

The background is a deep teal color. On the left, there is a large, stylized graphic of a sun or moon with a spiral pattern in shades of orange and red. On the right, there are several autumn leaves in shades of orange and yellow. At the bottom, there is a dense pattern of white musical notes and symbols, including a large treble clef, a bass clef, and various note heads and stems.

ANTIPHON

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARIZONA CHAPTER
of the AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

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LEADERSHIP

2 AzACDA Leadership

LETTERS

4 From the President

5 From the Editor

ARTICLES

6 Membership Milestones

9 **Re-Writing History: Curriculum Redesign for 21st-Century Conductors**
Dr. Elizabeth Schauer

12 **Narrative Programming An Elusive but Worthy Goal**
Dr. Daniel David Black

14 **Wow! You Are SO Talented!**
Chris Granger

15 **A Conversation with Dr. Ryan Holder, Associate Director of Choral Studies at Northern Arizona University**
Christina Hall

18 **Dr. Ryan Holder's Recommendations for High School Vocal Jazz**
Katherine Rosenfeld

CHORAL REVIEWS

19 **Christian Church Choirs**
W. Aaron Rice

ADVERTISERS INDEX

11 The University of Arizona Undergraduate Programs (Music)

20 Robert Ashbaugh Digital Design & Imaging



From the President:



Katie Gerrich
AzACDA President
president@azacda.org

Dear AzACDA Friends and Colleagues,

I am extremely excited to serve as your AzACDA President for 2023-2025! For those whom I have not yet met, my name is Katie Gerrich, and I have taught secondary choral music in Tempe for 22 years. I am the Director of Choirs at McClintock High School, where I have taught for the past 19 years. I truly love what I do, and a large part of that is the amazing connections I have made with fellow directors through ACDA.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to interact with so many wonderful people throughout our state and beyond who share the passion for ACDA and choral music! I believe our organization is life-changing for students and directors alike. The opportunities and relationships that are fostered through choral music are the best things in the world!

As I begin my presidency, I am eternally grateful for the kind-hearted servant leaders who have led before me. **Ted Gibson, Aimee Stewart, and Ryan Holder** have all continued to provide me wonderful guidance and support. In addition to those three, I am grateful to be able to work with a large board of amazing professionals who are dedicated to our state's choral community.

As President, I look forward to increasing Arizona's sense of togetherness—and reaching to all parts of our state—throughout this year and beyond. I also aim to uplift those who are new to the choral profession by hearing their needs and connecting them with those who have experience and passion to share.. Whether through a social hour, a conference or a chat, I look forward to authentic connections and conversations.

As we enter the holiday season, running from rehearsal to concert and back again, know that we are here for each other. I wish you a beautiful year of music making and connections with your singers and your community. ☰

Sincerely,

Katie Gerrich
President, AzACDA
President@AzACDA.org



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FROM THE EDITOR



W. Aaron Rice
AzACDA Antiphon
Editor
Director of Music
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Hello readers!

And thank you for tuning in for another issue of *Antiphon*, the AzACDA newsletter to connect and inform Arizona's choral conductors, singers, and enthusiasts. There's so much to read about in this issue from DEI initiatives to jazz! *Jazz hands*

In this issue, we take a moment to celebrate the many Arizonans who are celebrating milestone years of consecutive membership in ACDA, so I hope you will read what they have to say about the importance of our wonderful organization in their lives and careers. Maybe you'll see someone you recognize and take the opportunity to reconnect!

Dr. Elizabeth Schauer gives us a detailed look at her intentional re-design of her curriculum for graduate-level choral repertoire coursework. She goes into detail about the work she and her students have done to provide resources for you and anyone else who is looking to broaden their musical horizons beyond the traditions of Western choral education's past.

Dr. Daniel David Black offers insight into some strategies that may help with your programming efforts. Maybe you'll find a great option for a new concert program style you haven't yet tried.

Chris Granger offers a critical examination of a common compliment to many artists. He challenges the focus on talent above the hard work, determination, and practice it takes to refine that talent into truly great skill. It has inspired me to be intentional about my language in response to a particularly moving performance.

Christina Hall has recorded a wonderful conversation with NAU's Dr. Ryan Holder about the history of the Jazz Mad Festival. Dr. Holder offers some suggestions for anyone looking to venture into the musical world of vocal jazz as well as a long list of repertoire recommendations for both the experienced and novice jazz ensemble.

Close out this issue with some recommended repertoire for Christian Church Choirs from yours truly, and I think we have a wonderful issue to share with you this season. As always, please reach out to me if you have any thoughts, research, or insights you would like to share with your fellow ACDA members in Arizona. We love hearing back from our readers! ☰

Long days and pleasant nights,

W. Aaron Rice, DMA
Antiphon Editor
Antiphon@AzACDA.org

Membership Milestones

35-Year Members

“ACDA continues to inform, educate and inspire me to strive to be the best choral music educator and conductor I can be for our singers as we continue to make music together.”

— Kieth Koster (Tucson, AZ)



— Linda Spevacek (Phoenix, AZ)



“The American Choral Directors Association has played an important role throughout my entire choral-music career. It has been a privilege to serve as AZACDA’s website manager for most of this century, supporting the work of the excellent chapter officers!”

— David Topping (Phoenix, AZ)

25-Year Members



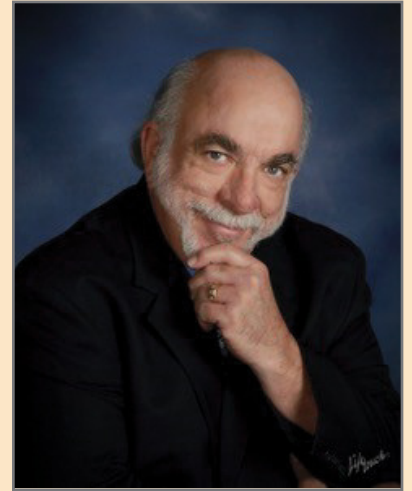
“ACDA was introduced to me in my undergraduate studies at the University of Arizona. I attended my first conference and was blown away! My musical world opened, and helped me in my journey as the choral director and educator I am today.”

— Wendy Umbrianna (Chandler, AZ)

20-Year Members

“AzACDA has given me the opportunity to re-learn a lot of things I have perhaps forgotten since college and to meet colleagues, mentors and students that have increased the shared experience I’ve gained in Choral Music. Thank you!!”

— Douglas J. Benton (Gold Canyon, AZ)



15-Year Members



“ACDA is a supportive community of colleagues who continuously encourage, inspire, and amaze me as they expand the possibilities and wonders of our profession.”

— Gideon Burrows (Thatcher, AZ)

“In a sometimes isolating career, ACDA has been a place of inspiration, collaboration, networking and friendshipping, community, learning, and growth. I am so grateful to be part of this organization!”

— Aimee Stewart (Chandler, AZ)



10-Year Members

"After teaching elementary music for 20 years, I was ready for more. More knowledge, more connections, and more opportunities. I joined ACDA and this organization has provided me with all of those things!"

— Jennifer Pearce (Chandler, AZ)



"ACDA means expansion, connection, and a place of simultaneous belonging and growth."

— Natalie Hall (Tucson, AZ)

"ACDA helps me building networks which helps and guides throughout my teaching career. I am very grateful for this networking opportunity."

— Andie Chung Graham (Phoenix, AZ)



— Marilee Decker

5-Year Members

Brandi Dignum

Brooke Durborow

Jessica Elder

Kaitlyn Fahrendorf

Barbara Freund

Katie Gerrich

Geoff Hutter

Heidi Johnson

Melissa Sassaman

Ben Shafer

Cheryl Tucker

Re-Writing History: Curriculum Redesign for 21st-Century Conductors

By Dr. Elizabeth Schauer
Director of Choral Activities at The University of Arizona

In the fall semester of 2020, graduate choral conducting majors at the University of Arizona embarked on an educational journey that featured a new curriculum including study of historical and contemporary works by women and BIPOC composers, and from a variety of religious and cultural traditions, alongside music that has been part of traditional courses of study. This new curriculum went well beyond a commitment to diversity and inclusion in concert programming, embedding the historically excluded composers and genres into the educational fabric. This has been a rich and rewarding journey for the students and me, and I am very grateful to Antiphon Editor Aaron Rice for the invitation to share about it.

The preparatory research itself was highly illuminating, with traditional references and resources woefully lacking in information and works lists, if female and BIPOC composers were included at all. In this process I was grateful for the help and scholarship of many wonderful people in the musical world, who have expertise in areas unfamiliar to me and who were incredibly generous and supportive. Ultimately the result was four newly designed semesters featuring a compelling balance of traditional and newly included repertoire and composers.

The students have been partners in the process of implementing the curriculum. They engage enthusiastically and with determination in the work required, and the process of finding resources and scores has been considerably more challenging than in previous semesters. A wonderful result of this is that the students have become more thoughtful, profound,



tenacious and creative scholars. Assessments at the end of each semester have revealed that over a third of the genres, works and composers are new to each cohort of students. Additionally, recital repertoire requirements for the conductors ensure that each student will have hands-on experience with this music on the podium as well.

The graduate students have begun to take their new knowledge and research out into the choral community in impactful and significant ways: UA students have been invited to guest-lecture in the graduate programs of other universities; they have presented their research for the regional and national poster sessions of ACDA conferences and in other national and international venues; and doctoral students are drawing from the newly incorporated repertoire for their lecture-recitals and dissertations. Recent projects have included the first published edition of a mass by the Viennese Classical composer Marianna Martines; new free editions of works by historically excluded composers, a dissertation on the monumental work *Light of the East*, by contemporary female Korean composer Byung-Hee Oh (including the first published biography), and a dissertation on the ground-breaking work *Balintawak: Misang Pilipino* by Filipino composer Abdon Bonifacio.

Two other parallel initiatives are an outgrowth of this curricular redesign. First, the University of Arizona Choral Studies Distinguished Speakers Series (DSS) was created as a resource for use in our courses, but it is also freely available to all. This online series features engaging lectures on historical and contemporary repertoire composed by historically excluded

populations, and on relevant movements and traditions not typically included in the choral curriculum. When possible, content-area specialists are from the same populations as the topic on which they are presenting. The series also features a second tier with lectures by current students and alums of the UA graduate choral program who have been invited based on exceptional scholarship on the topics presented. This series currently includes 15 lectures with four more on the way, and may be found here:

<https://choral.music.arizona.edu/distinguished-speakers-series>

The second outgrowth is the University of Arizona DEI Choral Literature Intensive, which is a three-day summer program designed to share this content, especially with practicing professionals who did not have this as part of their education. The first of a five-year rotation of this event occurred in June 2023. It featured lectures on ten historically excluded composers, and reading sessions of 20 works by them, as well as the opportunity for attendees to engage with their cohort members during social activities and shared meals in Tucson—a UNESCO City of Gastronomy. Graduate students were among the featured lecturers for this event.

My desire in all of these initiatives is to create immediate,

large-scale change in the choral world. As the students begin their teaching careers following graduation, they will be equipped to teach the next generation in a new way. The DSS gives all teachers free access to lectures by specialists that can be used as course content in their high school, undergraduate and graduate classes. These lectures also can be used for free (and enjoyable) professional development for teachers on their own time. The UA DEI Choral Literature Intensive provides the opportunity for non-students (and students) to form cohorts to learn about and sing this music together, so they are armed with knowledge and resources to integrate it into the classroom and into their concert programming. Finally, I have made information about the four-semester course sequence freely available to college educators wishing to restructure their own curricula (including through an interest session at the 2022 Western ACDA Conference). This transformative journey has been arduous, with moments of shame and anger about the past, as well as hope and joy for the possibility of a different future. It has been an inspiring process of coalescing the energies of numerous dedicated and delightful scholars, past and present, to answer the long-overdue call to do better—to amplify and celebrate all the voices that make up our musical family throughout the world and throughout time. ≡





Dr. Jeff Vanderlee
Choral Conducting Faculty

Dr. Elizabeth Schauer
Director of Choral Activities

Dr. M. Nicole Davis
Associate Director of Choral Activities

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Narrative Programming An Elusive but Worthy Goal

By Dr. Daniel David Black

Director of Choral Activities at
Houghton University

Successful choral conductors possess a wide variety of skills: clear gesture, verbal communication, effective rehearsal techniques, thorough score analysis, the ability to work with different kinds of choirs, a knowledge of vocal and instrumental techniques, transpositions, foreign language pronunciation, knowledge of historical performance practice, inspiring leadership qualities—the list goes on. Audiences, however, experience most of those conductor skills indirectly because they are always mediated through the performances of the ensembles they hear.

When conductors interface with their audiences in concerts, however, they can make direct contact through the vehicle of their programming choices. By analogy, part of a museum curator's craft can be found in their selection of certain works of art, their placement of them in a particular order, and their attention to the viewer's experience through tools like writing, exhibit decor, and even the crafting of foot traffic flow. Similarly, a conductor's craft can be experienced through the careful selection of works. The programming ideas I have included below are designed to help you educate, enrich, and enliven your audiences, ultimately leaving them wanting more.

Too many variables!

First, a caveat. Programming is difficult! There are so many variables to take into consideration. How long is the rehearsal interval? What are the performing forces? Are all the parts even covered? Are all the vocal or instrumental sections of equal ability? Are there too many fast pieces? Too many slow pieces? Too many major or minor pieces? What is in the music library and is there a budget to purchase new music? After all of these narrowing variables are considered, maybe the program that comes out the other end is something like "music that will hold together." I have certainly programmed concerts like that myself and been glad to have them turn out at all. Many of us in the profession



do not have the luxury of doing much else. That said, when the dust settles at the end of a concert season we might look ahead and dream of ways to put together programs that do more than just hold together

Start Easy and Work Toward Difficult

I suspect that for most conductors, the first crafted program with which they experiment is a *Thematic Program*. Such a program might be based on a theme such as springtime, Broadway, the sea, community, spirituals & folk songs, certain holidays or times of the year, etc. This is a classic programming approach because it works well. The selection process is straightforward and the audience understands the program.

One variation on thematic programming is an *Historical Program*, which includes a second theme of change over time. An historical program could follow a single genre such as a motet or chorale over time, or it could trace the history of women composers. A historical Broadway program could follow the development of Broadway music from its inception to the present day. This programming idea is more difficult than the basic thematic program because conductors will find "holes" in the timeline for which they either do not have any pieces or for which the pieces they have do not fit any of

the narrowing criteria mentioned above. That said, when a historical program comes together, it can educate audiences about the history of ideas and how music is a companion to so much of the human experience.

A second variation on the thematic program is the Composer Program, programming an entire concert around one composer. Many composers have enough variety in their catalogs to create varied and fascinating concert programs. If a composer's output is significantly affected by world events, a concert program focusing on a single composer can further educate and enrich audiences about historical events as they learn through the musical choices you have made.

Narrative: The Summit

In my own experience, the most difficult but also the most rewarding programming challenge is the Narrative Program. In this type of program, the conductor tells the audience a story through the concert program. That story could be something like the story of America, the story of a family that moves from one country to another, or the story of transportation (walking, sailing, horse travel, railroads, automobiles, airplanes). A narrative approach can zoom in on one person such as Horatio Spafford or zoom out to include an entire group such as the Jewish diaspora. People are steeped in stories from a young age and so much of the media people consume (books, newspapers, magazine articles, TV shows, movies) take the form of a story. For that reason, audiences are predisposed to understand the

structure of a narrative concert program and, at least initially, go along for the ride.

In a *Narrative Program*, the conductor or performers will often speak to the audience in between selections in order to guide their thinking. Written program notes can be helpful but I would caution against putting all of the narrative in writing instead of the spoken form. Ours is an aural art form and we cannot count on audience members to read about the program and its pieces. That said, the audience came to hear music so it is a good idea to keep spoken comments brief. In the end, we have the sound of the ensemble and our spoken words to act as a guide to our fellow travelers in the audience. A narrative program carries with it the risk that your audience might not "get" your program in a way that they would "get" a program based around springtime or Broadway or a holiday so take this opportunity to educate your audience and act as their guide on the journey through the story you have curated.

A Path Forward

If you are interested in pursuing any of the above programming ideas, let me encourage you to take on one new programming challenge at a time and don't bite off more than you can chew. With each new challenge, you will learn new repertoire, store away pieces for later use, find new ways to balance all of your other variables—which are still there. Lastly, don't forget to give yourself a break. As I wrote above—programming is hard! 🎵



Wow! You Are SO Talented!

By Chris Granger

Choral Director at Horizon Honors High School
Canto Accompanist at Phoenix Children's Chorus

How many musicians, amateur or professional, have been told “you are so talented” before? I’m sure almost all of us have heard that. While the compliment is appreciated, it can also spark a sense of inadequacy. Though some may argue, “talent” may not be the best word to use when complimenting singers/musicians, and let me explain why.

Fundamentally, in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, talent is defined as a “special, often athletic, creative, or artistic aptitude.”

At the age of ten, I joined choir and music became an important part of my life. Shortly thereafter, I found a love for playing the piano and started playing in the community and at my local church. It wasn’t long until I started hearing the phrase “you’re so talented” on a fairly regular basis. At the time, this phrase was fuel for me to continue playing and continue to grow; I didn’t realize how much time and effort would later be put into honing this craft.

In college, I studied Music Education and Piano Performance and I was spending almost eight hours a day practicing the piano. I spent the first hour of my practice session working on technique: scales, arpeggios, etc. The second hour was spent practicing sight reading. The remaining time was spent on piano literature, musicality, etc. Don’t forget the time spent practicing open-score reading for choir rehearsals, scheduling rehearsals for chamber ensembles, accompanying gigs, and other related activities. All of these added to the practice and the work put into honing this craft. Boasting about how much time and effort I spent is not my goal here; however, a lot of musicians can relate to the amount of blood, sweat, tears, and most importantly TIME spent improving their musical selves.

Upon graduating from college, I moved out to Arizona, set on building a reputation for myself as a local pianist. In both my teaching and my playing, the word “talent” seemed to follow me everywhere I went. By extension, it followed my students as well. More and more gigs were played, concerts performed, and being “talented” was a constant reminder at each. However, as my career, reputation, and skills continued to grow, being told I was “talented” started to feel... almost elementary. Admittedly, whenever I was told I was talented, it almost made me



feel a twinge of embarrassment or inadequacy. When talking with a few colleagues, a mix of music teachers, instrumentalists, pianists, and vocalists, I discovered that many felt the same way. However, we could not figure out why.

It’s not that we don’t appreciate the compliment. In fact, quite the opposite. We appreciate the compliment considerably. But for some reason, it didn’t resonate harmoniously with us either. I took the time to reflect and dig to find the root cause of this feeling. I realized that I associated the word talented to my early career as a musician when I was discovering what would eventually become my passion, when performances and recitals were not so “high-stakes,” and the bar was not set nearly as high. Now, hearing the word “talented” makes me feel like the person saying these nice things hasn’t acknowledged the time, effort, and hard work of becoming an accomplished musician worthy of the opportunity to perform in front of an audience.

Have I looked at someone and told them “you are very talented”? Of course I have! Do I regret saying it? Not necessarily—a compliment is always nice to hear. However, I started to change my thinking and, especially when talking to peers, the verbiage of my compliments changed. Instead of saying “you are so talented”, I started using “you played/sang/performed so well” or “I can tell you have put in a lot of time and effort to play/sing/perform as well as you do.” Almost immediately a positive

difference was observed in the way that compliment was received. Performers that were paid this compliment appreciated that someone was acknowledging the amount of time and effort they spent on getting to the level they had achieved. Comparatively, becoming an accomplished engineer doesn't just rely on a natural aptitude for numbers and problem-solving, but spending time and effort studying and refining their knowledge and understanding of the craft. An accomplished author may have a natural aptitude for wordsmithing, but countless hours and many red-ink pens have been spent editing, revising, failing, succeeding, and implementing feedback in order to become accomplished.

There is no need to be angry at those who still praise you as talented. That person has gone out of their way to pay a compliment, and we should acknowledge and appreciate

that. I also would not want people to believe that saying someone is talented is a wrong or offensive thing to do.

The moral is that "talent" will only get someone so far. If you hear a stellar performance, instead of saying "you are talented", try acknowledging the fact that you are aware of and appreciate the amount of work that went into that person being able to present a high-quality performance. Consider saying things like: "I can tell you've worked very hard" or "you are such a skilled performer." Acknowledging the fact that you recognize that this person's skill goes beyond that of the "talented" they discovered in their early career will mean a lot to the performer by recognizing their dedication.

Talent will got us started, but hard work and determination drives us the rest of the way. It's acknowledgment of that hard work that makes your students, friends, and fellow musicians feel valued. 📖

A Conversation with Dr. Ryan Holder, Associate Director of Choral Studies at Northern Arizona University Vocal Jazz Advice and Recommendations for High School Choirs

*By Christina Hall Vocal Jazz R&R Chair
Graduate Student at Arizona State University*

The following article is in reference to a conversation I had with Dr. Ryan Holder about the NAU Jazz Madrigal Festival and advice on how high school directors can begin teaching vocal jazz to their students.

Hello Dr. Holder and thank you for meeting with me on Zoom today.

Thank you for having me.

To get things started, let's talk about who you are and what the high school festival that you run at NAU is. So, Dr. Holder, how long have you been here at NAU?

I started in the fall of August 2006 at NAU. When I first started, I was just a one-year hire. And I was brought in to teach Women's Chorale, vocal jazz, and conducting. Then after that first year, I reapplied and got the tenure track job, and I've been here ever since. Now I'm a full professor with tenure.



Congratulations.

Thanks.

Tell us then about the idea for the Jazz Madrigal Festival. How did that get started?

From what I've been able to gather, it started 49 years ago. It used to be just a madrigal festival, and it was by invitation, eight to ten schools would be invited to participate, and then they would all sing their own individual sets for each other. They'd do combined numbers, and then the university choir would also perform. That was the format of the festival for a long time. Eventually they added a vocal jazz component later, and so you kind of had this dual track system going on. It eventually expanded into multiple venues. There was a time when it was a competition, it was a competitive festival, and so the "winner" of the Jazz Mad Festival would then be invited to perform at the evening concert the next year.

Oh, okay.

So that was up until the early 90s, I think. After that, when Dr. Copley took over as Director of Choral Studies, we removed the competitive aspect of it and it just became a rated, but not competitive festival. And then when I arrived, we expanded the festival from four venues to six and now we're up to seven venues. Within the vocal jazz category, we've established open or closed mic options. So you can either have open—which as you know, is just like choir mic-ing—or closed mic—which is one on a mic part to allow for different experiences. In 2019, we added a second evening host concert because prior to that there was just one host concert. It would sell out immediately and we'd have 600 people on the waiting list. So that's where we are now.

Looking at what it is now, how many ensembles participate and what do the numbers look like compared to the very first year?

The year after COVID, we had 111 high schools, 147 ensembles, which we estimate was about 3,600 students who came to Flagstaff over the two and a half day period.

What are some of your most memorable or impactful guest artists that you've had in the past?

I think my absolute most memorable was the first time Take 6 showed up to the Jazz Mad Festival. I've been a fan of Take 6 since I was in high school, in the early 90's. And I just remember singing along to all their charts and being amazed by what they were bringing to the table, musically. 2010 was the first year they performed, which was incredible—just life-changing. That was also the year that I was covering for Dr. Copley, who was on sabbatical for the semester. I got to conduct Shrine at the same concert that Take 6 was in. In my office there's a huge, signed poster of Take 6 with the concert program featuring Shrine of the Ages, Dr. Ryan Holder, and Take 6. That will always be a highlight for me. I always like it when I bring in a group that people don't know about, and then they're just like, "Oh my god, that was amazing." The last two years we've had Accent and Saje, and I've talked to choir directors who said "We've never heard of these people before," "We don't know who they are," "We didn't really know anything," you know? They could walk out of those concerts with their minds blown. Those are always cool experiences.

Anything else you want to add about the festival itself?

I'm pretty confident it's the largest single choral festival in the country—certainly as far as number of venues, number of students, number of choirs—and the quality of guest musicians that we bring in is world-class. I'm really excited that next year we have The Swingles coming in. That's another one of those bucket-list groups that I'm really excited to have.

Wonderful. Can you provide some jazz composers or arrangers who write really great jazz charts for high schools that you would recommend?

It all depends on the level of the high school group. If you're looking at beginning high school vocal jazz, you're going to go to the more traditional publishers like Roger Emerson or Kirby Shaw. I think that's a good place to get started. But I think Rosana Eckert, Jeremy Fox, and Kerry Marsh are doing some great things now for beginning vocal jazz groups. You're starting to see a lot more SAB vocal jazz charts—SA or SSA, too—because there's a real need for

quality vocal jazz literature for those kinds of non-traditional voicings. I am a huge fan of Matt Falker's Anchor Music Publications site. I think that's really great. I point as many people there as I possibly can. And again, it's got a wide range of styles and ability levels.

From a teacher's perspective, what is something you would tell your students who are wanting to get into vocal jazz?

Make sure that your students have developed an ear for it. That's going to include a lot of listening and copying what you hear. Vocal jazz is like any other type of language, I think, in that in order for you to understand it, you have to listen to it and then be able to repeat it. Even prior to that, as the teacher, you have to be familiar with it. It is my hope that all of my students who come from NAU have that vocal jazz experience so they know if it's a swing chart, you're not clapping on one and three, which we see all the time at Jazz Mad. Whereas if you're doing a Latin piece, especially a samba piece, then you are going to be stressing one and three. Those types of basic fundamentals, I think you have to know. And so it's about doing your homework ahead of time. Just like anything, always stay one step ahead of them as you go through.

If a high school director wants to teach a jazz chart for the first time, what is a direction you would point them toward, so they are at least one step ahead of their students?

I think a good place to start would be an a cappella jazz ballad. Those are going to be as close to choral—you know, "choral"—as you can get. You can take a lot of the same concepts that you would do with your traditional choral ensemble and apply them to the a cappella ballad. Now, of course, there are going to be some differences, right, like with diction or with tempo, rubato feel, that sort of stuff. But again, I think that's the easiest way to start. And again, listening has got to be the key because if you don't know what it's supposed to sound like, then how are you going to be able to teach your students in a real and authentic manner?

In your opinion, what does a solid jazz set look like?

What is critical, especially if you are putting together a Jazz Mad set, is you want to have variety. I would always say you want a swing piece, a ballad, and a Latin piece. That's kind of the standard, and there's variety within those styles. The swing piece could be a bebop tune or a heavy 12/8 swing. The ballad could be a cappella or accompanied. The Latin piece could be a samba, bossa nova, or Afro-Cuban. I think that gives us and the students a balanced diet for vocal jazz rather than doing all ballads or all swing—which I've seen before, too.

As a teacher, I've had students come up to me asking how they can get better at singing vocal jazz. Do you have any advice for students?

Now with technology and information that's available in an instant at your fingertips, there's a lot of resources that you can go to, you know. Whether it's going to Spotify and listening to Ella Fitzgerald or going on YouTube and watching the New York Voices, there's so many different resources now available to most students that you can pretty easily do some self-study on that. And then there are additional resources like the Scatability app or iRealPro, additional things maybe for the advanced or someone who wants to be advanced could look into some of those.

Well, thank you so much for the deep dive into the NAU Jazz Madrigal Festival and how teachers and students can explore vocal jazz in their own classrooms.

Thank you for having me.

The next NAU Jazz Madrigal Festival will be held February 8-10, 2024 and registration submission begins at 7:00 am sharp on October 23, 2023. For more information, visit <https://nau.edu/music/performance-areas/choral-studies/jazz-madrigal-festival/> for updates.

Dr. Ryan Holder's Recommendations for High School Vocal Jazz

Broadley, Sharon, *The Golden Rule*. (Level III, swing). UNC JazzPress VJ135.

Charlie Chaplin and David Raksin, *Smile*, arranged by Steve Zegree (A cappella ballad). Hal Leonard 08603699.

David Wheat and Bill Loughborough, *Better Than Anything*, arranged by Dave Barduhn (Level III, jazz waltz). Anchor Music Pub DBA-J3-3653.

Truman Capote and Harold Arlen, *A Sleepin' Bee*, arranged by Paris Rutherford (Medium swing). Hal Leonard 08743726.

Vincent Youmans and Irving Caesar, *Sometimes I'm Happy*, arranged by Rosanna Eckert (Latin, also available in SSAA). Anchor Music Pub ECK-L3-3451.

Lambert, Henricks and Ross, *Cookin' At The Continental*, arranged by Mark Mazur (Level III, swing). UNC Jazz Press VJ858.

Frank Loesser, *More I Cannot Wish You*, arranged by Phil Mattson (A cappella, also available in SSAA). Hal Leonard 08602192.

For non-traditional voicings, here are a few other vocal jazz charts:

Ben Folds, *The Luckiest*, arranged by Kerry Marsh SAB (Level II, ballad, also available in SSA and SATB). kerrymarshvocaljazz.myshopify.com.

Bobby Troup, *The Three Bears*, arranged by Dave Barduhn SAB (Level II, medium swing). Anchor Music Pub DBA-S2-3875.

Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart, *My Romance*, arranged by Greg Jasperse SSA (ballad, also available in SATB). Shawnee Press 35028732.

Walter Donaldson, *My Blue Heaven*, arranged by Rosana Eckert Three-Part-Mixed (swing, also available in Two-Part). Hal Leonard 00299892.

Christina Hall serves as the Az ACDA Vocal Jazz R&R Chair, as well as the ACDA Western Region Youth R&R Coordinator, and the Toolbox Session chair for the 2024 WACDA Conference in Pasadena, California. ☰



Choral Reviews for Christian Church Choirs



Reviews by W. Aaron Rice
First Presbyterian Church of
Granada Hills, Los Angeles, CA

Creation's Song

Music by Jill Friedersdorf and Melissa Malvar
Text based on lyrics by Notker (840-912)
Translated by John Neale
Three-Part Treble and Piano
Hal Leonard #10498696

While this piece offers stunning moments of musical tension in cluster chords and persistent seconds between parts, the voice leading makes this easily singable. The piano accompaniment elegantly supports the voices, and a brief passage of changing meter gives you the opportunity to educate your singers on shifting beat accents. Afterward, a triumphant return of the opening musical material for the climax of the piece brings you to a final "amen" and "alleluia!" which close the piece with a sense of peace that is sure to leave both singers and congregants ready to receive the Word.

"I Believe In The Sun"

Music by Thomas Juneau
Text Anonymous
Two-Part Treble and Piano
Hal Leonard #10685434

Many Music Ministers work like me with choirs that have far more treble than bass voices. This piece works splendidly for those choirs, and it is effective to include the tenors and bases on parts I and II, respectively. The opening statement of "O, I believe" sets the tone for the haunting solo, which introduces the text in either English or German, giving you the

option to challenge a singer and congregation with an unfamiliar language or to work with what your singers already know.

Afterward, the remaining singers present the English text in duet before repeating it with the solo returning on top. Overall, this is a quick piece for any group to learn, thanks to its simple construction based on two main parts. Presentation of this piece in worship had my choir and congregation talking about it for weeks and encouraged them to share the times they learned to believe in God, even when he was silent.

Abun D'bashmoyo

Music by Shireen Abu Khadar
Text based on lyrics by Notker (840-912)
Translated by John Neale
Three-Part Treble and Piano
Hal Leonard #10498696

Some of you may remember the composer Shireen Abu Khadar from her presentation at ACDA Nationals in Cincinnati this year! She is also the founder of Dosan World, a collective dedicated to sharing the magnificent musical traditions of the Levant, an Eastern Mediterranean region encompassing Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and a multiplicity of faiths, languages and music. This piece struck me immediately for its text, which is the Lord's Prayer in the language that Christ would have originally taught it to his disciples. Abu Khadar sets this amazing text to two sacred melodies in the Syriac tradition to great effect.

Don't be afraid of the unfamiliar language, because your sheet music purchase also includes a spoken text file and an in-depth pronunciation guide in print, to boot. Some of the parts are fairly high for the tenors, but a falsetto approach works incredibly well for this piece. The focus on just two melodies in this piece also makes it easy to learn musically. I used this piece for World Communion Sunday, and the choir and congregation relished the chance to sing and hear the actual words of Christ as he first shared them. ☰

BOOK DESIGN & PRODUCTION

