

The background of the cover is a deep blue gradient. It features several white musical staves that curve across the page. Scattered throughout these staves and the background are various white musical notes, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and treble clefs, creating a sense of musical movement and harmony.

ANTIPHON

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

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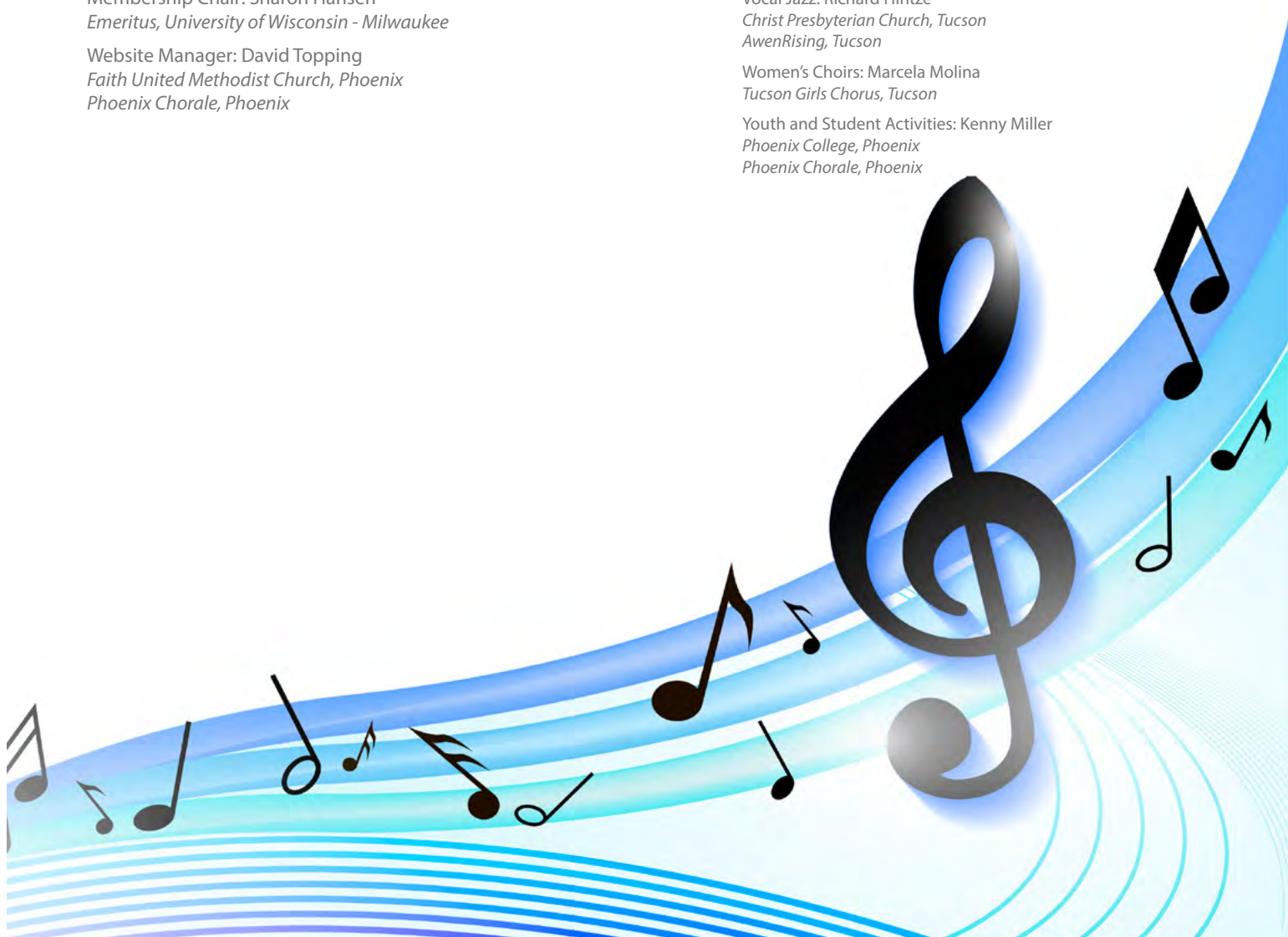
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Two-Year College Choirs: Adam Stich
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THIS ISSUE

4	From the President
6	Meet Our Headliner Clinicians for the AzACDA Summer Conference
8	Announcing the 2016 Junior High/Middle School Choral Festival
8	Announcing the 2016 AzACDA High School Choral Festival
8	Announcing the 2016 AzACDA Diamondbacks Nights
9	2015 AzACDA Cantaremos Festival Report
ARTICLES	
12	Working with the Senior Adult Choir: Strategies and Techniques for a Lifetime of Healthy Singing Kimberly VanWeelden, Abby Butler, and Vicki Lind
21	Go For It! – Starting Your Own Show Choir Program Jordan Keith
23	Conductor Perspectives: An Interview with Greg Amerind Thomas Lerew
28	Why Every Conductor Should Teach Music Appreciation Daniel David Black
30	Boys to Men Choral Festival Michael Frongillo
CHORAL REVIEWS	
31	Children & Community Youth Choirs – Aimee Stewart
32	Music in Worship – Doug Benton
33	Senior High School Choirs – Joseph Johnston
33	Two-Year College Choirs – Adam Stich
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ARIZONA CHORAL MUSIC?	
35	AzACDA Congratulates the Tucson Girls Chorus on 30 Successful Seasons
35	Pre-WACDA Conference Performance by NAU's Shrine of the Ages Chorale
35	University of Arizona High School Honor Choir
36	2015 AzACDA Cantaremos Festival Photo Collage
ADVERTISERS INDEX	
11	University of Arizona Graduate Choral Conducting Program
27	Doug Benton of Malmark Bells
38	Robert Ashbaugh – Digital Design & Imaging

From the President:



Elizabeth Schauer
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Greetings AzACDA Friends!

The national website describes the mission of the American Choral Directors Association as follows: to inspire excellence in choral music through education, performance, composition, and advocacy. At the state level, it is our goal to realize that mission by serving with excellence—embodying in our efforts and in our programs the same high standards to which we aspire in our music. Your input and feedback is vital in the ongoing task of sustaining and re-creating our organization to this end. In Roman mythology Janus is the god of beginnings and passages who is usually depicted as having two faces because he looks to the future and to the past. Recognizing the wisdom of Janus, I invite you to look back with me to celebrate the successes of 2015, to reflect on how we can build and improve on them, and to envision a future for AzACDA that serves our art and you, the ambassadors of it, in the very best way possible.

Looking back:

- In July, our summer conference attracted a record-setting 160 attendees who were inspired, challenged, and encouraged by our headliners and a host of dedicated Arizona choral artists.
- In July, we recognized Bart Evans as the AzACDA Choral Director of the Year for his outstanding contributions to choral music in our state.
- In August, we launched our new “In the Spotlight” feature to introduce Repertoire and Standards Chairs and to highlight activities in their constituent areas.
- In October, the UA student chapter of ACDA (Thomas Alcaraz, president) hosted the 2015 Western Division Student Symposium with over 60 college and university students in attendance.
- In November, we concluded our membership drive with 435 members—a new milestone for AzACDA. Congratulations to Membership Chair Sharon Hansen!
- In November, we celebrated the 20th birthday of Antiphon with a beautiful and informative issue featuring 38 pages of articles, reviews, news, features, and advertisements. Congratulations to editor Thomas Lerew and to all of the contributors!
- In November, we offered the Cantaremos Honor Choir Festival for singers in 5th through 9th grades with a record high number of students auditioning and over 200 participating in the three choirs. Congratulations to chair Aimee Stewart!

“Your input and feedback is vital in the ongoing task of sustaining and re-creating our organization to this end.”

Looking ahead:

- In January, our chapter began a technology audit with input from board members to evaluate audition, payment, and registration procedures; our email and Facebook presence; and our website. Look for improvements and new features soon!
- In February, we will be represented at the Western Division Conference with performances by NAU’s Shrine of the Ages Choir (Dr. Edith Copley, conductor), Solis Camerata (Dr. Kira

- ↳ Rugen, conductor), and Orpheus Male Chorus of Phoenix (Dr. Brook Larson, conductor); interest sessions presented by Caleb Nihira, Dr. Richard Hintze, and myself; and reading sessions, roundtables and honor choirs organized and presented by Arizonans serving on the divisional board including Jason Raetz, Herbert Washington, Laurel Farmer, and Greg Amerind.
- ↳ In February, 197 singers from 11 Arizona schools and choral organizations will participate in the Western Division Conference Honor Choirs. Thanks to the all of the directors who go the extra mile to provide this experience for your singers and who helped Arizona achieve a significant increase in participation over the 2014 conference.
- ↳ On March 23 and May 6, the State High School Choral Festival (Joseph Johnston, chair) and the Junior High/Middle School Choral Festival (Melanie Openshaw, chair) will offer high quality performance and clinic experiences for ensembles throughout the state.
- ↳ In July, we will join together for our summer conference in our new home, the Mesa Community College Performing Arts Center with headliners Dr. Mary Goetze and Dr. Brad Holmes. Will this be the year we reach 200 attendees?

Congratulations to all of you on our collective successes and achievements and thanks for all you do to elevate and share the choral art in Arizona! 🎵

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Schauer
AzACDA President



Meet Our Headliner Clinicians

for the AzACDA Summer Conference!



*Dr. Brad Holmes,
Millikin University*

Dr. Brad Holmes, Millikin University

Dr. Brad Holmes conducts the University Choir and is the Director of Choir Programs at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. Choirs under his direction have sung in every state but Alaska and in more than 30 countries. Holmes was a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University for two academic terms, working primarily with the Choir of Clare College and he returns to England frequently for conducting engagements and choral workshops. Other international invitations have included engagements in Continental Europe and the Far East. Domestically, Dr. Holmes has conducted over 200 choir festivals including all-state choirs, divisional ACDA honor choirs, district festivals, and church music clinics through the United States.

In his 22 years at Millikin University, Dr. Holmes has overseen the growth of the choral program to five traditional choirs and a variety of smaller vocal ensembles involving more than 300 singers and five choral staff members. The Millikin University Choir has performed at four regional and two national conferences of ACDA. Dr. Holmes also is a successful and sought-after composer and arranger, and his music is self-published as well as available from First Step Records and Santa Barbara Music Press. He received the M.M. degree in conducting from the University of New Mexico and the D.M.A. degree in choral music from Arizona State University. Prior to his appointment at Millikin, Dr. Holmes was Associate Director of Choirs at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Conference sessions Dr. Holmes will present:

Heigh Ho! Heigh Ho! Mining for Aesthetic Jewels in the Everyday Rehearsal

In this session, Dr. Holmes will investigate ways for students to dig beneath the notes and rhythms as they mine for unseen aesthetic jewels. A variety of tools will be used in demonstrating techniques for unearthing the gems of musical meaning. Methods of encouraging imagination in the rehearsal are introduced and the imagination/technique cycle is discussed.

Which Choir is this Anyway? A Practical Approach to Variety in Sound

In this session, Dr. Holmes will discuss methods of achieving variation in tone and style within the bounds of vocal health. Historical and national approaches to choral singing will be explored and analyzed.

What Was That Conductor Thinking? A Few Interpretive Influences

Faster or slower? Accented or smooth? Rubato or strict tempo? Why? What are the musical/textual clues that lead to a balanced musical interpretation? Beyond, 'I just felt like it,' what guides do we use in our interpretive choices?



Dr. Mary Goetze, Indiana University, Indiana University Children's Choir and the International Vocal Ensemble

Dr. Mary Goetze has been one of the driving forces of the children's choir movement in the United States for decades. Her compositions and arrangements have reached multitudes of children's choirs (published by Boosey & Hawkes), and her research and publications on children's voices have influenced music teachers throughout the world. During her tenure at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Dr. Goetze founded the Music in General Studies program and also two choral programs that have continued past her retirement in 2007—the International Vocal Ensemble and the Indiana University Children's Choir. Now as Professor Emerita, she continues to compose for choral groups, write articles and books and travel to present lectures and workshops, and conduct honor choirs both nationally and internationally. In 1991, Indiana University honored her with the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching.

In recent years, Dr. Goetze has worked to advance diversity through choral music education, creating the field of international choral music where all musics and the cultures that beget them are valued. Her term for this approach is "social justice through music." In 1995, she founded the International Vocal Ensemble in the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, an ensemble that recreates vocal music from around the globe. To bring world choral music and musicians to the ensemble, Dr. Goetze has gone to the cultures themselves and lived and worked with the people. In order to make music of diverse cultures accessible for classrooms and choirs beyond IVE, she and Jay Fern have authored a series of interactive CD-ROMs and DVDs. Global Voices offers students experiences with music of a variety of countries, including South Africa, Japan, Hungary, Azerbaijan, and New Zealand. Dr. Goetze received her B.M. degree from Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, her M.M. degree from Indiana University and her Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

Conference sessions Dr. Goetze will present:

Singing THEIR Way: The Vocal Challenges of Singing in Diverse Musical Styles

As we embrace the challenge to include vocal music from many cultures of the world, we are confronted with HOW to perform the music in ways that honor the people, their music and culture. In this session, we will listen to a variety of approaches to singing from around the globe, then discuss how we might approximate these vocal timbres in ways that are appropriate for our singers.

Bringing Music from Diverse Cultures to Life

In today's world, most teachers realize the importance of building bridges for our students from the local and familiar to the wider world where people think, behave, and make music differently. In this session, participants will explore methods of making cultural connections through the music we teach and the way we present it. In order to bring music to life on and off the pages of music books and octavos, an emphasis will be placed on how to connect with live informants, both local and remote, as well as using interactive technologies.

Involving Singers in Artistic and Creative Processes

In our democratic society, young people are encouraged to share their ideas and collaborate with each other. In this session, Goetze will share ways to incorporate these practices into choral rehearsals, providing singers with opportunities to make musical decisions, evaluate their own performances, improvise, and compose.

Keep your eyes out for emails with more information soon. We hope to see you July 18-20, 2016 at Mesa Community College Performing Arts Center! ■■■

*Dr. Mary Goetze,
Indiana University,
Indiana University
Children's Choir, and
the International Vocal
Ensemble*

ANNOUNCING!



The 2016 Junior High/Middle School Choral Festival

Our Junior High/Middle School Choral Festival will be held on May 6. This annual event is an engaging musical experience that affords Arizona's younger singers the opportunity to perform in a quality venue, work with esteemed clinicians, and create lasting memories. This year, teachers will also receive a recording of their performance from OnTheSpot as well as have the opportunity to purchase pictures.

Our 2016 clinicians are Herbert Washington of the Phoenix Children's Chorus, Sammy Brauer of Coronado High School, Joseph Johnston of Mesa Community College, and Jason Thompson of Arizona State University. Registration opened January 25 and will close February 22. The performance schedule is developed on a first-come first-served basis so be sure to register early! The culminated schedule will be distributed to teachers by March 1. More information will be appearing soon on the [AzACDA](#) website. Please consider joining us for another fantastic event for your singers! 🎵

The 2016 AzACDA High School Choral Festival

Congratulations to all who qualified for the AzACDA Senior High School State Festival! The festival will be held again at Mesa Community College's new Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, March 23. This year we are privileged to have the following judges:

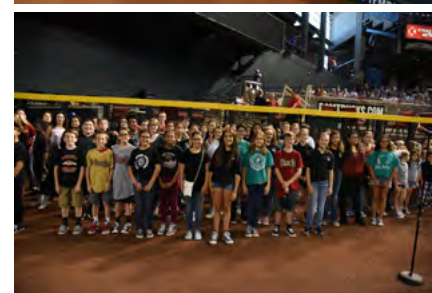
- ▮ Prof. Bruce Rogers – Director of Choral Activities, Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, California
- ▮ Dr. Ryan W. Holder – Associate Director of Choral Studies, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff
- ▮ Mr. Greg Hebert – Director of Choral Music, Tempe Corona Del Sol, Tempe
- ▮ Dr. Craig Peterson – Director of Choral Activities & Chair of Performing Arts, Mesa Community College, Mesa

For more information please visit our [website](#) or contact Joseph Johnston, AzACDA R&S Chair for Senior High School Choirs at seniorhighschool@azacda.org. 🎵

The 2016 AzACDA D-backs Nights!

- 🎵 April 8, 2016 (All ages) – 6:40pm vs. the Cubs
(Dr. Kenny Miller, conductor)
- 🎵 September 9, 2016 (Youth Choirs, Elementary, and Jr. High) – 6:40pm vs. Atlanta Braves (Dr. Jason Thompson, conductor)
- 🎵 September 17, 2016 (High School and College) – 5:10pm vs. Dodgers
(Dr. Sharon Hansen, conductor)

Participating choirs perform the Star Spangled Banner on the warning track before the games and are led by guest conductors selected by AzACDA. Performances are highlighted live on dbTV. The D-backs Choir Night includes a unique performance opportunity, a special discount on D-backs game tickets, and fundraising for your choir. Sheet music, a personalized flyer, and pre-game practice details are provided following reservation. Performance spots are limited and are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call Tom Demeter of the Arizona Diamondbacks to register at: 602-462-4244 or e-mail at: tdemeter@dbacks.com. 🎵



2015 Cantaremos

Honor Choir Festival Report



Aimee Stewart
AzACDA Repertoire &
Standards Chair for
Children and Youth
Community Choirs
[childrenandyouth@
azacda.org](mailto:childrenandyouth@azacda.org)

Written by Aimee Stewart

A state honor choir experience for youth in grades 5-9, the AzACDA Cantaremos Festival was a great success again this year as we celebrated its 10th anniversary. Over 260 applications and 203 participating youth represented schools from across the state. We were thrilled to have so many first-time singers and their teachers involved this year as well. Also new to this year's festival was the all-choir festival work performed to end the concert. Our inspiring clinicians included Jean Perry (5-6th Treble Choir), Thomas Bookhout (7-9th Men's Choir), and Danya Tiller (7-9th Women's Choir).

The 5-6th Treble Choir totaled 46 singers, 40 of which were at Cantaremos for the first time! The choir's repertoire included four pieces. When surveyed about their favorite piece, five students chose "¡Cantar!" (Jay Althouse), seven chose "Happy Wanderer" (Friedrich Moeller, arr. Dave and Jean Perry), nine chose "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (John Rutter), nine chose "Galop" (by Ken Berg), and 12 chose the all-choir work "Like a Singing Bird" (Bob Chilcott). Other written student feedback confirms that we are making a positive difference in these young people's lives by providing this festival opportunity. Several singers picked the t-shirts, lunch, or the clinicians as their favorite part of the experience, but the vast majority expressed their love of rehearsing, performing, making new friends, and singing all day. Below is a sample of the student feedback we received:

- ↳ "I love to sing and I love to be on stage! I love to perform and sing!"
- ↳ "I love the feeling when the light is shining on you and how everyone else is singing and dancing along."
- ↳ "Your family is here, you're performing and you have freedom to sing your heart out with these songs."
- ↳ "The stage rehearsal was my favorite part because it was really fun pretending that you were actually doing the show."
- ↳ "It was a fun little challenge to learn all the songs."
- ↳ "Preparing the music with the practice recordings because I liked taking my time to sing at home."
- ↳ "I like practicing so I can get my voice better."
- ↳ "I met a nice friend."
- ↳ "Singing with different people from all over the state because it's fun meeting and singing with new people."
- ↳ "It's always fun to see my friends in choir."
- ↳ "The music is just right for this choir."
- ↳ "I just enjoy doing what I love and singing is one of my many passions."
- ↳ "The songs were so much fun to sing!"
- ↳ "You can hear the beautiful harmony."
- ↳ "It was just all-around a really wonderful experience."

The 7-9th Men's Choir included 36 young men and 30 of these singers were at Cantaremos for the first time. Their repertoire was expertly selected by Thomas Bookhout to fit perfectly with this vocally challenging age group of male singers. The choir's three selections were "El Pambiche Lento" (Juan Tony-Guzman), "Loch Lomond" (arr. Earlene Rentz), and the mixed-voice arrangement of "Join the Song" (Ken Berg). Survey results indicated that "Loch Lomond" and "Join the Song" were the favorite pieces.

Not quite as verbose as our younger choir, the boys still expressed what they loved about Cantaremos:


- ↳ "T-shirt was awesome!"
- ↳ "Probably those smoothies were my favorite, that was pretty great."
- ↳ "Instructor and pianist were brilliant and friendly."
- ↳ "There's a lot of respect and I love that."
- ↳ "It's a great experience to work with skilled conductors and pianists and really fun to practice with them."
- ↳ "Practicing with a lot of boys."
- ↳ "I can't control my voice yet and this has helped me."
- ↳ "Jamming with new friends."
- ↳ "There were many nice people."
- ↳ "Everyone is kind and enjoy (and are good at) singing."
- ↳ "It sounded excellent as compared to the start of the day."
- ↳ "I got to see my family in the concert and this is the part I was waiting for."
- ↳ "It was fun learning new pieces."
- ↳ "I love singing music."
- ↳ "It brought me a great opportunity to give me a good amount of experience so I can be a better choir member."
- ↳ "We sounded so great together."
- ↳ "I liked seeing us progress in it the whole day."
- ↳ "Inspiration to sing and give the message too."
- ↳ "My favorite part of Cantaremos is just singing in general."
- ↳ "My favorite part of this experience was singing all day!"

Our largest and most competitive choir is consistently the 7-9th Women's Choir. We accepted 40 singers from each voice part for a total of 120 young women. Clinician Danya Tiller chose difficult music including three unaccompanied selections. These young women definitely rose to the challenge, executing each piece brilliantly. Their concert repertoire included "Cantate Domino" (Heinrich Schutz, ed. Nancy Grundahl), "Come Pretty Love" (arr. Joan Szymko), "You Stole My Love" (Walter MacFarren, arr. Jerry Weseley), and "I See the Heaven's Glories Shine" (Andrea Ramsey).

Danya Tiller also selected, rehearsed, and conducted the all-choir work, "Like a Singing Bird" (Bob Chilcott). Concluding the concert with over 200 singers onstage was a fantastic finish to the day and a tradition I hope we will continue.

I wish to thank the many individuals who helped make this festival possible including:

- ↳ Melanie Openshaw, Ashley Ricks, Marcela Molina, Haylee Abney, and Herbert Washington for serving as our judges
- ↳ Mary Ellen Loose for creating the programs
- ↳ Ryan Holder and NAU Choral Studies for creating the rehearsal tracks
- ↳ Our brilliant accompanists
- ↳ AzACDA Treasurer Joyce Bertilson
- ↳ All the participating choir directors that sponsored students

I am excited to announce our 2016 clinicians will be Gloria Day (5-6th Treble), Jason Thompson (7-9th Men's), and Herbert Washington (7-9th Women's). AzACDA hopes to continue to improve your students' experience as well as the reach of this unique festival to even more student singers. I look forward to another excellent festival next year! 

Graduate Choral Conducting Program at the University of Arizona



Arizona Choir & UA Symphonic Choir rehearsal, Musikverein, Vienna

Varna International Productions – Photo: Carl R. Englander

Join our success story!

- **Daniel Black** – 2013 finalist; **Scott Glysson** – 2013 semi-finalist
Richard Hintze – 2013 semi-finalist; **Phil Moody** – 2011 WINNER
Brad Miller – 2009 finalist; **Jon Peterson** – 2007 finalist
Lee Nelson – 2005 WINNER; **Joni Jensen** – 2005 semi-finalist
Eric Holtan – 2003 finalist; **David Gardner** – 2001 finalist
ACDA National Conducting Competition Graduate Division
- **The Arizona Choir**
AMEA Showcase Concert 2016; Dvořák Hall, Prague & Musikverein, Vienna 2014
Concert tour to Mexico 2008; ACDA Convention concert appearance 2004, 2006
Liszt Academy Concert Tour with Budapest Chamber Orchestra 2003
- **The Symphonic Choir**
Dvořák Hall, Prague & Musikverein, Vienna 2014
ACDA Conference appearance 2010, 2014
AMEA Convention appearance 2006, 2011
- **Christopher Jackson** – co-winner
The Julius Herford Prize 2007

Resident Graduate Choral Conducting Majors 2015 - 2016:

Donathan Chang
Jason Dungee
Gavin Ely
Anne Grimes
Benjamin Hansen
Richard Hintze
Jooyeon Hwang
Jonathan Kim
Eunji Lee
Thomas Lerew
Douglas Leightenheimer
Yujia Luo
Omaris Maldonado-Torres
William Mattison
Caleb Nihira
Sehong Oh
Thomas Peterson
Terry Pitt-Brooke
Jessica Pierpont
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Working with the Senior Adult Choir: Strategies and Techniques for a Lifetime of Healthy Singing

Kimberly VanWeelden
Florida State University

Abby Butler
Wayne State University

Vicki A. Lind
University of Arkansas, Little Rock

Author Biographies

Dr. Kimberly VanWeelden, Professor of Choral Music Education at Florida State University, is an active member of ACDA and MENC and has presented at state, regional, national, and international conferences. Her work with senior citizens in choral performing ensembles has spanned over ten years. Currently, she is the Director of the Tallahassee Senior Citizen's Choir.

Dr. Abby Butler is currently Associate Professor of Vocal Music Education at Wayne State University. She has been guest conductor for state and regional music festivals in addition to serving as an adjudicator for the New Hampshire All State Chorus and the New England Music Festival Association. Butler's research on multiage music instruction has appeared in Contributions to Music Education and General Music Today.

Dr. Vicki R. Lind is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she specializes in music education. Lind is an active researcher and writer and has published articles in national and international journals including The Choral Journal, The Journal of Music Teacher Education, Contributions to Music Education, and Sharing the Voices: The Phenomenon of Singing III.

Editor's Note: The following article stems from a presentation the three authors made at the 2001 ACDA National Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

Working with the Senior Adult Choir: Strategies and Techniques for a Lifetime of Healthy Singing

The senior adult population in the United States has grown dramatically over the last century. In fact, according to the Federal Agency Forum on Age-Related Statistics¹, there are currently 35 million people age 65 and older in the U. S. and it is predicted this number will double by the year 2030. This increase has led to numerous jobs, activities, resources, and support systems specifically designed and implemented for senior citizens with the intent of enhancing their quality of life. Senior citizens interested in pursuing a lifestyle that is healthy, active, and rewarding may seek fulfillment through musical performance. Unfortunately, aging can and does present unique problems for the older singer.

"Fortunately, there are many ways we can help older singers overcome and/or diminish the challenges of aging so they may successfully participate in choral ensembles."

In any discussion on the challenges of aging, we are prone to rely on stereotypes that have been shaped by literature, TV and the media, cultural expectations, and our individual experiences with people. If we believe those stereotypes, we may actually prevent our older singers from enjoying choral activities throughout their later years. (For example, if we believe all the stereotypes of aging are inevitable and there is nothing we can do about it, we may be less likely to make suggestions to our older singers that may help them improve their singing.) In this three-part article, I will lead a brief discussion of the aging process, strategies for working with the adult learner,

and successful vocal pedagogy techniques. Fortunately, there are many ways we can help older singers overcome and/or diminish the challenges of aging so they may successfully participate in choral ensembles. To accomplish this goal we must first understand the aging process.

Part I

Understanding the Aging Process

Throughout our lifetime our bodies are in a constant state of change. As we age, we experience a variety of physiological changes that may affect our ability to sing effectively. Changes within the vocal apparatus, including the laryngeal skeleton, vocal folds, and position of the larynx, changes related to vision and hearing, as well as changes to the respiratory and cardiovascular systems may all impact our singing.

Vocal Mechanism Changes

From birth through early adulthood the vocal apparatus continues to grow and develop until it reaches a relatively stable period during middle adulthood. During the latter part of our lives, the vocal apparatus slowly deteriorates, resulting in problems with vocal flexibility, resiliency, agility, and pitch accuracy.² This occurs because of changes within the cartilages of the larynx. In middle adulthood the vocal apparatus is composed of healthy cartilage which has a firm, gristly consistency and is capable of considerable elasticity.³ However, as we continue to age, the hyoid, thyroid, cricoid, and arytenoid cartilages begin to turn to bone, resulting in complete ossification of the laryngeal skeleton by age 65.⁴ Older adult singers may also develop an extreme vibrato, often termed a “wobble”, because the laryngeal skeleton has not only turned to bone but has melded together.

Natural deterioration of the vocal folds also occurs with age. Noticeable changes to older adult voices may include breathiness, decreased volume, a thinner sound, and loss of vocal efficiency.⁵ The vocal folds are made up of two wedge shaped bundles of muscles covered by a mucous membrane. This membrane consists of three layers that protect the vocalis muscles. According to Hirano⁶, the first layer is a mass of soft mucous while the middle and deepest layers make up the vocal ligament. As we age, the mucous glands of the larynx secrete less fluid causing the outer layers to deteriorate and ultimately reduce protection for the vocal muscles underneath. This produces a “roughness” to the voice quality because the vocal fold edges have become ragged.⁷ Also, like other muscles and ligaments within the body, those which make up the vocal folds atrophy over the course of time.

“Natural deterioration of the vocal folds also occurs with age. Noticeable changes to older adult voices may include breathiness, decreased volume, a thinner sound, and loss of vocal efficiency.”

Another change of the vocal mechanism involves the descent of the larynx. During puberty⁸ the larynx experiences rapid growth that corresponds

with a sudden drop in fundamental frequency (approximately 225 Hz for females⁹ and 130 Hz for males¹⁰). During early and middle adulthood the voice continues to lower, albeit at a much slower rate, for both genders. In late adulthood, ages 80 to 90, the female voice continues to lower in pitch while the male voice actually rises. Because of these changes, older singers may experience difficulties with pitch accuracy, in addition to experiencing a reduction of their extended range and natural tessitura.

Changes within the tessitura may prove especially frustrating for both the conductor and singer. For example, an older adult female who once sang soprano might find she can no longer sing pitches above her break, around E6, with the same degree of accuracy and finesse as she did in her middle adult years. As she progresses into her 80's and 90's her tessitura will continue to narrow. Instead of singing comfortably in the soprano range, she may now find it difficult to manage even a very narrow alto range. Singers may encounter vocal strain or abuse when they continually try to sing notes that are no longer appropriate for their voice.

Respiratory and Cardiovascular Changes

Additional changes to the respiratory and cardiovascular systems may also affect the singing abilities of older adult singers. Since sufficient air supply and management of breath are so important to the physical act of singing, it is important to understand how aging interferes with this process. As we grow older our lung volume, vital capacity, and air flow decrease.¹¹ Starting around age 40 a reduction in our vital capacity, the maximum volume of air moved in and out of our lungs, combined with an increase in residual volume, the air remaining in the airways and air sacs at the end of respiration, results in less efficient breath. By the time we reach 80 years of age our vital capacity will have decreased 40 percent from our maximum capacity at age 20. While research has not pinpointed the exact cause of this phenomena, specialists speculate changes to the shape of the thorax, spine, and position of the lungs may be responsible for this decreased capacity.¹² For the older singer this

simply means they have to work harder just to breathe! As a result, they may find intonation on sustained notes, long phrases, and moving while singing, such as processions in a church setting, to be extremely difficult. Just as our respiratory functions slowly decrease over time, our heart rate also declines.¹³ Older adults will find physical tasks which were performed with relative ease during early and middle adulthood now take a great deal more energy to successfully execute.

Other Physical Changes

So far we have discussed the challenges of aging that are likely to have a direct impact on our vocal production, but there are other aspects of aging that can indirectly effect our singing. Problems with our teeth, hearing, vision, menopause, and other medical conditions can lessen the enjoyment we derive from participating in a choral ensemble. For example, dentures or other orthodontic work may cause changes to the oral cavity and thus affect timbre or resonance. Singers adjusting to new dentures may also find articulation to be particularly challenging, especially in the beginning. Encourage your singers to let their dentists know they are singers. Their dentist may be able to make suggestions that will help them overcome these initial obstacles. Ideally, a dental impression should be taken before any surgery is done, insuring that the new dentures are more similar to the person's natural set of teeth.

Hearing loss also has obvious side effects such as distortions of sound quality, loudness, and pitch accuracy. For singers, hearing loss may cause vocal strain as they attempt to over-compensate by singing louder. Older singers may also have a great deal of difficulty fine tuning their intonation and/or discriminating certain timbres. Common hearing aids, designed to block out background noise and amplify the speaking voice, however, are not designed for use in a music setting. Digital hearing aids are usually recommended over analog for music participation but can be quite expensive. People wishing to continue musical activities should talk to their doctors or consult an audiologist about their interest.

Vision changes are also quite common as we age. Near-sightedness and less effective night vision are common problems for the elderly. Advancements in corrective lenses such as bifocals or trifocals can help to counteract many of these problems, yet these aids can be quite frustrating when trying to read music. Conductors may want to choose octavos that are printed in a large font or make enlargements of existing scores. Besides the expected addition of bifocals, more serious conditions such as cataracts and glaucoma may require more advance medical treatment. People in the early stages of these diseases may

"When we are young, we often take our bodies—and our voices—for granted. As we age, we come to realize that we can no longer afford to do so, at least not without sacrificing some aspect of our singing."

experience blind spots or fuzzy vision. Singers having difficulty reading or experiencing any of these symptoms, should be encouraged to seek the advice of a professional.

Medical conditions and the side effects of medications used to treat those conditions may also impair singing. Many of the elderly require prescription drugs to manage their health. Unfortunately, these drugs, such as antibiotics, antihistamines, diuretics, hormonal treatment and even aspirin, can produce undesirable results. Excessive drying of the upper respiratory tract is the vocal complication most associated with medications. Antihistamines, diuretics, and even vitamin C, when taken in large quantities, often reduce and thicken mucosal secretions to the point of producing a dry cough which in turn can be harmful to the vocal folds. Aspirin, often used to treat health related conditions for the elderly, can cause hemorrhage in the vocal folds resulting in difficulties with singing. Aspirin may also mask the pain of a sore throat which in turn may prevent singers from seeking medical attention when it could be most beneficial.

Most of the physical and medical problems discussed so far apply to adults in their sixties or older. However, women in their forties and fifties may encounter an additional challenge to their singing. Menopause, while technically not a "medical condition", can result in vocal difficulties for many women. Female singers may experience changes in their voices due to estrogen deprivation. Such changes may include hoarseness, breathiness, and a reduction in range, particularly in the top voice.¹⁴ This is caused by swelling of the vocal folds and changes in the amount and consistency of the mucous membranes that line the vocal tract¹⁵ due to a decrease in the estrogen level. While the effects of menopause on the voice may vary, estrogen replacement therapy has proven an excellent solution for female singers.¹⁶ In order to achieve appropriate estrogen levels during and following menopause, female singers may want to obtain a baseline measure while in their thirties or early forties.

When we are young, we often take our bodies—and our voices—for granted. As we age, we come to realize that we can no longer afford to do so, at least not without sacrificing some aspect of our singing. However, it is important to realize that while the aging process itself cannot be reversed, it may be possible to postpone, or even correct some of the symptoms. Just as physical exercise has been found to improve the efficiency of our cardiovascular and respiratory systems, researchers have found that consistent and regular vocal practice coupled with appropriate voice training can minimize the consequences of vocal aging.¹⁷

It is also important to realize that older people may be embarrassed or scared to admit they are having problems related to these areas. Because of this, they may not seek medical attention until the conditions worsen, thus negating any benefits that might result from preventative treatments. It is also important to remember that we are NOT our singers' medical doctor. We should never diagnose or prescribe treatments for our singers. However, because we see our singers regularly and because many of them may come to us with questions about their singing voice, we should keep ourselves informed about the changes that directly and indirectly affect the voice as people age. As choir directors, we can help our older singers come to terms with their infirmities by treating them with respect, maintaining a good sense of humor, encouraging them to seek medical attention when warranted, and above all by supporting their desire to continue to sing.

Part II

Working with Adult Learners

Working with older adult singers can be rewarding, however, it can also be fraught with challenges and frustrations. Choral directors who are used to working with younger singers may find themselves at a loss when trying to meet the needs of an older generation. In order to help our senior singers improve their vocal abilities and engage in meaningful music activities, it is important to understand how adults learn, what motivates them to participate in activities, and how we can organize our rehearsals to best meet their needs.

Motivation Factors of Learning

It is generally agreed that adults have the capacity for continued growth and development, and that the experiences of adulthood often have a positive impact on one's motivation to learn. In an article published in the *Music Educators Journal*, David Meyers describes adult learners as more likely to "recognize their need for learning and to pursue it voluntarily".¹⁸ Perhaps one of the most important considerations when working with adults is understanding what motivates adult learning. In general, adults are self-motivated: they seek experiences that will improve their quality of life. Because adult learners are self-motivated, and because they tend to be independent and self-sufficient, most prefer self-directed learning experiences. Wlodkowski (1999) writes about the importance of a respectful, inclusive teacher-student relationship when working with adult learners.¹⁹ Choral directors can foster this type of relationship by avoiding the autocratic conductor as authoritarian model. Instead, choral directors should assume the role of "assistant" as the senior singer is guided to a new understanding about the voice and music making. Choir members should be encouraged to set personal goals and reflect on their individual progress. Within the ensemble, singers can be given the opportunity to solve problems and set group goals by collaborating with other singers and with the director.

Another characteristic of adult learners is that they choose to engage in learning that is deliberate and purposeful. Adults want to engage in learning that is meaningful and that directly applies to their own interests or needs. Since most choir members cite their love of singing as the number one reason to participate in choral music we must keep singing central to the learning experiences.²⁰ Too many extraneous activities may lead to frustration and may cause the adult participant to lose interest.

Social and Emotional Issues

While the love of singing and a desire to learn about music may be the most important reason adults choose to sing in a choir, social

reasons are also important. Senior singers often cite social enjoyment as one of the most beneficial aspects of choral music participation.²¹ The focus of any choral program will be on music. However, it is also important for choral directors to consider the social and emotional needs of adult learners. If we truly believe that music should be enjoyed throughout a lifetime, we must provide an environment that is positive and that encourages older singers to participate. Adult learners are self-directed, and highly motivated, yet they are not immune to failure. In fact, it is important that learning activities be adjusted to the abilities of our singers. Wise describes how educators must sequence activities so adults build upon what they already know and are able to do.²² When adults are asked to do something beyond their ability, they often feel embarrassed, fearful, and even infuriated. The instinct is to escape, flee the situation. It is important to build success into each rehearsal. Choose warm-ups and music that is within the capability of the ensemble and find ways to make every singer feel successful as they tackle increasingly difficult tasks.

While each choir is unique, there are some general guidelines one might want to consider when choosing music. In general, music with a lower tessitura and limited vocal range has been found to be most effective for older singers. Rhythmic,

Senior singers often cite social enjoyment as one of the most beneficial aspects of choral music participation.²¹

homophonic works are most often recommended and directors are encouraged to use some type of instrumental accompaniment to support the vocal line.²³ Older singers may have trouble with long phrases, rapid melismatic passages, and wide unprepared leaps. With these guidelines in mind and with careful planning, it is possible to develop a musical program that will challenge and excite older singers and at the same time satisfy their need to feel successful.

Attending to the social and emotional needs of the choir can also lead to physical benefits. In fact, it is possible to help older singers avoid some of the problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle while providing social activities for them. Many members of my senior choir go to an exercise class three times a week together. (Several have stated that the physical warm-ups done at the beginning of each rehearsal mirror those done during their exercise session.) When a new member joins the choir, several invitations to join them at the exercise class with the reassurance that “all the choir members stick together” is commonly heard. Since singing is a physical activity, we are not only helping the choir member become more physically fit, we are also improving the choir.

There are several other ways to help singers have a rich and active social life through their participation in the choir. Choral directors might consider holiday and end of the year gatherings; concerts at retirement homes, assisted living, and adult day care facilities; social hours following performances; and arranging for rotating carpools. All of these efforts help facilitate a greater connection between the conductor and the ensemble members and foster friendships within the choir.

Physical Environment

Not only is it important to plan for the emotional and social environment, it is also important to take into consideration the physical environment of our rehearsal and performance venues.²⁵ As we age, our eyesight gradually changes. Using scores with large print or having magnifiers available may also assist singers with failing eyesight. And, while we might like to add a touch of color to our rehearsal, using flat white paper with dark print is best. Lighting is another consideration. By using bright light that is distributed evenly throughout the rehearsal room, singers will be better able to read their scores. It is also important to check the lighting in hallways, stairways, and parking lots as well. Making access to the rehearsal hall as safe and comfortable as possible will encourage singers to continue to participate even if their eyesight is not as good as it used to be.

Choral conductors can also modify the environment to accommodate those singers who are experiencing hearing loss. Reducing noise by keeping windows and doors shut, adding carpet, and limiting the use of fans can help singers focus on the rehearsal. Remember that you are working with adults. If you have singers who are experiencing difficulty seeing or hearing, let them help you find the best solution. Allowing singers to change seats, close windows, or adjust lighting may be a simple way to find solutions to individual problems. These same factors should be taken into consideration in the concert venue. Older singers may need a bit more time and freedom to adjust to the new setting. If a little extra time is given to the choir during dress rehearsals, each singer can adapt to the lighting, maneuver around the risers, fine tune hearing aids, or make other adjustments to insure their comfort during the actual performance.

Adults join choir because the act of singing gives them pleasure and because it contributes to their social well-being. Adult choir members are often dedicated, hard working, and a joy to be around. As one senior singer stated, “I don’t have much time left so I’m not going to waste a minute doing things I don’t want to do!” Directors must recognize the value their older singers place on singing and live up to their high expectations. Be prompt, be organized, have a plan, set goals, encourage continual improvement, and keep singing at the core of the choral rehearsal.

Part III

Successful Vocal Pedagogy Techniques

Working with seniors in a choral setting can be a very rewarding experience for singers and conductor. However, because many vocal challenges arise as singers age, adaptations of common vocal building techniques and practices must be made so all singers can participate successfully. These include stretching the muscles connected to the vocal mechanism, performing low breathing exercises, connecting the breath to vocal production, and offering suggestions to help persons minimize excessive vibrato.

Physical Warm-ups

Physical exercise is an activity that can easily be incorporated into the choral rehearsal through the inclusion of physical warm-ups. Stretching the muscles directly or indirectly connected to the vocal mechanism, which include those muscles in the face, neck, shoulders, arms, upper chest, abdomen, side torso, and upper and lower back, will greatly benefit older singers. Furthermore, because all muscles atrophy as we age, it is important to methodically stretch all the muscle groups

that impact successful singing.²⁶ It is also important to realize there may be differences in the sequence and type of physical warm-ups used for older singers versus younger singers. For example, stiff joints and limited range and motion of those joints is common in older adults. Therefore, the sequence of stretching should be done at a slower pace and be more thorough for older singers. Conductors should also consider the physical limitations of their senior singers when planning the physical warm-up sequence. Group back massages can also be difficult and painful for persons with arthritis in their fingers or back. Also, extreme stretching, such as bending one arm behind the head while the other arm grasps the elbow or standing on tiptoes are unnecessary to achieve a sufficient loosening of the muscles needed to support proper singing technique. While conductors should be cautioned to avoid extreme physical stretches, several other muscle stretching exercises are currently being used in geriatric exercise classes and can transfer easily into the choral rehearsal. A stretching sequence we have found to be particularly useful for all singers is listed below. And we encourage you to try these exercises yourself, as well as trying the undesirable extreme stretches which actually produce stress, so you will be able to feel how a good stretch and an extreme stretch differ.

1. Lift both arms directly above the head and pretend to gently brush the fingers on the ceiling. This aligns and lengthens the spine, allowing the singer to prepare for efficient vocalization. Avoid standing on tiptoes, as we often do with younger singers, because balance is an increasing issue with age and is unnecessary to produce good results.
2. Allow the arms to remain over the head and slowly bend at the waist, head tucked into the chest and arms parallel with the ears. This exercise will stretch the lower and middle back. Avoid encouraging people to touch the ground as this involves an extreme stretch of the muscles in the buttocks and legs. Also, make sure the chin is tucked into the chest. If the face is parallel to the floor or persons are trying to look forward, this will create an extreme stretch at the base of the neck and upper back.
3. Slowly return to an upright, aligned position one vertebrae at a time, allowing the arms to hang loose until resting at the sides of the body.
4. Slowly rotate both shoulders one way several times, then reverse the motion. Stiffness within the shoulders and upper back is common for all people. This stiffness can also have a very large impact on vocal production. Therefore, it is important to incorporate stretching exercises that isolate these muscles groups. Avoid rotating the shoulders individually as this does not improve the stretch and can be difficult and awkward for older adults.
5. Extend one arm across the body keeping the arm straight and the palm facing backward. Use the hand of the other arm to help support at the elbow. Reverse arms. This exercise will stretch the muscle on the outside of the shoulder. Avoid having the palm of the extended arm facing forward as this produces an extreme stretch in the shoulder.
6. Lift one arm above and slightly over the head keeping the palm facing to the inside. Reverse arms. This exercise will stretch the side torso which directly effects the lower back and abdomen muscles. Avoid having the palm of the lifted arm facing forward as this produces an extreme stretch on the outside of the shoulder.
7. Extend both arms away from the body at shoulder level keeping the palms facing forward. Push back slightly so the shoulder blades come closer together. This exercise stretches the upper chest and inside muscles of the shoulders. Avoid having the palms face down to the floor or to the back as this produces an extreme stretch on the front of the shoulder and upper back.
8. Keep arms extended and slowly bring them together rounding the back and tucking the chin to the chest. Repeat steps 7 and 8. This exercise stretches the upper back and shoulders. Avoid looking forward as this produces an extreme stretch on the upper back.
9. Bring arms down to the side of the body and gently shake away any remaining tension.
10. Stand in an efficient, aligned posture for good singing and slowly drop the chin to the chest keeping eyes on the floor. This exercise will stretch out the very back of the neck. Avoid attempts to look forward because the slight movement of the eyebrows lifting will cause added stress to the base of the neck in back.
11. Remain in that aligned posture and rotate the head so one ear is over a shoulder. Hold for five seconds then return to chin to chest. Reverse rotation to the other side. This exercise will stretch the side muscles of the neck. Avoid bringing the shoulder up to the ear as this causes an extreme stretch to the side of the neck. Instead bring the ear to the shoulder, you will not be able to physically touch the two.

12. Rotate the head so one ear is over a shoulder then slowly rotate the head so the chin is over that shoulder. Reverse rotation to the other side. This exercise will stretch the group of muscles between the back of the neck and the side of the neck. Again, avoid bringing the shoulder up to the ear.
13. Slowly lift head until facing forward and in good posture. Begin chewing with mouth open. The last muscles to exercise are those in the face.
14. Smile big—constricting the facial muscles and hold for a few seconds.
15. Move directly into a yawn so the muscles will relax.
16. Finish with a slow massage of the muscles in the face and jaw.

Low Breathing Exercises

Some of the most noticeable problems older singers exhibit involve controlling their pitch. Singing below the pitch due to lack of breath support, having an excess vibrato or “wobble”, or having a strident or “tinny” tone in the upper register can cause them to sound off pitch with the rest of the ensemble. All of these things are primarily caused by a disconnection between the breath flow and the vocal mechanism. Therefore, if a choral conductor can train singers to increase the amount of air they take into their bodies and teach them techniques to manage the air as it leaves their bodies, these problems will diminish and may be eliminated all together. Isolating the individual components of good breathing technique into three main parts, deep low breathing, managing the breath, and connecting the breath to vocal production will help older singers overcome these challenges.

Low breathing exercises are extremely important for older singers. Because 40 percent of the vital capacity of their lungs will be lost due to the natural aging process, exercises that focus the air lower will help singers utilize to the fullest extent

“All of these things are primarily caused by a disconnection between the breath flow and the vocal mechanism.”

their remaining lung capacity. A simple exercise would be to ask the singers to take a deep breath without lifting their shoulder. Then ask the

singers to slowly exhale as if blowing through a straw until they feel no more air within their bodies. At this point instruct the singers to immediately do a lip trill, vibrating the lips while phonating, until no air truly remains in the body. When the singers finish this routine, their body will naturally take a very deep breath expanding the rib cage and diaphragm. It is this deep breath which is the important part of the exercise. Asking people to take a deep breath may not be enough to produce the correct results. Thus, by making the deep breath a natural reflexive process, persons will automatically feel the expansion and begin to understand what low breathing really entails.

Exercises that train singers to manage the breath should also be incorporated into the warm-up routine. For example, laughing patterns, panting, and sustained blowing exercises are useful in strengthening the muscles involved in managing the breath as it leaves the body. Another example of a breath management exercise is “Repitika”. (See Figure 1) This exercise is excellent for working the muscles that directly impact how the air leaves the body. It is important to note, however, that singers should avoid using their neck and head to produce the accents within this exercise. Instead, encourage the singers to remain in good singers posture and roll the “r” of repitika.

Figure 1

re pi ti ka re pi ti ka sh sh sh s s s ft ft ft (breathe)

Connecting the Breath to Vocal Production

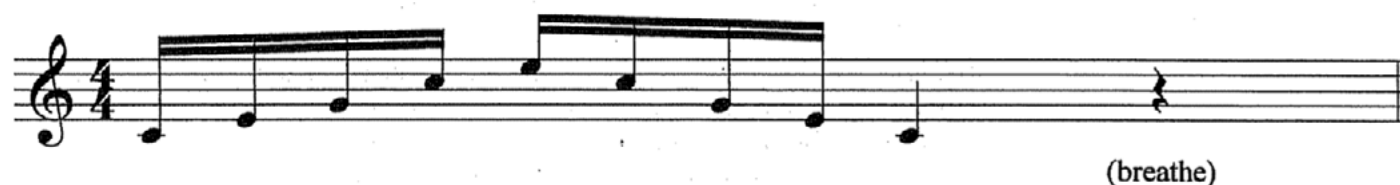
The final step to the warm-up process is connecting the breath to actual vocal production. Lip trills, vibrating the lips while phonating, are an excellent way to start this transition. Since a singer cannot produce a lip trill without a great deal of air flowing through the voice, this technique is excellent to foster a greater connection to the breath. Additional benefits for older

singers include: less strain on the vocal folds which allows the singers to vocalize higher their ranges; no consonants or vowels to complicate the process which is particularly helpful for persons with dental or oral difficulties; dynamic control is not an issue because the exercise lends itself to soft and light vocal production; and singers will not be able to “wobble” because the jaw and the thyroid cartilage are not actively engaged. Two examples of vocal lines which may be used as lip trill exercises are listed in figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2

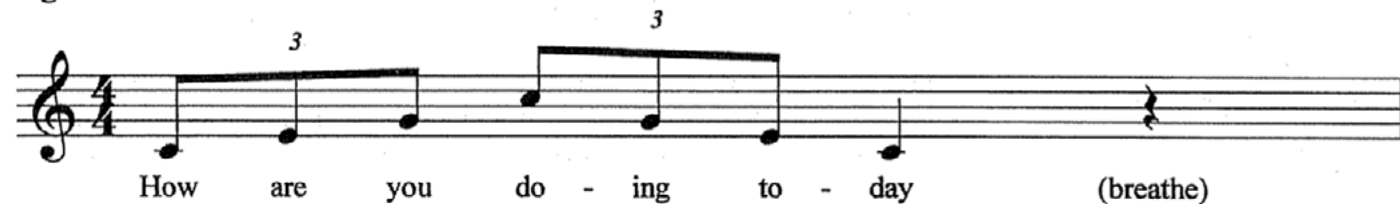


Figure 3



The second stage of connecting the breath to vocal production involves the addition of words. An example exercise would be “How are you doing today?” which uses the same pitches found in figure 2. (See Figure 4) Emphasis should be placed on a great deal of air flow on the “H” of How. This will begin the air flow necessary to achieve the upper notes in the exercise. Also, adding movements to the exercise will help the singers physically engage the breath. For example, singers could inhale to the motion of preparing to bowl (arms swinging back), then they could swing arms out in front of their bodies and step forward on the word “How”. They could be encouraged to energize their faces, without asking for excessive tension in neck, eyebrow, or lip areas. At the top note of the exercise, singers could bend their knees slightly, keeping the back lifted, to help ease head voice production.

Figure 4



Additional Help for the “Wobble”

Because the vocal mechanism naturally ossifies and melds together as a person becomes older, the excess vibrato or “wobble” is oftentimes difficult to control. When looking at a singer that has an excessive vibrato, you will usually see rapid up and down movement of either the jawbone or where the two plates of the thyroid cartilage fuse together (otherwise known as the adam’s apple). To help singers control this movement consider employing the following ideas. First, if the movement is in the jaw, ask the singer to make a “V” with the thumb and first finger and rest the chin within the “V”. This light pressure will train the singer when the jaw is moving as well as providing gentle pressure that will reduce and/or stop the movement. If the movement is in the thyroid cartilage, ask the singer to lightly rest one hand on the Adam’s Apple. Again, this will remind the singer they are

creating too much movement within this area and will also lessen the movement slightly. Finally, a conductor may want to ask their singers to sing with reduced vibrato. Using this technique can be very helpful but a few considerations should be kept in mind. These include: 1) more air must flow through the vocal mechanism; 2) singers should only use this technique for short periods of time; and 3) only use this technique when singing at a comfortable range, never in high extremes.

Ending Thoughts

If we truly believe singing is for a lifetime, then we, as choral directors, have a responsibility to learn about the effects of aging, to understand the learning process of adults, to facilitate the social and emotional needs of older adult singers, to incorporate pedagogical techniques that encourage healthy singing, and to create an environment that nurtures the talents of all ensemble members. If we keep these issues in mind, we can and will make choral singing an exciting and rewarding experience for our older singers.

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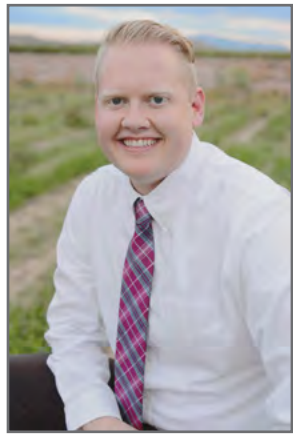
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Go For It—Fearlessly Entering the World of Show Choir



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The idea of starting a show choir program from scratch can be daunting and overwhelming, but be assured: there is help out there! There are a variety of online resources that offer extensive information and ideas regarding the process. Two of these publications include: [Productions](#) (Show Choir Products and News Magazine) and [Song in Motion](#) (The Show Choir Magazine). These resources are free and include archived articles that will help any teacher interested in starting a show choir.

As an additional general resource on successful show choir programs, I recommend viewing the below choirs on YouTube. I have found success through having students view performances of these schools and write reviews as weekly homework assignments. Encouraging students to see the performance possibilities for themselves sparks their creativity more than any instruction I give.

- ↳ American Leadership Academy (Spanish Fork, UT)
- ↳ Los Alamitos High School- Sound FX (Los Alamitos, CA)
- ↳ Carmel H.S. Ambassadors (Carmel, IN)
- ↳ Mount Zion Swingsations (Mount Zion, IL)
- ↳ Brea Olinda High School (Brea, CA)

Creating Original Shows

In this day and age of show choir, many directors are taking on the challenge of creating original shows. The expectation is that their show will be unique, one-of-a-kind, and not something recreated from previous performances by other choirs. In his article in the November 2013 issue of the online magazine, *Productions*, Jeff explains that creating these types of shows is almost like creating “original short theatrical pieces that tell a story.” While some may worry that the intended story will be lost on spectators and adjudicators, Jeff recommends making sure the show is highly entertaining and that the material is well pronounced within the production. Jeff took this concept and ran with it, writing original songs for his show choirs with astounding success that thrilled audiences. This article, linked below, offers substantial information for directors who are toying with the idea of writing original material for their show choir productions.

[Review of “One Arranger’s Story: Creating an Original Show” by Jeff Bowen in the November 2013 issue of Productions online magazine.](#)

Incorporating Pop Music

Incorporating current pop hits in arrangements and shows is an important recruiting tool for show choir programs. Yet, many complain that pop music today has become simple, loud, flat, and non-varied in texture. Garrett Breeze shares some wonderful insights on how to successfully incorporate popular hits into a show choir set. He suggests focusing on three specific key areas when arranging pop music for show choir sets to combat the negative aspects that are associated with this music. He emphasizes how important both knowing and staying true to the form of a piece is for arrangers and recommends prioritizing focus to the lyrics. Garret recommends giving the arrangement new shape: taking a “radio hit” and giving it new life by adding unexpected dynamics or reharmonizing the work to elevate the affect. Garrett’s article is a wonderful tool for directors who are looking to enliven their concerts by using pop hits within their show set.

[Review of “Wowing Your Audience with Pop Music” by Garrett Breeze in the May 2015 issue of Productions online magazine](#)

Practice Makes Perfect

Practice is a crucial aspect of creating and maintaining a successful show choir program. As educators, we are often pressed for time and left feeling unprepared for competitions and concerts. Jason Johnson writes about the importance of practice in his article “Do It With a Capital ‘P.’” He compares participating in show choir to participating in sports: no one wants to be on a sports team that does not put their all into every practice. Many directors are hesitant to schedule more practice time and rehearsals outside of class. Jason details how impactful student-led sectionals have been outside of class. He says students often know what they need to work on just as much as the director. Johnson’s is a great article for reminding directors that it takes time, effort, and practice to create a truly successful show choir production.

[Review of “Do It With Capital ‘P’” by Jason Johnson in the February 14, 2014 issue of Song in Motion online show choir magazine](#)

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Conductor Perspectives



An Interview with Greg Amerind

Mesa Community College

National ACDA R&S Chair for Vocal Jazz

Written by Thomas Lerew
AzACDA Antiphon Editor
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LEREW: Thank you for agreeing to talk choral music with us. Please tell us a little bit about your background including your training and what inspired you to go into choral music.

AMERIND: I've been around music all my life. My parents are choral singers. They sang in choir together in college. Mom was a pianist and Dad sang in quartets and occasionally led songs in church. My older sister and I sang duets together when we were kids. I was actually first exposed to choral music in the church. The music of the church in which I grew up was all unaccompanied. Singing four-part harmony without any help was typical and that's where I learned to sight-read. Later in my childhood, I started taking piano lessons as well. I sang in high school but was more interested in band and orchestra, due largely to the fact that I was a trumpet player at the time. I did not really fall in love with choral singing until I was a freshman in college at the California State University, Northridge, where I sang with John Alexander. Prof. Alexander really inspired me with his artistry and it really seeped into my pores and got me excited about singing all the time. It was also about that time that in my first year of college I was introduced to vocal jazz singing in our vocal jazz ensemble. That music just really kicked my butt. It was so challenging. The harmonies and the innovativeness of the music completely reeled me in. A few years later, some of the members of that group formed our own professional vocal jazz group called, "Pacific Jazz & Electric" which was intended as a play on the California utility company Pacific Gas & Electric. We started performing around the southern California clubs and festivals. We even did some stuff on the radio. It was about this time that I started doing a lot of writing, songwriter demos, and whatever work came my way. I had transferred to UCLA but left after my junior year and worked as a musician until I got married and started a second career as an advertising media supervisor to pay the bills while raising my family. I had started teaching privately in my mid 20's as well, but I didn't really get back into the academic side until my mid 40's when I decided to go back and get my degrees here at Arizona State University. ASU is where I discovered ACDA, as I had never heard of it prior. I was blown away by ACDA and completely jumped in. I was able to form and direct a vocal jazz group at ASU for a few years while earning my graduate degrees. I also served as the Assistant Artistic Director for the Phoenix Boys Choir for almost nine years which was very rewarding. Currently I teach privately and I'm teaching vocal jazz at Mesa Community College. I released a vocal jazz album on

[CD Baby](#) and [iTunes](#) several years ago and I'm hoping to start up another choir or jazz group in the Phoenix area some time soon as well.



LEREW: As the national R&S chair for vocal jazz, what do you see as the future of vocal jazz in the American choral landscape?

AMERIND: Obviously that's a big interest of mine. My main focus is to promote vocal jazz as an integral part of the American choral landscape. I feel very strongly that vocal jazz is a huge component of the American version of choral music. Jazz itself is this country's classical form, so to speak, and should therefore be a required music curricular component at every level of music education in the United States. It's my opinion that we devalue our own culture and history by not doing so already. One of the greatest drawbacks has been a lack of understanding, exposure, and acceptance of vocal jazz on the part of a lot administrators and choral directors in this country. It's not as bad as it used to be, but it's still a problem. I don't think many musicians realize just how valuable a vocal jazz program can be at attracting singers and musicians to their programs. Classical music, opera, and musical theatre are all great! I've done all of those myself and love them. But jazz belongs in the curriculum too. So, my term as the national chair for vocal jazz will be one of advocacy in music education. I want to see vocal jazz in every music

"I feel very strongly that vocal jazz is a huge component of the American version of choral music. Jazz itself is this country's classical form, so to speak, and should therefore be a required music curricular component at every level of music education in the United States."

program. Expanding resources and outreach will be a big part of that. The jazz repertory in itself needs to grow drastically. We have always kind of depended heavily on what we call the Great American songbook and jazz standards but what we still lack is a large degree of original compositions in the jazz style. The instrumental side of jazz is way ahead on that. A growing vocal jazz repertory needs to include settings of new text from the world of poetry just like traditional choral music – but written in a jazz style. Another thing that is exciting has been the explosion of vocal a cappella groups through opportunities like the TV show "Sing Off." They do a lot of things that come from the vocal jazz world, but with no instruments. They sing baselines and provide vocal percussion

that fill in for the combo. It's almost its own category, and I plan to advocate for areas that have this as a strength in addition to Vocal Jazz. I think the two are very closely related, but distinct enough to be separate, kind of like Barbershop or Show Choir, both of which also overlap with vocal jazz but are still very unique categories.

LEREW: What advice do you have for the strictly classically-trained choral conductor interested in exploring offering vocal jazz in their public school program? How should they go about educating themselves about vocal jazz techniques? What issues should they consider? What resources would you recommend?

AMERIND: The first step is to just listen to everything you can get your hands on. Immerse yourself in the world of vocal jazz. Start with groups like Singers Unlimited, [The Manhattan Transfer](#), [New York Voices](#), and [The Real Group](#). Those are what I would call the traditionally elite and most influential groups of the genre but there are a lot of amazing groups out there. If possible, attend all of the interest sessions that you can on vocal jazz at the many different conferences you attend. Listening and attending sessions will teach you a lot about the style and its repertoire. Likewise, there are some really good books out there as well. [Paris Rutherford](#) was at the University of North Texas for many years and has an [excellent book](#). Steve Zegree had phenomenal programs at Western Michigan and was just getting one started at Indiana University when, sadly, he passed away. [He wrote a great book](#) as well that is sort of a step-by-step primer on starting a vocal jazz group. [Kirby Shaw](#) and Michelle Weir have great resources as well. [Michelle's book](#) is an approach to vocal improvisation, which is really scary for a lot of choral directors who have never done it before. Michelle also just released a smart phone app called "[Scatability](#)" that helps singers practice the art of scat singing. It provides a combo playing chord changes for songs like Gershwin's "I've Got Rhythm." You can record yourself and you can play it back for self-evaluation. It will certainly help you, the conductor, get started.

Do not be afraid to treat your vocal jazz group just as any other choral group. Know that some style differences apply like the minimization of vibrato in tight, complex harmonic passages, the use of individual singer sound amplification, vocal color stylistic issues such as scoops and falls will all be technical considerations you will have to impart to your singers. But, do not allow yourself to get bogged down with these. You have to be willing to just jump into that. Seeking out other jazz educators like myself can really help with this. Have them come work with your students or bring your singers to festivals like the annual event at Northern Arizona University. The [Oceanside Jazz Festival](#) in California each April is also fantastic. Other jazz professionals want to help you succeed and grow the artform.

Even if you did not attend a college that offered training in vocal jazz, there's really no reason to not be able to

"Even if you did not attend a college that offered training in vocal jazz, there's really no reason to not be able to acquire it on your own."

acquire it on your own. You can see there are lots of old and new resources out there and many of them are truly fantastic. Always keep in mind, too, that as you discover this world of vocal jazz, you'll find a lot of the techniques used in traditional choral singing apply to vocal jazz as

well. Good singing is good singing, and good choral singing is good choral singing.

LEREW: What are some of the tenants of the vocal jazz curriculum that you would offer music educators advocating to start a vocal jazz ensemble in their choral program?

AMERIND: I would start by ensuring that the powers that be of your school know and are convinced that the music you are advocating to include in the curriculum is America's homegrown form. Vocal jazz is a fantastic means for attracting new students to your program because of how easy they can relate to it. Vocal jazz has really taken off in the Pacific Northwest. They realized, "Hey, Brahms, Bach, and Beethoven aren't really drawing students to our colleges like these vocal jazz compositions are." As educators, we can hook them on something fun like vocal jazz and then sneak the other stuff in under the radar so to speak. Vocal jazz is also a great device for community outreach and engagement. It is music that most people can relate to and find entertaining. My group at ASU had paid gigs around town every year. As for incorporation in the curriculum, why wouldn't an American music school not include this as part of its core curriculum? The Great American Songbook is our cultural touchstone. It has a sophistication and artistry that is equal to any other music out there. We should be proud of that and building on

that. I mentioned earlier how challenging this was for me as a young singer to do this kind of music, particularly the harmonies and voice leading. It's challenging even for the most well trained singer. Those skills should be both developed and applied to other genres.



LEREW: I know you have several published and unpublished choral compositions. Where does the inspiration for your compositions come from? What is your process for creating a composition once the idea is planted in your mind?

AMERIND: For me, it's always about the text. The text is what excites me and actually makes me want to write. I draw my musical ideas from the words and their meaning to me personally. I write my own poetry but primarily set others. As the musical ideas come, I will decide if I want to set the piece solely for voices or if instrumentation is needed to fully realize the musical affect. I have not written a lot of unaccompanied pieces. I guess I just prefer the larger palate. Typically, when arranging existing works, my primary focus is taking the original material and reimagining it harmonically or rhythmically to take the piece in a completely new direction. I don't want to just create a cover. I would rather put a song in an odd meter like a five or a seven-meter or take a song that was written in three originally and write it in four—anything that makes the work more interesting. Jazz has always done this well.

LEREW: You have worked with every type of choral ensemble imaginable. What have you found to be consistent of group choral singing across the different kinds of ensembles you have conducted?

AMERIND: The number one thing that I pay attention to is how well the singers are listening within the group. The best groups, no matter what size or type of music they are performing, listen well to each other. That's the reason they're successful. I think a good choral musician has to be self-sufficient but also selfless to a large degree. The focus must always be on the ensemble and not the individual. Likewise, I also think the conductor has to have a delicate balance of ego and vision with humility and openness. Even though they are the final say, the conductor should let others contribute verbally and physically. This makes the group stronger and more cohesive. More people will buy in that way too. Choral music really doesn't differ across musical genres. Breathing, tone production, a healthy vocal instrument, unification of vowels, solid metric and rhythmic unity, knowing when your line is a featured line or when it's a supported line, and understanding and executing the style of the piece are all universal concepts to every choral ensemble. As long as those issues are the singers' focus, success naturally follows.

"The best groups, no matter what size or type of music they are performing, listen well to each other."

LEREW: What have been the most rewarding accomplishments of your work as a conductor, vocal performer, and composer?

AMERIND: I think one of my most treasured performances as a conductor was when I lead a 300+ voice interfaith group in a performance at Chase Field on the one-year anniversary of 9/11. This group was of all ages, genders, faiths, and ethnicities. The piece we performed was "We Are One." I thought that experience was the very essence of unity through the power of choral music. When I was younger, I sang with the Lionel Hampton band. He was


one of the greatest jazz musicians of all time. He played the vibraphone, but he was also a great drummer, and I had the great fortune of singing with this group a couple of times. Working with the ASU vocal jazz group was also incredibly rewarding. They never retained the same singers over eight semesters, so we were always kind of building something new at the beginning of each semester. The one thing that carried through each time was their enthusiasm. As a composer, I've been really fortunate to have my work performed by a lot of different groups, but what I loved the most is one of my pieces being performed by the Phoenix Boys Choir. They always do such a magnificent job on everything I give them. Their sound is so pure and they are always willing to try new things. They never know if something's hard unless I tell them it is. Working with groups like that is so very rewarding. And of course, singing my own compositions in my own group combines the best aspects of all three. The creative process is most complete for me in that setting.

LEREW: With all the various professional activities you have going on at once between your work as a conductor, educator, vocal performer, publishing composer, and ACDA leader, what advice can you give to choral musicians striving for better balance between the professional and the personal sides of daily living?

AMERIND: As you listed all those things, I was thinking, "Yeah, I guess I am kind of a busy guy!" You don't really think about it when you are just doing it. I don't know that I am the best person to answer this question. As many in this field believe, I feel choral music is not just something that we do; it is who we are. With that mindset I find it's very easy to lose sight of the more important things like family and keeping yourself healthy. I just constantly remind myself that my family has and continues to be so supportive of my career path and I want to be just as supportive of their activities. It's essential to unplug from the music world and plug into their world on a regular basis, and I find that when I do that my own work and passion is enriched by those other experiences. I also remind myself that if I'm not healthy, I can't sing. That motivates me to take better care of myself through eating right, exercising, and getting enough rest. I always try to appreciate the freedom I have to do what I'm most passionate about. Expressing that appreciation regularly is important and I always feel like I could do better in all those areas.

LEREW: Finally, as we ask everyone, what advice do you have for young choral conductors just starting their careers?

AMERIND: Stay hungry. Pick the brains of anyone you can for information and advice. Sing in as many groups as you can or even start your own group. Go to as many ACDA or AMEA (Arizona Music Educators Association) events as possible. Start building a network and interact with the experienced teachers with whom you come in contact regardless of what level they themselves teach. You cannot afford to be shy but must put yourself out there. Never be afraid to try something new that may cause you to fail. We all fail. That's part of the game and I would argue it's the most important part of the game. Through failure we learn to fly.

Thank you for speaking with Antiphon, Dr. Amerind. For more information about Greg and his work, visit gregoryamerind.com. 



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Why Every Conductor Should Teach Music Appreciation



*Dr. Daniel David Black,
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Written by Daniel David Black

I recently had the experience of being assigned to teach a section of Music Appreciation relatively close to the start of the term (this course is called “Music History & Appreciation” at my institution). I scrambled a bit near the beginning, doing my best to assemble materials from colleagues in the field and relying on the text and its instructor resources more than I might have if I had more time to prepare. After a few weeks, and many feverish preparation sessions, I hit my stride, which I was able to maintain to the end of the semester. Once the initial panic wore off, I really grew to love the experience of teaching the course and in time, I found it incredibly valuable for my own professional development as well as the development of the choral program I lead.

From the perspective of a choral conductor, Music Appreciation is sometimes regarded as one of those “other classes,” thrown into the job description grab bag as a possibility for the individual to teach should his or her schedule not be filled up with choirs and/or courses more directly related to choral ensembles (conducting, choral methods, choral literature, etc. specifically within the collegiate realm). For this reason, I often hear it mentioned in statements like, “I hope I don’t have to teach music appreciation” or “I would rather teach theory than appreciation.” To be sure, there are good reasons why teaching appreciation can be challenging. The class is usually full of non-majors looking to get their art/music/theatre distributional studies requirement out of the way with a single class. It’s all but a guarantee that they do not have a strong interest in thinking about and listening to music—especially Western art music—to the level that your music majors do (or at least, to the level that your majors are used to doing). The classes are often large, making for a less intimate teaching experience, and because Appreciation is usually a 100-level class for non-majors, it is difficult to get into any single concept at a deep level.

There are great reasons, however, that I believe every conductor should seek out opportunities to teach Music Appreciation at a regular interval. Here are a few of the reasons I discovered during and after my experience teaching the class:

1. It forces you to get out of your primary instrument group

Spending as much time with choral music as most choral conductors do naturally leads to greater knowledge about choral music than other types of Western art music. Listening to recordings of other types of music is helpful, and I certainly encourage that. Attending

“There are great reasons, however, that I believe every conductor should seek out opportunities to teach Music Appreciation...”

performances of orchestras, string quartets, vocal and instrumental soloists, percussion ensembles, concert bands, and the like is also

helpful, but with any subject, there is no experience more effective for personal learning than that of having to teach the material. Doing so gives one the added benefit of understanding the development of choral music against the broader context of the development of Western art music. I once had a theory/composition professor who told me he never really understood theory until he had to teach it. The same applies to the canon of Western art music. Who knows—it may lead to new programming ideas!

2. You might gain new members for your ensembles – I did!

Just about every institution has an ensemble that is not auditioned and many programs provide a path for dedicated individuals to work their way up the hierarchy of ensembles. There are loads of people in the world who might very well enjoy singing but who have had little or no experience doing so. In order for them to take the plunge, they need to have a positive experience with the person in charge of the ensemble (that's you!) and they need to be invited. Teaching a section of Appreciation provides you with an opportunity to present

"Teaching Appreciation allows one to go through the "Cliff's Notes" version of music history first while the stakes are lower, reawakening knowledge that has often laid dormant for years..."

yourself as a fun, knowledgeable, approachable, and passionate teacher. You can drop hints throughout the semester that you conduct ensembles, require attendance at your own performances (and other concerts on campus) so that they see and hear what singing in choir is like, and invite students to join at least once during the semester. Remember, for the few hours you have these students in your classroom each week, they are a captive audience. You can plant the seed for participation many times. One of those times it may take root and grow!

3. You can use Appreciation as a stepping stone to teaching something more intimidating – such as a year-long Music History sequence

Like Appreciation, teaching Music History is a common part of the job description "grab bag" and is not a universally beloved idea by ensemble conductors. Many of us ensemble conductors haven't really had to grapple with the fully history sequence since we were undergraduates. Since that time we have, perhaps, had a graduate-level sequence in our own sub-field (choral literature, orchestral literature, band literature, etc.) but haven't yet been re-exposed to the full gamut of Western music history. Teaching Appreciation allows one to go through the "Cliff's Notes" version of music history first while the stakes are lower, reawakening knowledge that has often laid dormant for years, before teaching through the same timeline at a much more in-depth level. I plan on taking the History sequence in the future and the idea is much less intimidating now that I have taught Appreciation.

4. It will force you to champion all of Western art music

The students in Appreciation classes, more often than not, group all Western art music together under the umbrella of "classical music," and they don't usually regard it too highly. Like me, I'm sure you want to do everything in your power to convince them of the value of this tradition but in order to do so, you can't rely solely on the music you know best. These students don't know that you're a choral music nut, they just know you as the music teacher, and you're on point to discover the musical path into their hearts. Maybe they like movies or video games so you have a pathway to talk about orchestral music. Maybe one of them plays the guitar so you can talk about other string instruments. Maybe they like 12-bar blues so you can use that as an avenue for talking about form (I have found that the concept of form is one of the most difficult to grasp for Appreciation students). Maybe you have a student whose background includes participation

"Nearly everybody I have taught in Appreciation finds something to latch onto..."

in a church that has liturgical worship practices. What better way to uncover and explain many of the things they have been seeing and hearing for years? Most people have attended events or places for which music serves a very specific purpose (weddings, funerals, sporting events, shopping malls, on hold on the phone) which can very easily lead to a discussion about genre and the purpose of a specific kinds of music. Nearly everybody I have taught in Appreciation finds something to latch onto and whenever possible, I use that as a vehicle for encouraging further exploration. In those conversations, I am often speaking about genres, composers, and pieces with which I am barely familiar (by my standards) but to the student, I have the opportunity to be the "passionate expert" and point them toward something they may discover they love.

There are so many experiences in this profession that we are asked to have that we would not choose on our own. It's up to us as individuals to make the most out of those experiences, steering them to be beneficial to our students, our institutions, and ourselves. With just a little reorientation of our thoughts, teaching Appreciation can go from feeling like a burden to something you look forward to doing and that helps your program grow and thrive. ☰

Boys to Men Festival Inspires Young Singers to Find Their Voice



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Written by Michael Frongillo

On November 7, 2015, I walk into Camelback Bible Church in Scottsdale, AZ slightly early to attend the Boys to Men choral festival and can immediately sense a buzzing energy in the building. In the main sanctuary, Brook Larson, the artistic director of Phoenix's Orpheus Male Chorus and coordinator of the festival, is rehearsing the ensemble before the event begins. The sonorous, rich sound of Orpheus draws in the early attendees comprised of music educators, their male students, and male vocalists from various choirs throughout the Phoenix area. As an Orpheus member practices an opening "Ave Maria" solo, a handful of chattering teenage boys next to me fall quiet to listen, even putting their smart phones away. The rehearsal winds down and more male singers enter the venue and are immediately divided into their TTBB voice parts amongst the pews. By 1:00 p.m., over 300 male vocalists are seated ready to sing and the 13th annual Boys to Men choir festival is underway. The first clinician, Michael Sample, begins the festival by rehearsing one of the combined choir pieces, "The Mermaid" by Michael Levi, and the students are immediately enthralled by his exciting energy, fun and quirky warm ups, and the powerful sound of a 300-member male choir singing a jaunty sailor tune that fills the church. The second clinician, Gary Steinkamp, is a well-known and accomplished vocalist and conductor most notably for his work in barbershop music. As the participants rehearsed "Drivin' me Crazy" by Bob Disney, Steinkamp emphasized making the music dynamic and interesting with colorful artistic choices and character motivations, while guiding the younger singers to sing with more ease and in a healthier manner. As a tenor, Steinkamp, with the support of the local musicians was able to get the younger tenors to access their higher register more accurately and consistently and offered helpful advice for the developing male voice.


By 3:30 p.m., the full ensemble has settled and is finding its footing as the festival moves into the final run-through of the combined pieces. Chords tune precisely, the sound is unified and expressive, the men are more comfortable and socially engaged with one another and the commitment to musical excellence is evident in every singer. There is an overwhelming sense of joy and camaraderie radiating from the choir that is palpable and infec-

"As a high school choir director, I know first-hand that a lack of male participation and enthusiasm in choir can be both frustrating and limiting, and the benefits for both directors and their students that this festival provides."

tious. This group is ready to sing! As I watch the rehearsal and later the well-attended concert, I am inspired not only by the beautiful singing, but also the overwhelming sense of community in the room. Here are

all of these people, initially strangers to each other but now one unit, brought together by the love of music and to foster young vocalists' musical experience. Brook Larson says the purpose of the festival is to "motivate and inspire students to sing" and that is exactly what occurred that Saturday afternoon. I saw generations of singers come together to create something bigger than themselves with students learning that they are worthy of musical excellence and that everyone can find their voice.

The Boys to Men festival gives male singers from junior and high schools across the state the opportunity to sing with other Arizona males in a full afternoon rehearsal with guest clinicians leading up to an exciting culminating performance with selections from participating schools, local choirs, and all of the festival participants. The festival began in 2003 as an educational outreach program of the Phoenix Chorale and grew quickly in popularity. Responsibility for the festival was transferred to the Orpheus Male Chorus in 2010, which continues the tradition of facilitating such an experience that encourages, inspires, and supports young male singers in choir.

As a high school choir director, I know first-hand that a lack of male participation and enthusiasm in choir can be both frustrating and limiting, and the benefits for both directors and their students that this festival provides. When young men do not feel comfortable singing out and taking risks or are challenged by changing voice issues in their own schools, it can be difficult for these singers to feel successful. Boys to Men creates that safe environment where they can experience such gratifying success. Educators bring their students to this festival knowing their students will take the skills and confidence they learn during the festival and inject it back into their school and community. In fact, participating directors mentioned enthusiastically that after listening to some of the barbershop choirs they noticed barbershop quartets popping up in their after-school programs while students' perceptions of choir become much more positive and enthusiastic. Cindy Durazo, the choir director at Sandra Day O'Connor High School, has been coming to this festival from the beginning and notes that her students leave motivated and excited to sing, "It gives a good message to boys. They get to bond with a large group of guys and it teaches them that singing is something they can enjoy their entire lives." 

REVIEWS

Choral Reviews for Children's Youth and Community Choirs



Written by Aimee Stewart
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Solstice from "Fearful Symmetry"

Music by Randall Thompson (1899-1984)

Text by Robert Wolff

Unison Treble Voices and Piano

Published by E.C. Schirmer Publishing (EC.4289)

Solstice is a secular work that references Christmas time and is ideal for singers grades four and up with little experience. The unison voicing allows both singers and conductor to focus on the other very interesting musical elements of the piece including fermati, crisp and articulate diction on sixteenth and thirty-second notes, accents, legato and staccato articulations, dotted rhythms, and rubato. The work begins cautiously in A minor, the first two measures of each verse sung solely on one pitch. As the melody moves upward in minor thirds, the

energy builds. The first text of the chorus is, "It's the solstice," on a C octave morphing the piece into C major. The octave then becomes a symbol of the solstice itself. Conductors should consider discussing exactly what the winter solstice is (when the earth is the furthest distance from the sun), how that could relate to the other intervals in the music, and perhaps why the composer chose to use an octave to represent that phrase every time it is sung. The sixteenth notes give a forward energy to the feel of the music, as the accompaniment builds throughout each of the two verses. The chorus is more lyrical, but the dotted rhythms are slightly different with each refrain, which can confuse young singers. The accompaniment is very difficult, requiring an expert pianist. The overall message of the text is "Peace on earth, and goodwill to men," appropriate for any winter program.

Prayer from "Hänsel and Gretel"

Music by Engelbert Humperdinck

Original German text: Adelheid Wette, translated by

Constance Bache and Willis Wager

Arranged by Bryceson Treharne

SA and Piano

G. Schirmer (HL.50301270)

Sometimes called "Evening Prayer" or "Evening Benediction," this duet is taken from Humperdinck's opera *Hänsel and Gretel*, written in the year 1893. Treharne's arrangement includes the full six-measure introduction, and changes the key to be more appropriate for young choral singers. In the opera, "Prayer" is sung while Hänsel and Gretel are lost in the woods. Realizing they must spend the night in the dark, they sing a prayer for protection. The work is gentle and sweet with lyrical lines and a folksy hymn-like feel. The harmonies are surprisingly rich underneath the simple melody. The

second half of the piece begins a climax to the finish. Each two-measure phrase is one step higher than the last, creating a pattern that fits beautifully with the text: “to guide my steps to heaven,” with the highest point of the song sung on the word “above.” The text targets young singers, grades two through six. The harmonies are advanced yet accessible for this age group. If needed, the piece can be sung on only the melody. There are two verses, then an 8-measure ending with a slightly different melody that can be sung by 2 soloists. While the piece references biblical imagery—angels, prayer, heaven, soul, “Matthew, Mark and Luke and John”—the Grimm brothers’ fairy tale, Hansel and Gretel, is secular. The connection to the fairy tale can be creatively incorporated in your programming while exposing young singers to high quality music.

Fire

Music by Mary Goetze
Words by Patricia Taylor
3-part treble and Piano
Boosey & Hawkes (HL.48004254)

Fire was inspired by a poem written by a 13-year old girl. Goetze’s setting invokes images of flames licking up as the word “fire” is tossed between voice parts. She uses a motif on the text “I am fire” on a fifth G-G-D. The piece is in G minor with a 3/8 meter that should be conducted in one. The rather difficult piano accompaniment flickers and sparks. Goetze offers alternate easier options for the most difficult measures. There are two tempo changes twice—a slower section and an unaccompanied section before returning to the original musical material to end the work. The unaccompanied section adds textual variety and contrasts the rest of the piece by being lower in range and much more rhythmically even. It evokes coals burning as a fire dies down with the text “I am endlessly moving.” The intense sequence at the end of the piece gives a rapid-fire (pun intended!) effect, with each voice part singing “fire” on every beat for four measures leading to a dramatic finish. In performance, red, orange, yellow, and brown scarves can be used and lifted high with every utterance of the word “fire” to excellent effect!

Psalm 150

Music by Peter Anglea
SATB and Piano
Beckenhorst Press BP2041

This new setting is an energetic, rhythmic, and spirited mix of choir and piano—fun to sing, fun to play, and exciting to hear. The accompaniment could be successfully played on organ with a sensitive touch and a light pedal. The choir begins softly with SA only, TB coming in shortly by themselves with both joining forces on the rest of the opening theme. The music transitions through several keys and thematic ideas before growing to a big fortissimo ending. This work is accessible by just about any choir, and can be used for any festive occasion. The piece bears great versatility and could be used as an introit as well as an anthem. Due to the rhythmic structure, choirs should sing this with a light, crisp sound, perhaps lightly separated eighth notes to ensure textual clarity. There are lots of simple, teachable moments with this fun piece that your choir and congregation will truly enjoy.

Christ in the Stranger’s Guise

Music by David Ashley White
SATB and Organ
E. C. Schirmer Music Company #8136

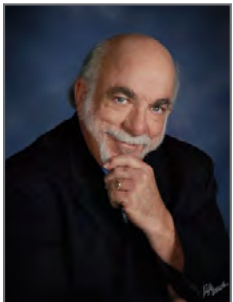
The text of this beautiful work is Gaelic in origin and the music is sweeping in its breadth. The organ provides ample opportunity to explore colorful voicing and the composer writes an engaging interplay between the choir and organ. The accessible choral parts incorporate some unusual harmonies that fit the imagery of the text. The text is based on Matthew 25:40 “unto the least of these...” You choir will enjoy this challenge of text articulation combined with smooth legato vocal writing.

I Sing As I Arise Today

Tune: SEED OF LIFE by William Rowan with new music by Kenneth Dake
Words attributed to St. Patrick
SATB and Organ, with opt. brass quintet and percussion
Morningstar Music Publishers, #50-8121

This is a new, exciting setting of the famous prayer, “Breastplate” attributed to St. Patrick, using the melody *SEED OF LIFE* by William Rowan. Written in strophic form, the first verse is in unison, the second verse unaccompanied SATB, and the final verse (Alleluia’s) in unison with descant. The work concludes with two Alleluia’s expanding from an open fifth to eight parts. This is also an accessible work for choir, though the unaccompanied verse will pose some challenges. Overall, this is a great piece for a service or event about challenge, courage, guidance, confidence, etc.—such as Confirmation or Graduation. This unique amalgamation of text to tune is a very powerful piece, one your choir and congregation will enjoy.

Choral Reviews for Music in Worship



Written by Doug Benton
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Choral Reviews

for Senior High School Choirs



Written by Joseph Johnston
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Red Mountain High School
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Sanctus

Music by Randall Johnson
SATB and Piano & Timpani
Santa Barbara Music Publication SBMP 1052

This robust piece of music starts out with a rhythmic timpani drive that sets the piece into motion, almost like a miniature “O Fortuna.” It moves into a lighter second section that leads into an aleatoric moment. Text from several languages are covered by a soli tenor section, allowing your men to shine, while singing the text “Through every land on every tongue.” The entire piece comes back home in traditional ternary fashion, ending with a rhythmic send off. This selection is meant for moderate to advanced choirs.

Unclouded Day

Music by Shawn Kirchner
SSAATTBB, unaccompanied
Boosey and Hawkes 48021256

This traditional bluegrass gospel style song is a real treat. Although challenging at times, it comes together quite nicely. Its fugue-like setting and contrapuntal feel allow individual sections to come out of the texture. It is a great way to build confidence for singers in an eight-part setting. The song leads to a roaring crescendo with a higher tessitura, and ends with a solid resounding chord that will echo in the halls. This is a piece that audience and singers alike will be humming for weeks.

Combined selections:

The following selections can be combined or performed separately. I came across both of these pieces and discovered they complement each other extremely well. Calling My Children Home can act as a processional leading directly into No Time. I suggest playing around with texture to achieve the sound you want. I enjoy starting Calling My Children Home with a trio on both sides of the room or venue.

Calling My Children Home

Music by Joseph H. Jennings
SATB, unaccompanied
Hinshaw Music HMC 2130

This is an extremely evocative work of art that begins SAT and builds to a full SATB texture. The text alone will bring tears to your eyes. Chanticleer’s version of the original Doyle Lawson, Charles Waller, and Robert Yates prairie song, in its simple beauty, allows for a wonderful display of dynamic contrast and rich phrasing. Its hymn-like echo is very angelic and awe inspiring. Ending in the key of C, it sets the tone for the beautiful piano introduction of *No Time* by Susan Brumfield.

No Time

Traditional Camp Song
Music by Susan Brumfield
SATB and Piano
Colla Voce Music LLC 21-20114

After an engaging piano introduction and a four bar “oo” section, the ladies start this campfire song in unison. The texture builds throughout and weaves into a call and response between the men and ladies. The piece continues to flourish into a rich climax of sound followed by a final “oo” section that ends where it started – with a perfect female unison.

Choral Reviews

for Two-Year College Choirs



Written by Adam Stich,
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My God is So High

Traditional Spiritual
Music Arranged by Moses Hogan
SATB, unaccompanied
Alliance AMP 0190

Although not one of Hogan’s more famous offerings, this particular spiritual provides a nice change in character. This is more in line with what I call a “rocking chair” spiritual. The tempo (quarter note = 74) allows for a slow two feel (at ~36), perfect for a rocking chair on a front porch. This arrangement is not as difficult as many of Hogan’s other works. It does,

however, have some chromaticism that can provide a sufficient challenge. There is also a wonderful opportunity to showcase one or more soloists (soprano or tenor). What really sets this piece apart are the intense accents and the internal rhythmic drive that provide a sense of joy and excitement, even at a slower tempo than many other spirituals. The piece utilizes very limited divisi (sopranos divide on two chords; tenors divide on final chord).

The Star-Spangled Banner

Music by John Stafford Smith
Text by Francis Scott Key
Music Arranged by Jamey Ray
SATB, unaccompanied
Alfred 31206

This is undoubtedly the finest and most difficult arrangement of the National Anthem I have ever come across. Divisi occurs in all parts, at times extending to eleven voices. The chords are jazz inspired with a lot of extensions. This challenging arrangement can take up a lot of time in rehearsal. Subsequently, I sometimes wonder if it is worth the payoff for a football game, or some other quick performances. However, once learned, it can be a real showpiece that can be used over and over again for civic meetings, graduations, local sporting events, Memorial Day ceremonies, etc. Performable by a small group (15 member Jazz Choir) or by a large concert choir. Very difficult with extensive divisi. Highly recommended for advanced groups, or groups with a lot of rehearsal time.

Amavolovolo

Traditional Zulu Dowry Song
Music Arranged by Rudolf de Beer
SSAA or SATB, unaccompanied with optional percussion
Hal Leonard 08749217

This is a very easy piece and learnable in one rehearsal. The piece can be flexible and used in multiple ways, with soloists, small groups, one percussionist, multiple percussionists, etc. It would be especially suitable as a processional for a multi-cultural concert or other event. A lot of options in repeats, voicings, improvisation, etc. A good use may be for a clinic with younger students and college students combined. It is only about two pages, and easily memorized. Very easy.

Because

John Lennon and Paul McCartney
Music Arranged by Kerry Marsh
SATB, with cello
kerrymarsh.com

Kerry Marsh's arrangement of this Beatle's classic is equally suitable for concert choirs or jazz choirs. The voice leading is excellent, with only a few measures that are consistently problematic to learn. The cello obligato is beautifully written. It is a good chance to get your instrumental folks involved

with a bit of choral music, and gives a nice texture change for the concert. Medium difficulty; don't let the fact that it was commissioned by a high school sway you—Folsom High School is one of the best vocal jazz programs in the country. The choir begins unaccompanied for the first 12 measures. Then the cello comes in, quietly and gracefully. When in tune it is a great moment. If the choir has gone out of tune it can be quite a shock! The piece as a whole is very ethereal and has an ending that doesn't quite feel like the end, which will leave your audience and your singers "hanging." Beautifully done.

Twa Tanbou

Music by Sydney Guillaume
Text by Louis M. Celestin
SATB, unaccompanied
Walton Music, WJMS1101

This piece is a challenge to learn, mostly due to its rhythmic complexities and length. The piece is about 26 octavo pages long and moves very quickly. There is no divisi, and the voice leading is natural, with most of the parts having their own independent motives, which are relatively easy to sing once learned. Most of the rhythms are very difficult, but repeat. Each portion of the piece seems to have its own character as it moves forward. The Creole text is about three drums arguing about which is best, most beautiful, or most important. Then they discover that when they work together the music is the most beautiful. The text alone is very difficult; not very often are singers asked to sing in creole, and this creates a wonderful challenge in rehearsal. The work is fast and short (less than 4 minutes long). So, it is a lot of work for a small bit of the program, but is impressive enough that it can be used as an opener, closer, or as the central theme of a longer program. Difficult. ≡



WHAT'S HAPPENING

in Arizona Choral Music

AzACDA strives to publicize member choral news and events from around the state. We invite you to share photos, videos, and sound clips with the rest of your fellow AzACDA members by sending them to antiphon@azacda.org. Thank you for your efforts to promote the choral art in our state.

AzACDA Congratulates the Tucson Girls Chorus on 30 Successful Years!



The Tucson Girls Chorus is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2016. TGC now includes seven K-12 choirs as part of the core TGC educational program, one alumnae choir, and four engagement choirs in satellite locations. TGC's engagement program advances the mission of TGC to provide opportunities for music education, choral singing, leadership skills, and empowerment to under-served communities. AzACDA congratulates the Tucson Girls Chorus on 30 successful years of quality music education and choral singing! 🎵



Pre-WACDA Conference Performance by NAU's Shrine of the Ages Chorale

The Northern Arizona University Shrine of the Ages Chorale under the direction of Dr. Edith Copley is presenting a pre-Western ACDA Division Conference performance at Gold Canyon United Methodist Church on February 23 at 7:30. Come support one of Arizona's premiere collegiate choral ensembles as they prepare to represent AzACDA in Pasadena! The concert is free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be received. Everyone is asked to please bring at least one non-perishable food item per person to help GCUMC Food Bank. The church is located at 6640 S. Kings Ranch Road, Gold Canyon, AZ (1 block north of Hwy 60, Walgreens on the corner). 🎵

The University of Arizona High School Honor Choir



Seventy students representing schools from throughout the state participate in the University of Arizona High School Honor Choir conducted by Elizabeth Schauer. In addition to the rehearsals and concert, the two-day featured courses taught by UA faculty, a campus tour, a directors' workshop, games, performances by the two 2015 UAHSCH Distinguished Soloists and a combined closer with Symphonic Choir. 🎵

2015 AzACDA Cantaremos Festival

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10.

1. Dr. Thomas Bookhout rehearses the 7-9th grade Men's Choir.
2. Choir friends are reunited at Cantaremos!
3. Jean Perry directed the 5-6th grade Treble Choir.
4. The 7-9th grade Women's Choir
5. Danya Tiller rehearses the 120-voice 7-9th grade Women's Choir.
6. Dr. Thomas Bookhout
7. The 5-6th grade Treble Choir sings unison in the All-Choir selection.
8. Danya Tiller directed the 7-9th grade Women's Choir, accompanied by Rebekah High.
9. Danya Tiller conducts the all-choir final song "Like a Singing Bird" by Bob Chilcott.
10. The 7-9th grade Women's Choir rehearses onstage.

Robert does books

