



A large choir of men and women in dark robes is performing in a grand cathedral. The scene is lit with a deep blue hue, and the choir members are holding lit candles, which provide a warm, golden light. The architecture features high, pointed Gothic arches and intricate stonework. A conductor stands on a small platform in the center, facing the choir. The overall atmosphere is solemn and festive.

Christmas in Norway  
with the  
**St. Olaf**  
Choir

with the Nidarosdomens Jentekor

FILMED AT NORWAY'S TRONDHEIM CATHEDRAL

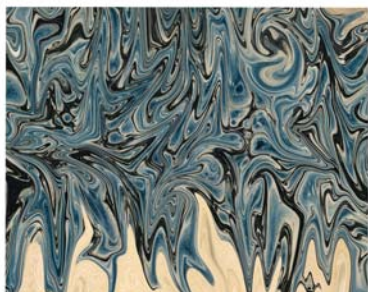
Tune in during the Christmas holidays for a new one-hour PBS special

*Check your local television listings for program information.*

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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tim Sharp

## Sabbatical

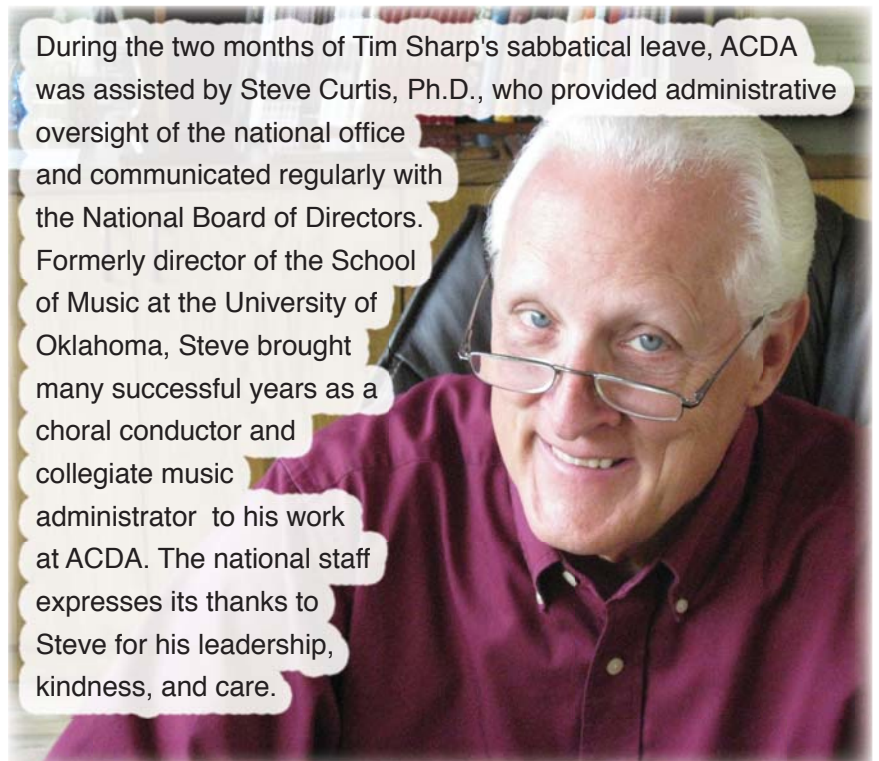
For the last two months, I have engaged in a “deep dive.” I have had the opportunity and the time to follow some hunches, plunge into a network of ideas, and to

complete projects of research and writing that have been developing over some time. The time-honored name for this form of deep dive is a “sabbatical.” The objective of my sabbatical has been to put some atoms in motion toward bringing closure to projects and ideas I had been developing on the fringe of my normal schedule.

It is widely known that Google gives its engineers one day a week to work on anything they want. It is reported that Bill Gates takes an annual “reading vacation” during

which time he deliberately reads a stack of material he has cultivated, most of which does not have anything to do with his day-to-day business focus. ACDA gave me this opportunity in the form of a two-month sabbatical during September and October.

The beauty of the “deep dive” is that it gives the opportunity to absorb yourself in important thinking and visionary planning, along with follow through toward conclusions and plans of action. Reading and observation remain my primary vehicles for processing new and interesting ideas and innovations. Having the time to then “think on paper” by writing and editing those thoughts has been extremely important for me and I believe it has also been important for ACDA. I am grateful to our Leadership Board for recognizing the need for this time of strategic thinking, planning, and writing.



During the two months of Tim Sharp's sabbatical leave, ACDA was assisted by Steve Curtis, Ph.D., who provided administrative oversight of the national office and communicated regularly with the National Board of Directors. Formerly director of the School of Music at the University of Oklahoma, Steve brought many successful years as a choral conductor and collegiate music administrator to his work at ACDA. The national staff expresses its thanks to Steve for his leadership, kindness, and care.

I return to my work and our shared mission affirming two of the greatest gifts I know: our ability to learn and our ability to adapt. For my work as Executive Director of the American Choral Directors Association, this will take shape as I chart new areas of development for our work, implementation of new programs, and as we initiate and respond to new collaborations to help us achieve our mission and goals.

In the weeks and months ahead, you will learn of ways we will become even more completely the "American" Choral Directors Association as we work with our colleagues in other countries throughout North, Central, and South America. We will simultaneously reach a wider audience and become a more diversified association. You will be excited and interested in participating in new programs to be developed by our standing committees, our advisory groups, and our various chapters as they give us new and relevant ways to carry out various outcomes of our strategic plan in the areas of mentoring, lifelong choral singing opportunities, and urban outreach. You will see new avenues announced that will help us expand this programming through new channels of funding and financial development. And, you will see an increased level of membership that will help us carry out our mission to inspire excellent in choral education, performance, composition, and advocacy.

*Jim Sharp*

 TimothySharp

 American Choral Directors Association

The mission of the American Choral Directors Association is to inspire excellence in choral music through education, performance, composition, and advocacy.

## 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 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 foster and promote International exchange programs involving performing groups, conductors, and composers.
- To foster and encourage rehearsal procedures conducive to attaining the highest possible level of musicianship and artistic performance.
- To cooperate with all organizations dedicated to the development of musical culture in America.
- To disseminate professional news and information about choral music.

—ACDA Constitution and Bylaws

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### WHAT'S ON TIM'S DAYTIMER?



- November 1 - 2 Saint-Saens's *Requiem*, Springfield, MO
- November 5 Simon Estes Foundation, Tulsa, OK
- November 10 Robert Shaw Film Benefit Atlanta, GA
- November 12 Tulsa Honor Choir Festival, Tulsa, OK
- November 15 Fauré's *Requiem*
- November 20-23 WWU Invitational Choral Festival, Bellingham, WA

### WHAT'S ON TIM'S IPAD?



- Paid to Think* David Goldsmith
- "On Collaboration" *Harvard Business Review*
- Wisdom* Andrew Zuckerman

### WHAT'S TIM LISTENING TO



- Thompson's *The Last Words of David* Westminster Choir/ Joseph Flummerfelt
  - Bach's Part I: Chorale: *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* (Chorus) Praetorius/Georg Christoph Biller
- Hear more at <[www.acda.org](http://www.acda.org)>. Log in and Click on the First Listen icon

## World Choir Initiatives

For the Tenth World Choral Symposium in Seoul, Korea (August 7-13, 2014) the following North American choirs have been invited and will appear:

- Hamilton Children's Choir (Canada)
- Roomful of Teeth (USA)
- USC Thornton Chamber Singers (USA)
- VocalEssence Ensemble Singers (USA)
- Voz en Punto (Mexico)

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Karen Fulmer

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

—Leonard Bernstein

In this season of thanksgiving, it might seem odd to open my column with a reference to violence. Recent days and months have seen an increased share of unthinkable acts toward humankind and the sense of helplessness can be overwhelming. Reading Leonard Bernstein's quote as a positive way to respond to violent acts reminds us all of the important role music plays as the great healer and vehicle for expressing gratitude.

To make music more intensely, more beautifully, and more devotedly than ever before expresses the vision and purpose of the American Choral Directors Association. We as choral directors have the power to reach out into the world and invite people to sing. The upcoming Children's Retreat in Minneapolis, planned by national children and community youth leaders and presented by experts in the field, will address outreach programs and strategies for achieving artistic excellence. I encourage all directors who work with children and middle level voices to attend this very valuable training. In flipping through television channels this past weekend, my eye was drawn to a faith-based choir who prepares beautiful music for services each week, reminding me of all the conductors who strive to bring the gift of song to a hurting world through their houses of worship. I know that college campuses across the nation are being vigilant to safety and the protection of all who reside there. And yet, a commitment to make music more intensely, more beautifully, and with more devotion than ever before is the call to us as an association and nation. May we all heed this call.

As a coincidence, the Membership drive is in its final days. This has had a ripple effect to attract more people to singing and also serves as a call to directors to make music more visibly, intensely, beautifully, and more devotedly than ever before.

To achieve great things, two things are needed; a plan,  
and not quite enough time.

—Leonard Bernstein

All of us understand the significance of a plan and the limits of time. It is in the implementation that barriers and even violence appear. May each of you achieve great things in this season of thanksgiving and make a difference in your world for the sake of beauty, even if you don't have quite enough time to do it all.

*Karen Fulmer*

# FROM THE EDITOR



Brad Epperley

Esteemed Readers of *Choral Journal*,

It has been an interesting and challenging month here at ACDA. Tim Sharp is on sabbatical spreading the ACDA message across the rest of the Americas. His hope is that we can be the “American” Choral Directors Association and not just the “United States of American” Choral Directors Association. With the shifts in demographics within the United States and continued globalization, it only makes sense that we reach out to our choral brethren in South America, Central America, and Canada. They provide an untapped resource of highly motivated yet sadly under-

served singers that we can help develop into modern chorales that rival the quality of those in the states and Europe. Just look at what Gustavo Dudamel was able to accomplish before he was hired away from his home country!

In the time that Tim Sharp has been on sabbatical, we have been lucky enough to have Dr. Steven Curtis filling in as a part-time director. Steve, as he has asked to be called, has been an invaluable asset as well as a real joy to have around the office. His decades of experience in both choral music and academia offer us an alternative view that we don't often consider here at ACDA. As I've always said, the more eyes you can put on a project, the better it will be. It can only serve to help improve the final issues of *Choral Journal* by having Steve around. He has been nothing but helpful and we are grateful he has taken the time to give us a hand with Tim out of the office on his goodwill tour.

This month contains several articles of interest to history buffs. Vance Wolverton brings us an informative write-up of an amazing anthology of Latvian music going back over a century. The anthology contains twelve volumes dedicated to secular, choral, and sacred music and is accompanied by a 12-disc set of recordings that bring the text to life. Dr. H. G. Young III recounts Continental Harmony, an historic millennial push for American composers to create pieces that reflected our national culture, history, and hopes for the future. Finally, Joshua Palkki examines a seminal Finnish work titled the *Kalevala*. The piece is a compilation of Finnish folk culture that documents the difficulties of an oft-oppressed people and their history.

As I have come to learn my responsibilities and expectations here at ACDA, I am more and more in awe of the amazing job accomplished by the national staff. All masters of their craft, the staff of the national headquarters are a group of professionals that consistently go above and beyond the call of duty. I just want to take this time to thank them yet again for making my transition so smooth and comfortable. As someone who has spent years in the publishing industry, I can tell you they run a tight ship. You can feel confident, as do I, in the national office staff and their tireless work on behalf of ACDA and *Choral Journal*.

Keep up the good work,

*Brad Epperley*

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- **Student Membership Initiative-** For participating states, our student membership discounts are being renewed. That's a dues price of only \$5 for new student members, with states and the national office covering the rest.

**For more information, visit [www.acda.org/singup](http://www.acda.org/singup).**

AMERICAN CHORAL  
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION



# **A UNIQUE TREASURE**

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



VANCE D. WOLVERTON



**The** Laviešu Kordziesmas Antologija [Latvian Choral Anthology] is a musical monument unique in the world in that it is a collection (12 volumes) devoted entirely to the choral music of one small nation, Latvia. In the Introduction to Volume I of the Anthology, prominent Latvian musicologist Arnolds Klotiņš notes the following:

The current anthology is the first to attempt the presentation of the best of Latvian unaccompanied works for choir, from their first appearance to the end of the 20th century. Furthermore, its aim is to make the material available to choirs in other countries, and it is therefore published in two languages, Latvian and English. Five volumes are devoted to secular songs, arranged chronologically by author [composer]. Another five volumes, similarly arranged, contain an important section of Latvian choral music that has developed from the creative interpretation of our folklore heritage, namely, arrangements of folk melodies and more substantial compositions based on folklore. In addition, two volumes have been allocated to sacred works, unaccompanied songs based on religious texts.<sup>1</sup>

An additional feature of this project is a series of 12 compact discs, recorded by the Riga Chamber Choir AVE SOL. Each compact disc contains a selection of songs from the corresponding volume of the anthology. Each volume of the anthology also contains commentary in both Latvian and English about each of the works in that volume.

Vance D. Wolverton, Ph.D., Ch.M.  
Chair Emeritus, Department of Music,  
California State University, Fullerton

# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



Volume I of the *Latvian Choral Anthology* (hereinafter referred to as *LCA*) is subtitled *Gaismas pils* [Castle of Light], *Unaccompanied Secular Music for Male, Female and Mixed Choir*. It covers the years 1873 to 1918 and contains 51 pieces (36 for mixed choir, 14 for male choir, one for female choir) representing 11 composers. Klotiņš notes that:

This first volume of the Anthology embraces the period ending with 1918—a vital year in Latvia's history when it first gained its independence—and gives some insight into a more or less completed chapter in the development of Latvian choral music. In addition, romanticism, an integral part of Latvian choral music, is a common and unifying feature of the music of this period.<sup>2</sup>

Especially noteworthy in Volume I are the choral ballads (The King's Daughter, The King and the Mushroom, and The Haunted Thicket) by Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948), the universally acknowledged founding father of Latvian art music. Sidebar 1 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume I of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume II of the *LCA* is subtitled *Pa zvaigžņu ceļu* [Following the Stars] and covers the years between the world wars (1918–1940). This volume contains 52 works (39 for mixed voices, eight for male voices, and five for female voices) representing 15 composers. The compiler, Arnolds Klotiņš, notes that Volume II, "includes only original songs, leaving another very substantial body of Latvian choral music, folk song arrangements, and larger folkloric compositions, for a different publication."<sup>3</sup> He also singles out two composers, Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948) and Emilis Melngailis (1874–1954), as having been especially

influential during the inter-war period. Many of the composers represented herein were students of Vītols, either in St. Petersburg or Riga. Melngailis is recognized for enriching choral song with a new and expanded perception of folk-singing methods. Sidebar 2 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume II of the *LCA* and the pieces

included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume III of the *LCA* is subtitled *Atmini sauli* [Reach for the Sun] and covers the years 1940 to 1965. This volume contains 59 unaccompanied secular works (42 for mixed voices, 11 for male voices, and 6 for female voices) representing 28 composers. This volume

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### SIDEBAR 1

#### VOLUME 1, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented in Volume I are Kārlis Baumanis (1835–1905), Ādams Ore (1855–1927), Andrejs Jurjāns (1856–1922), Jānis Straume (1861–1929), Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948), Emilis Melngailis (1874–1954), Emīls Dārziņš (1875–1910), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jānis Zālītis (1884–1943), Kārlis Kažociņš (1886–1920), and Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967). The accompanying compact disc includes the following works:

- Andrejs Jurjāns: *In Latvia* (TTBB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *The Castle of Light* (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *The King, the Crow and the Mushroom* [The King and the Mushroom] (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *The Haunted Thicket* (SATB div.)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Autumn* (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *Long Ago* (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *Moonbeams Shooting Softly* [Moonbeams] (SATB)
- Emīls Dārziņš: *Beloved Motherland* (TTBB)
- Emīls Dārziņš: *Forever Blue* (TTBB)
- Emīls Dārziņš: *Mignon* (SATB);
- Emīls Dārziņš: *In Distant Dreams* (SATB)
- Emīls Dārziņš: *Children of Zion* (SATB)
- Emīls Dārziņš: *Mermaids' Song* (SSAA)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *As the Swallows Depart* (SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *Come Hither Brethren* [Come, Brothers] (TTBB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *The Goblet on the Isle of the Dead* (SATBB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *When Night* [At Night] (SATB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *Birch Grove* (SATB)
- Kārlis Kažociņš: *Like Swans* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *In the Clear Blue Distance* (SATB)

covers a time during which Latvia was occupied by foreign powers: the Soviet Union (1940–1941), Nazi Germany (1941–1944), and again by the Soviet Union (1944–1990). From the first period of Soviet occupation through the beginning of the second (1944), nearly 250,000 Latvians were deported or emigrated. Naturally this number included many composers, conductors, and singers. Arnolds Klotiņš notes the following:

More than 40% of the songs in this publication [*LCA, Vol. III*] were composed outside Latvia, written by composers who left Latvia in 1944 and 1945, fleeing from the second Soviet occupation, and found refuge in the West.<sup>4</sup> Finally, in answer to the question of whether any general trends or common features of stylistic development appear in the Latvian unaccompanied choral music written outside Latvia in this period to 1965, it must be noted that post-war Latvian composers in the West can easily be divided into two groups according to their musical grounding and the traditions in which they were educated. The largest group comprised composers that [sic] had already enjoyed an active music career and developed a refined, mature style, such as the old masters, Jāzeps Vītols and Ādolfs Ābele, or those still relatively young during the war, such as Arnolds Kalnājs or Jānis Norvilis, who had at least begun their professional careers and developed their artistic ideas in Latvia. The second group of composers living outside Latvia after the war was much smaller: Their artistic ideas had not been completely shaped

by the musical life of Latvia, because they had only just graduated from the Latvian Conservatory, or their studies in Latvia had been interrupted by the war and had been continued elsewhere. Of those represented in this volume, the leading figures in this group are Alberts Jērumis and Tāivaldis Keiniņš.<sup>5</sup>

Klotiņš identifies 1965 as a dividing line between periods of choral music development in Latvia. He avers that a period of traditionalism began in the postwar years when the essentially Romantic songs of the 1930s were retained with almost no further development. In 1966 the Latvian Composers' Union organized a large event with the purpose of evaluating recently composed choral music. Over a period of five days, 22 choirs presented 167 works, 52 of them premieres. The judges concluded that the composition of choral music in Latvia had stagnated. Thus, the composers themselves acknowledged the necessity for change.

Of special note in Volume III is the appearance of two prominent female composers: Paula Līcīte and Lūcija Garūta. In his discussion of the effects of occupation, Klotiņš singles out Garūta. The feelings of dread experienced by Lūcija Garūta on the eve of a second Soviet occupation found expression in her cantata, *Dievu, Tava zeme deg* [God, Thy Earth is Aflame] (1943), the most powerful monument to wartime experiences in Latvian music (p. 14). Sidebar 3 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume III of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume IV of the *LCA* is subtitled

## SIDEBAR 2

### VOLUME 2, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented in Volume II are Jazeps Vītols (1863–1948), Emīlis Melngailis (1874–1954), Jāzeps Mediņš (1877–1947), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jānis Reinholds (1882–1938), Jānis Zālītis (1884–1943), Jēkabs Graubiņš (1886–1961), Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967), Valdemārs Ozoliņš (1896–1973), Jānis Cīrulis (1897–1962), Alfrēds Feils (1902–1942), Helmers Pavasars (1903–1998), Pēteris Barisons (1904–1947), Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), and Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994). The accompanying compact disc includes the following works:

- Jāzeps Vītols: *The Sun's Revelry*  
[Sun Festival] (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Birch-Tree in Autumn* (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *David Before Saul* (ATB div.)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Dies Irae* (TTBB)
- Emīlis Melngailis: *The Heart Is So Heavy*  
(SATB)
- Emīlis Melngailis: *In a Foreign Land*  
[In a Strange Land] (SSATB)
- Emīlis Melngailis: *Midsummer Eve* (SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *An Ancient Nurse's Song*  
(SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *Freedom* (SATB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *Cherished Souls*  
[Precious Shadows] (SATB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *Like Snow on Mountaintops*  
(SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Roses* (SATB, A solo)
- Pēteris Barisons: *Following the Stars*  
[Along the Starry Road] (SATB)
- Pēteris Barisons: *To the Muse* (SATB)
- Pēteris Barisons: *Blue Dream-Hills*  
(SATB div.)
- Pēteris Barisons: *In Latvia* (SATB)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *A Tale About Piķamice*  
[A Tale About Billycock]  
(SATB div.)
- Jānis Norvilis: *The Voices* (SATB)

# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



*Apliecinājums* [A Testimony] and covers the remaining years of the Soviet occupation (1966–1990). This volume contains 33 unaccompanied secular works (29 for mixed voices and 4 for male voices) representing 19 composers. As noted above, the large-scale conference organized by the Latvian Composers' Union in 1965 resulted in the composers themselves acknowledging the need for change. Klotiņš observes:

[T]he debuts in 1966 of several younger generation composers displayed a fundamentally different conception of expressiveness in choral music, and also a differing

attitude to the use of folklore elements and earlier styles of music, as well as the new techniques in choral singing and composition emerging in the second half of the twentieth century. All these developments introduced a new period, exemplified by the founding of the well-known experimental Riga Chamber Choir *Ave Sol*, directed by Imants Kokars, and the successful participation of Latvian choirs in international choral competitions and festivals.<sup>6</sup>

During the 25 years covered in Volume IV, the choral movement and song festivals grew to be an autonomous social

force. Klotiņš notes that in the late 1980s, "this force virtually exploded into the famous singing revolution that shook the Baltic States and was a major step on the way to regaining independence."<sup>7</sup> Klotiņš further observes that during this 25 year period Latvian choral composers living outside Latvia can be divided according to the traditions in which they were educated and the source of their creative development. Some had already developed as musicians in prewar Latvia. Others had left Latvia and developed their composing skills outside the country. It is this latter group that provided many of the most important Latvian choral works written during this period. This group includes Alberts Jērumis, Tālvāldis Ķeniņš, Longīns Apkalns, and Andris Vītoliņš. Others, exemplified by Imants Ramiņš (b. 1943), turned to more traditional principles and were invigorated by a renewed interest in folklore inspired by the work of the Latvian Folk Ensemble of New York, directed by the immensely influential Andrejs Jansons. Sidebar 4 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume IV of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume V of the *LCA* is subtitled *Mūžība* [Eternity] and covers the years from 1991 to 2000. This volume contains 25 unaccompanied secular works (20 for mixed voices, 3 for female voices, and 2 for male voices) representing 12 composers. The year 1991 marks an obvious delineation as in that year Latvia regained its independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The succeeding decade brought rapid and significant societal changes in the Baltic States. Perhaps the most important change for choral music was the disappearance of censorship. Texts written by poets who had previously been banned for many years now became available to composers. Religious texts were also



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### SIDEBAR 3 VOLUME 3, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented in Volume III are Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948), Emilis Melngailis (1874–1954), Jāzeps Mediņš (1877–1947), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jēkabs Mediņš (1885–1971), Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967), Paula Līcīte (1889–1966), Jānis Mediņš (1890–1966), Jēkabs Poruks (1895–1963), Valdemārs Ozoliņš (1896–1973), Lūcija Garūta (1902–1977), Helmers Pavasars (1903–1998), Pēteris Barisons (1904–1947), Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Bruno Skulte (1905–1976), Jānis Ivanovs (1906–1983), Leonīds Vīgners (1906–2001), Jānis Ķepītis (1908–1989), Jānis Ozoliņš (1908–1981), Ādolfs Skulte (1909–2000), Marģeris Zariņš (1910–1993), Viktors Baštiks (1912–2001), Alberts Jērums (1919–1978), Tāivaldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008), Oļģerts Grāvītis (b.1926), Aldonis Kalniņš (b.1928), Valters Kaminskis (1929–1997), Romualds Kalsons (b.1936). The accompanying compact disc includes the following works:

- Emilis Melngailis: *Rose Garden* (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *Play On, Musician* (SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *Spring Morning* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Astral Choir* (SATB)
- Helmers Pavasars: *I Must Let Snow Cover Me* (SATB)
- Pēteris Barisons: *This Is a Day of Song* (SATB)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *First Night* (SATB)
- Jānis Ivanovs: *Autumn Song, vocalise* (SATB)
- Leonīds Vīgners: *Reach for the Sun* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Skulte: *The Forests Sough* (SATB)
- Marģeris Zariņš: *Four-Part Madrigal on an Old-Fashioned Theme* (SATB)
- Alberts Jērums: *Bird of the Distant Garden* (SATB)
- Oļģerts Grāvītis: *To an Artist, vocalise w/violin solo* (SATB)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *Every Day* (SATB)
- Valters Kaminskis: *Pine Trees* (TTBB)
- Romualds Kalsons: *Latvia* (SATB)

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no longer taboo and nearly every Baltic composer added to the sacred repertoire (NB: sacred works from these years are to be found in Volume XII of LCA detailed below). Klotiņš notes that, “although the compositional techniques of the second half of the twentieth century had already appeared in Latvian choral music, their use became even wider

in the new conditions of ideological and stylistic freedom.”<sup>8</sup> Among these techniques were the expanded use of chord clusters and much freer use of meter and rhythm.

The renewal of independence in Latvia was accompanied by inevitable changes in the community and artistic life of émigré Latvians in the West. Klotiņš observes:

### SIDEBAR 4 VOLUME 4, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented in Volume IV are: Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Jānis Ivanovs (1906–1983), Ādolfs Skulte (1909–2000), Alberts Jērums (1919–1978), Tāivaldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008), Ģederts Ramans (1927–1999), Aldonis Kalniņš (b.1928), Valters Kaminskis (1929–1997), Romualds Jermaks (b.1931), Agris Engelmanis (b.1936), Pauls Dambis (b.1936), Romualds Kalsons (b.1936), Imants Kalniņš (b.1941), Imants Ramiņš (b.1943), Pēteris Vasks (b.1946), Pēteris Plakidis (b.1947), Juris Karlsons (b.1948), Imants Zemzaris (b.1951), Artūrs Maskats (b.1957). The accompanying compact disc includes the following works:

- Jānis Ivanovs: *Migrating Birds, vocalise* (SATB)
- Jānis Ivanovs: *Rainy Day, vocalise* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Skulte: *To the Sea* (SATB div.)
- Tāivaldis Ķeniņš: *Sunken Castle, ballad* (SATB div.)
- Pauls Dambis: *Sea Songs, song cycle*
- *Blow, Mother Wind, Blow* (SATB s/S solo)
- *Today the Sun is Dark* (SATB div.)
- *Bells are Ringing in Riga and Jelgava* (SATB div.)
- Imants Kalniņš: *A Testimony* (SATB)
- Imants Kalniņš: *Love* (SATB div. w/SAT soli)
- Imants Ramiņš: *To the Sea* (SATB div.)
- Pēteris Vasks: *Madrigal* [In Time Flowers Wilt] (SATB)
- Pēteris Vasks: *Mother Sun* (SATB div.)
- Pēteris Plakidis: *In Memoriam* (SSSATB div.)
- Juris Karlsons: *Sun Sparks* (SATB div.)
- Juris Karlsons: *My Song* (SATB div.)

# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



These [émigré] Latvian communities, almost completely made up of Second World War refugees and their descendants, seemingly lost the main ideological basis for their existence and the focal point of their cultural and political activity—the campaign to liberate Latvia from Soviet occupation and renew its independence. Furthermore, at a time when the border was opened up and Latvian culture became accessible in Latvia, there was less incentive to further national cultural activities with the communities themselves, but rather a temptation to look only to Latvia for cultural experience. In the first half of the 1990s this situation led to a weakening of the choral movement in the Latvian diaspora. [However] over the course of the 1990s, Latvians outside Latvia had to some extent regained faith in the significance and power of their culture. The aims of their activities had also undergone some change: whereas earlier these had been predominantly aimed at helping the homeland, now it was the preservation of national culture and its development with the Latvian communities themselves that became the priority.<sup>9</sup>

Sidebar 5 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume V of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

The first five volumes of the *LCA* are devoted to original compositions—Latvian unaccompanied secular songs for choir—from their first appearance until the end of the twentieth century. Volume VI begins coverage of a different genre of the Latvian choral tradition: unaccompanied choral arrangements of folk songs. Klotiņš observes:

The notion that arrangements carry as much weight as original compositions is testimony to the enormous importance of this genre in Latvian choral music. Harmonizations of folk melodies, although quite simple at the outset, gave choirs their first Latvian repertoire during the period that marked the dawning of national professional music in Latvia and created the impetus for the First Latvian National Song Festival held in Riga in 1873. This was evocative testimony that another nation had joined the 19th century's wave of national awakening.<sup>10</sup>

Klotiņš also notes that an arrangement is the creative work of an individual and thus the arrangers listed in the *LCA* are afforded the status of composers.

The first Latvian folk song (text and melody) was published in 1635 in *Syn-tagma de origine livonorum* by Fredericus Menius. However, it was 150 years later before a more significant publication of Latvian folk songs (text only) was published in *Volkslieder* (Leipzig, 1778–79), the famous collection of songs from many nations by Johann Gottfried Herder. It should be noted that Herder lived in Riga (1764–1769) and was greatly influenced by the experience of folklore he gained during those years. One of the foremost principles espoused by Herder was the idea that the most truthful and organic expression of the soul occurs in the language of the folk song. The first Latvian exponent of this thinking was Jānis Cimze (1814–1881). Cimze was sent to Germany to be trained as a teachers' college director, but he was able to augment his studies in music with the prominent collector of folk music, Ludwig Erk (1807–1883). Cimze did not consider himself to be a composer, but the annual Vidzeme region teachers' conference in 1870 provided him with the impetus to collect folk songs and add four-part settings. Cimze's understanding of the options available for treating folk song melodies was based upon German school and church music of the time, namely the four-part chorale. Unfortunately, this ideal led Cimze to revise collected source material in ways that were not always stylistically suitable, but have proven popular and durable even to the present day.

Volume VI of the *LCA* is subtitled *Pūt, vējiņi* [Blow, Wind, Blow] and covers the years 1873 to 1918. This volume contains 82 unaccompanied arrangements of *tautasdziesmas* [folksongs] (66 for mixed voices, 2 for female voices, and 14 for male voices) representing 15

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composers. Sidebar 6 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume VI of the LCA and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume VII of the LCA is subtitled *Dziedot dzimu/Tautasdziesmu apdares* [Born Singing/Arrangements of Folk

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### SIDEBAR 5 VOLUME 5, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented in Volume V are: Aldonis Kalniņš (b.1928), Agris Engelmanis (b.1936), Pauls Dambis (b.1936), Romualds Kalsons (b.1936), Maija Einfelde (b.1939), Imants Ramiņš (b.1943), Pēteris Vasks (b.1946), Pēteris Plakidis (b.1947), Juris Karlsons (b.1948), Imants Zemzaris (b.1951), Selga Mence (b.1953), Ilze Arne (b.1953). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Pēteris Plakidis: *Eternity* (SSSAATTBB)
- Pauls Dambis: *Lux Mundi* (SATB)
- Pauls Dambis: *A Song to the Grasses* (SATB div. w/solo)
- Imants Ramiņš: *Elegy* (SATB div. w/flute solo)
- Romualds Kalsons: *Bare-Footed* (SATB w/SATB soli)
- Agris Engelmanis: *Come, Silent Night* (SATB)
- Selga Mence: *The First Shoots* (SATB div.)
- Selga Mence: *Diptych* (SSAA w/SA soli)
- Ilze Arne: *We Are One* (SATB div.)
- Ilze Arne: *Idyll* (SATB div.)
- Juris Karlsons: *Rīga, My Rīga* (SAAAAATB div.)
- Juris Karlsons: *A Life of Song* (SATB)

Songs] and covers the years 1918 to 1940. This volume of the LCA continues the publication of unaccompanied choral arrangements of Latvian folk songs

begun in Volume VI. The establishment of the independent state of Latvia in 1918 was accompanied by an invigoration and cultivation of the arts, especially

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### SIDEBAR 6 VOLUME 6, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composer-arrangers represented in Volume VI are: Jānis Cimze (1814-1881), Dāvis Cimze (1821-1872), Indriķis Zīle (1841-1919), Oskars Šepskis (1850-1915), Ernests Vīgners (1850-1933), Ādams Ore (1855-1927), Jānis Sērmūklis (1855-1913), Andrejs Jurnāns (1856-1922), Jānis Straume (1861-1929), Jāzeps Vītols (1863-1948), Pāvulis Jurjāns (1866-1948), Atis Kauliņš (1867-1944), Marija Gubene (1872-1947), Emilis Melngailis (1874-1954), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879-1951). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Jānis Cimze: *Rīga Is Humming* [Rīga Resounds] (SATB)
- Jānis Cimze: *Where Are You Going, Young Lad?* (TTBB)
- Jānis Cimze: *Late Evening Sun* [The Setting Sun] (SATB)
- Jānis Cimze: *Speaking Mother Tongue* [My Mother Tongue Tells Me] (SATB)
- Jānis Cimze: *Three Silver Rivers Flow* (SATB)
- Jānis Cimze: *The Raven Sits on the Oak-Tree* [The Raven in the Oak-Tree] (SATB)
- Ernests Vīgners: *The Rapid River* (TTBB)
- Ernests Vīgners: *Līgo Songs* (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *Blow, Wind, Blow* (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *Where Are You Rushing To, Little Hawk* (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *I Grew Up Beyond the River* (SATTBB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *I Plant the Bird-Cherry Tree* [I Planted a Bird Cherry] (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *Where the Boy Has Gone* [Where Have You Been, Young Man?] (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *The Oak-Trees Grow in a Row* (SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *Black-Eyed Country Girl* [The Dark-Eyed Country Girl] (SATB)
- Jānis Straume: *River Full of White Flowers* (SATB)
- Jānis Straume: *Where Did You Grow Up, Pretty Girl?* (TTBB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Rush, Sun, to Our Lord* [A Prayer to the Sun to Set Early] (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *The Sun Is Rolling* [The Setting Sun] (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Put Shoes, Daughter, on the White Feet* [Get Ready, Girl] (SATB)
- Marija Gubene: *I Climbed a Hill* (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *Tops of Forest Trees Are Swaying* [Bow Down, Lofty Treetops] (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *I Sent My Bay Horse Trotting* (TTBB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *The Low Ground Oak-Tree* [Low-Spreading Oak-Tree] (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *Orphan's Glorifying* [In Praise of the Orphan] (SATB)

# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



folklore and traditional art and music. Unaccompanied choral arrangements of folk songs retained their significance throughout the 1920s and 1930s as witnessed by their prominent inclusion in the national song festival programs. Klotiņš has observed that “composers’ attitudes towards [sic] folklore evolved considerably” during this period and that “interaction between folk music and professional choral music during this period must be recognized as one of the most remarkable features in the history

of music in Latvia.”<sup>11</sup> Volume VII contains 80 unaccompanied secular works (68 for mixed voices, 11 for male voices, and one for female voices) representing 16 composers. Sidebar 7 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume VII of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume VIII of the *LCA* is subtitled *Al, manā zemītē* [My Homeland] and covers the years 1940 to 1965. Klotiņš notes that these years were, “one of the most painful and destructive periods in

twentieth century Latvia... as a result of its occupation and annexation to the Soviet Union.”<sup>12</sup> Under Soviet occupation, approximately ten percent of Latvian citizens were deported to slave labor camps in Siberia and another seven percent emigrated to the West including nearly one-third of Latvia’s musicians and half of the active composers of the time. The policies of the Communist regime were largely obstructive including censorship, repression, and threats. There was also the repugnant requirement that all publications feature works that glorified Stalin and Communist philosophy. The regime’s attitude toward folklore and to the use of folkloric material by composers in their creative work was somewhat ambivalent. Klotiņš observes that “these rifts within the administrative system made it easier for those in the arts, including conductors and the choral movement in general, to fight for the preservation and development of traditional, national and universal values.”<sup>13</sup> As witnessed by the pieces included in Volume VIII, these efforts were largely successful.

Volume VIII contains 82 unaccompanied arrangements of *dziesmas* [folksongs] (64 for mixed voices, 10 for female voices, and 8 for male voices). Sidebar 8 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume VIII of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume IX of the *LCA* is subtitled *Sidrabiņa lietiņš lija* [Spell of Silver Rain]. The folk song arrangements published in this volume represent the same period in Latvian music (1966–1990) that Volume IV of the Anthology covered with respect to original secular compositions. Klotiņš notes that Latvian composers of earlier periods used folk song texts in their compositions, but never before had this practice become so widespread as in the period represented in this

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volume.<sup>14</sup> He further observes that sometimes composers made use of folk music motifs in their compositions, while

at other times only stylistic elements were employed resulting in stylizations

of folk music where the division between these types of compositions and

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## SIDEBAR 7 VOLUME 7, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composer-arrangers represented in this volume are: Andrejs Jurjāns (1856–1922), Pāvuls Jurjāns (1866–1948), Emilis Melngailis (1874–1954), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jūlijs Rozītis (1880–1952), Jēkabs Mediņš (1885–1971), Jēkabs Graubiņš (1886–1961), Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967), Artūrs Salaks (1891–1948), Jēkabs Poruks (1895–1963), Jānis Cīrulis (1897–1962), Alfrēds Feils (1902–1942), Pēteris Barisons (1904–1947), Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994), Volfgangs Dārziņš (1906–1962). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Pāvuls Jurjāns: *Līgo Songs/Second Set* (SATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *The Tomtit Sings* (SAATB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *In the Dark Night* (TTBB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *My Bride Lives Far Away* (SSSATBB)
- Emilis Melngailis: *When Will You Return, Dear Brother?* (SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *Born Singing* (SATB div.)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *My Mother Dear* (SATB w/solo)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *Make Way!* (SATB)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat* (SATB)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *The Setting Sun* (SATB)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *Keep Off the Strong Beer!* (SAATBB)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *The Forest Trembles with the Dance* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Is It Happiness?* [Will There Be Happiness?] (SATB s/S solo)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Beyond the River* (SATB div.)
- Alfrēds Feils: *All the Dogs Are Barking* (TTBB)
- Alfrēds Feils: *I Mowed Two Meadows* (SATB div.)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *No Bird Sings as Sweetly* (SATB div.)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *Lo, Two Fellows Fine* (SSAATTBB)
- Volfgangs Dārziņš: *My Brother-in-Law's Daughter* (SATB)
- Volfgangs Dārziņš: *A Game-Dance* (SATB)

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## SIDEBAR 8 VOLUME 8, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The 20 composer/arrangers represented in this volume are: Emilis Melngailis (1874–1954), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jēkabs Graubiņš (1886–1961), Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967), Teodors Kalniņš (1890–1962), Lūcija Garūta (1902–1977), Pēteris Barisons (1904–1947), Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Bruno Skulte (1905–1976), Volfgangs Dārziņš (1906–1962), Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994), Marģeris Zariņš (1910–1993), Ērika Freimane (1911–1960), Imants Sakss (1918–1991), Alberts Jērums (1919–1978), Tāivaldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008), Olgerts Grāvītis (b. 1926), Edmunds Goldšteins (1927–2008), Aldonis Kalniņš (b. 1928), Valters Kaminskis (1929–1997). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *The Sister Living Far Away* (SSATB)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *Fallow Land in Flower* (SSAA)
- Jēkabs Graubiņš: *A Burial Ground Covered in Flowers* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *The Shawls of the Sea Nymph* (SATB div.)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Roses Bloom in Every Garden* (SATB div. w/T solo)
- Lūcija Garūta: *The Little White Sheep* (SATB div.)
- Lūcija Garūta: *My Homeland* (SATB)
- Pēteris Barisons: *I Climb a Hill to Sing* (SATB)
- Pēteris Barisons: *My Fast Filly* (TTBB)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *Brother, Where Did You Find Her?* (SATB)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *A Līgo Song* (SATB div.)
- Bruno Skulte: *My Brother and His Bride* (SATB div.)
- Bruno Skulte: *In the Dark Night* (SATB)
- Volfgangs Dārziņš: *The Village Maiden* (SSATB)
- Volfgangs Dārziņš: *My Brother's Bride* (SATB div.)
- Volfgangs Dārziņš: *The Sun Sets in the Evening* (SATB)
- Marģeris Zariņš: *Running Steps* (SATB)
- Marģeris Zariņš: *Little Steps* (SSAATB)
- Marģeris Zariņš: *The Guests Lead the Dance* (SATB div.)
- Alberts Jērums: *A Prayer to the Sun to Set Early* (SATB div. w/S&A soli)
- Edmunds Goldšteins: *Broad Is the Maple Leaf* (SATB div.)
- Valters Kaminskis: *Recognizing an Orphan* (SATB div.)
- Valters Kaminskis: *I Care Not for Sorrow* (SATB)

# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



folk song arrangements could no longer be strictly drawn.<sup>15</sup> This renaissance of interest in folklore, especially folk songs, as presented in Volume IX, validates the genre as one that is of vigorous and lasting value. Volume IX of *LAC* contains 42 unaccompanied arrangements of folk songs (38 for mixed voices, one for male voices, two for female voices). Sidebar 9 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume IX of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume X of the *LCA* is subtitled *Saule pina vainadziņu* [The Sun's Golden Wreath] and covers the years 1991 to 2000. This volume is chronologically the final one of a series of five volumes (VI–X) presenting an overall view of the development of Latvian folkloric composition for choir since 1873. Taking the broad view across the 125 years represented in these volumes, it can be seen that there has been progressive development of folkloric choral composition as a specific genre.

One of the most important influences on the innovative works presented in Volume X was the folklore movement of the 1980s in Latvia. The inclusion of traditional rhythm instruments in choral performances may be explained by the influence of the growing folklore ensemble movement. The aforementioned innovations in the last decade of the twentieth century were also shaped by compositional techniques specific to contemporary music, especially aleatoric techniques. It should also be noted that composers turned their focus from form and expressiveness to the basic elements of folk music—intonations, rhythms, words, syllables—resulting in an emphasis on the overall sonority or sound percept in their works. Volume X contains 36 unaccompanied arrangements of folk songs (32 for mixed voices, two for male voices, two for female voices). Sidebar 10 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume X of the *LCA* and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

The final two volumes (XI and XII) of the *LCA* are devoted to sacred music. Volume XI of the *LCA* is subtitled *Lūgšana* [Prayer] and covers the years 1873 to 1940. In selecting the works for inclusion, Klotiņš notes that the vast majority, “had to satisfy the same artistic requirements as secular music, and are envisaged first and foremost as works of art to be performed, either in concert halls or churches.”<sup>16</sup> Just as the period of National Awakening in the second half of the nineteenth century had special significance in the genre of secular music, the same is true of sacred music. The works representing this period were chosen as much for their importance to denominational worship, but even more so for expressing spiritual values common to all mankind. In the early years of the twentieth century, the quest for a Latvian folk-style chorale encouraged

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### SIDEBAR 9

#### VOLUME 9, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composer/arrangers represented in Volume IX are: Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994), Alberts Jērums (1919–1978), Tālvāldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008), Longīns Apkalns (1923–1999), Arvīds Purvs (b. 1926), Oļģerts Grāvītis (b. 1926), Edmunds Goldšteins (1927–2008), Aldonis Kalniņš (b. 1928), Pauls Dambis (b. 1936), Leons Amoliņš (b. 1937), Andrejs Jansons (b. 1938), Imants Ramiņš (b. 1943), Pēteris Plakidis (b. 1947), Selga Mence (b. 1953), Ilze Akerberga (b. 1953), Dace Aperāne (b. 1953), Anita Kuprisa (b. 1958). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Jānis Kalniņš: *God Walks Through the Fields* (SATB)
- Jānis Kalniņš: *The Swarthy Bride* (SATB)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *My Bride Lives Far Away* (SATB div.)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *Sing With Me, Girls!* (SATB div. w/S solo)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *The Guests Lead the Dance* (SATB w/S solo)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *Spell of Silver Rain* (SSAATB w/SSA soli)
- Pauls Dambis: *A Herding Song from Nīca* (SSAATB w/SSA soli)
- Pauls Dambis: *Going Dancing with My Brother* (SSAATTBB w/SSAA soli)
- Pauls Dambis: *Winter Games* (SATB div. w/ST soli)
- Pēteris Plakidis: *Rain, Rain, Go Away* (SSATBB)
- Pēteris Plakidis: *I Sent My Bay Horse Trotting* (SATB div.)
- Selga Mence: *Even from Afar* (SATB div.)
- Selga Mence: *The Hills Beyond the Daugava* (SATB div.)
- Selga Mence: *Nothing Comes without Toil* (SATB)
- Selga Mence: *The Orphan Girl* (SSAA w/SSAA soli)
- Anita Kuprisa: *The Youngest Daughter* (SSATB)
- Anita Kuprisa: *Prepare Yourself, Silvery Sun* (SSATTBB)



**SIDEBAR 10  
VOLUME 10,  
LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY**

The composer/arrangers represented in Volume X are: Aldonis Kalniņš (b. 1928), Romualds Jermaks (b. 1931), Pēteris Plakidis (b. 1947), Juris Karlsons (b.1948), Selga Mence (b. 1953), Ilze Arne (b. 1953), Anita Kuprisa (b. 1958), Ilona Rupaine (b. 1956), Juris Vaivods (b. 1966). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Aldonis Kalniņš: *God Walks Through the Rye Field* (SATB div.)
- Aldonis Kalniņš: *Don't Hang the Swing* (SATB div. w/SA soli)
- Romualds Jermaks: *Why Don't You Marry, Dear Orphan?* (SATB)
- Romualds Jermaks: *The Soldiers Are Troubled* (SATBB)
- Pēteris Plakidis: *Dear Mother Sun!* (SATB)
- Pēteris Plakidis: *Brake the Flax!* (SSSAAA)
- Selga Mence: *The Sun's Golden Wreath* (SSSAAATTBB w/SAA soli)
- Selga Mence: *Laima's Blessing* (SATB div.)
- Selga Mence: *My Beloved Steed* (SATB)
- Ilona Rupaine: *Rain, Rain, Go Away!* (SATB div. w/S solo)
- Ilona Rupaine: *The Tomtit's Warning* (SATB div.)
- Ilona Rupaine: *Duido* (SSAATB w/S solo)
- Juris Vaivods: *A Mother Raised Her Son* (SATB div. w/S solo)
- Juris Vaivods: *Heralding the Spring* (SSAATTBB w/SA soli)
- Juris Vaivods: *Who Has the Ring?* (SSAATTB w/SAT soli)



**SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHILDREN'S CHOIR**  
Artistic Director / Assistant Professor  
of the Practice of Children's Music



The Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir of Harrisonburg, Va., affiliated with Eastern Mennonite University, seeks an experienced, creative, and enthusiastic children's choir Artistic Director/Assistant Professor of the Practice of Children's Music to lead an elementary and secondary-level choral organization.

**Qualifications:** Minimum of a Masters Degree in Music, Music Education, or Choral Conducting, with choral emphasis on children's music at both the elementary and secondary levels; minimum of five years successful elementary or secondary level school, church or community choral teaching and directing experience; wide range of knowledge pertaining to children's choral music, with a specific emphasis on Kodály methodology; familiarity and experience with skill- and age-appropriate repertoire for children's choirs; expertise in healthy and appropriate vocal development; knowledge of emerging music literacy and current best practices in music education.

The Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir is a nationally recognized auditioned children's choir organization that, for more than twenty years, has brought high caliber children's choral music to the Shenandoah Valley. With over 130 participating choristers in three performing ensembles and two non-performing exploratory classes, the SVCC maintains a high standard of excellence in children's choral music as well as an active concert and touring calendar.

**Deadline: November 1, 2013.** Applications will be reviewed immediately and on an ongoing basis. On-site interviews are scheduled to be held in January 2014.

**Application:** For the complete job description and application procedure, please visit [www.emu.edu/hr/openings](http://www.emu.edu/hr/openings) or [www.emu.edu/svcc](http://www.emu.edu/svcc). EOE



# A UNIQUE TREASURE

## THE LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY



composers to employ dactylic meter rather than the iambic meter more common to German Lutheran chorales. During the 1920s and 1930s original compositions of professional quality concert music emerged as the most important category of Latvian sacred choral music. Volume XI contains 72 unaccompanied works (66 for mixed voices, five for male voices, one for female voices). Sidebar 11 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume XI of the LCA and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc.

Volume XII of the LCA is subtitled *Dvēseles ceļi* [Journeys of the Soul] and covers the years 1940 to 2000. Whereas Latvia was under occupation by the Soviet Union throughout most of this period (until the re-establishment of independence in 1991), the conditions for creating, much less performing, sacred music were intolerable. Klotiņš describes the situation thus:

The most unfavorable ideological conditions for the creation of sacred choral works were, of course, in Latvia during the period of its occupation. It would not be true to say that during this period the creation of such choral works came to a complete standstill, although that was the aim of the ideological manipulations, nevertheless the decline was undeniably substantial. Secretly in churches or privately at home, sacred songs did appear in Latvia during the period of occupation. The few composers who worked in this genre, however, could not hope for concert performances of their works or, indeed, any performance of reasonable quality. This was not only because religious persecution had severely diminished and weakened the church choirs that still existed, but also because sacred music concerts, even those held in churches, were considered religious propaganda by the regime and as such were banned by law.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, due to the relatively meager quantity and quality of sacred choral music created by composers living in occupied Latvia, Volume XII is the only volume of the LCA in which Latvian composers living abroad hold a dominant position.

The dissolution of the system of ideological manipulation accompanying the renewal of Latvia's independence resulted in a great surge of sacred song writing. Klotiņš avers that religious

subject matter can be divided into two streams: (1) focus on God or the divine in nature and (2) focus on man and his spiritual life in relation to the divine.<sup>18</sup> Unlike the works of the pre-war period presented in Volume XI, the sacred works composed since the 1990s belong mainly to the first category and the Latin texts associated with it. These contemporary Latvian choral works more often represent manifestations of spirituality rather than expressions

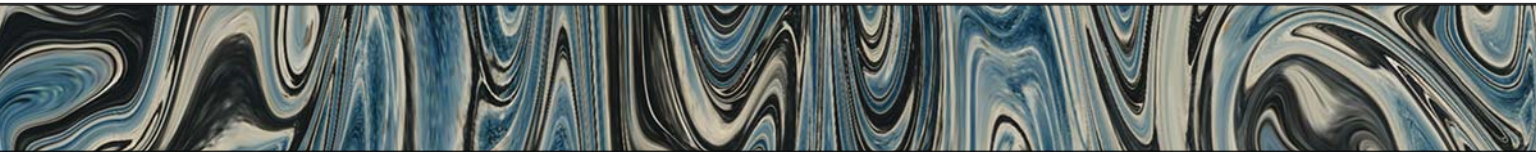
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### SIDEBAR 11

#### VOLUME 11, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented are: Kārlis Baumanis (1835–1905), Jānis Bahs (1846–1931), Oskars Šepskis (1850–1915), Ernests Vīgners (1850–1933), Andrejs Jurjāns (1856–1922), Jānis Kade (1858–1923), Jānis Sanders (1858–1951), Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948), Marija Gubene (1872–1947), Emīlis Melngailis (1874–1954), Emīls Dārziņš (1875–1910), Jāzeps Mediņš (1877–1947), Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), Jūlijs Rozītis (1880–1952), Jānis Zālītis (1884–1943), Jēkabs Mediņš (1885–1971), Harijs Ore (1885–1972), Visvaldis Sanders (1885–1979), Jēkabs Graubiņš (1886–1961), Ādolfs Ābele (1889–1967), Artūrs Salaks (1891–1948), Kārlis Līdaks (1893–1942), Jēkabs Poruks (1895–1963), Valdemārs Ozoliņš (1896–1973), Jānis Cīrulis (1897–1962), Alfrēds Feils (1902–1942), Helmers Pavasars (1903–1998), Arnolds Kalnājs (1906–1975), Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994), Jānis Dreimanis (1909–1963). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Oskars Šepskis: *Motet* (SATBB)
- Oskars Šepskis: *Hosanna* (SATB/SATB)
- Andrejs Jurjāns: *The Lord's Prayer* (SATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *Prayer* (SSAATB)
- Jāzeps Vītols: *In Memory of the Author of the National Anthem* (SSATB)
- Emīlis Melngailis: *God Rules the Earth* (SATB)
- Emīlis Melngailis: *The Lord Is My Shepherd* (SATB)
- Alfrēds Kalniņš: *Psalms 23* (SATB div.)
- Jānis Zālītis: *From Early Childhood* (SATB)
- Jānis Zālītis: *May the Earth Feel No Pain* (SATB)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Prayer* (SATB div.)
- Ādolfs Ābele: *Lord, If You Take Us by the Hand* (SATB div.)
- Helmers Pavasars: *Behold, the Brightness* (SATB)
- Arnolds Kalnājs: *Eternal God* (SSATBB)
- Arnolds Kalnājs: *Play the Harp and Sing Praise* (SATB div.)



of emotional experiences. Volume XII contains 42 unaccompanied works (35 for mixed voices, two for male voices, five for female voices). Sidebar 12 contains lists of the composers represented in Volume XII of the LCA and the pieces included on the accompanying compact disc

Imants Kokars (1921–2011), artistic director of the Riga Chamber Choir AVE SOL and Project Director of the Latvian Choral Anthology, summarized the importance of the anthology and recordings as follows:

This project is a significant contribution to Latvian culture, serving to reflect its historical development. It will allow our

heritage to be treasured by the generations to come, and will be invaluable in gaining global recognition for Latvian music.<sup>19</sup>

Each of the hardback volumes contains no less than 200 A4 pages. A photograph and a brief biography accompanies each composer's work. An English translation of the text of each work is included. A pronunciation guide of Latvian letters and diphthongs is included in each volume. Anyone wishing to purchase the LCA (available as a set of 12 volumes or as individual volumes) and the accompanying CDs should contact Uldis Kokars by e-mail <u.kokars@inbox.lv>.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume I, Introduction, p. 11. Riga: SIA SOL, 1997.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 14.
- <sup>4</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume III, Introduction, p. 15. Riga: SIA SOL, 1998.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 15.
- <sup>7</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume IV, Introduction, p. 14. Riga: SIA SOL, 2002.
- <sup>8</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume V, Introduction, p. 13. Riga: SIA SOL, 2003.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 13-14.
- <sup>10</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume VI, Introduction, p. 15. Riga: SIA SOL, 1999.
- <sup>11</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume VII, Introduction, p. 15. Riga: SIA SOL, 2000.
- <sup>12</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume VIII, Introduction, p. 15. Riga: SIA SOL, 2001.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 16.
- <sup>14</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume IX, Introduction, p. 15. Riga: SIA SOL, 2004.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 15.
- <sup>16</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, Volume XI, Introduction, p. 14. Riga: SIA SOL, 2000.
- <sup>17</sup> Arnolds Klotiņš: Latvian Choral Anthology, volume XII, Introduction, p. 11. Riga: SIA SOL, 2006.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 12.
- <sup>19</sup> Imants Kokars: Anthology of Latvian Choral Music (promotional flyer).

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## SIDEBAR 12 VOLUME 12, LATVIAN CHORAL ANTHOLOGY

The composers represented are: Jānis Kalniņš (1904–2000), Bruno Skulte (1905–1976), Jānis Norvilis (1906–1994), Eduards Šēnfelds (1907–1990), Viktors Baštiks (1912–2001), Alberts Jērumis (1919–1978), Tāļivaldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008), Arvīds Purvs (b. 1926), Romualds Jermaks (b. 1931), Andris Vītoliņš (b. 1931), Pauls Dambis (b. 1936), Maija Einfelde (b. 1939), Imants Ramiņš (b. 1943), Pēteris Vasks (b. 1946), Pēteris Plakidis (b. 1947), Guntars Gedulis (b. 1952), Ilze Arne (b. 1953), Arturs Maskats (b. 1957), Imants Mežaraups (b. 1958), Rihards Dubra (b. 1964). The accompanying compact disc contains the following works:

- Tāļivaldis Ķeniņš: *Journeys of the Soul* (SATB)
- Tāļivaldis Ķeniņš: *Alleluia* [motet] (SATB div.)
- Romualds Jermaks: *Prayer* (SATB)
- Romualds Jermaks: *De Profundis* (SATB div.)
- Pauls Dambis: *Psalm 19* (SSATB w/S solo)
- Pauls Dambis: *Psalm 22* (SSAATB w/SA soli)
- Pauls Dambis: *Psalm 121* (SATB w/S solo)
- Imants Ramiņš: *Ave Maria* (SATB div. w/MS solo)
- Pēteris Vasks: *Cross of Golgotha* (SATB div.)
- Rihards Dubra: *Salve, Regina* (SATB div.)
- Rihards Dubra: *Ave Maria* (SATB div.)





# CONTINENTAL HARMONY A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF THE MILLENNIUM

H.G. YOUNG III

*Continental Harmony*

NEW MUSIC FOR THE MILLENNIUM

In small towns and big cities across America, people celebrated the millennium in a vibrant way by commissioning new works of music. *Continental Harmony: A Musical Celebration of the Millennium*, a joint project of the American Composers Forum and National Endowment for the Arts, was an historic initiative that linked communities, one from each state, with composers to create new music that reflected our nation's history, culture, and hopes for the future. *Continental Harmony*, the first nationwide and largest new music commissioning project in American history, was named for one of

the tunebooks of colorful American composer William Billings, the musical voice of the American Revolution.<sup>1</sup>

*Continental Harmony* sounded the millennium through a landmark music festival as the newly created works were heard across the United States. Bill Ivey, then chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts stated that, "Continental Harmony will unite communities of every description in the common goals of creating and performing new music tailored to their needs, encouraging an air of festivity appropriate to the dawning of the new millennium."<sup>2</sup> *Continental Harmony* was recognized as an official White House Millennium Council partner and an archive was created at the Library of Congress.<sup>3</sup> National project director Dr. Patricia Shifferd observed that, "the

H.G. Young III, PhD, Professor of Music, West Virginia University at Parkersburg, was project director and conductor for West Virginia's two *Continental Harmony* projects. <HG.Young@wvup.edu>

## MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE PEOPLE



Continental Harmony poster designed by Gary Kelley of Cedar Falls, Iowa.

motto of the White House Millennium Council 'Honor the Past, Imagine the Future' beautifully expresses the spirit and goals of Continental Harmony.'<sup>4</sup>

The Minnesota-based American Composers Forum, with a mission of "linking communities with composers and performers, encouraging the making, playing, and enjoyment of music,"<sup>5</sup> selected fifty projects, one from each state, from the 175 applications submitted by communities across America. For these fifty projects, the Forum received 850 applications from 350 composers. Each community reviewed composer applications and selected the composer best suited for their own individual project. The National Endowment for the Arts<sup>6</sup> provided \$2.4 million and the Forum secured additional funds for eight more proj-

ects, including five in the bay area of California.

Projects reflected the diversity of American life and culture. Brent Michael Davids, an enrolled member of the Mohican nation, created a work for Native American and European flutes and percussion that incorporated the Ram Dance of the Havasupai, the native inhabitants and spiritual guardians of the canyon, which premiered on the south rim at the Grand Canyon Music Festival.<sup>7</sup> A



WHITE HOUSE  
MILLENNIUM COUNCIL  
Honor the Past - Imagine the Future



# CONTINENTAL HARMONY: A MUSICAL

spirited musical portrait of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team with homage to Scott Joplin, *Bushy Wushy Rag*, was composed by Phillip Bimstein for the Equinox Chamber Players with taped sounds from the ballpark.<sup>8</sup> In Oakland, California, Sonos Handbells, San Jose Taiko, and Pusaka Sunda, a Javanese gamelan ensemble, joined forces for *The Navigator Tree*, created by computer scientist, artist, and musician Jaron Lanier, who coined the term virtual reality.<sup>9</sup> In New Haven, Connecticut, Neely Bruce assembled *Convergence: Some Parades for Charlie's Dad* for choirs, bands, ensembles, organs, and carillon, all colliding on the village green as part of the International Festival of Arts and Ideas. New York City composer Eve Beglarian used multimedia and new technologies for *The Continuous Life*, a futuristic work for Houston's OrchestraX and Diverse Works art space.

Pittsburgh-based composer Anne LeBaron combined the Tougaloo College Choir, local poets, rap musicians, a

blues guitarist, and chamber orchestra in *Traces of Mississippi*, a work that united the racially and economically divided Madison County.<sup>10</sup> In Sacramento, California, the Camellia Symphony was joined by traditional Chinese instruments, (the dizi, erhu, and zheng), for New York composer Han Yong's *Pictures of Years: Nianhua*, based upon the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac celebrating the music, traditions, and culture brought to California by Chinese workers who built the transcontinental railroad. In Culver City, California, Thomas Oboe Lee composed *Portraits of Jazz* for the American Jazz Philharmonic and Henry Mancini Institute. Music for singers and fiddlers was celebrated in Farmington, Maine, by San Francisco composer Alexis Alrich.<sup>11</sup> In Miami, Florida, *Migrants Journal* by Lukas Ligeti, son of Hungarian composer György Ligeti, captured the sounds of the backstreets of the Caribbean cultures of Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad, combining them with computer generated sounds to make music for an immigrant city.<sup>12</sup>

Of the fifty-eight Continental Harmony compositions, more than half included choral singing.<sup>13</sup> The first to premiere on February 27, 2000, in Grand Forks, North Dakota, was Steve Heitzeg's *What the River Says*, a piece that deals with the devastation from floods along the Red River from Manitoba to Minnesota. In the three-movement work for choir, piano, and percussion (including stones and driftwood gathered by the composer from the banks of the Red River). Heitzeg, known for his compositions that celebrate the natural world and address social and ecological issues, noted, "I'm trying to respectfully write about the value of water and rivers in our lives, and at the same time, write a piece that honors the human communities that live with rivers and that complex dialogue we

have when the river floods and when it is drought."<sup>14</sup>

In Scottsville, Kentucky, the Allen County Arts Council selected Depp Britt, a successful Nashville-based singer in the Cumberland Boys Quartet and composer of Christian music, to compose a piece of Southern gospel music for his hometown's celebration using the American shape-note tradition. *Tabernacle Trilogy's* three songs, "The Song of the Redeemed," "We're Singing Heaven's Song," and "Heaven's Jubilee," premiered on July 4, 2000, at an old wooden tabernacle in Scottsville where camp meetings, revivals, and shape-note singing conventions had been held since 1897.<sup>15</sup>

The smallest community selected for a Continental Harmony grant was tiny Cotton, Minnesota, population 300, sliced in half by a four-lane highway. The project's theme was, "Life here in the forest and what we like about it—past, present, and future." Duluth-based composer Tyler Kaiser wrote *Cotton Cantata*, described by one local citizen as a "classical hoedown," to honor the town, nature, and the millennium.<sup>16</sup> The project touched almost everyone in the community in some way. A community choir was joined by the students from the K-12 Cotton School, its band and chorus, and home-made instruments, (kalimbas, wood and clay rattles, ocarinas, and drums) created by the elementary children using materials found in the surrounding forest.<sup>17</sup>

Missoula, Montana's triennial International Choral Festival was the site for the premiere of *Walt Whitman's Dream* by William McGlaughlin, the popular host of the PBS program *St. Paul Sunday*. The composition for chorus, including children and orchestra, was performed as the festival's finale by 700 singers, including the visiting choirs from Austria, Botswana, China, Cuba, Denmark, and

## Madrigal Dinner Scripts

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# CELEBRATION OF THE MILLENNIUM

Spain.<sup>18</sup>

The words of Walt Whitman also provided the structure for Parkersburg West Virginia's Continental Harmony project. Tennessee composer Kenton Coe, who studied with Paul Hindemith at Yale and Nadia Boulanger in France, was asked to reflect on faith in a composition for three choirs: a choir of high school and college students representing the voice of the present, an ecumenical choir from the area's churches representing the wisdom of the ages, and a

children's choir representing our hope for the future. His composition, *The Unknown Region: A Journey of Faith*, addresses a more universal theme. Coe reflects:

What I have tried to do is to follow musically the sometimes tortuous journey from this world to the next proposed by Whitman's poem that represents for me an evocation of the ultimate reason for faith. Whitman's rocky path is interrupted by four reflections in the form of

ecumenical prayers: a fearful and agitated outburst from Jeremiah which(sic) ends with the positive belief that God will protect; a native American hymn reflecting faith in the natural elements; a quiet Gospel hymn showing faith in a personal God; and children expressing the most complete and innocent trust that salvation will come at the time of God's choosing.<sup>19</sup>

Other multi-movement choral compositions depicting the spirit of America's heartland include: *I Am St.*

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# CONTINENTAL HARMONY: A MUSICAL

*Joseph*, for St. Joseph, Missouri, by Joseph Bisharat of Los Angeles, California; *Heartland* for David City, Nebraska, by Deborah Fischer Teason of Hamden, Connecticut;<sup>20</sup> and *Spiritscape* for Sioux Falls, South Dakota, by Albany, New York, composer Bruce Roter. The final premiere, *Jersey Polyphony* by Puerto Rican composer Raymond Torres-Santos, took place on March 11, 2001, in Newark, New Jersey, featuring the Newark Boys Chorus and New Jersey Philharmonic Glee Club.

In just over twelve months, fifty-eight new musical works, at least one in every state, had been performed.<sup>21</sup> In his book *American Music in the Twentieth Century*, Kyle Gann noted that during the final decade of the century there were more composers writing more types of music than at any other previous time in history.<sup>22</sup> This diversity was certainly evident in Continental Harmony's millennial celebration.

A one-hour documentary of Continental Harmony, written, directed, and produced by Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Ed Robbins, highlighted several of the projects and was broadcast on PBS in September 2001.<sup>23</sup> Robbins noted:

I learned a tremendous amount about the connections between music making and community building.... Some of my favorite moments were seeing discoveries happening for other people and seeing people being surprised by some interactions with the composer.... When you drive across the country, on the surface, there seems to be a great homogenization of America; there's a McDonald's, Hardee's, and Texaco station everywhere. But when you have to go beneath the surface, as you have to do documenting these projects, you discover that regional differences and community-based identity still exist and that sense of place is incredibly important to so

many people. Continental Harmony is about rebuilding and rediscovering that sense of place. I think that is a very valuable and precious thing to be pursuing and building, as the media and the spread of mass culture take over. It's really interesting when a place's unique history is rediscovered and people find out what's unique about who they are and where they came from.<sup>24</sup>

The success of Continental Harmony's millennium celebration in 2000 led to additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts for a second round of projects celebrating community through music over a five year period beginning in 2002. Choral music with historic and regional subjects and strong community connections was common once again.

For Portland, Oregon, Indiana composer David Dzubay created *Northwest Passages* for the Portland State University Choir, narrator, and the chamber ensemble fEARnoMUSIC, consisting of piano, violin, viola, cello, and percussion. The composer notes that:

*Northwest Passages* presents two compositions in parallel. One of these, a series of five movements for instruments and narrator, follows the western course of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, beginning at the departure from Saint Louis in May 1804 and ending with the arrival at the Pacific Ocean in November 1805. The narrator recites excerpts from the Corps of Discovery's journals, focusing on a few landmark events from the journey. In the score, these movements are called 'portages,' as they serve to link from one to the next of five choral songs comprising the other composition.... The songs (for chorus) are settings of Native American song texts, and present a counterpoint to the narrative of the expedition. Alongside the songs, the narrator recites

excerpts from Chief Seattle's oft-repeated speech of 1854, creating another counterpoint in this work, representing in some way, a passage of two peoples.<sup>25</sup>

An upstate New York project brought together a composer, a best-selling author, some fine musicians, some great students and teachers, and the sister cities of Geneseo, New York, and Siena, Italy, to rethink Galileo's Renaissance concept that the arts and sciences are both of vital interest and importance. Composer Glenn McClure's chance discovery of *Galileo's Daughter*, a book by science writer Dava Sobel that drew upon Galileo's correspondence with one of his two daughters, became the basis for both his Continental Harmony composition and community-based project that included multi-disciplinary lessons for American and Italian school children. McClure's *The Starry Messenger* uses madrigal singing and Renaissance instruments to celebrate scientist and musician Galileo. The international alliance resulted in performances in both Geneseo and Siena.<sup>26</sup> The Rochester-based ensemble Madrigalia, who sang the premiere, received the 2007 Alice Parker/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming from Chorus America.

The arts and sciences was also the theme for Charleston, West Virginia's, project. The 2003 opening of the \$120 million Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, a performance hall, art gallery, black box theatre, planetarium, and children's science museum, was the project's focus.<sup>27</sup> The project theme grew from the new center's mission, "To inspire creativity, learning, and wonder through the experiences in the arts and sciences for all people of West Virginia." Paul Halley of Norfolk, Connecticut, former music director and organist at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine and long-time member of the

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Paul Winter Consort, was selected to compose a piece for combined choirs from Charleston, Parkersburg, Morgantown, and Lewisburg to emphasize the center's statewide mission. It was the center's planetarium that gave Halley the connecting point for his *In Sideribus Domi: At Home in the Stars*. Halley noted that both artists and scientists must have courage to take risks, and never cease from exploration. He used an original poem by David Densmore as the cen-

ter of the work. "Discovery belongs to those who are willing to be lost, and lost, stumble on the footing of the foundation of the new." It concludes, "the goal of the arts and sciences? To make us better dancers."<sup>28</sup> Halley played piano in the instrumental consort for the premiere, then orchestrated his new work and conducted it at the Tanglewood Music Center the following spring.

Community remained a strong component of many Continental Harmony

Encore projects. In the 1950s and 1960s, the vibrant Rondo neighborhood of St. Paul, Minnesota, was an integrated but predominantly African-American business, religious, and education center in the city's urban core; a community uprooted and displaced by the construction of the I-94 freeway that replaced Rondo Avenue. Using oral histories compiled in the book *Voices of Rondo* and interviews with former residents, Stephen Newby of Everett, Washing-

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ton, composed *Rondo Oratorio*, a multi-movement work for chorus, instruments, and narrator, drawing from gospel, jazz, classical, spiritual, and hip-hop traditions. The themes of the oratorio: faith, hope, and love, express the vitality of a community that has survived in spirit despite geographical dislocations.<sup>29</sup>

In New York City's West Harlem, pianist and composer Ishmel Wallace, a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and student of Steven Stucky, and his sister Vita direct "What a Neighborhood!" a program that nurtures a sense

of community through the music of living composers and includes all the diversity of the area. His *West Harlem Christ*, written for the St. Mary's Gospel Choir, sets words of poor and homeless neighbors with those of neighbors who help others in the community.<sup>30</sup>

Commissioned by the Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies at Keen State College in New Hampshire for its twenty-fifth anniversary, *Kaddish*, by Lawrence Siegel, uses the power of music to teach about the Holocaust and increase awareness of genocides in the world today. Named for a traditional Jewish prayer for the dead recited as part of the mourning rituals at funerals and on the anniversary of the death of a loved one, Siegel sets words taken directly from interviews with survivors of the Holocaust. This powerful work is in three parts. "The World Before" reflects on life in central Europe before the Holocaust and introduces some of the individual survivors whose stories make up the work. The "Holocaust" movement tells some personal stories of the unimaginable events that took place in the ghettos, the trains, and the camps. The final section, "Tikkun Olam," healing or repairing the world, begins with a spoken-word improvisation whose text consists of the names and barest details of the lives of some of those who perished, followed by a setting of the Mourners' *Kaddish*, sung for these and all victims of genocide. The work concludes as the chorus affirms the words "so here I am" to serve as an emblem of the resilience and determination of those survivors to carry on their lives and, in some way, the lives of those who perished.<sup>31</sup> Following its 2008 debut in New Hampshire,<sup>32</sup> *Kaddish* was performed and recorded by Minnesota's VocalEssence,<sup>33</sup> then performed in a full symphonic version by the Houston Symphony and Chorus in 2010 and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in 2011.

Other Continental Harmony Encore projects that involve choral singing and orchestra include Adrienne Albert's *An Alaskan Symphony*, describing the Kenai Peninsula near Homer, Alaska,<sup>34</sup> and Peter Boyer's *Dreaming a World*, with texts drawn from diverse American poets for the Battle Creek (Michigan) Symphony, community and children's choirs, and percussion.<sup>35</sup> Continental Harmony concluded its decade of new music creation in Ada, Oklahoma, in November 2009. *Lowak Shoppala'* [Fire and Light] by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, a multimedia theatrical work for orchestra and children's choir, was initiated by the Chickasaw Nation to celebrate the opening of the new Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Oklahoma, and is based upon their original migration story.<sup>36</sup>

Over one hundred compositions, more than half of which include choral singing, were written as part of Continental Harmony during the decade from 1999–2009.<sup>37</sup> National project director Patricia Shifferd affirmed, "The arts are essential to community identity and unity. Music—its creation and performance—is especially well suited to this task. . . . Through music, communities recreate their histories in celebratory ways, often using texts that evoke the languages, landscapes, and cultural traditions of their citizens. Music can also evoke places and peoples far away, creating a vivid understanding of, and empathy for the recurrent problems of life experienced by our fellow humans around the globe."<sup>38</sup>

Walt Whitman wrote, "I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear."<sup>39</sup> The varied carols of Continental Harmony were sung proudly across our nation. The compositions resulting from the program are indeed varied and eclectic. They showcase America's ethnic diversity and they demonstrate music's power to bring people and communities

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together to heighten community awareness. They reflect America's optimism, individualism, and sense of place, and collectively create a giant and colorful patchwork quilt of America's music at the turn of the century.<sup>40</sup>

## NOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> "Continental Harmony: New American music to ring in the millennium," *ArtWorks*, vol. 7, no. 3, Summer 2000.
- <sup>3</sup> Library of Congress, Music Division, American Composers Forum Collection (1998–2000). Includes photographs, programs, newspaper clippings, and some video and audio recordings.
- <sup>4</sup> "Continental Harmony Update: New Honors, New Funding, and Five New Sites," *Sounding Board*, vol. 26, no. 6, June 1999.
- <sup>5</sup> The American Composers Forum was founded as the Minnesota Composers Forum by Libby Larsen and Stephen Paulus and incorporated in 1975. Barbieri, Susan, and John Michel, "Founding the 'Forum' for Composers," *Sounding Board*, October/November/December 2011.
- <sup>6</sup> Bauerlein, Mark, editor. *National Endowment for the Arts: A History 1965–2008*. (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts). Available at <<http://www.nea.gov/nea-history-1965-2008.pdf>>.
- <sup>7</sup> Parker, Bill. *Guardians of the Canyon*. <<http://www.mnartists.org/work.do?rid=8031>>.
- <sup>8</sup> Miller, Sarah Bryan. "Composer's St. Louis Work takes him out to the ball game," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 1, 2000.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Navigator Tree*, program notes (Accessed 6/16/2000) <<http://sonos.org/news/jaronNavigator.htm>>.
- <sup>10</sup> Documentary of this project on *Continental Harmony*, produced and directed by Ed Robbins, Twin Cities Public Television, 2001.
- <sup>11</sup> Sutherland, Amy. "Hill in the Country: A Maine Suite...Has Community Property Written All Over It," *Maine Sunday Telegram*, May 21, 2000. (Reprinted in *Sounding Board*, vol. 27, no. 2, July/August 2000).
- <sup>12</sup> Delgado, Celeste Fraser. "Sonic Truth; Experimental composer Lukas Ligeti came to town with a mission: Create a new Miami sound," *Miami New Times*, April 13, 2000.
- <sup>13</sup> Continental Harmony was not the only millennial project that produced new works for chorus. Other significant commissions include four new passion settings from the International Bach Academy, Stuttgart, Germany, by composers Tan Dun (St. Matthew), Osvaldo Golijov (St. Mark), Wolfgang Rihm (St. Luke), and Sophia Gubaidulina (St. John), and The Walt Disney Company's "millennial symphonies" by Michael Torke (*Four Seasons*) and Aaron Jay Kernis (*Garden of Light*), premiered by the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Kurt Masur.
- <sup>14</sup> Graham, Carol. "Nature's Song," *Grand Forks Herald*, February 25, 2000.
- <sup>15</sup> Documentary of this project on *Continental Harmony*.
- <sup>16</sup> Casey, Chris. "Cotton's 'Classical Hoedown' a Unique Northland Creation," *Duluth News Tribune*, May 16, 2000. (Reprinted in *Sounding Board*, vol. 27, no. 7, July/August 2000)
- <sup>17</sup> Documentary of this project on *Continental Harmony*.
- <sup>18</sup> McGlaughlin, William, *Walt Whitman's Dream*, Subito Music.
- <sup>19</sup> Coe, Kenton, *The Unknown Region: A Journey of Faith*, program notes, April 2000.
- <sup>20</sup> MacMilliam, Kyle, "A Connecticut Composer and Performers in David City Collaborate on *Heartland*, a World Premiere," *Omaha World-Herald*, May 5, 2000. (Reprinted in *Sounding Board*, vol. 24, no. 4, July/August 2000).
- <sup>21</sup> PBS developed a Web site to profile all of the 58 millennial projects <[www.pbs.org/harmony](http://www.pbs.org/harmony)>.
- <sup>22</sup> Gann, Kyle. *American Music in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997).
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- <sup>24</sup> Broat, Alexandra. "Capturing Community: An Interview with 'Continental Harmony' Filmmaker Ed Robbins," *Sounding Board*, vol. 28, no. 9, December 2001.
- <sup>25</sup> Dzubay, David. *Northwest Passages*. <<http://pronovamusic.com/notesNWP.html>>.
- <sup>26</sup> McClure, Glenn. "The Starry Messenger: Beyond the Premiere," *Sounding Board*, vol. 34, no. 1, September/October 2006.
- <sup>27</sup> Wise, Kris. "Clay Center composition reaches for the stars," *Charleston Daily Mail*, September 22, 2003.
- <sup>28</sup> Halley, Paul. *In Sideribus Domi: At Home in the Stars*, Pelegos Music, PEL2046.
- <sup>29</sup> Gehrke, Karl. "Remembering Rondo with music," Minnesota Public Radio, September 23, 2005. (Reprinted in *Sounding Board*, vol. 34, no. 2, November/December 2006).
- <sup>30</sup> O'Brian, Colin. "Big Town, Big Heart: Celebrating New Yorkers Who Make a Difference," *New York Daily News*, March 6, 2006.
- <sup>31</sup> Siegel, Lawrence. *Kaddish: Music of Remembrance and Hope*. For information visit: <[www.kaddishproject.com](http://www.kaddishproject.com)>.
- <sup>32</sup> Cohen, Jan. "Kaddish debuts in New Hampshire and Minnesota," *Sounding Board*, vol. 28, no. 3, September/October 2008.
- <sup>33</sup> *Kaddish*, music and libretto by Lawrence Siegel, VocalEssence Chorus and Chamber Singers, Philip Brunelle, conductor, Navona Records NV5834. (Multimedia content on CD includes the score).

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<sup>34</sup> Albert, Adrienne. "A Place Called Home: Continental Harmony in Alaska 2006–07," *Sounding Board*, vol. 34, no. 6, July/August 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Scott, Linda Jo, and Peter Ingalls, "Battle Creek Symphony multicultural project has strong community impact," *Sounding Board*, vol. 35, no. 2, November/December 2007. For music sample and program notes visit: <[www.propulsivemusic.com/works/concerthall/dreamingaworld.php](http://www.propulsivemusic.com/works/concerthall/dreamingaworld.php)>.

<sup>36</sup> Hudspeth, Dana. "Lowak Shoppala' brings history to life," *Chickasaw Nation* <[www.chickasaw.net](http://www.chickasaw.net)>, November 13, 2009.

<sup>37</sup> A list of all Continental Harmony compositions, composers, and host

communities is found at the end of this article.

<sup>38</sup> Shifferd, Patricia. "Continental Harmony: A Community-based Celebration of the American Millennial Year," *Reflections on American Music: The Twentieth Century and the New Millennium*, James R. Heintze and Michael Saffle, editors. *Bibliographies and Monographs in American Music #16*. (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2000), pp. 328–350.

<sup>39</sup> The poem was first published in *Leaves of Grass* in 1860, with the title and first line revised for the 1867 edition.

<sup>40</sup> For an assessment of Continental Harmony's millennial projects see: Cleveland,

William, and Patricia Shifferd. *Measuring Change in Continental Harmony*, Community Arts Network, June 2001. Available for reading at: <<http://www.artsandcommunity.com/csac/articles-and-essays.html>>.



## CONTINENTAL HARMONY

A Musical Celebration of the Millennium (2000)

Encore: Celebrating Communities through Music (2002–2009)

The first composition for each state listed below (plus the first two for Minnesota, Missouri and Illinois, and first six for California) were written for Continental Harmony's Millennium Celebration. All others were part of Continental Harmony Encore.

### ALABAMA

Gadsden – *I Am Song*, Philip Koplou (Covington, KY)

Dothan – *Wiregrass Symphony*, Richard Pearson Thomas (New York, NY)

### ALASKA

Juneau – *Glacier Blue*, Evan Solot (Philadelphia, PA)

\*Homer – *An Alaskan Symphony*, Adrienne Albert (Los Angeles, CA)

### ARIZONA

Grand Canyon – *Guardians of the Canyon*, Brent Michael Davids (Minneapolis, MN)

\*Phoenix – *Valley of the Sun*, Joseph Curiale (CA)

### ARKANSAS

\*Blytheville – *Song for the Delta*, Steve Cooper (Rogers, AR)

### CALIFORNIA

Culver City – *Symphony No. 3: Portraits in Jazz*, Thomas Oboe Lee (Cambridge, MA)

Santa Cruz – *Glossary: A Rhetorical Setting of Computer Terms*, Harry Brant (Santa Barbara, CA)

Oakland – *The Navigator Tree*, Jaron Lanier (Sausalito, CA)

Sacramento – *Pictures of Years: Nianhua*, Han Yong (New York, NY)

San Francisco – *Freedom Dreams*, Jennifer Higdon (Philadelphia, PA)

\*Piedmont – *The Oh of Moon and Piano*, Mark Wings (San Francisco, CA)

Long Beach and Mexico City, Mexico – *Dos Visiones/Two Visions*, Ana Lara (Mexico City, Mexico) and Robert Maggio (Lambertville, NJ)

Bakersfield – *Son*, Hector Martinez Morales (MA)

Modesto – *Two American Portraits*, Gabriela Lena Frank (Berkeley, CA)



# CELEBRATION OF THE MILLENNIUM

## COLORADO

- \*Breckenridge – *Nature's Universal Throne*, David Heckendorn (Kew Gardens, NY)  
\*Denver – *The Westside Oratorio*, Daniel Valdez (Salinas, CA)

## CONNECTICUT

- \*New Haven – *Convergence: Some Parades for Charlie's Dad*, Neely Bruce (Middletown, CT)  
New Britain – *Reliquary of Labor*, Ken Steen (Glastonbury, CT)

## DELAWARE

- Wilmington – *Delaware Rhapsody*, Robert Macht (Baltimore, MD)

## FLORIDA

- Miami – *Migrants Journal*, Lukas Ligeti (New York, NY)  
\*Tallahassee – *Breathe In the Colors You See*, Oliver Lake (Montclair, NJ)

## GEORGIA

- Kennesaw – *The Unsung*, Eric Alexander (Acworth, GA)  
Macon – *Spirit Jug*, Scott Ethier (Astoria, NY)

## HAWAII

- \*Kailua-Kona – *The Channel*, Christopher Rogers (Hawi, HI)

## IDAHO

- \*McCall – *Breath of the Mountain*, Linda Tutas Haugen (Burnsville, MN)  
Twin Falls – *Magic Valley*, Anthony Scott Watson (Allentown, PA)

## ILLINOIS

- \*Freeport – *Song of the Earth*, Patrick Beckman (Freeport, IL)

- \*Oak Park – *A Symphony of Place*, James Kimo Williams (Chicago, IL)  
\*Chicago – *Underground Movements*, Evan Solot (Philadelphia, PA)

## INDIANA

- Carmel – *Liberty for All*, James Beckel (Indianapolis, IN)  
Gary – *Sand and Steel*, Lisa DeSpain (New York, NY)

## IOWA

- Fort Dodge – *Rural Symphony*, Jonathan Chenette (Grinnell, IA)  
\*Grinnell – *Roots of Renewal*, Craig Naylor (Kalispell, MT)

## KANSAS

- \*Arkansas City – *Carl Sandburg's Prairie*, Eugene Friesen (Townshend, VT)  
Glasco – *Dreams and Faith* (The Solomon Valley Anthology), Greg Sanders (Kingsville, TX)  
Arkansas City and Wichita – *Headfirst into the Blue Fields of Grace*, Philip Aaberg (Oakland, CA)

## KENTUCKY

- \*Scottsville – *Tabernacle Trilogy: Three Songs*, Depp Britt (Nashville, TN)  
Louisville – *Big Madisonial Ceremonial*, Gary Powers Nash (Itta Bena, MS)

## LOUISIANA

- New Orleans – *My Name is Citizen Soldier*, Frank Proto (Cincinnati, OH)  
\*Alexandria-Pineville – *Symphony No. 9: Hope*, William Banfield (St. Paul, MN)

## MAINE

- \*Farmington – *A Hill in the Country: Maine Suite*, Alexis Alrich (San Francisco, CA)  
\*Bangor – *Symphony No. 4: The Penobscot River*, Thomas Oboe Lee (Cambridge, MA)

## MARYLAND

- Takoma Park – *Hallelujah, In Praise of Light*, Lisa DeSpain (New York, NY)

## MASSACHUSETTS

- Fitchburg – *Raging River, Rolling Stone*, Barbara White (Princeton, NJ)

## MICHIGAN

- Ann Arbor – *Lokananta*, Gabriel Gould (Ann Arbor, MI)  
Dearborn and Ann Arbor – *Arboresque*, Simon Shaheen (MI)  
\*Battle Creek – *Dreaming a World*, Peter Boyer (Upland, CA)

## MINNESOTA

- \*Cotton – *Cotton Cantata*, Tyler Kaiser (Duluth, MN)  
St. Paul – *Descendants of the Dragon*, Zhang Ying (Minneapolis, MN)  
\*St. Paul – *Reconciliation*, Geoffrey Stanton (Ann Arbor, MI)  
\*St. Paul – *Rondo Oratorio*, Stephen Newby (Everett, WA)

## MISSISSIPPI

- \*Madison – *Traces of Mississippi*, Anne LeBaron (Pittsburgh, PA)  
\*Gulfport and Biloxi – *Dreams: A Celebration of Mississippi Music*, Evan Solot (Philadelphia, PA)

# CONTINENTAL HARMONY: A MUSICAL

## MISSOURI

\*St. Joseph – *I Am St. Joseph*,  
John Bisharat (Los Angeles, CA)

St. Louis – *Bushy Washy Rag*,  
Phillip Bimstein (Springdale, UT)

## MONTANA

\*Missoula – *Walt Whitman's Dream*,  
William McGlaughlin  
(New York, NY)

\*Ennis – *From the Dreams of Montana  
Children*, Eric Funk  
(Bozeman, MT)

## NEBRASKA

\*David City – *Heartland*, Deborah  
Fischer Teason (Hamden, CT)

Macy – *Huthuga*, Stacy Fox (NY)

## NEVADA

\*Carson City – *A Land of Sun and  
Sage*, Jim Cockey (McCall, ID)

\*Virginia City – *Building from the Past*,  
Lisa DeSpain (New York, NY)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

\*Plymouth – *Voices of the Lake*,  
James Clemens  
(Downers Grove, IL)

\*Keene – *Kaddish: Music of  
Remembrance and Hope*,  
Lawrence Siegel  
(Westmorland, NH)

## NEW JERSEY

\*Newark – *Jersey Polyphony*,  
Raymond Torres-Santos  
(San Juan, PR)

\*South Orange/ Maplewood –  
*American Dale*,  
Janet Albright (VA)

## NEW MEXICO

Alto – *Keepers of the Land*,  
Jerre Tanner (Kailua-Kona, HI)

\*Roswell – *Beyond Courage*,  
Stephen Melilo (VA)

## NEW YORK

Syracuse – *Dance Mix*, Rob Smith  
(Houston, TX)

\*Geneseo – *The Starry Messenger*,  
Glenn McClure (Geneseo, NY)

\*New York City (West Harlem) –  
*West Harlem Christ*,  
Ishmael Wallace (New York, NY)

## NORTH CAROLINA

\*Concord – *Building Bridges*, Ronald  
Nelson (Minneapolis, MN)

Charlotte, Dallas, Gastonia – *High Seas  
to High Shoals: Thematic Variations  
on the Life of Charles Wilkes*,  
Jerre Tanner (Kailua-Kona, HI)

## NORTH DAKOTA

\*Grand Forks – *What the River Says:  
Three River Songs*, Steve Heitzeg  
(St. Paul, MN)

Grand Forks – *Meeting Ground*,  
Geoffrey Hudson  
(Cummington, MA)

## OHIO

\*Carrollton – *Suite Carroll County*,  
Mona Lyn Reese (San Jose, CA)

Akron – *Women at an Exhibition*,  
Randall Woolf (New York, NY)

## OKLAHOMA

Edmond – *Showdown on Two Street*,  
Sam Magrill (Edmond, OK)

\*Ada – *Lowak Shoppala'* (Fire and Light),  
Jerod Impichchachaaha' Tate  
(Oklahoma City, OK)

## OREGON

Portland – *Wood, Water, Wind (W3)*,  
Kenny Endo (Honolulu, HI)

\*Portland – *Northwest Passages:  
Five Dream Songs*, David Dzubay  
(Bloomington, IN)

## PENNSYLVANIA

Gettysburg – *South Mountain Echoes*,  
Robert Maggio (Media, PA)

University Park – *Cross-Cultural  
Variations*, David Cleary  
(Cambridge, MA)

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Evelyn Simpson-Curenton  
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Georgetown*, James Clemens  
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Dakota Cantata*, Bruce Roter  
(Albany, NY)

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# THE INFLUENCE OF THE *KALEVALA* ON CONTEMPORARY FINNISH CHORAL MUSIC

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JOSHUA PALKKI

Deep-seated historical and cultural ideals challenge and inspire composers and to understand composer intent, one must examine historic and cultural influences surrounding them. Choral music has long been influenced by literature popular at the time of composition. Finland was forever changed by the 1835 publication of the epic folk poem, the *Kalevala*, when the country was in danger of being forcibly annexed by Russia. The *Kalevala* is a written account of an ancient oral *runo* [rune] poetry tradition. This article contains an exploration of the origins of *runo* singing, the compilation of the *Kalevala*, and the influence both have had on the compositional style of several Finnish composers. *Kalevala* inspired choral works combine elements of the ancient *runo* poetry tradition with nineteenth- and twentieth-century compositional techniques to honor the ancient text and its importance in Finnish culture.

# THE INFLUENCE OF THE *KALEVALA* ON

## The Compilation of The *Kalevala*

In 1809 Finnish-speaking Finns faced a dire set of circumstances. After seven centuries of Swedish rule, Finland was annexed by Russia and became an autonomous grand duchy. The Finnish language had not been codified; it and Finnish culture were in serious peril. One commonly heard oath was, "We are not Swedish, we will not become Russians, let us therefore be Finnish."<sup>1</sup> A "Russification" process was underway, stripping Finns of their rights in an effort to forcibly make them part of the mother country.

The *Kalevala* first appeared in print in 1835, the result of efforts by a doctor named Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884). It was published in two volumes titled *Kalevala taikka vanjoja Karjalan runoja*

*Suomen Kansan munaisista ajoista* [The *Kalevala*, or Old Karelian Songs from the Ancient Times of the Finnish People.]<sup>2</sup> It became an important document that helped unite Finns in their struggle for independence. Filled with Pagan and Shamanistic themes, the *Kalevala* comprises spells, wedding poems, and charms telling, "the story of the three national heroes of Finland ... and of their exploits against Pohjola, the land of darkness and forests."<sup>3</sup> It gave Finns a sense of their forgotten, unique history after Finland was under Russian rule by 1809.<sup>4</sup>

As a written transcription of an ancient sung poetry tradition, the *Kalevala* is something of an enigma. These songs and poems were never intended for publication. It is ironic and remarkable

how an oral tradition from an uneducated populace became the basis on which Finland built a singular culture and history. Three versions appeared: the original (1835), the 'New *Kalevala*' (1849), and an 1862 publication for educational use. "The 'New *Kalevala*', the most extensive compilation comprising fifty *runos* or *cantos* totaling 22,795 lines is the canonized version known today."<sup>5</sup> *Runos* or *cantos* are chapter-like sections of the *Kalevala*, most of which describe the adventures of one character.

## *Kalevala* Meter

The unifying aspect of the poems collected by Lönnrot and others was the *Kalevala* meter, a form of trochaic tetrameter. "Trochaic" refers to a strong/weak pattern of emphasis, and tetrameter signifies eight syllables per line organized into four rhythmic feet, each containing two syllables. Thus strong/weak/strong/weak/strong/weak/strong/weak. **Sil** loin // **van** ha // **Väi** nä// **möi** nen is an example. Here bold type shows emphasized syllables and slashes the delineation of the four rhythmic feet. Rules governing the *Kalevala* meter developed from emphasis patterns in spoken Finnish language in which initial syllables are always accented and secondary accents typically occur on the third syllable. The *Kalevala* meter "has no syntax, i.e., the lines do not combine into couplets of longer verses: a poem is made up of an optional number of independent lines."<sup>6</sup> *Kalevala* meter implies no rhyme scheme.

Transcription of *runo* singing began in 1797 and writings of the time indicate that specific rhythmic patterns were used when singing. Although four and six beat patterns existed, the most popular was a five beat pattern in which the last two syllables were held twice as long.<sup>7</sup> In modern transcription, the pattern



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Figure 1. Traditional 5/4 Kalevala Metric Rhythm.

appears in 5/4 meter, as seen in Figure 1. The reason for the prevalence of this rhythmic pattern is not known, but likely aided memorization: lengthening the final two syllables allowed the singer twice as much time to recall the next line. This time factor was especially important when two singers were performing lines of poetry in tandem.

## Runo Singing Practices

Traditional *runo* singing had a standard format that reinforced the parallelism inherent in the poetry. In Karelia, two men held hands as they intoned the poems in an overlapping call-and-response format. Henrik Porthan's account of such performance practice says:

When the leading singer has reached the line's third-last syllable, that is the final foot, the accompanist joins him in song....After this, the accompanist repeats the line on his own, slightly varying the tune, as though he were gladly giving it his approval. During these moments, the leading singer remains silent until the accompanist reaches the final foot, which both then sing in unison. Then the singer performs the next line....<sup>8</sup>

In Ingria (modern day Russia), soloists intoned poems supported by choral accompaniment.<sup>9</sup> The role of ancient *Kalevala* poetry tended to be more pragmatic than artistic. A beautiful singing voice was appreciated, but clear text delivery and a strong memory were

more important. Singers could intone poems in any key and they could be sung to any number of tunes. A small number of melodies were applied to many different poems. Although runic songs had a very limited range (three to five tones),

“because of their modal complexity they yielded a great richness to listeners.”<sup>10</sup> Ranges were usually no larger than that of the *kantele*, a Finnish folk instrument similar to a dulcimer. Ancient *runo* tunes were based on elementary fragments of pentatonic modes, and often changed modes between phrases.<sup>11</sup> In terms of the modern compositions explored in this study, runic melodies are often placed in a tonal context, not unlike works of J. S. Bach in which modal melodies and chorale tunes were placed in the context of a major or minor key. These characteristics of ancient *runo* melodies have inspired composers for over a century.

## Runo Singing Traits Present in Modern Compositions

Beginning in the nineteenth century, composers began to incorporate ancient folk poetry and *runo* melodies in an effort to compose purely Finnish music. The choral selections explored in this study use various techniques that honor ancient *runo* singing practices. An obvious feature is the use of the 5/4 *Kalevala* meter and rhythmic pattern. Other features include use of repetition to reiterate modal melodies with small ranges and repeated notes at the ends of phrases as sung by ancient *runo* singers. To evoke the essence of sung poetry, some composers adopt scoring techniques that replicate call-and-response singing. In addition, modal mixture and/or modulation between phrases or sec-

tions, often to closely related keys, evoke ancient singing practices. Several pieces explored in this study contain modal ambiguity. The presence of open fifth intervals and pedal tones imbue modern compositions with an unsettled sound. In general, the dark Pagan and Shamanistic elements of the ancient Finnish poetry tradition have greatly influenced the composers in this article.

## Consulted Contemporary Choral Works

To demonstrate the use of *runo* singing practices in contemporary choral works, this author analyzes the following choral works: *Pakkasen luku* (movements 4, 5, 7 and 11) by Pekka Kostiainen (b. 1944), *Venematka* (op. 18, no. 3) by Jean Sibelius (1865–1957), *Ikirunon llo* by Juha Hilander (b. 1957), and *Marjatan jouluvirsi* by Einojuhani Rautavaara (b. 1928).

Pekka Kostiainen (b. 1944) is a prolific composer and conductor not widely known outside Finland. Kostiainen studied at the Sibelius Academy where he completed diplomas in organ and composition. In addition to his work as an organist and lecturer in musicol-



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ogy, he is an active choral conductor. *Pakkasen luku* [Frost's Incantation] was composed in 1983 to celebrate the centennial of the Finnish Vocal Music Festival. The eleven movement work contains sections for men's, women's, mixed, and children's choirs and can be performed by various combinations of performing forces. Regarding the source material, Kostiainen explains: "The text I have used is *Kalevala* canto thirty, lines 143–316. For five movements, I have chosen Armas Launis' published Karelian poetry tunes.... The rest I have prepared myself in the same spirit. In movements one, two, five, and eleven I have used *Kalevala* lead singer (call-and-response) patterns."<sup>12</sup> Although canto thirty mainly dwells on characters Lemminkäinen, a "quicksilvery Don Juan character," and his confidant Tiera,<sup>13</sup> *Pakkasen luku* concerns a wicked and controversial character: Pakko, a personification of Frost sent to freeze the water on which Lemminkäinen and Tiera sail. Of all the pieces examined in this article, *Pakkasen luku* contains the most dramatic source material and Kostiainen certainly personifies this drama using innovative compositional techniques (for example, in several movements he

employs silence for dramatic effect). The number five also holds some significance in this work. It is the number of strings on the ancient *kantele*. In addition to the *Kalevala* 5/4 rhythm and meter, the key signatures of the fourth, fifth, and seventh movements contain five flats or sharps. The narrative of this article encompasses four of the eleven movements of *Pakkasen luku*.

The fourth movement, *Kylmä muita kummempia!*, is based upon canto thirty, lines 203–211, in which Lemminkäinen violently holds and taunts Frost. Kostiainen employs *Kalevala* meter and the accompanying five-beat *Kalevala* rhythm pattern, but within the context of a 4/4 time signature, resulting in an ever-evolving ostinato in the tenor and bass parts as seen in Figure 2.

After two measures of this repeated motive in the men's voices, the women enter, creating the semblance of a call-and-response singing pattern. In measure five, a recurring sixteenth note figure in the soprano part evokes the feeling of an incantation and Lemminkäinen's taunting of Frost. Sustained open fourth and fifth intervals heighten the drama in the final fifteen measures as his rage increases, building to the text *kinahmia*

*kauheata* ["foaming in its utmost fury"].

Kostiainen sets canto thirty, lines 212–240 in movement five, *Joko nyt sanon sukusi*, in which Lemminkäinen describes Frost's upbringing. An open fifth built on G<sup>♯</sup> is heard at the outset and is used as a pedal point throughout. As opposed to the traditional 5/4 *Kalevala* meter and rhythm pattern, a repeated four-measure phrase in 5/8 appears throughout as shown in Figure 3.

This static rhythmic pattern appears in each measure of the movement in both the solo and choral parts. Call-and-response practices appear throughout. With only one exception, the soloist intones the melody and the choir answers with a harmonized adaptation. Though this movement is in G<sup>♯</sup> minor, the main melody begins intermittently on D<sup>♯</sup> or G<sup>♯</sup>, epitomizing the *runo* singing tradition of modal modulation between phrases. Dynamics are keenly implemented to highlight dramatic moments in this histrionic text. Tension builds to measure twenty-seven where Frost's "father, ever crime-stained" and "most wicked mother are depicted."<sup>14</sup> *Fortissimo* dynamics continue until measure sixty-five as the ridicule continues. Softer dynamics enter as Lemminkäinen describes himself as

Figure 2. Pekka Kostiainen, *Pakkasen luku*, "IV. Kylmä muita kummempia!," mm. 1–5. Ostinato built from the 5/4 *Kalevala* Metric Pattern within a 4/4 time signature

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**Figure 3.** Pekka Kostiainen, *Pakkasen luku*, “V. Joko nyt sanon sukusi”  
Repeated phymic pattern used throughout movement

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“a boy so wholly worthless.”<sup>15</sup> A long silence in measures fifty-one and fifty-two has an arresting effect, after which

the choir intones the melody without prompting from the soloist.

Movement seven, *Joko nyt suureksi*

*sukesit?*, exhibits a more subdued Lemminkäinen as he confidently tells Frost: “you can never freeze me.” Traditional 5/4 *Kalevala* meter is employed in this tonally simplistic piece. In the grand scheme of *Pakkasen luku*, such simplicity sets it apart from dense and complicated movements such as movement five. In twenty measures, Kostiainen employs only three chords: E major and B major with an added seventh or ninth. The latter B major chords provide color and emphasis on important words including: *ehoksi* [contempt] in m. 8, *tulen* [fire] in m. 15, and *pakkasen* [frost] in measure



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nineteen. Fifteen of the twenty measures are marked with *dimuendi* to highlight Lemminkäinen's more relaxed state.

The eleventh and final movement of *Pakkasen luku, Tehkämme sula sovinto*, employs the traditional 5/4 *Kalevala* meter and rhythmic pattern. The Karelian *runo* singing tradition is depicted with the soloist intoning the call and the choir responding with a complementary melody. Here Kostiainen's text setting is unorthodox; rather than setting the poem in order, he begins with lines 299–302 then jumps to lines 313–316. The first eight lines of text are set in only four measures of music—two measure sections that repeat four times. Measures three and four use the entire SATB choir in the response, rather than just the altos and basses as in measures one and two. This shift in scoring highlights an emotional shift in the text, which describes the end of conflict as seen below:

Then the Frost, the son of Northwind,  
Felt that he was near **destruction**,  
Whereupon he prayed for **mercy**,  
And he spoke the words which follow:  
[Emotional Shift]

"Let us **understand** each other,  
nor the one the other injure,  
In the course of all our lifetime,  
While the **golden moon** is shining.<sup>16</sup>

Though this movement begins in F major, significant shifts in the tonal center appear beginning in measure five that create a feeling of uncertainty and unease for Frost's words. This is the first time he speaks in the eleven-movement work. He swears to Lemminkäinen that he will not freeze him as once threatened. Kostiainen transposes each subsequent entrance of the melody up a whole step, proceeding rapidly through many tonal centers. Marked *meno mosso* and *legato*, the last five measures of the

work return to the text: "Let us make a firm agreement that we will not hurt each other." Here homophony and wandering tonality are employed, chromatically bringing the work to an end on an ominous open fifth.

Raised in a Swedish-speaking household, Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) learned Finnish at age eleven, not knowing he would eventually become the most celebrated composer in Finland. Sibelius discovered a new respect for his native land and culture while studying in Vienna. In 1890 he wrote to his fiancé, "I am reading my *Kalevala* diligently... It reads like pure music, theme and variation." He had a great interest in *runo* singing; He and sociologist Yrjö Hirn made a pilgrimage to hear and transcribe songs of the infamous Larin Parakse in 1891.<sup>17</sup> In addition to Sibelius's large orchestral works such as *Kullervo* and *The Swan of Tuonela*, several movements of opus 18, a collection of six choral works, contain text from the *Kalevala*.

Opus 18, number 3, *Venematka* (the boat journey) is a setting of the first sixteen lines of canto forty which describe the hero Väinämöinen singing while sailing on the water. Composed in 1893, this was Sibelius's first part song and depicts several aspects of *runo* singing. Of this piece, composer and Finnish choral historian Jaakko Mäntyjärvi says:

It is difficult to imagine how great an impact this music had on its original audiences.... Once [Sibelius] had come into contact with the *Kalevala* and its underlying ancient Finnish oral tradition, [he] proceeded to translate its archaic melodic formulae and its characteristic 5/4 meter into his own musical idiom. This brief song contains all the features of the style that Sibelius distilled from the *Kalevala* tradition: the bass pedal point, the upper voices in parallel intervals, the 5/4 metre and the repeated notes at the end of phrases.<sup>18</sup>



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Unlike other works explored in this study, Sibelius used widely spaced chords and melodies with large ranges (in measure 10, the soprano melody is nearly four octaves higher than the lowest bass part). Throughout, changes in scoring and tonality highlight important text.

Rhythmic drones are a prominent feature in *Venematka*. In the nineteen measures of this piece, bass drones appear in fifteen measures. The A pedal tone in the bass voice symbolizes the strength and vigor of Väinämöinen, the central protagonist of the *Kalevala*, appearing whenever the text depicts him sailing. The overall form is A B A B A'. In the first two A sections, the underlying A drone supports E-minor harmonies in the upper three voices, as evidenced by a repeated use of a D<sup>♯</sup> diminished seventh chord resolving to E minor, as found in measures 2–3 and 4–5. In the A' section (measures 14–17), the A drone in the bass voice returns, this time underlying an E-major section in the top three voices stating, “thus old Väinämöinen sailed.”

Sibelius utilizes an abrupt ending (a fragmentary effect) to give the sense that his piece is telling one very small part of a long and important epic. The key of D major is not established until

the two-measure coda, bringing the piece to an unexpected close as Sibelius returns to the text describing how Väinämöinen “sailed on singing on the water, striking joyance on the billows.” This establishment of D major is not as jarring as one might think considering the near constant drone on A, the dominant of D major in the bass voice. In some way this unexpected cadence is appropriate when considering that Sibelius sets only the first sixteen lines of canto forty, which contains 342 lines in total. There is a sense that though this short piece is ending, the story continues.

Juha Hilander (b. 1957) is a lecturer at Kuopio Senior High School of Music and Dance and also directs the male choir *Kuopio-kvartetti*. Hilander, the son of a choral director, composed two *Kalevala* pieces in 1980 published by Sulasol. He explains how the pieces were “[dedicated] to the Youth Chamber Choir in Varkaus. My father conducted this choir. It takes me a very long time to get something to the paper and it was also the same thing with these two *Kalevala* texts.”<sup>19</sup>

Hilander's *Ikirunon Ilo* is a setting of canto forty-one lines 1–16 in which Väinämöinen speaks about the power

of poetry and song. This setting is a marriage of old and new. The piece begins in the traditional 5/4 *Kalevala* meter but also contains sections in 4/4, 3/4, and 6/4 meter. These metric shifts and a predominantly homophonic texture help clarify the text. A two-measure phrase resembling a traditional *Kalevala* melody appears in the bass part in measures 1–2, before a freely composed melody appears in the female voice parts at measure three. Hilander uses parallel repetition effectively, with several small exceptions, measures 10–17 are identical to measures 1–9. Of all the works explored in this study, this piece reflects the most integrated scoring approach: the voices are treated consistently as an integrated, more homophonic choir and no call-and-response techniques are evident. This work does not attempt to replicate *runo* singing practices, but great variety in harmonic vocabulary and modal ambiguity pervade, giving some semblance of the modal shifts between phrases sung by ancient *runo* singers. The first two measures, for example, imply D minor and D Dorian with the presence of B<sup>♭</sup> and B<sup>♮</sup> as seen in Figure 4. Note B<sup>♮</sup> in the tenor in measure 1 and B<sup>♭</sup> in the soprano and bass in measure 2. In measures 3–5, rapid motion from E<sup>♭</sup>

Allegretto  
pp

S  
A  
T  
B

Väi - nä - möi - nen i - kui - nen

Va - ka van - ha Väi - nä - möi - nen lau - la - ja i - än - i - kui - nen

mf

Figure 4. Juha Hilander, *Ikirunon Ilo*, mm. 1–2.  
Natural Minor or Dorian?

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major to E minor and back to E<sup>b</sup> major highlights the text “[r]ubs his thumbs and limbers up his fingers.” In addition to modal mixture, Hilander employs open fifths throughout, typically in the tenor and bass lines, to create feelings of unease, as in the Kostiainen pieces referenced above.

Einojuhani Rautavaara (b. 1928) is one of Finland’s most respected living composers. Rautavaara wrote, “When a young composer encounters the Finnish world of choral music, he is immediately surrounded by myths...The Finnish tradition...meets in the temple of earth-spirits...a *Kalevala*-national milieu of forest deities, beaten cow paths, and lake landscapes.”<sup>20</sup> From his early years of composition, Rautavaara showed an interest in incorporating Finnish folk material into his compositions. His output includes several operas, symphonies, and concertos in addition to well-known choral works.

*Marjatan jouluvirsi* is excerpted from a 1975 cantata for treble voices titled *Marjatta matala neiti* [Marjatta the lowly maiden]. This movement was re-voiced for SATB chorus by Rautavaara in 1995 and exemplifies his neo-Romantic period.<sup>21</sup> Marjatta is the *Kalevala*’s portrayal of the Virgin Mary. Rautavaara set only a portion of Marjatta’s journey, choosing lines from canto fifty to tell specific aspects of the story. He explains:

[The piece] sets the basic Christian myth of the birth of the Son of God against a typically forested Finnish background, complete with characters and its own internal logic. In place of oxen and donkeys there is the hot breath of a horse, the stable becomes a sauna, and Herod is the malignant farmer Ruotas. The music on the other hand emerges out of the polarity of the situation; the ecclesiastical, ‘Gothic’ archaism and devout quality is contrasted with Shamanistic monotony and spells and charms.<sup>22</sup>



Figure 5. Einojuhani Rautavaara, *Marjatan jouluvirsi*, mm. 14–15.

Traditional *Kalevala* rhythmic pattern in augmentation

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This polarity is epitomized through a unique scoring approach. In the first sixteen measures, the lower three voices serve as a chordal foundation on which the soprano part narrates with a beautiful four measure melody that is repeated throughout the piece. The second half of the piece employs a call-and-response pattern between the men and the women. The men represent the call with a choral version of the soprano melody and the women respond with the same melody in rhythmic diminution.

In this piece, Rautavaara does not employ 5/4 *Kalevala* meter or traditional *runo* melodies. In contrast to the 5/4 meter, Rautavaara creates a “rocking” melody in 4/4, which depicts the maiden rocking her young son. The traditional *Kalevala* rhythm pattern is hinted at in measures 15 and 16 of the soprano part. Rather than the typical eighth and quarter note rhythmic pattern as seen in Figure 1, quarter and half notes state the same rhythm pattern in augmentation as seen in Figure 5. In keeping with *runo* singing traditions, the melodic lines display a limited vocal range.

Harmonically, *Marjatan jouluvirsi* exemplifies ambiguity as modal/tonal shifts occurring every two measures, beginning in F major, then shifting to F minor, F major, F minor, and F Dorian. After two measures of the F Dorian melody, Rautavaara introduces a new

G minor melody. This introduction is similar to the modal shifts that occur between phrases sung by ancient *runo* singers. In the second ending, the piece comes to an abrupt final cadence in C major, creating a feeling of unease as the text speaks of, “this anxious time of labor.” Here Rautavaara has created a truly modern setting that retains the character of ancient *Kalevala* text.

## Conclusion

The *Kalevala* had an enormous impact on Finnish language, history, culture, and music. This narrative history of the ancient Finns gave the burgeoning country a sense of history and national pride. Many of the singers who contributed to the *Kalevala* will forever be unknown but their miraculous contribution and impressive capacity for recall live on through the written record of the stories of their ancient roots, and in the music presented in this article. Today, Finland is a thriving and successful nation, home to Nokia and to Angry Birds. In 2011 *Newsweek* named it the best country in which to live. Through this exploration of choral works by four nineteenth- and twentieth-century Finnish composers, one can see how elements of ancient *runo* poetry are preserved in their music. The combined contributions of *runo* singers, transcribers, compilers

# CONTEMPORARY FINNISH CHORAL MUSIC

like Elias Lönnrot, and composers who imbued new life into this ancient text inspire those who treasure and honor these stories.

## NOTES

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# Rehearsal Breaks

## Refuting Misconceptions I: The Use of Vibrato in Choral Singing in the United Kingdom

by

Sarah MacDonald

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It is a well-known fact that there is a particular type of North American musician who is fascinated by the so-called "English Choral Tradition." I am one of those myself. I spent much of my Canadian childhood longing to be a choirboy, processing solemnly under the shadow of the fan-vaulted splendour of King's College Chapel. Although that particular dream never came true (there were certain obstacles in my way), I did eventually come to study at Cambridge as an organ scholar and I felt so at home that I am still here, over twenty years later.

Not surprisingly, I arrived with many preconceptions about life in the United Kingdom, most of which were quickly dispelled (it's not really like living in an episode of *Brideshead Revisited*). It is also the case that some of those aforementioned choral Anglophiles have musical misconceptions, and in this two-part series I will deal with two of my favorites. This month I will consider the mistaken idea that UK choirs sing without vibrato. In my next column I will look into the erroneous belief that all English choirs

can sight-read fluently.

Two key issues need to be considered in refuting the manifestly invalid assumption that English choirs never sing with vibrato. First, the technical definition of vibrato, and second, the passage of time and musical fashions (since the 1960s) and the associated advancement of musicological scholarship. My only caveat is that it is important for readers to remember that the best known UK choirs (i.e., those which are exported most frequently by means of broadcasts and recordings) constitute an exceedingly small minority of the choirs in the country. Therefore, the sound of a "typical" English choir is impossible to codify.

Vibrato is defined as a regular, pulsating variation in pitch, above and below the fundamental frequency. Both the range and the speed of fluctuation can be measured and adjusted. In most academic references to vibrato in singing (as opposed to vibrato in string playing), a clear distinction is drawn between vibrato, a natural by-product of a healthy, free singing technique, and warble (or

"wobble"), when the pitch oscillation is too wide or the speed of fluctuation too slow. This is normally symptomatic of poor technique or aging (and occasionally of abused or over-used vocal folds), which adversely affects both pitch and sound quality. Technically speaking, the misconception here is perhaps more accurately expressed by saying that the best UK choirs do not sing with warble rather than that they do not sing with vibrato.

It probably goes without saying that the humorous sign reading "Choir Room: Please check your vibrato at the door" is most commonly directed at sopranos. Since both age and technique are known to play a crucial role in the distinction between a natural vibrato and an undesirable warble, it is necessary to consider the normal make-up of an English choir's soprano section to ascertain why the latter is not perceived in the sound. In the majority of England's best-known choirs the soprano sections consist of young, individually-trained singers. This includes both boys and girls



# Rehearsal Breaks

in Cathedral choirs, those in their late teens or early twenties in mixed Oxbridge choirs, and young professionals in the best-known specialist choirs. Conductors in all of these places are at liberty to encourage healthy vibrato, even in sopranos, since the combination of youth and technical training safeguards against warble whereas healthy vibrato enriches choral colour, improves tuning, and facilitates a sound which is free, relaxed, and vibrant, a word I have chosen purposefully. Unsurprisingly, across this

country there are many thousands more choral singers who are aging or whose technique is unreliable. Consequently, warble is as equally present in Britain as it is in North American choirs. The question to be asked is whether comparing an average village parish choir with a professional London ensemble is necessarily appropriate or fair.

Historically, the early music revival, which gathered momentum in the 1960s, has influenced both fashion and taste. Vibrato has always been consid-

ered an essential expressive device and its use by singers and players alike is well documented in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theoretical treatises. So, although Baroque string players do not use vibrato continuously with equally wide pitch fluctuation on every note as they might when playing Romantic repertoire on a modern instrument, removing it entirely is an unsuitably extreme and unstylistic interpretation of the sources. By extension, the same is true for singers.

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Nevertheless, it is true to say that when the early music revival began there was an unhealthy fashion for some choral conductors to ask grown women to sing like pre-pubescent boys. This now outdated practice resulted in a vocal production which was artificially straight, constrained, thin, and often sharp (not to mention that it was undoubtedly both psychologically and vocally traumatic for a whole generation of sopranos). Unfortunately this sound was recorded for posterity and widely distributed, since this trend coincided with the invention of CD recordings in the 1980s. Thankfully, now most UK choir directors have outgrown this hazardous practice. At any rate, there have always been plenty of pre-pubescent boys, particularly in Europe, who have sung with vibrato, so it was a flawed constraint from the outset.

Notwithstanding the above refutations of the original misconception, there must be a particular quality that North Americans have perceived in English choral singing (and not just on 1980s recordings), since this characteristic misconception continues to be surprisingly wide-spread. It probably is true to say that the best-known UK choirs' sounds are characterised by unity of purpose and by what is usually called "good blend." Personally, I dislike the word blend in a choral context since it appears to deny choir members the opportunity to make an individual contribution to the overall sound. I know that most of my colleagues who are directors of music would agree with me. Instead, I try to achieve a unified choral sound in my own choirs by encouraging vocal independence and courage. They do, of course, have to listen to each other and cooperate musically. Ensemble of diction, expression, and intent are obviously crucial in order to turn thirty individuals into one musical force, but true vibrato need not – indeed, should not – be checked at the door in order

to achieve these ends. In my experience, this philosophy creates a fresh, colourful, free, well-tuned, and most importantly healthy choral sound to which every singer contributes individually and naturally.

I hope I've managed to refute this particular misconception successfully. If after reading this you still believe that UK choirs never sing with vibrato, do a Google search for videos of one of the UK's finest professional choirs, the BBC

Singers. Tune in next column to find out just how poor an English choir's sight-reading might actually be.



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**MARGIE CAMP** has dedicated herself to ACDA and its mission since she was in 7th grade! As SWACDA Immediate Past President, as well as Conference Program Chair and Treasurer for many years, Margie has worked consistently towards

ACDA's goal of providing choral music to every child. She presented sessions at the 2012 national Children's Choir Conductors Retreat and was an organizer of the inaugural national Middle School/Junior High Conference and the national ACDA Honor Choir in London. Although Margie has held many leadership positions for Colorado and Texas Music Educators Associations, ACDA remains the center of her focus. Margie taught choral music for 30 years, four times as teacher of the year, and retired from Cherry Creek Schools where she was district Music Coordinator. She has served as clinician, adjudicator and director for workshops, contests and honor choirs throughout the United States. She served as Secretary/Treasurer of TCDA and board member of TMEA. Margie received her Bachelor of Music Degree from Trinity University, Master of Music from University of Texas at San Antonio, and Specialist in Education from University of Colorado at Denver. She is Administrative Director and Director of Training Choirs for Young Voices of Colorado. She teaches choral methods and supervises student teachers at Metropolitan State University of Denver. In 2012 she was inducted into the CMEA Hall of Fame.



**TOM T. SHELTON, JR.** is a native of Greensboro, N.C. and a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he earned both a Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Choral Conducting. He is Assistant Professor of Sacred Music

at Westminster Choir College. Shelton has a passion for music education in all areas: church, school, and community. He taught middle school choral music in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County for 18 years. During that time he was selected Teacher of the Year for both Atkins Middle School and Kernersville Middle School. In 1999 the North Carolina Music Educators Association presented him with the North Carolina Middle School Music Teacher of the Year award. Before joining the faculty of Westminster Choir College, Mr. Shelton served as Associate Director of Music for Children and Youth at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, N.C., and as conductor of the Chorale for the Greensboro Youth Chorus.

Shelton has been active with the American Choral Directors Association, serving as a clinician for ACDA and NAFME Conferences in Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. His ACDA leadership positions have included Southern Division President (2011-2012), National R&S Chair for Middle School/Junior High Choirs (2007-2009) and North Carolina President (2005-2007). He currently serves as the New Jersey ACDA R&S Chair for Youth and Student Activities. Choral groups under his direction were invited to perform for the North Carolina Music Educators Conference and the North Carolina ACDA Conference. Mr. Shelton was invited to present the interest session, "Working with Boys in the Middle School Choral Setting," for the 2006 Southern Division ACDA Conference in Charleston, W.V., using his 8th Grade Young Men's Ensemble as the demonstration choir. In February, he will present a session for the 2014 Eastern Division ACDA Conference in Baltimore.

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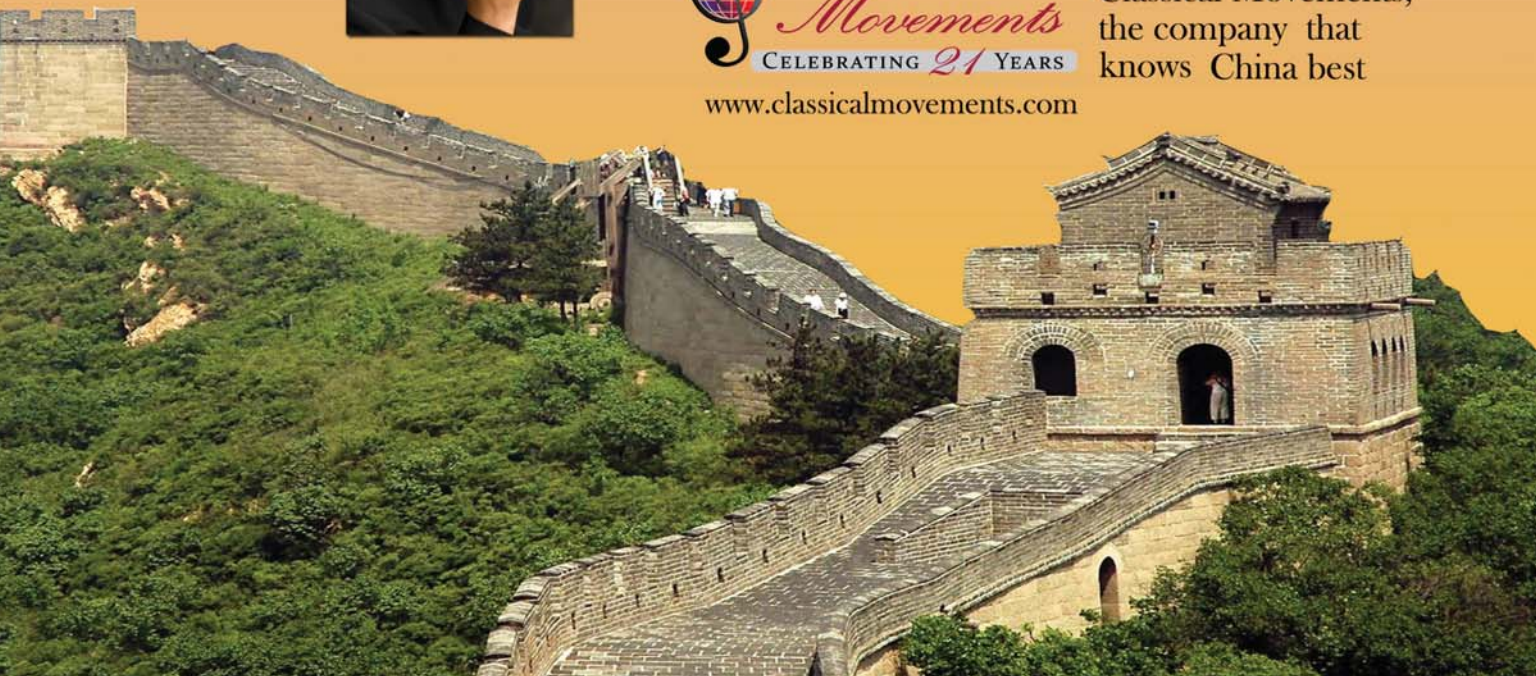
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# Book Reviews

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***Visions of Excellence: A Dialog with the  
Finest Directors from the Barbershop  
Harmony Society***

Joe Cerutti  
Nashville, Tennessee:  
Barbershop Harmony Society  
171 pp.  
\$19.99  
ISBN: Pending (Softcover)

One of our foremost commodities as choral conductors is simple inspiration. Whether that takes the form of a strong bond with our choral students, moving audience members with a particularly powerful setting of poetry, or touching an over-stimulated, media-saturated society with the quiet power of historically valuable music, it is inspiration that keeps the choral art alive and viable year after decade after century.

Inspiration in Joe Cerutti's book, *Visions of Excellence: A Dialogue with the Finest Directors from the Barbershop Harmony Society*, exists on several levels. First is the manner in which Mr. Cerutti was himself inspired as he was crafting the text. In the introduction, he states, "This book is directly modeled after Carole Glenn's *In Quest of Answers: Interviews with American Choral Conductors*, a book that most students of the American choral art have referenced throughout their studies." Like the Glenn work, Cerutti's book is based on the results of an extensive series of interviews with leading choral directors, in this instance within the Barbershop genre.

Each of the book's twenty chapters poses a different question and then shares the answers provided by the

twenty-five directors interviewed. While every question is undoubtedly germane to both the barbershop genre specifically and the choral art in general, Cerutti does not group the questions together through the use of overarching subject areas. This gives the book a warm, organic feel; something far less like a textbook and more like the sort of free-flowing exchange of ideas that commonly take place after hours at an ACDA Conference. While it would be possible to use the book to study a single area of the choral art (such as rehearsal techniques) there is far too much intertwining between the various functions involved in the choral craft for such compartmentalization. Rehearsal strategy is often determined by literature. The literature to be performed informs audition considerations. Singers that are selected through an audition process help to determine rehearsal plans, and so on.

The questions in *Visions of Excellence* explore the choral art from several angles. Cerutti explores the interviewee's thoughts on rehearsal techniques with several questions including, "What general issues are of particular importance in your rehearsal and what techniques do you use to address them?" And, "Describe how your chorus learns new music and what techniques and technologies do you employ to assist your members?" The matter of auditioning singers for an avocational experience can be a challenging matter. Cerutti inquires on that topic asking, "What kind of personal or musical characteristics do you look for in your singers?" Cerutti

also explores issues such as the use of coaches, balancing competition, and trends in barbershop.

Each type of choral music has something of tremendous value to offer the whole of the art form. As such, there is very little in *Visions of Excellence* that is not immediately applicable to every choral conductor. Few among us would not benefit from on-going discussions of blend, rehearsal techniques, audition procedures, ensemble formations, or literature selection. Each of these issues is discussed throughout the text.

Even those few questions that are genre-specific are not exclusionary. In Chapter 18, for instance, the question posed is, "What does barbershop chorus singing offer that you can't get in any other choral or quartet medium?" The answers by the interviewees fell generally into three categories: vertical tuning of chords, ensemble cohesiveness, and life-long avocational singing opportunities. Who in the profession can't identify with that?

While providing useful insights with practicing choral colleagues is obviously the book's intent, offering inspiration to future conductors also appears to be on Cerutti's mind. As in the Glenn text, Cerutti's *Visions of Excellence* poses the question, "What piece of advice would you give aspiring/beginning/struggling directors?" It is perhaps Jim Henry's response that could well serve as a thesis statement for the entire book (or a great dust-jacket quote), "Become a student of the art of music (not just barbershop music), conducting, and leadership. Use every resource to be-

# Book Reviews

come skilled in those three areas. Work on conducting like some people work on their golf swing.”

It seems there are two ways that this book could be approached. It could be read vertically, pondering one chapter and one specific choral topic at a time. Using this method, the reader can compare and contrast 25 different opinions related to a single subject. Another approach would be to read the book in a horizontal fashion, reading only the responses of a single interviewee. In that way, the book functions somewhat like a graduate seminar (or perhaps a conference interest session) with the reader gleaning a single director’s opinion on a variety of choral topics, thus gaining insight into that conductor’s overall methodology. It is in this manner that Mr. Cerutti inspires the reader to consider how they want to use the information

and to tailor their reading accordingly.

Visions of Excellence is not solely a book on Barbershop. It is a book on the intricacies, the techniques, and the delights of leading a choral ensemble.

Scott W. Dorsey  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### *The Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the Choral Rehearsal*

Duane Richard Karna (editor),  
Lanham, Maryland:  
Scarecrow Press, 2010.  
342 pp.  
\$65.00  
ISBN 978-0-8108-8169-3

Scarecrow Press and Duane Richard Karna suggest *The Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the Choral*

*Rehearsal* could revolutionize how conductors teach choirs to master singing foreign repertoire. The volume includes a comprehensive table of contents that boasts covering the diction principles of twenty-seven languages and even more dialects; each chapter is written by an author expert in that language. Though strong in some areas, the volume leaves a number of topics unaddressed, rendering it a useable, though flawed, resource for conductor-teachers.

Conductors will likely be drawn to the book for two things: its overview of many languages and its discourse on how to teach them to singers. In addition to considering languages most common to western choral repertoire, it also covers Romanian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Brazilian Portuguese, Swahili, Basque, Hawaiian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Dutch, Georgian, Swedish, Finnish, Greek, Norwegian, and Polish. This makes it a very attractive resource for the conductor’s shelf. Most helpful are the chapters on ecclesiastical Latin, Hebrew, Norwegian, Russian, and the Baltic languages. Not only do they offer detailed language and diction information, but they also give easy-to-understand instructions to conductors and singers. The ecclesiastical Latin chapter includes a “common errors” section detailing challenges singers often face. Likewise, the Baltic and Norwegian chapters are very detailed, include approximate comparisons to common English words, and give singer-specific notes. The English, German, Spanish, and Swahili chapters are strong for similar reasons. Readers interested in Japanese, Chinese, Hungarian, and Dutch will find these chapters less helpful as they are either difficult to read and understand or contain significantly less instruction to conductors and singers when compared to other chapters.

The volume’s finest chapters are the Hebrew and Russian chapters,



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authored by Ethan Nash and David M. Thomas, respectively. Nash offers helpful distinctions between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Hebrew with accompanying musical examples. In a section titled "The Singing of God's Name," he highlights how to address a topic which can be a sensitive one for observant Jews in either the choir or audience. In the Russian chapter, Thomas highlights pronunciation differences between sacred and secular texts, articulates characteristics of pre-revolutionary Russian texts, and offers an informative "Choral conduc-

tor's prioritized checklist for preparing Russian text." Most importantly, both Nash and Thomas write transparently, thereby reassuring anxious readers that they can effectively teach the diction principles to their choirs.

Conductors hoping for the book to be their primary language resource may be discouraged by its shortcomings, however. The strengths of particular chapters unfortunately highlight the weaknesses of others and the volume's overarching inconsistency. Some chapters draw the reader's attention to

common diction errors and others do not. Are there no common errors in those languages? Some chapters include bibliographies and others do not. Some authors address conductors and singers directly, as one would expect from the book's title. Others barely reference singing at all, offering information no more tailored to choirs than might be found in a general language resource. The Romanian chapter insightfully highlights the oft-overlooked topic of how to properly capitalize repertoire titles in printed programs, yet no other

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# Book Reviews

chapter does. These things, combined with blurry figures, an unclear typeface, and typographical errors leave readers somewhat underwhelmed. Though it does not realize its potential, the volume proves to be a useful starting reference for conductors interested in creating IPA charts for their choirs.

Ryan Kelly,  
West Chester University

## *Renaissance Music for the Choral Conductor: A Practical Guide*

Robert J. Summer  
(Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

In his preface to the book, author Robert J. Summer says that he believes there is less Renaissance music performed these days by high school and university choirs than in the past, and that he hopes the book will encourage people to program this repertoire more frequently. He suggests that incorporating early music into concert programs

allows for a "More balanced approach to the diversity of styles represented in all of the musical periods" (p. xi).

The issue of balance in repertoire is one that frequently arises in relation to programming at ACDA conferences. As recently as the last meeting of the National Board in Oklahoma City in June 2013, it continues to generate discussion. Summer's point is well taken and his purpose could be achieved by anyone inspired by reading this book. It is indeed a "practical guide." Relying on the expertise of musicologists and



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theoreticians, Summer presents a useful guide to approaching music of this time period.

He begins by contextualizing the music concisely, giving excellent historical detail in digestible chunks. All the essential information is provided, without burdening the reader with unnecessary complications. Yet for those of us wishing further details, he provides multiple resources that can be sought out for that purpose. Each chapter topic is developed thoroughly with clear examples and suggestions for listening.

Chapter 5, "Finding a good edition," is especially helpful. Many of us grew up with overly marked scores of madrigals and motets, editions that were, at the time, considered acceptable. Now we know that these are not appropriate. Summer gives us criteria for selecting valid editions. This is especially useful information to share with current undergraduates and early-career teachers who might have had little experience with this kind of repertoire. Likewise, Chapter 6, "Marking the score," gives useful suggestions that are illustrated with examples in Appendix A.

Summer devotes two chapters to rehearsing and conducting the music and offers multiple practical suggestions for teaching in the first. In the second chapter (actually Chapter 8), he emphasizes the folly of trying to apply beat patterns to this music and goes so far as to describe gestures that he uses for five representative compositions. At his point, the reader wishes for a DVD or YouTube link that would demonstrate these ideas, as reading about certain gestures can be a bit cumbersome. Still, if one is patient, it is possible to figure out what he is suggesting. The underlying principle that gesture relates most deeply to text stress is exactly correct.

One Renaissance motet that most of us know as performers or conductors

is Palestrina's "Sicut Cervus," a piece that Paul Salamunovich, one of Robert Summer's mentors, conducted multiple times. Chapter 9 focuses on this work, quoting Mr. Salamunovich extensively on his thoughts about appropriate tone color and phrasing, as well as rehearsal and conducting.

I found Chapter 10, on "The use of instruments in Renaissance vocal music," especially intriguing. Going beyond the now-common knowledge that music of this period holds multiple performance possibilities for singers and instrumentalists both, Summer suggests ways in which modern-day instruments can be used to "capture the spirit and the character of the sounds" (p. 65) of early instruments. For example, he says that winds sounding in the "Upper octaves when doubling or substituting for a vocal

part," give a brighter tone, and suggests several possible instrumental combinations for various pieces. One can envision a varied program of Renaissance music sung, played, or presented in combination rather than simply performed vocally. "Sing we and chant it" (Morley), performed by a combination of voices and instruments, is one such example of how media can be combined, as they might have been originally (p. 65).

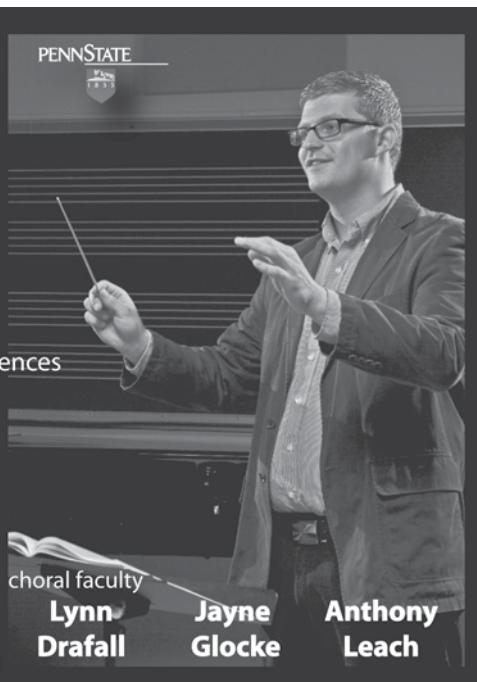
The "Mini-lectures on six master composers" (Chapter 11) is very useful in terms of providing sketches of teaching segments that would be helpful in choral repertory classes, complete with listening suggestions. Composers Josquin, di Lasso, Palestrina, Hassler, Byrd, and Monteverdi represent a cross-section of leading Renaissance figures. Students (and teachers) could develop

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# Book Reviews

similar materials on other composers, using these as models. For the conductor interested in presenting music by these composers, there is an excellent balance of biographical and musical information provided.

Putting knowledge into practice is what makes the music come alive, and Summer inspires readers with a significant section on "Presenting a madrigal dinner;" (Chapter 12) complete with extensive suggestions for all aspects of such an undertaking, including musical aspects, staging, and programming. For groups wishing to add dance to the event, there is an excellent chapter on dance forms of the Renaissance period. Ideally, it would be best to have a dancer involved in this element but reading about it is an inspiration in itself, and would certainly prompt me to envision a madrigal dinner as a multi-arts event. Appendix B provides instrumental music to accompany dancing.

Appendix A has thirteen musical examples, all marked according to Summer's practice. Here one can see not only the way he follows the melodic and thematic threads throughout compositions, but how he marks rhythmic relationships of duple and triple according to text stress. The visual markings are very helpful in terms of highlighting key concepts of this music.

In his foreword to the book, distinguished conductor Dale Warland mentions that he would have appreciated having such a book when he was a graduate student (p. ix). I can say the same, and add that I would have further benefited from having it when teaching a recent graduate seminar in Renaissance choral music. I will certainly recommend it to my students in the future. While the book needs supplementing to stand alone as a graduate level text, it has within it many of the resources to do so as Summer is meticulous about

providing resource information. The selected discography and bibliography are detailed and thorough. Summer's goal is not to set the world of musicology on its heels, but rather to assist choral conductors in making intelligent decisions about Renaissance music and perhaps demystifying it in some respects. That he does, and very well. I highly recommend this book, and commend the author for providing a very useful reference for choral conductors working with school, university, community, and church choirs. This book is well worth reading.

Hilary Apfelstadt,  
Toronto, Canada



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## Recorded Sound Reviews

**Johann Sebastian Bach:**  
**Matthäus-Passion Thomanerchor**  
Gewandhausorchester  
Georg Christoph Biller  
Accentus Music ACC20256  
(2012; 164 min.)  
Available on DVD and Blu-Ray

If any choir in the world can claim ownership over J. S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* it is the St. Thomas Boys Choir of Leipzig. Now more than eight hundred years in existence, Thomanerchor is the ensemble with which Bach himself performed his "Great Passion" on multiple Good Fridays during his life, and St. Thomas Church has undergone numerous restorations and additions over time for the sole purpose of maintaining Bach's sacred music at its highest level. On that alone, this DVD should be considered a must-own for any die-hard fans of the St. Matthew.

The performance was recorded live during Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services in April 2012. Using at least four HD cameras, director Michael Beyer gives viewers a complete sense of the atmosphere at this special event. The Lutheran congregants sit in contemplative prayer, not even craning their necks to see the musicians as they perform the great service. As the camera zooms out, one can appreciate the tiered double-choir loft where the boy sopranos sing the *cantus firmus* spatially separated from the rest of the chorus. Slow, panning shots of the cathedral's red-striped, gothic ceiling and stained glass windows give the impression of a churchgoer's eyes wandering during the

lengthy work. Even the close-ups of the bored, at times tired looks on the boys' faces only add to the overall charm of this presentation.

One could conceivably nitpick certain aspects of the performance, but there would be little point. Virtually everything is as it should be. Three graduates of the Thomanerchor are featured as tenor and alto soloists. Wolfram Lattke's Evangelist is clear and consistent. Stefan Kahle's alto arias are pure and never strained (see No. 6 "Buß und Reu" and No. 39 "Erbarme dich"). As expected, the Thomanerchor prove themselves experts at leaning into dissonances and creating excitement in the *turba* choruses. Each time the choir iterates the chorale tune "O Welt, ich muss dich lassen," the Lutheran message of penitence and atonement rings out with heartbreaking honesty.

Conductors who wish to become adept at performing the later sacred works of Bach would do well to study this video, as the manner in which Georg Christoph Biller deals with accompanied recitative is about as practical as it gets. The boys of Thomanerchor are brought up to sing this music, and having the proud results of this venerable institution available on two discs is a rare treat.

John Guarente  
Miami, Florida

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**Haec Dies: Byrd & the Tudor Revival**  
Choir of Gonville & Caius College,  
Cambridge  
Geoffrey Webber  
Delphian Records DCD34104  
(2012; 70:54)

The "Tudor revival" of the early twentieth century had an invigorating effect on choral music in England. The era saw a fascinating mix of old and new musical elements. Many Renaissance works were resurrected and even discovered, and at the same time, modern composers turned to earlier forms and techniques as models for new works. This release by the Choir of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, explores the relationship between these two bodies of music, juxtaposing Byrd's *Mass for Five Voices* with a group of English works primarily composed between the two world wars. It is a notable addition to the small group of similar recordings, such as New York Polyphony's *Tudor City* (Delphian, 2012) and *In Excelsis* by the Choir of New College, Oxford (Erato, 2003).

Geoffrey Weber summons a warm sound from his ensemble, and it blossoms in the excellent acoustic of the Workshop College Chapel (modeled after Westminster Abbey). Their performance of the *Mass for Five Voices* is commendable. The ensemble effectively employs dynamics, vocal color, and text declamation to highlight the many textural shifts. The juncture between "crucifixus" and "et resurrexit" is handled expertly and with an appropriate dramatic sensibility. Their sound is not without vibrato, and this reviewer much

prefers it to the more driven sound of the Tallis Scholars on *The Three Masses* (Gimell UK, 2001).

Most of the twentieth-century works on this recording are little-known, making this a worthy purchase for one's library. The stirring piece *Eternal Ruler* by William Harris, sung here with fervor, combines a famous melody by Orlando Gibbons with lush harmonies and a soaring soprano melody. Robert Pearsall's *Tu es Petrus* (a later, re-texted version of *Lay a Garland*) is presented with directness and simplicity. The only slightly disappointing moment on this recording occurs during Benjamin Britten's *Hymn to the Virgin*. At the start of the final stanza, the tempo feels rushed and the choir slips too easily through the climax at "*Gratia divina*."

The recording is further enriched by the inclusion of several Tudor Revival-era

organ works, which frame the choral music nicely and provide a fuller picture of the music of the revival. This is a finely crafted recording, the works are thoughtfully chosen and arranged, and the ensemble's performance is polished yet flexible.

Laura Wiebe  
Fairfield, Iowa

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**Otto Nicolai: Herr, auf dich traue ich**  
Kammerchor Stuttgart  
Frieder Bernius  
Carus 83.299 (2012; 50:35)

In this worthwhile recording of choral music by the German composer Otto Nicolai (1810–1849), Frieder Bernius and the Kammerchor Stuttgart present

eight sacred works written between 1834 and 1849, six of them recorded for the first time. Nicolai, best known as an opera composer and as the founding conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic, was also a church musician for most of his professional life, having begun his career in 1833 as organist of the chapel of the Prussian embassy in Rome.

The bulk of the disc is devoted to five psalm settings, each consisting of alternating passages for full chorus and a small group of soloists. Nicolai's lush and romantic harmonic palette is tempered by his frequent use of imitative polyphony, as well as occasional unexpected textures, from aggressively marked homophony in *Psalm 54* to a jaunty aria for solo soprano in the middle of *Psalm 97*. The album also includes the brief *Offertorium in Assumptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Nicolai's only unaccompanied Catholic liturgical composition, as well as *Herr, ich habe lieb*, a gradual motet with some surprising chromaticism amidst its mostly straightforward harmony.

The performances on the recording are uniformly strong, aside from some occasional thinness in the soprano section. The members of the Kammerchor Stuttgart sing expressively, with intensity and flexibility, but at the same time maintain clean intonation and text declamation. The contrast between *solis* and *tutti* sections is not always as dramatic as it could be, largely because of the relatively small size of the twenty-three member chorus. Choral musicians with an interest in early nineteenth-century repertory will find this disc a welcome addition to their collections.

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Claremont, California

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**Life and Breath:  
Choral Works by René Clausen**

Kansas City Chorale  
Charles Bruffy  
Chandos CHSA 5105 (2012; 62:25)

*Life and Breath* contains an eclectic collection of unaccompanied sacred choral works by American composer René Clausen (b. 1953). Masterfully recorded by Charles Bruffy and the Kansas City Chorale, the album pulls together compositions spanning thirty-three years of Clausen's career; a notable inclusion is his newly released *Mass for Double Choir* (2011), commissioned by the Phoenix and Kansas City Chorales. The uniqueness of this album is not only the brilliance of the performance, but more specifically the selections included. Though frequently performed, few of these works can be found in past recordings expressly dedicated to the music of René Clausen. The Kansas City Chorale's stellar performance further solidifies Clausen's rightful prominence in the American choral music landscape.

The recording begins with the well-known *All that Hath Life and Breath Praise Ye the Lord* (1983). Immediately in the opening phrase it becomes evident that the musical sensitivity of Bruffy and the Chorale elevates the exquisiteness of Clausen's compelling music to a high artistic level. The album demonstrates the great variety of characteristics in his music. The twenty-four-voice professional ensemble exhibits considerable flexibility and understanding in accommodating the diverse styles and textures. From the light esoteric passages of *O magnum mysterium* (2009) to the dazzling rhythmic vitality of *The Tyger* (2009) to the familiar flowing lines of *Set Me as a Seal* (1989), the Chorale uses refined vocal colors to communicate unique emotional ideas. This reviewer also found the album's CD notes to be especially insightful in supporting the lis-

tener's understanding of the background and purpose of each work.

In an interview featured on the

Kansas City Chorale's YouTube channel, Clausen himself states that this recording is "performed at such a high level [so as]



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Thomas Lerew  
Syracuse, New York

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***Songs of Innocence and of Experience:  
Music by Gary Higginson***

The Chapel Choir of Selwyn College  
Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir  
Sarah MacDonald, conductor  
Charlotte de Rothschild, soprano  
Danielle Perrett, harp

Regent REGCD381 (2012; 76:49)

Englishman Gary Higginson, composer of over 160 works ranging from string quartets to solo art song, provides us with a sampling of his choral compositions written between 1977 and 2010 in this recently released CD.

The disc begins and ends with two sets titled *Seven Songs of William Blake*. Although the first collection uses a far simpler harmonic palate than the second, both effectively express Blake's poetry through a deft blending of modal

harmonies and dissonant flourishes. "Little Boy Lost," the fourth piece of the second set, provides a special example of Higginson's gift for expressive writing. Undulating melismatic passages combine with jarring dissonance to portray effectively the disparate emotions of a boy once lost and then found.

Higginson wrote *Six Birds* to expand the availability of music for harp and girls' chorus, and the result is another one of the highlights of this disc. The Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir, ages nine to thirteen, sings with a spirited, rich, and



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age-appropriate tone that pairs perfectly with the airy timbres of the harp.

*How Beautiful is the Rain* and *Ceres' Song* provide the best examples of soprano Charlotte de Rothschild's exceptional control and artistry. Danielle Perrett, featured on seven of the tracks, plays the harp with clarity and sensitivity while never obscuring the vocalists.

A lack of clear diction detracts from the overall listening experience, and the Chapel Choir of Selwyn College occasionally sings with a harsh tone in the upper range. Ultimately, however, the choirs' artistically mature performances overshadow these relatively minor concerns.

Higginson offers several quality choral works for consideration which, when paired with the thoughtful performances and sensitive engineering, make this a thoroughly enjoyable and worthwhile recording.

Jeb Mueller  
Houston, Texas

#### **Pärt: Pilgrim's Song**

Chamber Choir Voces Musicales  
Tallinn Sinfonieta  
Risto Joost  
ERP 2309 (2009: 52:23)

It is safe to say that Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (b. 1935) holds a well-deserved position within the choral canon. Through numerous recordings by highly regarded ensembles, as well as in Paul Hillier's exhaustive 1997 book on the composer and his unique compositional method, Pärt's music has received much recognition. The Estonian chamber choir Voces Musicales, under the direction of Risto Joost, furthers Pärt's popularity with this recording.

Recorded by Estonian Broadcasting, *Pilgrim's Song* is a collection of Pärt's

more popular compositions. While Joost's interpretation and understand-

ing of Pärt's musical demands is clearly evident in this recording, the distinc-

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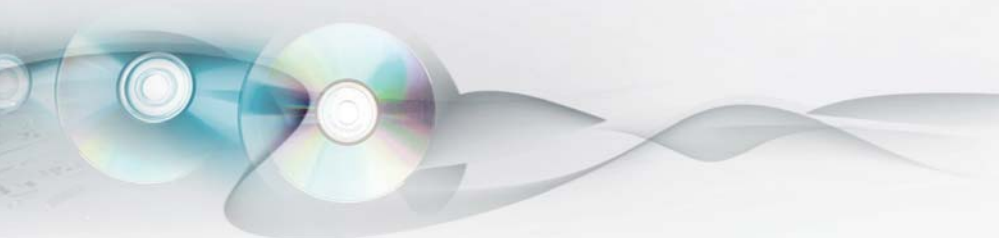
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tiveness of *Pilgrim's Song* comes from Joost's musical selections. His choice of works shows Part's varied compositional techniques and the range of expressive possibilities beyond our usual Euro-quasi-minimalist expectations. Although it does not contain many of his recent works (its latest composition, *Nunc dimittis*, dates from 2001) it is a creative programming of Pärt's musical highlights.

The recording begins with the title work, *Ein Wallfahrtslied* [Pilgrim's Song]. Composed in memory of Estonian film director Grigori Kromanov, with

whom Pärt collaborated on the 1977 film *Brillianty dlya diktatory proletariat*, *Ein Wallfahrtslied* was later arranged in 2001 for male chorus and string orchestra. Although not the earliest composition by Pärt on this recording, it does represent the composer at his most romantic. Joost acknowledges this aspect and emphasizes the sharp, varied articulations and dynamics not commonly found in Part's later *tintinnabuli* style.

Of the five compositions on this recording, *Magnificat* may be the most commonly performed work from Pärt's

canon. Here Chamber ChoirVoces Musicales employs a fuller tone compared to other recordings of this work and, moreover, with other selections on this recording. The result is a performance rich with vocal color that augments the *Magnificat* text's more dramatic moments. However, this timbre and, more specifically, a distinctive vibrato often hinders intonation and does not allow for the appropriate dissonances to "ring" in this highly demanding work.

The following work, *Summa*, has enjoyed more popularity in its later



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reincarnation for string orchestra than its original scoring for small vocal ensemble. Again, the ensemble employs a darker tone in *Summa* than in most recordings of Pärt's music. However, the tone does not effect the intonation or balance in this particular performance. In fact, *Summa* is perhaps the most musically balanced work on the recording; the melodic lines are appropriately balanced with the harmonic voices, thus allowing for a texture that supports Pärt's musically significant dissonances. This sense of ensemble balance is also seen in the final selections, *Nunc dimittis* and the demanding *Te Deum*. Of particular interest is Joost's sensitive handling of silence within these works. The ensemble treats

moments of silence as musical events with an intent and purpose much like the audible moments.

While many excellent recordings of Pärt's music are available, Chamber Choir Voces Musicales' contribution provides a stunning interpretation of one of the most recognized composers in contemporary art music. Moreover, Joost's selections from Pärt's *oeuvre* for *Pilgrim's Song* are varied yet thematically connected. Although stemming from the same composer, each composition is compositionally distinct from the others, providing the listener with an experience that does not wear on the ears. Joost's understanding of Pärt's musical idiom and interpretive gifts are

obvious, but his wisdom and originality in program selection are what make this effort both distinctive and well worth adding to one's library.

Michael Porter  
Boise, Idaho



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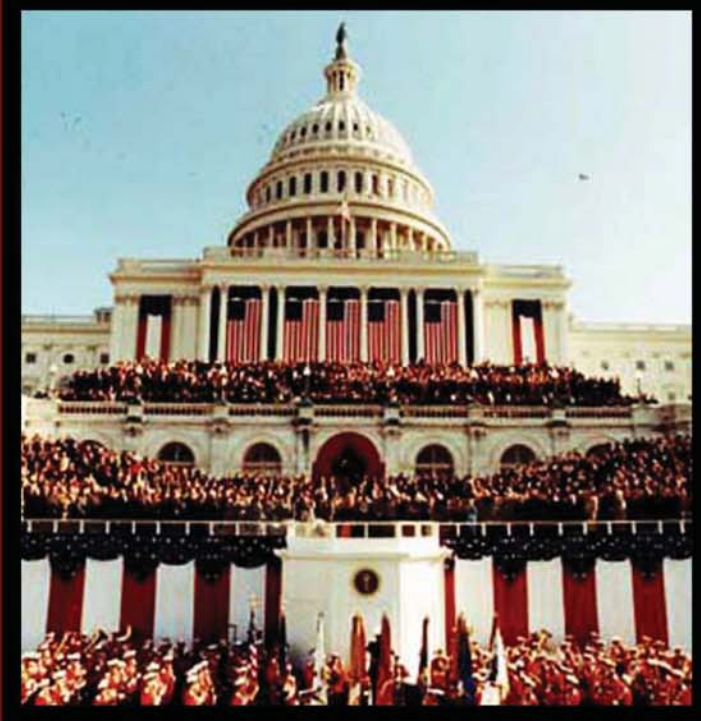
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# Choral Reviews

Steven Grives, editor <[sgrives@depaul.edu](mailto:sgrives@depaul.edu)>

## *Puer Natus Est*

Michael Mendoza (b. 1944)  
SSAA unaccompanied, Latin text



Alliance Music Publications, Inc.,  
AMP0781, \$1.50  
<<http://www.alliancemusic.com/index.cfm>>

Michael Mendoza's *Puer Natus Est* artfully evokes the style of medieval music in a contemporary musical setting. The text is the Introit from the third Mass for Christmas Day and is translated as, "A boy is born to us, and a son is given, whose government is upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called, the Angel of great council" (Translation as it appears in Jeffers, 1988).

Mendoza crafts the piece into five easily discerned sections: Introduction, A, B, C, A1. The introduction is a statement of the chant, *Puer natus est nobis et filius datus est nobis*, voiced for unison sopranos, but it can be easily performed by a confident soloist. The key (F major) and register (primarily a five-note range  $f^4$  to  $c^5$  with a brief melodic lift up to  $f^5$ ) are good compositional choices for creating a fluid line with good intonation for the female voice.

In the next section, the chant moves into the alto voice, an octave lower than the original statement, and is harmo-

nized in three, then four parts. Mendoza generates a non-metered, rocking quality by seamlessly alternating between 2- and 3-beat groupings, moving sopranos and altos at different times and on weak beats, while staying in a written 3/4 meter for ease of reading and counting. This free metrical sense is consistent with the text-driven origins of early chant while at the same time, it creates modern interest both rhythmically and harmonically as overlapping lines and subtle dissonances occur.

The B section (mm. 27–36) is homophonic and contains the most declamatory segment of the piece's text: *Cujus imperium super humerum ejus et vocabitur nomen ejus, magni consilii Angelus*. Written in three parts (soprano 1, soprano 2, altos in unison), the B section is the most harmonically active with excursions out of F major to G minor, E major, C major, G major, A major, and finally, at the point of arrival of this section in m. 36, D major. These changes are brief, chord-to-chord movements but because they are sometimes unexpected to the ear, they may present a challenge to younger ensembles. Dynamically, the section opens at *mezzo forte* and gradually increases to *forte* at the climax in m. 36. It is a strong, bold telling of the text, "Whose government is upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called, the Angel of great council."

In contrast, the C section (mm. 37–48) is a soft, expectant iteration of the Alleluia text, now in 4/4. The upper three voices are harmonized and move in parallel motion over an alto

2 pedal point on  $g^3$ , following its own rhythmic pattern. Rhythmically, this section feels similar to the rocking quality of the A section except that the alto 2 pedal point evokes a subtle, waiting-to-resolve-harmonic tension that keeps the listener engaged. Practically speaking, it is critical to have alto 2 voices that can maintain pitch integrity upon which the rest of the ensemble can depend, especially during this section of the piece where the repeated  $g^3$  can present a challenge to intonation and key centeredness.

The final A1 section returns to *Puer natus est* in F major; but with some noticeable changes from the first A section. Here, there is some alternation between 4/4 and 3/4 meters, a *forte* dynamic throughout, and more homophonic writing than in the original A section. A subtle *ritard* and, one might imply, *diminuendo* at the end bring the piece to rest on an F major chord, sung low in all voices.

*Puer Natus Est* could be successfully performed by younger treble ensembles (provided the altos are comfortable with  $f^3$  and  $g^3$ ) as well as collegiate and professional women's choirs of virtually any size. To be true to the early music/chant style of this piece, singers should have control over their voices to avoid too much vibrato. This piece would work well as a processional and would also be effectively performed surrounding the audience in a sanctuary or concert hall.

Michael Mendoza's *Puer Natus Est* is harmonically beautiful, rhythmically inter-

# Choral Reviews

esting, and textually meaningful. It falls within the category of choral pieces that are achievable without being simplistic and it is worth adding permanently to one's choral library for multiple uses in years to come.

**R&S:** Women's, Senior High School, College and University, Children's and Community Youth.

**Latin pronunciation guide:**

<<http://www.pronunciationguide.info/Latin.html>>

**Latin translations and text background:**

Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire*, vol. 1, *Sacred Latin Texts*, earthsongs, 1988. <<http://www.earthsongschoralmusic.com/catitem.php?seqnum=100289>>

**Programming suggestion:** Christmas; could be paired with other pieces with similar texts, such as *For Unto Us a Child is Born* (Messiah) by G. F. Handel.

Ramona M. Wis  
Naperville, Illinois  
Former President, IL-ACDA

## Little Birch Tree

Russian Folk Song  
Sue E. Bohlin (arr.) (b. 1957; 2007)  
SA, piano, woodblock, and optional cello (2:00)



Santa Barbara Music Publishing  
SBMP 757  
\$1.95

**e-address:** <<http://sbmp.com/SR2.php?CatalogNumber=757>>

**score preview:** <<http://sbmp.com/SR2.php?CatalogNumber=757>> (click on "click here")

**text:** secular, english: source unknown

**R&S:** Ch/Yth, MS

**Keywords:** secular, Russia, folk song, Tchaikovsky, birch, flute, balalaika, E minor, Bohlin

## Summer's Here

Sue E. Bohlin (b. 1957; 2011)  
SSAA and piano (5:00)



Alliance Music Publications AMP 0846,  
\$2.00

**e-address:** <<http://www.alliancemusic.com/product.cfm?iProductID=1031>>

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**text:** secular, english: Sue E. Bohlin and Blake More

**R&S:** Ch/Yth, MS/Jr.H

**Keywords:** secular, summer, rhythmic, Mixolydian, challenge

Sue E. Bohlin is associate conductor and principal accompanist for the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choirs and conducts the Anchor Bay Children's Choir. Her published compositions, including *Little Birch Tree* and *Summer's Here*, are intended for children's choirs and were written for these two specific ensembles.

*Little Birch Tree* is based on a Russian folk tune, the same tune quoted by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky in the fourth movement of his *Symphony No. 4*. Bohlin writes in the program notes that the birch tree is of national significance in Russia, Estonia, and Finland, and that Russians frequently make flutes and balalaikas (both mentioned in the song) out of birch wood. Written in E minor and a primarily strophic form,



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the piece evokes the movement of the birch trees' leaves through a sixteenth-note-patterned *ostinato* in the bass line of the piano and through a shift to 5/8 meter in an inserted bridge section. The two voice parts sing in unison for the majority of the piece, but they sing in canon during the third stanza to represent the flutes and balalaika. A woodblock (Bohlin suggests that finger cymbals may be substituted) plays during the transitions from one section to the next. The optional cello part (available as a free download from the Santa Barbara Music Publishing website) supports the piano accompaniment during the bridge and the fourth stanza. The piece is very accessible for younger singers.

*Summer's Here*, on the other hand, is clearly intended for a more advanced children's choir or a middle-level ensemble. The vocal ranges are fairly extensive for all the voice parts. The piece is rhythmically intricate and challenging for the choir, accompanist, and conductor alike. Though the majority of the piece is written in 6/8 meter, frequent syncopations, subdivisions, feelings of duple meter, and other meter changes nearly eradicate any feeling of a traditional compound meter. The key is primarily A Mixolydian (with a key signature of two sharps), but Bohlin transitions to D Mixolydian and E Mixolydian for several measures before returning to A Mixolydian. The first sopranos divide for seven measures while the altos and second sopranos sing a countermelody, the latter crossing higher than the first sopranos' parts. Despite all the challenges above, however, the piece still captures the carefree days of



summer, especially during the recurring refrain, which happens to be the most straightforward section, both tonally and rhythmically.

**Connections:**

<http://www.piedmontchoirs.org/>

**Performance Links:** (Little Birch Tree) performance by the Ensemble of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, Robert Geary, conductor  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0518NVjX4Xo>>

**Performance Links:** (Summer's Here) performance by the Piedmont Choirs,

Robert Geary, conductor  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeDhWcH6Oko>>

Alexa Doebele  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



## ACDA TREASURE CHEST

### The Little Publication that Could: ACDA Newsletter

by Scott W. Dorsey

From the standpoint of daily research, the *Choral Journal* is frequently the launch-point for those seeking scholarship on virtually every area of concern to the choral conductor. With several thousand articles published in more than 450 issues, the *Choral Journal* is an indispensable tool for choral researchers.

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Each of ACDA's seven divisional and 50 state organizations publishes a newsletter. While they are often used primarily for information and news items with a local flavor, the vast majority of the newsletters also contain feature articles with commentary and pedagogical scholarship that rivals that found in the *Choral Journal*.

Conductors seeking practical teaching ideas can read a small sampling of selected articles from ACDA newsletters through ChorTeach, the Association's online magazine. It is available to ACDA members at <http://acda.org/page.asp?page=chorteach>.

("ACDA Treasure Chest" provides an encapsulated description of some of the remarkable resources available in the Archives of the American Choral Directors Association. The Archive is open to ACDA members without cost. Contact the ACDA National Office to schedule your research visit.)

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