

# Book Reviews

Stephen Town, editor  
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## ***The Choral Director's Cookbook: Insights and Inspired Recipes for Beginners and Experts***

Gumm, Alan (editor)  
Galesville, MD  
Meredith Music Publications, 2006  
126 pp.  
ISBN: 1-57463-078-4 (softcover)  
Meredith Music Publications  
4899 Lerch Creek Ct.  
Galesville, MD 20765  
<www.meredithmusic.com>

## ***Choral Charisma: Singing with Expression***

Carter, Tom  
Santa Barbara, CA:  
Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Inc., 2005/  
revised 2006. 170 pp.  
ISBN: 0-9648071-5-7 (softcover).  
Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Inc.  
(SBMP 572)  
P.O. Box 41003  
Santa Barbara, California 93140  
<www.sbmp.com>

The first book is one in a purported series of appropriately-named volumes for music educators that are rather unusual in their cookbook and recipe presentation of pedagogical topics. As the editor, Alan Gumm, explains in the Foreword, "the idea of collecting easy-to-find and quick-to-read ideas from experts in the field came to [Garwood Whaley, owner of Meredith Music Publications, during] Christmas 2004 as his wife eagerly flipped through a new cookbook" (p. vii). After the initial volume in the series became

a reality with the release of *The Music Director's Cookbook: Creative Recipes for a Successful Program*, Gumm was selected to edit a choral version and fifty-seven choral directors were targeted to contribute "recipes" on topics about which they are passionate. "In cooking terms," Gumm writes, "each recipe represents a *pièce de résistance* for individual authors," whose success as conductors of ensembles of various sizes, types, and voice combinations is "built on outstanding records of performance, conducting, workshop clinics, recordings, research, choral composition, leadership, and teaching" (p. vii). To be sure, the volume is a collection of helpful essays packaged in a clever format, which encourages a front-to-back content examination for subject matter that is needed, or of interest, at the moment.



Any number of examples can be cited—and, indeed, at another sitting or at a later date I might choose others—but the following will suffice: those essays/recipes authored by Lynn Brinckmeyer ("Does Your Verbal Feedback Nurture or Starve Your Students? Food for Thought"), Simon Carrington ("Tasting a Text: The Missing Ingredient"), David N. Childs ("Putting the Zest Back into Intonation: Alternatives to Simmering or Stewing in the Choral Rehearsal"), John M. Cooksey ("Kinesthetics and Movement in the Choral Rehearsal"), Edith A. Copley ("Diction al Dente: Preparing Texts 'To Taste'"), Eric A. Johnson ("Preparing the Mind, Preparing the Ear:

Developing Subvocalization Skill to Improve Intonation"), Diane Loomer ("Creating a Men's Choir in a SATB Town"), Rebecca Reames ("Singers in Motion, or Stirring Up Your Rehearsals"), James Rodde ("Breath, Space, Focus: Choral Tone Supreme"), Z. Randall Stroope ("It Only Takes a Spark . . . to Get a 'Choi-r' Go-ing"), Axel Theimer ("The Perfect Blend: Every Choir Director's Dream and Goal"), Robert Ward ("Do Not Be Deflected from Your Course"), and Susan Williamson ("Growing Pains: The Trials, Tribulations, and Eventual Success of a Recovering Perfectionist").

As is discernible from my examples, the topics range from rehearsal commentary to teacher support, from choral movement to intonation improvement, and from vocal tone to ensemble engagement, to name a few. Lynn Brinckmeyer reminds us that "students will probably not remember missing an accidental in rehearsals but will remember how they felt performing in ensembles. Our goal is to serve students and to guide them on a musical journey. By examining how we impart information to the singers in our choirs, we help build a community that is essential for creating meaningful, musical memories" (p. 9). Robert Ward writes about the need for mentoring new music teachers, many of whom confront feelings of failure because they cannot reach every student. "Where in our process of training music teachers do we communicate to them that they have to reach every student? . . . Lately I have wondered why music teachers assume a greater burden than physicians. Medical students are taught that some illnesses are beyond a physician's power to heal.

Similarly, we senior-level teachers need to do a better job of convincing young teachers that they need not carry the burden of believing that they can, or should, be able to reach all students. Such a belief system is not realistic, it is not healthy, and it will ultimately drive talented teachers from the classroom" (p. 112). Rebecca Reames advocates what many of us already know:

The use of movement activities in choral rehearsals enhances and improves singers' vocal technique, music reading, performance skills, and other behaviors conducive to good singing and performance (such as focus of attention, concentration, and memorization) (p. 80).

Eric A. Johnson offers a specific strategy, "subvocalization," for activating the singer's mind in the process of generating and maintaining pitch. According to him, "subvocalization helps develop and strengthen the connection between the inner ear and the voice and ultimately becomes an empowering tool for lifelong singing" (p. 55). James Rodde centers on choral tone. "When we offer beautiful and

meaningful vocal production," he records, "the listener is 'invited in,' not 'sung at.' And the beautiful sound created by the singers helps generate feelings of pride, unity, and emotional depth within the ensemble" (p. 86). Z. Randall Stroope discusses how to introduce a work to an ensemble.

Directors should consider starting a new piece with the section that, to them, is the most compelling and makes the rest of the piece worth learning and spending countless rehearsals doing the nitty gritty,

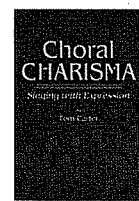
He proposes.

Give students the best first impression, and give them credit for very likely feeling the same draw and basic human angst that the director feels. ... Find the point where the 'fire' starts and move from there ... (p. 103).

If readers are searching for a multi-author volume of salient choral topics, presented in an amusing and concise manner, *The Choral Director's Cookbook* is

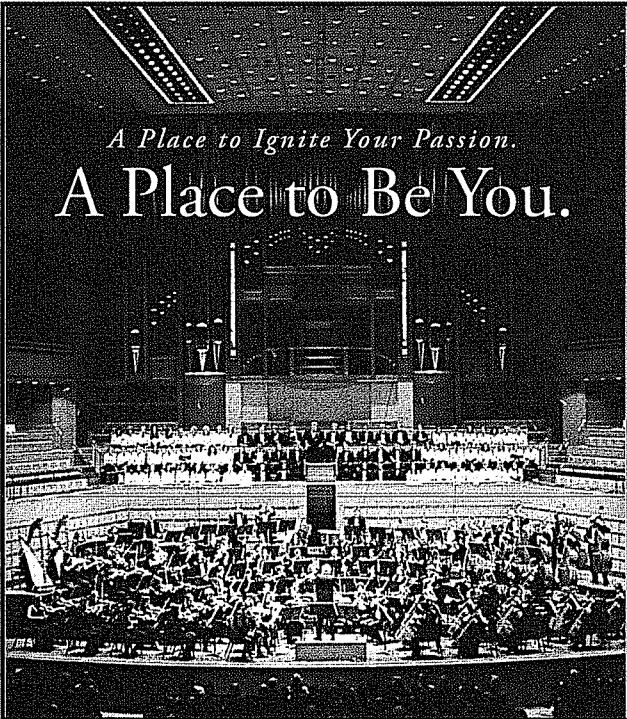
a title to obtain; however, if they desire a single-author book on specific and unique rehearsal techniques that includes an almost comprehensive treatment of the subject matter, then they should consider *Choral Charisma: Singing with Expression* by Tom Carter.

In the latter, the author presents his approach to expressive singing, one that emerged from his extensive background in music and theatre, and describes how it can be implemented. He discusses how directors can create "an atmosphere of safety and security—an atmosphere that supports full expression" (p. vii); yet, whereas the text elucidates a comprehensive approach, "it is a 'friendly' guide, one that [the reader] can hopefully learn from readily but enjoy at the same time" (p. vii).



There are ten chapters and a conclusion, prefaced by acknowledgments, an introduction, a self-test, a dedicatory page, and table of contents; then two appendices, a bibliography, a page documenting permission to quote copyrighted material, recommended sources for further investigation, an index of quoted authors and experts, a large section of exercises, and a biography of the author. The chapters are easy to read and digest, due to their imaginative titles, the sectioning of the subject matter, and the conversational tone, which may be illustrated through an overview of the contents.

"Chapter One: Safety First" considers the following topics: High Expectations; Respect and Support for All; Help Singers Support Each Other; Support the Singers (Earn Their Trust; Avoid Too Much Control; "Discipline" and the Adult Choir; The Language of Empowerment; Expect Them to Do What You Ask); and Director, Support Yourself. Here, sentences of the greatest pertinence are: "Without safety, a choir will never be fully expressive. It's that simple" (p. 2); "If a director treats the singers well, and insists that they treat each other well, the vast majority of singers will feel safe" (p. 4); "Do they obey you



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because you intimidate them? Or do they support you because you respect them?" (p. 13); and, "Your singers will only be responsible if you give them responsibility. They will only be trustworthy if you trust them. They will only support other singers to grow if you help them with their growth. And that can only happen by nurturing and valuing them, not by controlling them" (pp. 13-14).



"Chapter Two: Emotional Vulnerability" examines these issues: What's On Your Mind Is On Your Face; The Science of Emotion (Jump-Start the Emotion; The Truth Lies in Our Faces; The Audience Reads Voices, Too); Connecting to Meaning (The Composer Can't Do It for Us; The House of Connection); The Impact of Connection (Truthful Connection Affects Sound; Face, Voice, and Body; Emphasis and Figurative Language; The Magic Between Choir and Audience); The Singers and Connection (The Joy of Connected Singing; Each Singer's Awesome Responsibility; Dealing with Emotional Overwhelm); The Director and Connection (When Singers Do More; The Director Can Relax; Learning the Music; The Way you Rehearse Is the Way They Perform; The Comfortable Choir; Inhibitions; The Inner Critic; The Inner Critic Questions; Perfectionism and the Inner Critic). Sentences that resonate strongly are the following:

- The audience knows when we are truthfully connecting to the words and the music, and they know when we are faking it.... They know not only by our faces, but also by the sound of our voices" (p. 26 and p. 30);
- Composers help us with all of their structures, but their ability to guide us ends at the printed page. If the singers fail to connect truthfully and meaningfully to the music, the composer's meaning won't make it to the audience.... In such a scenario, a magnificent sounding choir may be Impressive, but it won't be EXpressive (pp. 29-30);

- In order for you to make the most of the choir's potential, it is vital that you incorporate truthful connection principles from day one, and apply them on a consistent and regular basis (p. 41); and,

- When the director strives for musical 'perfection' without giving an equal amount of weight to the humanity underneath, the singers will never be fully expressive. Such a directorial approach stifles most singers' authenticity—they are so concerned

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with being 'perfect' that they don't feel free to risk being human (pp. 44–45).

After a chapter on vocal technique – “Chapter Three: Truth, Tone, & Technique” – the remainder of the book introduces material, chapter by chapter, that will help singers become more expressive: “Chapter Four: Analyze the Text”; “Chapter Five: Plot & Character”; “Chapter Six: Words & Pictures”; “Chapter Seven: The Singer Acts”; “Chapter Eight: Personal Matters”; “Chapter Nine: That’s Nonsense”; and “Chapter Ten: When the Music Changes.” I like Carter’s use of “imagery” and the “seven senses” (p. 73 *passim*)—consider the following: as rehearsals continue “the singers rehearse specific imagery, thoughts, and feelings, they don’t memorize more words” (p. 80); the “fourth wall” (p. 93);

and “interior motivation” in “Chapter Ten: When the Music Changes.” In particular, I appreciate the author’s “composer as architect/singer as builder analogy,” which he uses at different points in his text and imaginatively to conclude chapter seven (see p. 99).

Carter ends by writing:

This is not difficult stuff, when you examine it closely. After all, each of us is human and knows something about singing, and that is really the subject at hand—celebrating the human condition through song. With a little practice connecting to our personal and collective humanity while we sing, we will have new gifts to offer ourselves, each other, and our audiences. We’ll also bring something new to the music (p. 141).

The Gumm and Carter books are recommended unequivocally.

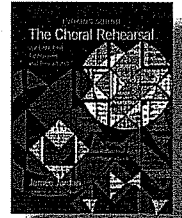
Stephen Town,  
Book Reviews Editor


professional choral ensemble based in Philadelphia that he formed in 2006)—is well known for his many publications; in fact, he has authored ten textbooks and several choral series, as well as four other volumes. *Evoking Sound: The Choral Rehearsal, Volume One: Techniques and Procedures* is his latest book to be released by GIA Publications, Inc. In it, an overview of the rehearsal technique developments of the past twenty-five years is provided, as well as a teaching/rehearsal template that reflects research in the psychology of music learning. “It is my belief that the choral rehearsal should not be a potpourri of rehearsal techniques applied with high levels of energy regardless of the musical situation at hand,” the author writes in the Introduction. “The choral rehearsal should instead be a musical layering process, where the layers of the musical elements of a score are built one element at a time, not moving to the next musical element until the previous element has been learned. In essence, a choral rehearsal, no matter the level or age of the choir, should be an experience of strong pedagogical biases on the part of the conductor” (pp. xxviii). Clarifying the last sentence, Jordan continues:

the conductors who have been the most effective over the decades are those conductors who choose a rehearsal procedure for informed and pedagogically rooted reasons, and adhere doggedly to those principles (p. xxviii).


Then, he goes on to close his Introduction by underscoring this belief and the authorial approach to his new book:

the key for each of us is to be committed to a bias of how to rehearse a choir that is rooted first and foremost in how the choir learns and how we can teach the singers to listen. With these overriding






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***Evoking Sound: The Choral Rehearsal, Volume One: Techniques and Procedures***  
Jordan, James

GIA Publications, Inc., 2007  
483 pp.  
ISBN-13: 978-57999-673-4  
(Hardcover) @ \$39.95  
GIA Publications, Inc. (G-7128)  
7404 S. Mason Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60638  
<www.giamusic.com>

James Jordan, who teaches and conducts at the Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, New Jersey - for twelve years (1993–03) he served as conductor of The Westminster Chapel Choir; now he conducts The Westminster Williamson Voices (one of the select touring and performing choirs that he founded in 2004) and Anam Cara (a twenty-voice

objectives, the choral rehearsal will be transformed into a vital learning experience (p. xxix).

Following the Foreword by Tarik O'Regan, the Acknowledgments, Preface to Volumes 1 and 2, and Introduction, the book is divided into ten parts and 39 chapters – i.e., Part 1: Establishing the Spirit of the Rehearsal; Part 2: Planning and Preparing for Rehearsal; Part 3: Teaching Listening; Part 4: Conducting Gesture as a Rehearsal Technique; Part 5: The Accompanist and the Rehearsal; Part 6: Philosophy of Skill Teaching within the Rehearsal; Part 7: Teaching Rhythm in All Its Dimensions; Part 8: Teaching Artistic Phrasing Through Movement; Part 9: Rehearsal Accountability; and, Part 10: Inward Bound—Summary – and the concomitant Appendices (Appendix A, B, C, D, and E, Bibliography, List of Supplemental Resources, and About the Authors). Some of the subject matter has been presented in other texts by Jordan —e.g., *Evoking Sound: The Choral Warm-Up/Methods, Procedures, Planning, and Core Vocal Exercises* (GIA Publications, Inc., 2005) [see the review in the *Choral Journal*, 46/1: 68–69]—but the remainder is new or reconsidered because of the passage of time and the acquisition of different experience. Five of the chapters and one appendix are the contributions of Jordan's colleagues: "Chapter 16: Prognosticating the Choral Ensemble's Ear" by Matthew J. LaPine, "Chapter 21: The New Role of the Accompanist: From the Perspective of the Accompanist" by Marilyn Shenenberger, "Chapter 29: Teaching Diction" by Amelia Nagoski, "Chapter 33: Using Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the Rehearsal" by Thomas J. Parente, "Chapter 36: Recording a Choral Ensemble in Rehearsal and in Performance" by John C. Baker, and "Appendix A: Quick Study Guide to Choral Ensemble Singing" by Gerald S. Custer.

The beautiful design of the book aids in the process of studying the multitudinous topics, for it is a large volume with pages presenting generously-sized borders on which marginalia may be entered. One feature is a DVD icon that cross-references the material in the text with that on

the companion DVD, *The Choral Rehearsal DVD: Influencing the Choral Ensemble through Gesture, Rehearsal Technique, and Accompanying Technique* (DVD-720); however, please note that the DVD has yet to be released and, therefore, an assessment

of its contents and quality cannot be included in this review. Nevertheless, one can refer to two other DVDs, mentioned by Jordan in the Introduction: *Choral Ensemble Intonation*, filmed in conjunction with the text *Choral Ensemble Intonation*:

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## Book Reviews

*Method, Procedures, and Exercises* by Jordan and Matthew Mehaffey (GIA Publications, Inc., 2001), which demonstrates many of the rehearsal techniques and procedures advocated in the new publication, and *Creating a Masterpiece, Volume 1: The Brahms Requiem* by Robert Shaw (produced by Carnegie Hall and available only through the gift shop in New York), which Jordan labels an "unending resource for study and growth for all conductors" (p. xxxi).

In my opinion, Parts 1, 2, and 7 are the most engaging and helpful, but readers may think that other pedagogical sections are more applicable or stimulating. The chapters are short and the various topics are discussed in a concise and eloquent style ranging from brief paragraphs to a few pages; their titles and subtitles can provide a very good idea of the contents, easing the need to paraphrase all of the material and go beyond the delimitations of the review format. Thus, in Part 1, "Chapter 1: The Psychological Perspective of the Rehearsal" includes "Eye Before Ear: With or Without Text?," "Aware Listening," "Responsibilities of the Rehearsal," "The Larynx Remembers," "The Collective Mentality of the Rehearsal: Abandoning Vocal Responsibility," and "Teaching and Reinforcing Vocal and Aural Awareness." "Chapter 2: Creating an Atmosphere

of Personal Responsibility: Minimize Ensemble Hiding" consists of "Divide and Expose" and "RBWA: Rehearsing by Walking Around." "Chapter 3: Birthing a Piece: Trust in the Process and the People" centers on "The Fragile Dynamic of the Rehearsal," "How Do Choirs Learn?," "Realizing the Different Musical Voices of Every Ensemble," and "Giving Up Ownership of the Music." "Chapter 4: Approaching Choirs in Rehearsal: Different Strategies for Different Choirs?" focuses on "Confidence," "Care," "Affirmation," "Belief," "Trust," "Process," and "Patience." "Chapter 5: Rehearsing a Choral Ensemble vs. an Instrumental Ensemble: Common Ground?" considers "Core is the Same," "Realizing the Worlds of Texture and Articulation," and "Realizing the World of Sound."

In Part 2: Planning and Preparing for Rehearsal, "Chapter 6: Choosing a Rehearsal Paradigm and Establishing a Rehearsal Method: System is Comfort" discusses "Score Study System" and "Systems of Score Analysis." As an aphorism, "system is comfort" reminds us that the most effective rehearsal techniques are those that are highly systematic and sequential, and it represents the many succinct formulations of Jordan that make his prose so attractive and memorable. "Chapter 7: Communication as Rehearsal Technique" is a compilation of choice words to employ within rehearsals. "Chapter 8: Layered Rehearsing" enumerates the levels of a rehearsal that the author will flesh out in Chapter 11 (i.e., (1.) Determine vocal requirements of the piece; (2.) Establish the context for aware listening; (3.) Mark the score; (4.) Sound the harmonic structure before singing; (5.) Introduce modality with an aural immersion exercise; and, (6.) Initially sound the score using appropriate neutral syllable without text and provide alternating dominant in upper tessitura that reinforces "tonality of the moment"). "Chapter 9: Setting the Stage in the Rehearsal Room: The Acoustical Foundation of Rehearsal" treats the various seating and standing formations for choral ensembles that were detailed in *Evoking Sound: The Choral Warm-Up* (Jordan prefers the concept of choral

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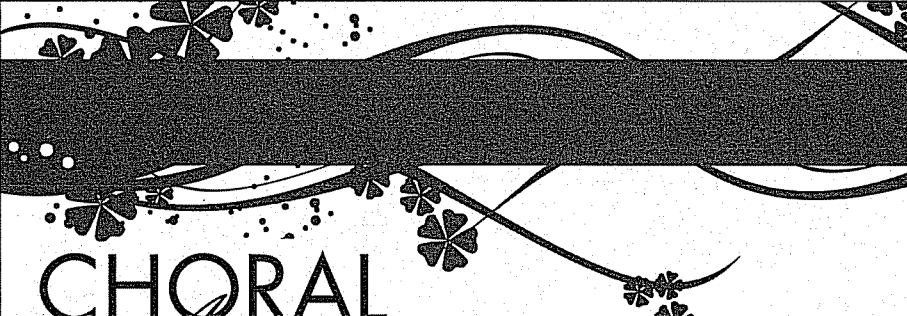
seating by Weston Noble), and "Chapter 10: The Choral Warm-Up: Make Ready the Voice" reiterates Jordan's fourteen pedagogical cardinal rules for executing warm-ups; these were amplified extensively in the previously-cited volume.

"Chapter 11: Sounding a Piece: An Overview of Teaching Strategies" is one of the longer chapters in the text and, perhaps, is its pedagogical core. It addresses a number of subjects: "Rote Teaching and Music Literacy for Choirs" and "Conducting vs. Teaching/Rehearsing" are considered initially. Then, in "An Overall Plan for Introducing a Piece," Jordan broaches those issues, bulleted in the text rather than numbered, which he believes must be addressed with every choir when examining a new piece:

- Use conducting gesture that provides the correct signals to the choir;
- Maintain a consistent tempo and resting tone to establish the choir's readiness for hearing;
- Allow the choir to absorb the harmonic language by rote: consider rehearsing the work at a slower tempo;
- Impart the shape and forward movement of the work: establish the movement of air early in the rehearsal process;
- Use count singing that teaches one layer of musical element at a time;
- Use neutral syllables to teach the musical elements of a piece;
- Be aware of the proper production of the vowels that will influence intonation; and,
- When using count singing or neutral syllable singing, make certain the choir is counting with an emphasis upon correct attack and correct rhythm—do not be concerned about sustainment; teach the notes and the rhythms first.

Subsequently, we find "Readiness for Hearing: Consistent Tempo and Resting Tone," "Harmonic Language Immersion," "Shape and Forward Movement of the Work," and "Exact Attack and Exact Pitch." "Using Count Singing" follows these sections, and here Jordan outlines the method


in this manner: (1.) On initial readings, count sing at a low dynamic level (*sotto voce*), minimizing vibrato and vocal color; (2.) Insist that the choir count with an exact particularity; (3.) When correct pitch and correct rhythm have been established, add the appropriate dynamic levels, but still



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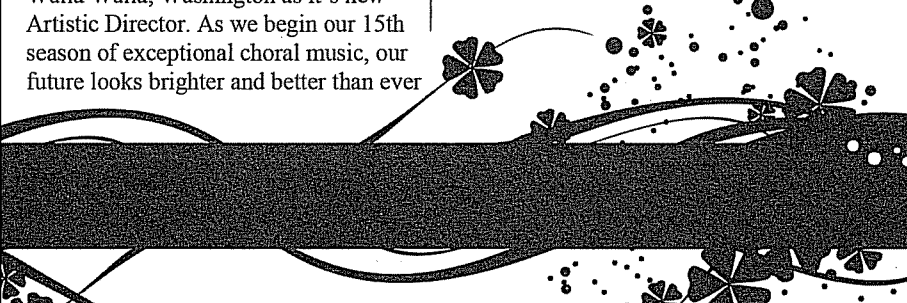
**March 14, 15:**  
*Bach's St John Passion*

Members of the Seattle Baroque Orchestra will join Choral Arts for a performance of this great choral/orchestral work. Tenor Ross Hauck (Seattle) will sing the role of the Evangelist and Bass David Farwig (Denver) will sing the role of Jesus.

**May 2, 3:**  
*A Letter to the World: Settings of Dickinson and Thoreau*

Featuring works by Donald Grantham, Raymond Schroyens, William Hawley, Jake Heggie (NW Consortium commission), an Emily Dickinson sing-along and *Walden Pond* by Dominick Argento for chorus, three cellos and harp.

For more about Robert Bode and our upcoming 2007-2008 season, visit Choral Arts' website at <http://www.choral-arts.org>.



minimize vibrato and maintain the count singing syllable; and (4.) When the singers perform the correct pitch and rhythm in conjunction with the dynamics, then add vibrato to the sound). Next, the author cautions with "Personal Commitment

Toward Good Intonation" and "Neutral Syllables." About the latter, Jordan's rules to consider are: (1.) Rehearse only on pure vowels—no diphthongs!; (2.) Be careful with the choice of vowel sounds when all voice parts move into extreme

high and low ranges; (3.) Choose a consonant to precede the vowel that reflects the rhythmic spirit of the piece and that will assist with correct vocal production on the sound for a particular period; (4.) When in doubt about what vowel to choose, select "o," "ee," or the German "ü"; (5.) Be vigilant about the tongue vowels, "ee" and "eh"; (6.) Avoid the "ah" vowel!.

Then, we encounter "Choosing a Vowel for Rehearsing," "Choosing Consonants for Rehearsing: Reflecting Music Style," and "Correcting Pitch and Rhythm Problems." "Adding Text" features another of the lists that are frequent in Jordan's writings; here, the author believes one should adopt the following sequence: (1.) Speak the text slowly to make sure basic vowel sounds are in agreement; (2.) Whisper the text in rhythm to make sure consonants are of the desired length; (3.) Speak the text in an exaggerated "Julia Child voice," with heightened speech, in the choir's middle to upper register; (4.) Speak the text with sustained speech; (5.) Chant the text in a regular metric style; (6.) Remind the choir to sing through each vowel sound; (7.) Regardless of the style of the work, rehearse the work staccato; (8.) Be certain to observe the schwa; (9.) Sing the work as written; and (10.) Be aware of Americanisms. "Open vs. Closed Vowels for Better Choral Ensemble" concludes the chapter.

The subject of count singing was broached in the foregoing paragraph, but it is addressed again in Part 7 ("Chapter 25: The Count Singing System of Robert Shaw). There, Jordan enumerates the Shaw count singing rules: (1.) Always count at a piano dynamic; (2.) Count with particularity; (3.) Maintain an absolute consistent tempo; (4.) Count singing propels musical line; (5.) Count singing allows for the ensemble to experience, in context, the various vertical elements of the musical score; and (6.) Count singing must be done with energy. Along with count singing, Jordan believes one should employ pulsing, which is the topic of the subsequent chapter ("Chapter 26: Pulsing: A Multifaceted Rehearsal Technique"). "By definition, pulsing is the singing of a work as it is written, but with text



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and with a constant rhythmic subdivision, preferably the microbeat (e.g., if a piece moves in quarter notes, the choir would pulse eighth notes)" (p. 257). According to Jordan, pulsing does the following: (1.) Reinforces rhythmic pulse through reiterated subdivision with text; (2.) Clarifies and energizes the attack at the start of each phrase; (3.) Reinforces rhythmic ensemble breathing; (4.) Promotes constant vowel awareness; (5.) Teaches and reinforces the re-singing of each vowel on melismatic passages; (6.) Energizes and clarifies the vowel on sustained pitches; (7.) Builds into the choral texture and "fabric" forward-moving musical line; (8.) Teaches the choir to constantly re-sing the vowel, especially on sustained pitches; (9.) Clarifies the rhythmic placement of consonants; (10.) Clarifies choral homophonic singing; (11.) Reinforces good ensemble intonation; (12.) Clarifies the endings of musical phrases through energized releases; and (13.) Teaches individual responsibility for singing a musical line.

One additional chapter should be mentioned, although it is placed in Part 10: "Chapter 39: Introduction to Volume Two: Inward Bound." It serves to promote *The Choral Rehearsal, Volume Two: Inward Bound: Philosophy and Score Preparation*, which will be published shortly. Whereas volume one "attempted to detail a broad range of rehearsal techniques . . .," the intent of volume two "is to introduce and familiarize conductors with various approaches to score study and analysis" (p. 387). Hence, it will include chapters on the score analysis of Frauke Haasemann, Julius Herford, and Margaret Hillis; a system of phrase analysis

that combines the note grouping ideas of Marcel Tabiteau with the "day-tay" system of Weston Noble; and, a form of analysis based upon the shape movement system of Rudolf von Laban.

In my review of Jordan's 2005 publication, *Evoking Sound: the Choral Warm-Up* (mentioned above), I wrote that "conductors at various stages of their careers will find the book appealing: it can be used as a choral methods text; it will be welcomed by beginning teachers; and even veterans may replenish their choral pedagogy with ideas and materials as systematized by Jordan." That is certainly an evaluation that can be applied to Jordan's new book. *Evoking Sound: The Choral Rehearsal, Volume One: Techniques and Procedures* is highly recommended.

Stephen Town,  
Book Reviews Editor

**Charles Faulkner Bryan:  
His Life and Music**

Livingston, Carolyn  
Knoxville: The University  
of Tennessee Press, 2003  
368 pages  
\$38.00.  
ISBN-10: 1572332204 (Hardcover)  
<[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)>


Carolyn Livingston has written the definitive biography of Tennessee musician Charles Faulkner Bryan (1911–55). Her book is a carefully researched, detailed

account of Bryan, who was a well-rounded music educator, choral conductor, voice teacher, singer, composer, and folk music expert. Bryan not only performed folk music himself but also studied it in depth, wrote articles and pamphlets about it, and promoted its use in music classrooms.

Livingston researched Bryan extensively, using both primary and secondary sources, and the strength of this book is the quality and depth of her research. She interviewed many of Bryan's family members (including his wife Edith) and former students, and studied the archive of his music and papers which is housed in the library at Tennessee Technical University in Cookeville, Tennessee. (For a brief description of the archive, visit <[www.tntech.edu/library/archives/collectionDescription.asp](http://www.tntech.edu/library/archives/collectionDescription.asp)>) Livingston uses over 100 footnotes in each of the book's 8 chapters, and the 12-page bibliography of interviews, books, and articles is similarly comprehensive. The author also included two complete lists of Bryan's musical compositions as appendices; one is organized by genre (and within genre, chronologically), and another list of works is arranged alphabetically by title. The latter list is also annotated.

Charles Bryan's short life was defined by his passion for music and music education, and Livingston argues that it was significant particularly for two reasons: his promotion of folk music (and its use in the classroom) and his compositional career. Bryan espoused the use of folk materials






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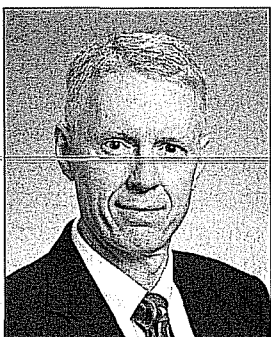




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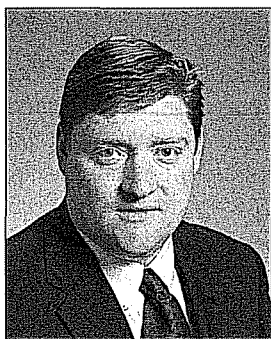
is pleased to announce  
two appointments  
to the choral faculty



**Dr. Robert Greenlee**

Director of Choral Activities and  
Director of the Graduate Choral Division  
BM and MM - University of Oklahoma  
DM - Indiana University

Dr. Robert (Robby) Greenlee is coming home after 25 years in Maine, where he was Professor and Chair of the Music Department at Bowdoin College and conductor of the Bowdoin Chamber Choir. He has been active as a professional singer, keyboardist, author of articles on performance practice, and composer of published choral, keyboard, and chamber music.



**Dr. Mark Lucas**

Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education; Associate Director of Choral Activities; Director of the University of Oklahoma Choir and of the OU Men's Choir  
BM - Bethany College, Lindsborg Kansas  
MM - University of Oklahoma  
PhD - University of Oklahoma

Dr. Mark Lucas is the founder of the Young Men's Vocal Workshop at the University of Oklahoma, which in January 2007 hosted over 600 young men in concert.

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as a method of teaching cultural literacy and musicianship simultaneously. He used both folk melodies and folk instruments in his general music classes, and interpolated the indigenous music of Appalachia into his compositions as well.

Bryan was active as a composer throughout his life, and in 1944 was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to study composition with Paul Hindemith. The majority of Bryan's compositions are choral, but he also wrote solo songs, instrumental pieces, and a number of stage works. In 1947, Bryan's cantata *The Bell Witch* was premiered in Carnegie Hall, with Robert Shaw conducting performers from the Juilliard School of Music. According to Livingston, Bryan's three-movement instrumental piece *White Spiritual Symphony* (1937-39) was the first symphony ever written that was based on white spirituals. Further, when the piece was played by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (Eugene Goossens, conductor) in 1942, Bryan also became the first Tennessee composer to have his work played by a major symphony orchestra.

Though Bryan is a fairly obscure figure (especially for those of us who do not live

in Tennessee), he did compose one well-known choral piece that is still in use today, *Charlottown*. Livingston refers to this piece as an "African American secular folksong" (p. 90). The piece is accessible, unaccompanied and still occasionally appears on concert programs. Originally published by J. Fischer in 1943, the copyright has now passed to Alfred Publishing, and the piece is in print in SATB and SSA voicings.

This excellent book has a few minor flaws. One is Livingston's occasional predilection for narrative, blow-by-blow descriptions of Bryan's music, including time and key signatures, key changes, explanations of which voice parts are given the melody, etc. Without the printed music these accounts are of little value; score excerpts would have been much more informative. (There are 17 musical examples in the book but narrative descriptions also appear when describing compositions not accompanied by musical examples.) Additionally, Livingston's passion for Bryan's music and life often seems overly flattering. She compares his work in music education to Kodaly and Orff and associates his compositional oeuvre with that of more successful composers such as Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, and John Jacob Niles. Bryan is not mentioned in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and with only one piece in print, he certainly remains a fairly minor figure. Livingston may be valid in arguing that Bryan's work is worthy of more attention, but the aforementioned comparisons drift toward idolization and do not seem to be defensible.

Nonetheless, these minor blemishes do not change the fact that this is a successful, readable, and exceedingly detailed biography of Charles Faulkner Bryan, "Tennessee's first composer of art music."

Kurt Runestad  
Crete, Nebraska

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