complete this great work lie in the available manuscript materials. As stated above, this work remained unfinished at the time of Mozart’s death. Mozart did complete the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria*, but only the first two sections of the *Credo* are notated in the composer’s hand, and even these two sections (“Credo in unum Deum” and “Et incarnatus est”) were not fully realized. As there are no surviving sources of the other section of the *Credo*, nor any information specifically referring to their composition, it is very possible that he did not work on any of the remaining movements therein. The same holds true for the *Agnus Dei*. However, the *Sanctus*, *Hosanna*, and *Benedictus* were completed, and it is believed that they were performed in Salzburg. Unfortunately, the majority of the manuscript, the vocal parts, and the string parts for the *Sanctus* and the *Hosanna* have been lost. This new edition was completed in

consultation with both the surviving manuscript materials, and the first printed edition of the work.

This edition varies significantly from the 2005 Carus edition, completed by Robert D. Levin. As opposed to the new edition, which seeks to present the work as closely to Mozart’s completion as possible, the Levin edition was undertaken in an effort to complete the mass from a liturgical standpoint. Premiered at Carnegie Hall in January of 2005, The Levin edition is roughly 25 minutes longer than the Bernius/Wolf edition—roughly 80 minutes in total compared to the new 56-minute completion. Given their vastly different purposes, both editions are still available through Carus-Verlag (Levin: Carus 51.427 and Bernius/Wolf: Carus 51.651). Carus has also published a Vocal score, a separate Choral score, and has released a recording of the new edition. This recording features Frieder Bernius directing the Kammerchor Stuttgart and the Hofkapelle Stuttgart. This recording also includes significant liner notes with incredible detail about the work, the current editing project, and the recording.

Scored for double-choir, SSTB soloists, flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings, and continuo, this work is not for the faint of heart. That being said, it is indubitably a treasure in the world of choral-orchestral music. Considering this new edition, the work is even more accessible than previous completions, and is well worth programming. Further information, perusal scores, and ordering information can be found on

the Carus-Verlag website: <https://www.carus-verlag.com>.

Kevin Dibble
Iowa City, IA

There is No Rose

English and Latin Text (c.1420)

Music by Guy Forbes (b. 1957: 2016)

SATB (divisi), unaccompanied (3:53)

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The image displays eight staves of musical notation for SATB voices. The staves are arranged in two columns. The left column contains Soprano 1, Alto 1, Tenor 1, and Bass 1. The right column contains Soprano 2, Alto 2, Tenor 2, and Bass 2. Each staff shows a single measure of music with a whole note. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: Soprano 1 (G4), Soprano 2 (F4), Alto 1 (E4), Alto 2 (D4), Tenor 1 (C4), Tenor 2 (B3), Bass 1 (A3), and Bass 2 (G3).

In perusing music using the familiar text of the fifteenth-century poem “There is No Rose,” one quickly discovers that it has been used a great deal in choral literature. However, composer Dr. Guy Forbes of Millikin University offers a refreshing presentation of this text with beautiful, lush harmony in this SATB divisi choral piece. The design of this piece is essentially in ABACA’ form: The original repeated melody gives the piece a sense of stability, calm, and poetic reverence. The contrasting sections add tension and effective dramatic expression with key modulations

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and builds to climaxes with changes in tempo, dynamics, and pitch.

The voice parts are included in a piano score for rehearsal only. The meter changes throughout, catering to the text in a slow tempo (which varies from 40 to 58, with the quarter note receiving the beat). The vocal lines for altos and sopranos, for the most part, are in a comfortable range; the tenor line tends to be in the mid to upper register and Bass II is frequently in the low register (below B flat 2). The divisi in all voice parts would require a fairly large

choir.

Other than the male register issues just mentioned, the biggest challenges within this piece lie in the harmony. The more challenging harmonic progressions, especially in the B and C sections, although tonal in nature, would require a more advanced high school, college or community choir. It is the rich harmony, however, that gives this a cappella piece its biggest appeal. It is also worth mentioning that this piece provides a nice contrast from the more celebratory, upbeat choral selections on a typical

Christmas concert program.

Further information about the composer and his choral works for women's choirs and mixed choirs is included on his website: www.guy-forbes.com/comps.php

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