

# ANTIPHON



The magazine of the Arizona Chapter  
American Choral Directors Association  
Spring 2013, Volume 17, Issue 2

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Gestural Language and  
Response to It* page 5

*A (K)night in Shining  
Armor* page 8

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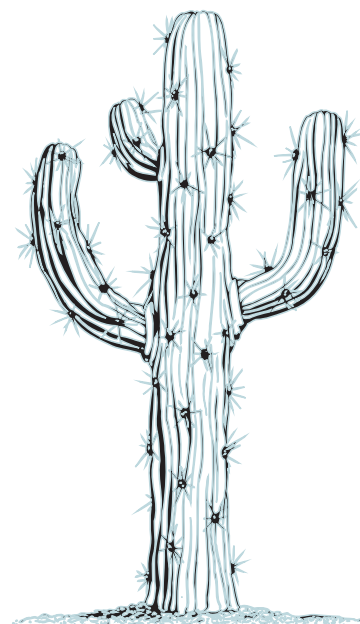
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# President's Welcome

*Written by Greg Hebert  
AzACDA President  
Corona Del Sol High School Choral Director  
St. Thomas the Apostle Music Director*

## Leadership in AzACDA



As the summer begins, let us take time to thank those who have served our ACDA board. These people have spent many hours of their time volunteering for this amazing organization. Without their efforts, we would not have such a strong Arizona chapter.

### Jennaya Robison, Secretary

After three complete years on the board, Dr. Robison will be moving to Iowa as the Assistant Professor in Choral Music at Luther College. There she will conduct Aurora, Cathedral, teach voice, and conducting. We wish her, and her family, the best. The people of Luther College are fortunate to have such a talented and knowledgeable choral director.

### Jesse Sapake, High School Festival R & S

Jesse has been at Mt. View High School for more than a decade. He will be moving, with his wife, to San Francisco for graduate school in Accounting. Thank you for your service to the board, and your amazing teaching at one of the finest high schools in Arizona.

### Meredith Hendricks, Cantaremos Festival Chair

Meredith will be moving, with her husband, to Texas. Her service for the last two years on the board has been appreciated. We will all miss her smile, fun attitude, and amazing organizational skills.

### Brent Hylton, Music in Worship R & S

Brent has served the board for 2 years now. He will

still remain at Pinnacle Presbyterian as Music Director/Organist. He brought a wealth of knowledge to the board through his formal studies with Robert Shaw, Rene Clausen, Kenneth Jenkins, and Robert De Cormier. Recently, he has hosted Four Seasons. His hospitality and genuine warmth will be truly missed.

### Katie Kouns, Show Choir R & S

Katie has been at Horizon High School for fourteen years. As the choral director there, she has had one of the finest high school programs in Arizona. Although her school is well versed in all styles ranging from Chamber to Jazz, she is most noted for her amazing Show Choirs. As the R & S Chair she has helped promote show choir music as a legitimate form of music in a state that has no strong tradition of it. She is moving, with her family, to Indiana. Her impact on Arizona will not be forgotten.

### Scott Glysson, Boy Choirs R & S

Scott has just finished his graduate work at the University of Arizona, and will be stepping down. He has held this position for three years. He will be continuing to live and work in Tucson. Thank you, Scott!

As you set your calendar for the next academic year, please note the following ACDA dates:

**July 11–13**—AzACDA Four Seasons,  
Pinnacle Presbyterian/Four Seasons Resort

**September 14**, ACDA D-Back Night  
Chase Field vs. Colorado Rockies

**September 27**, ACDA D-Back Night  
Chase Field vs. Washington Nationals

**November 9**, AzACDA Cantaremos Grades 5–9  
at Skyline High School, Mesa

**Feb. 19–22**, ACDA West. Div Conf.  
Santa Barbara, California

**March 20**, AzACDA HS Festival  
Camelback Bible Church, Phoenix

**May 2**, AzACDA Jr. High Festival  
Camelback Bible Church, Phoenix

Hope to see you all at Four Seasons in July!

GREG HEBERT



## Developing a Clearer Gestural Language and Response to It

*Written by Elizabeth Schauer*

*Associate Director of Choral Activities, University of Arizona  
Chancel Choir Director, St. Mark's United Methodist Church*

**A**s conductors it is curious that, having completed our conducting coursework, we rarely ever again “practice” conducting. We expect our bodies to appropriately respond to and dictate the needs of the music we lead. It often is the case when conductors return to graduate school or participate in a master class following a working hiatus from school, that they are surprised by or disappointed in their own gestural language. Alternately, they may indicate that the particular demands of their ensemble dictate their conducting style, rather than adhering to their training or seeking the most artful gestures they can employ.

Conducting is a learned skill and one that continually must be practiced, monitored and refined. In particular, the aspects that should be monitored are effectiveness and efficiency in communicating the necessary information to the ensemble (and the audience), and the artfulness with which this information is delivered. Additionally, response to conducting gesture must be taught, monitored and refined. Frustrated conductors often bemoan their choir's lack of response. The actual reasons for unresponsiveness in an ensemble may be that the information given is not clear or, in some cases, because the ensemble has not been taught how to respond to this information.

In her conducting text, *The Modern Conductor*, Dr. Elizabeth Green devotes a section to the topic of Psychological Conducting. This practice not only is helpful for beginning students of conducting, but also for those conscientious about keeping skills honed, and for training singers (or players) to respond to gesture. Green provides relatively simple rhythmic exercises including some with articulation and dynamic indications. These actual examples may be used (the page on which they are found varies from edition to edition) or we can create our own. Examples (not drawn from *The Modern Conductor*) are found at the end of this article.

The conductor sees the example but the singers do not. The information must be conducted in such a way that the choir responds by accurately reproducing the example in an audible fashion such as speaking or singing a neutral syllable like “ta.” Beginning students of conducting often are frustrated with the exercise. They have learned basic technique and believe they are delivering meaningful musical information. Like that of even advanced conductors, their immediate response often is to criticize the choir members for not recreating the example accurately even though they are responding directly to the conductor’s gesture and not to notated music.

In order to successfully conduct these exercises, one must prepare. The choir has to see the information to which they must respond BEFORE they can respond. The preparation, ictus and rebound must be considered as separate entities and specifically controlled and presented in such a way that not only does the choir “ta” where they are supposed to, but also doesn’t do so when there is a rest. For example, a large rebound from a beat preceding a rest will cause the choir to read a preparation for the next beat and some members inevitably will come in. Alternately, an insufficient preparation, particularly one with no breath, will not compel the singers to respond at all. In addition, the contrast of gestures indicating articulation (legato, staccato, marcato) and dynamics must be specific and distinct enough that singers can read the difference and respond accordingly.

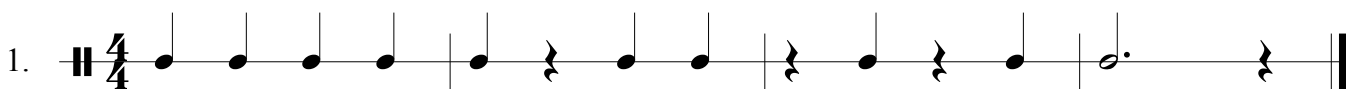
As frustrating as this exercise can be when first encountered, the conducting students begin to approach it as a puzzle and challenge, even practicing on their non-music-major friends to see what will work and what won’t. When they return to conducting music, their gesture is clearer and more intentional and, as a result, much more effective and efficient in communicating the facts and interpretation of the music.

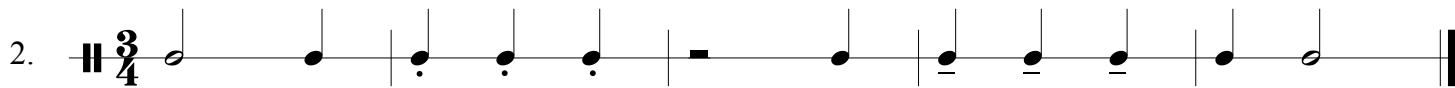
Practicing professionals who wish to clean up their conducting technique, or to train their ensembles to respond more specifically to it, can benefit by incorporating this type of exercise into the rehearsal process. These examples can be used, or others drawn from the choir’s literature and/or created by the conductor. As part of an effective warm-up, these can provide conductors with specific information about which gestures are effective and which aren’t. Videotaping is recommended so that conductors can observe their own gesture, and see how and why the choir members respond to it as they do. Further, it forces the choir to rely only on conducted information, teaching them to focus intently and to respond to what they see. This practice can dramatically change the way a choir responds to conducting in rehearsal and performance, especially if the music is memorized and the choristers watch the conductor without distraction.

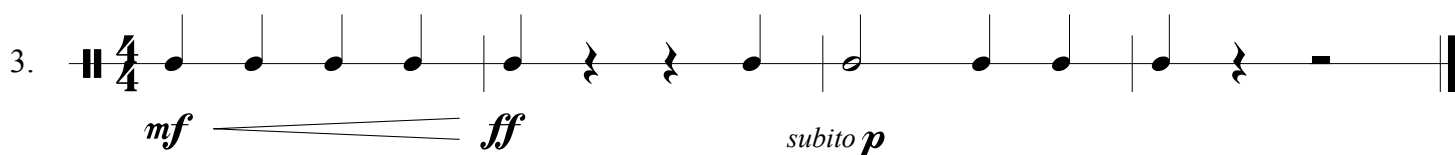


Conductors must be greedy about protecting the time they have to do the things that only they can do. Musical selection, score-study and analysis fall into this category, but so does conducting, perhaps the most visible and valuable tool we have in teaching. In our preparation of each work, before we ever step in front of the choir, we must make artful and well considered decisions about our conducting, practice so that these decisions are consistently manifested in our delivery. We must monitor our effectiveness through aural and visual feedback. We benefit, as do our singers and audiences, from clear and artful communication in our leadership of our ensembles, and these exercises can be a tool in achieving that.

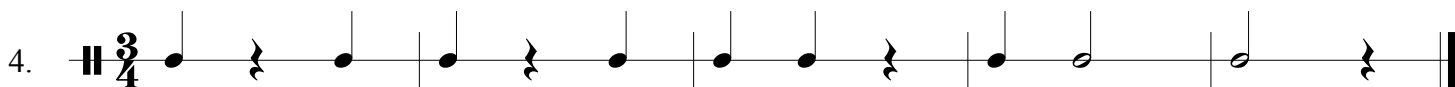


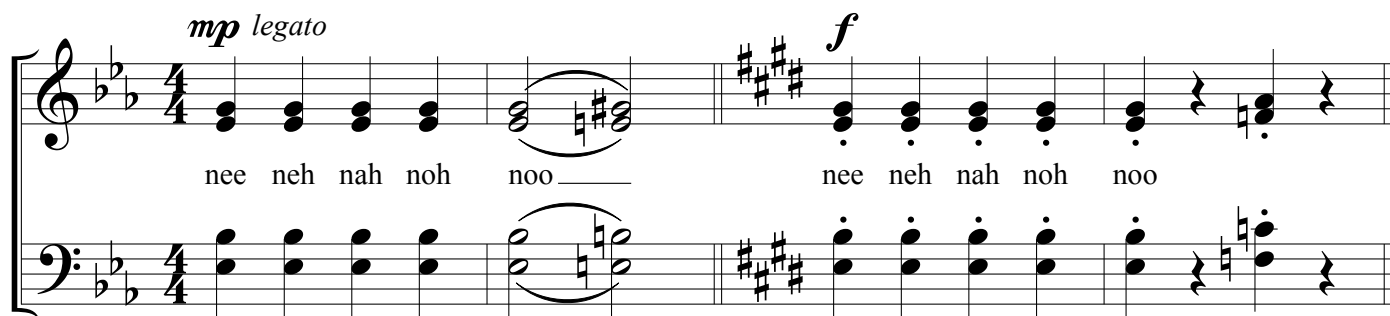

# Dr. Elizabeth Schauer Examples

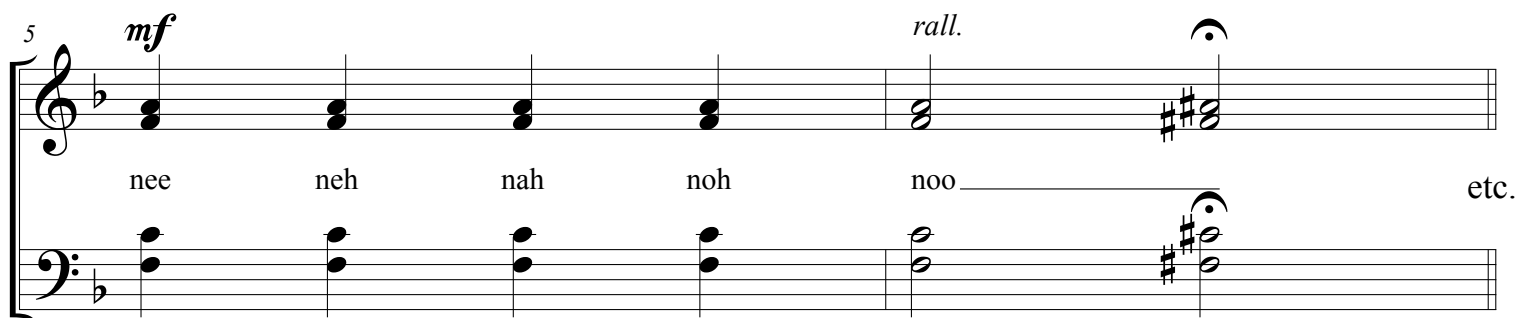

1. 

2. 

3.   
*mf*  *ff*  *subito p*

4. 

*mp legato*   
nee neh nah noh noo  *f* nee neh nah noh noo

5. *mf*   
nee neh nah noh *rall.* noo  etc.

# A (K)night in Shining Armor

*Written by Sammy J. Brauer  
AzACDA Repertoire and Standards Chair – Women's Choirs  
Director of Choral and Orchestral Activities, Coronado High School, Scottsdale*



I often look for fun and exciting fundraising activities that fit my high school's community and demographics. The school has several strong programs in our performing arts department who have already established fundraisers that are considered exclusive. Therefore, when I began teaching at my high school, I was tasked with looking for fundraising ideas that are original and would help to propel the choral and orchestra programs forward.

Aside from the candy bars, pastries, and cookie dough sales which are becoming more difficult to gain district approval due to ever-changing nutrition standards and guidelines, we hit upon something that satisfied our needs on several levels and is a proven success: Madrigal Dinner Theater, and just in time for planning the upcoming winter or holiday season.

We are entering our fourth year of presenting a Madrigal Dinner for our school and community. We currently have a two-night show and sell out both nights – we schedule the shows just prior to



the winter break. There are many reasons why this activity works for our high school program. For you middle school teachers, don't be afraid to make this a consideration for your program as well.

The show is cost effective. Your first show may see a small return since you are getting the word out and in a position of making one-time purchases. The good thing is, most of what you need to purchase for the first show can be saved and used for years to come. You may want to "go lean" your first year in order to gauge the future possibilities, depending on your budget. Here is my list of costs (in order of most to least expensive):

#### 1) DINNER MEAL

About \$8 per plate. The first year, I received three bids from culinary services. It just so happened that my district's culinary department bid and was the lowest bidder. Subsequently, I have gone with them and never looked back. By using our own district's resources, we have had extra benefits such as, familiarity with the district's guidelines for food choices and handling, at ease with special logistics, easier (internal) communication and accommodations, and delicious food.

Our menu included: roasted turkey leg, buttery corn cobbette (not in modern dictionaries), spicy new potatoes, hot rolls, and spice cake (all foods expected to eat with your hands. Remember, not much cutlery available in circa 1495). The cost included unlimited tea, water, and coffee. Note: Because the script calls for a Wassail Toast, my booster parents supplied and served hot spiced cider for the occasion.

#### 2) COSTUMES

Always eager to keep the overhead costs low, we borrowed, pieced together and rented. Our rented costumes were for a few leads only. You can be very creative with this and parents and/or students may be encouraged to get involved. In an exchange for a reduction in rental costs, we offered the rental company to put in a full-page advertisement in the program for free. The costume rental business was more than happy to agree. Items we rented were King and Queen outfits, 2-3 knights and 2-3 ladies-in-waiting costumes, all totaling between \$300 and \$400. Items we purchased were tights, jester costume.

Items we borrowed were vests, peasant-style shirts or blouses, artisan hats to which we hot-glued feathers in, belts, capes, swords, etc. Items we put together ourselves included skirts, aprons and headdresses for the serving wenches, and boot covers made from large scraps of vinyl that we cut from a pattern and hot-glued strips of Velcro.

#### 3) TABLE TOPPERS

We put a little extra money in creating lovely centerpieces for tables. We are able to use them for years to come. The only items we have to replace annually are candles.

#### 4) TABLE CLOTHS

We borrow our round table cloths from a local hotel/restaurant. Our only cost is having them cleaned between shows and when returning them.

#### 5) SCRIPT

The cost is a flat fee of \$125. The cost includes unlimited performances for the show and the ability to reproduce copies for the players. The company sends it to me as a PDF for an extra \$4, sent as an email attachment to which I save to my files. (They will send it to you snail mail, but will cost more for postage). The company I order from is Knight-Shtick Press, from Bemidji, Minnesota. I am sure there are other companies and have briefly searched the internet for other dinner theater script providers. However, it is my experience that Knight-Shtick has the best library of shows. More on the company and quality of scripts will be mentioned later.

#### 6) DRESSING THE HALL

We used color guard flags borrowed from our band program to put on walls. We made a faux rock fireplace to hang on the wall, found over-size wreaths to hang, and black theater cloth to hang on the back of the "court's high table" area. We then found a shield that depicted our school's logo and hung that in the hall. We used a mobile follow spot, theatrical lights on "trees," and candles from the tables; all which provided enough to aptly light the room.

#### 7) PRINT MATERIALS

Programs, posters and tickets were purchased by the choir club and cost was low since we used our in-house copy center, and printed only in black/white.

Set your ticket cost to balance between your overhead and your fundraising goal. Try not to over price yourself as your first-time audience might suffer from sticker shock. Feel free to raise your cost the next year.

The shows are designed to be very entertaining and engaging from start to finish. They allow students to perform as instrumentalists, singers, dancers, actors and a combination of those. We hold auditions for the speaking parts. There are quite a few lines in scripts that call for "Royal Court." I have decided to take out the "Royal Court" character name and replace it with names that would fit the times (such as Sir Rowland or Lady Cecily) in order to provide more speaking parts for more students. If you have a smaller performing ensemble, then I suggest keeping the "Royal Court" designation the same. Another benefit is if you have a limited number of musicians and actors, Knight-Schtick provides a list of their madrigals reflecting number of characters needed. The scripts are quite adjustable to fit your needs.

Since I am also the orchestra director at my school, I chose to add in the strings group. They play selected music while the audience is being seated, and during the times audience is eating, followed by a brief concert near the end of the show. I have students who play the guitar and serve as "strumming minstrels." The women's choir members are the "serving wenches." (Yes, we all laugh at that title and hope no one is offended.) Their job is to assist with seating, provide drink refills, and strike tables when audience is finished with the meal. Audience members are highly encouraged to leave them a tip. Usually, we take requests from families who wish to be seated in their student's area.

Finally, all members of the varsity choir and advanced choral ensemble are players in the show. The audience plays a part, too, depending on the show you choose. The website lists shows that are known for more audience participation than others. Key players in all productions will be your Court Jester (highly energized and able to memorize a substantial amount of material, Merton sire, Lord of mis-rule, and the high court. At the end of the show is a small concert, at which time the women's choir, varsity chorus, orchestra, and advanced vo-

cal ensemble perform several selections fitting to our setting. Remember, there is music performed throughout the script in between activities.

Knight-shtick press, a division of extremely, LTD., is owned and operated by Paul Brandvik. Most Madrigal Dinners use a Renaissance "masque," or play during the evening as the focus of the entertainment. The masque generally ties together the main theme of the event, beginning with a welcome by the Jester and continuing through short entertainments during the meal, culminating in the presentation of the masque itself.

The scripts provide all dialogue for the entire evening's entertainment, including the Welcome, The Wassail and the Boar's Head festivities, possible running gags during the meal, the play following the dessert, introductions to the various pieces of music and the farewell. The scripts also give suggestions for appropriate music.

The line between sacred and secular could be thinly drawn. One moment you might be regaled with risqué humor and next you might listen to, or sing, the most exquisite and ethereal sacred music. Due to the need to keep the music selections balanced between historic and educational needs, I venture from "heavily sacred" music while also steering from the more bawdy references. As mentioned before, I have purchased four scripts, none of which I was uncomfortable with the tone or references. Please feel free to check out the complete list of materials on the Madrigal Dinner site at: [madrigaldinner.com](http://madrigaldinner.com) or call at (218) 586-2270.

Lastly, in my ambition to raise money and provide a performance outlet for all of my students, I overlooked a critical benefit. These funny, Monty Python-type humorous dinner performances are providing a sense of community. Teachers, administrators and parents from not only our school but also from our feeder schools, mark their calendars and buy up entire tables for the performances. Last year we sold out in a matter of days. Next year we plan to extend our performances from two to three evenings. Good luck with your show, if you so choose to bring a madrigal dinner theater performance into your activities.



# ARIZONA ACDA SUMMER CONFERENCE 4 SEASONS

July 11-13, 2013 · Scottsdale

Hotel: Four Seasons Resort Troon North  
Venue: Pinnacle Presbyterian Church  
Early Registration Discounts Available  
Online Registration at [azacda.org](http://azacda.org)



**Bruce Rogers**  
Mt. San Antonio College



**Robyn Lana**  
Cincinnati Children's Choir

# “Emerging, Developing, Continuing, Lasting”

Written by Greg Hebert

Arizona ACDA President

Corona Del Sol High School, Tempe, AZ

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, Phoenix, AZ

This summer’s conference promises to be outstanding. Not only do we have the stunning Pinnacle Presbyterian Church, and the Four Seasons Troon North Resort, but two of the best and active headliners in the country.

Robyn Lana, from University of Cincinnati, and Cincinnati Children’s Chorus, plans on doing four sessions at four seasons. She will work with emerging/developing ensembles, while inspiring and challenging advanced children’s choirs. Robyn sponsors undergraduate interns with the children’s choir and mentors graduate choral conducting students. Level III Orff-Schulwerk-certified, she also teaches general music for grades 1–8 at the Montessori Academy of Cincinnati. In 2012, she was the ACDA Southern Division Honor Choir Director. Articles by Lana have been published in the Choral Journal, Choristers Guild’s *The Chorister*, and Chamber Music America’s *CMA Matters*.

Bruce Rogers, from Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, CA, has been one of the most sought after choral directors in the country. His chamber choirs have performed at many Western Division Conferences, as well as ACDA National. This past year, his choir performed, once again, flawlessly in the Dallas Morton Meyerson Symphony Center at the ACDA National Convention. After the performance it was an honor to congratulate him. I asked him how it felt to be the group that had to follow the Iowa State Women’s Choir, Cantamus. This choir, under the superb direction of Kathleen Rodde, sang a magnificent set of music, and was awarded a standing ovation until every performing member had left the stage. Bruce’s comments were, “I had to go after THAT??” Well, he did, and what an outcome. The audience was even more responsive. His choirs not only sang beautifully, but they understood that connecting with the audience is the most important part of their performances.

In addition, Bruce also has an award winning Vocal Jazz Ensemble, “Singcopation.” In *Downbeat Magazine*, Singcopation has been named “Best Collegiate Vocal Jazz Group” eight out of the past twelve years.

Edie Copley, Elizabeth Schauer, Ed Hughes, Tom Bookhout, and Rebecca Osborn, will be featured in interest sessions ranging in a variety of topics, along with eight different reading sessions (you will pick four and receive your music upon arrival).

The following choral ensembles will be present to do performances and/or serve as clinic choirs:

Chandler Children’s Choir

*Director, Amy Stewart*

Phoenix Girls Chorus

*Director, Dana Tiller*

Tucson Academy Adv. Women’s

*Director, Caleb Nihira*

Sedona Academy of Chamber Singers

*Director, Ryan Holder*

Mt. San Antonio College Singcopation

*Director, Bruce Rogers*

Finally, there will be time to connect, be inspired, and attend social activities. Please take advantage of our state conference and all that it has to offer you.

Register today: [www.azacda.org](http://www.azacda.org)

## Choral Reviews for High School Choirs

Written by Jesse Sapakie

AzACDA Repertoire and Standards Chair—

High School Choirs

Mountain View High School, Mesa, AZ

### *Muddy Waters*

Music by Roger Miller, arr. John Leavitt

SATB with accompaniment

Hal Leonard 08621858

From the musical *Big River*, *Muddy Waters* is a quick song that is not only a lot of fun to sing, but highly enjoyable for the audience. Written for four parts, it is a fairly easy piece that can introduce students to the musical theatre genre and promote healthy vocal production.

Selections from musicals can provide a glimpse into an ever-evolving genre. This piece also allows students to experiment with anywhere from minimal to extensive choreography. Another strength about this arrangement is that the writing seems to encourage good vocal production. The length of phrases and rests allow the students to properly prepare their breath support, producing a sound that can maximize their abilities. While the ranges do creep into the lifts of the men, the combination of sufficient preparation time and vowel choice make the production much easier than imagined.

*Muddy Waters* is also a great learning tool for consonants. The lyrics not only promote successful performance of initial and ending consonants in a phrase, but also internal consonants. Take the opening line, "Look out for me, oh muddy waters." Through the use of jumps, the internal consonants in the phrase ('k', 't', 'f', 'm', 'm', 'd') are all set up to allow the students to use the consonants to help sing accurately. Without even realizing it, the students begin to develop strong internal consonants, a skill that can then be transferred to any style of music.

If you are looking for a way to introduce some musical theatre to your growing mixed choir, *Muddy Waters* is a great choice.

### *The Salley Gardens*

arr. John Leavitt

SATB with accompaniment

Hal Leonard 08754073

An arrangement suitable for a beginning or medium level high school group, John Leavitt's arrangement of *The Salley Gardens* is a beautiful piece for the middle of a set. Written for four parts with no divisi, the song is a great way to learn about phrasing and expression of text.

The song basically has three sections, with the first and third being almost identical, with a little coda "Oo..." section at the end. In each of the sections, all the men or all the women have the opportunity to sing the melody phrase in unison. This allows each part to learn the general phrasing of the song fairly easily. It also allows them to sing with a full tone, as they have the support of half of the choir.

Each section of the song does also offer some four-part writing to counterbalance the unison line found initially. This provides a small challenge in spots, as there are some large leaps in the bass and a few interesting dissonances, but nothing out of reach of a medium level choir. The song ends with all parts on an "oo" that gives the teacher the opportunity to teach individual phrasing. With each part changing notes at different times, the students can effectively learn how to sing their own musical line that overlaps with the other parts. While easy to learn, it creates a beautiful tapestry that is a successful way to end the song.

## Choral Reviews for Men's Choirs

Written by Elliot Liles

AzACDA Men's Choir Chair

Veritas Preparatory Academy, Phoenix

### *Sing Dem Herrn*

Music by Michael Praetorius, arr. Wallace DePue

Two-Part

Alfred Music Publishing #1618966

All Parts: D3-D4

This canon, originally written by the well-known Renaissance composer Michael Praetorius, is easily used for two to five voices in any combination. This piece would be a good choice for a choir at any level and the limited range would suit any men's



chorus quite well. Both English and German texts are included and are concise and easily learned. The text itself, “Sing dem Herrn, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alle Leben ihm, Lobe seinen Namen, Singe mit Tambourine und Harfe,” translates to “Sing to the Lord, Alleluia, Alleluia. Every living creature praise his name. Sing with tambourine and harp.”

Possible performance options include using the piece as a processional with a men’s chorus or in an antiphonal setting with different choirs surrounding the audience. Music history of the period could also be introduced. Praetorius was an important composer of the Renaissance and his writings on music were extremely insightful. Rather than theoretical contributions, he wrote extensively on performance practices of his time and was quite possibly the most widely known music academic in his own time. His writings were some of the most important to the early music revival of the 20th century, and contributed greatly to the knowledge of previous styles and practices. With extensive possibilities for voicing and performance, this versatile canon would be a solid choice for a men’s chorus of any level or ability.

#### *Fair Phyllis*

Music by John Farmer, arr. Russell Robinson

TTB Unaccompanied or with Piano

Alfred Music Publishing #37941

T1: F#3-E4

T2: F#3-E4

B: G2-D4

Proponents of early music and the benefits of teaching music history are always on the lookout for repertoire choices that act as both a historical lesson, and as an accessible piece for middle or high school choirs. Unfortunately many of the reductions that are widely available fall flat, not for a lack of good intentions, but usually due to being poorly conceived. It is pleasantly surprising then, to find this arrangement of a traditional madrigal with the ability to stand on its own. Although it does not include the full four-part polyphony present in the original, the texture is not compromised.

The vocal lines of the different parts lie in a comfortable range and the necessary light quality of the

piece itself will aid in the singers acquisition of the high notes. With some repetition and the melodic nature of each of the polyphonic parts, your singers may have an easier time learning parts compared to traditional homophonic works. Like the original, the arrangement emphasizes changing meters and contrasting dynamics in repeated sections. With its joyous, dance-like feel and a text to which young men have no difficulties relating, this arrangement would work well for an up-and-coming male chorus.

#### *The Morning Trumpet*

Music by B.F. White from *The Sacred Harp*, arr. Mack Wilberg

TTBB Unaccompanied

Oxford University Press

Catalog Number: 3304585

T1: D3-Gb4

T2: D3-Eb4

B1: A2-B4

B2: A2-B4

This great arrangement of a traditional Southern shape-note song is an accessible vehicle to get an intermediate men’s ensemble singing in four-part harmony for the first time. If needed, parts can be readily omitted without loss of texture, as open consonances are a key attribute of the original compositions in the shape-note style. Starting with a march-like solo for the tenors, the entire choir joins in and layers new harmony on each successive verse and chorus. The second tenors sing the same repeated melody for the entire song, enabling them to retain independence as the harmonic structure intensifies.

Historical context could be easily introduced with this song, as the style of the original composition comes from our own folk traditions. As the rural English parish music was introduced to America during colonization, schools emphasizing the correct singing of sacred music were established with the new shape-note notation system. This new form of music was much different than other types of traditional music. It emphasizes open fourths and fifths in the harmonic structure, would usually have the melody assigned to the tenors, and was extremely participatory. These traits, combined with the unique way of singing that is readily heard in traditional practice of the style, would be a welcome change in any

concert. With its accented rhythms, percussive vocal lines, and gripping dynamics, combined with the accessible arrangement, this song would be a great choice for a burgeoning men's ensemble.

### **Choral Reviews For Women's Choirs (Middle School and High School)**

*Sammy J. Brauer*

*AzACDA Reading and Sessions Chair – Women's Choir Director of Choirs and Orchestra, Coronado High School, Scottsdale, Arizona*

#### *Renaissance Women*

A collection of songs during the age of the Renaissance

Michael East, Pierre Certon, Johann Jeep, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, Hans Leo Hassler  
Edited, collected and arranged by John Leavitt  
SSA Unaccompanied  
Hal Leonard Corporation #08596810

#### *How Merrily We Live*

Music by Michael East 1580-1648

Number Four in his second set of Madrigals

Michael East, also known as Michael Este, was an English organist and composer. In 1601, East wrote a madrigal that was accepted by Thomas Morley for publication in his collection *The Triumphs of Oriana*. In 1606, he received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Cambridge and served as choirmaster at Lichfield Cathedral. His most highly-regarded works are his five-part fantasies for viols. *How Merrily We Live* is a lovely three-part work arranged by John Leavitt for women's voices. The piece begins in a polyphonic texture, only later to shift to a hymn-like chorale, using alternating meters, between 3/2 and 2/2, serving to make the rhythm of the text agree. The voices in this section line up singing in homophony, a central part of music of the day, and typical to the true Renaissance style. John Leavitt's arrangement cleverly allows the vocal line minimal change, using the textural repetitions to drive the more musically important moments.

#### *Je le vous dirai! (Do not dare I say it)*

Music by Pierre Certon 1510-1572

[or in its original French realization, La, la, la, je ne l'ose dire]

"In the middle of the sixteenth century in Paris, a particular fad took hold for Voix de ville. The best chanson composers of the day suddenly took to setting the 'voices of the village,' music loaded with dance rhythms and simple melodies as if sung by villagers. Pierre Certon was apparently living in Paris already, and issued a collection of the popular chansons in 1552; it became a hit," according to Timothy Dickey, researcher for web site All Music, by Jovi ([www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com)).

The song setting is a simple homophonic chord progression in B Minor. The refrain has a subtle rhythmic motive that suggests cackling. This whimsical French chanson 'gossips' about a (not handsome) husband who is jealous of his beautiful wife. The original French chanson is translated as: "There is a man of the village who is jealous of his woman; he is not jealous for nothing, because he is cuckolded completely; she will go hand in hand with anyone to the sea." The simple text presented in John Leavitt's edition is somewhat watered down: "Do not dare I say it, I will tell you now: There's a man [who] lives in our village who is jealous of his wife. He is not jealous without reason, for he is not a handsome man! As she leaves to go to market, he will follow by her side, and la, la, la, do not dare I say it, I will tell you now." The range in each voice part is fairly narrow with little extension of range. This is a delightful addition to concert/festival repertoire for women's choirs. This work is also available through Hal Leonard as a stand-alone piece.

#### *Mein Feinslieb (O Dear Love)*

Music by Johann Jeep 1581-1644

Johann (also Johannes) Jeep (pronounced Yape) served in both the court and the church as a musician. In addition to German part-songs, he wrote psalms and hymn settings. He was an organist, choirmaster, and composer. His best-known song is the 4-part madrigal *Musica, die ganz lieblich Kunst* (Music, the most lovely art). This German Lied is a straightforward work of imitative part-singing. Even though in 2/2, it is marked poco animato with the half note to equal 60. A quality performance of this work was done recently by the Academy of Tucson High School Advanced Women's Choir during the ACDA Fall Choir Festival. This Leavitt adaptation is offered as a single work.

*Sonatemi un balletto (O play a ballet for my love)*  
Music by Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi 1550-1622

Original English translation: "Play a dance for me, I want to dance with my love! As I have great pleasure In dancing, I'm telling the truth, Come on, what are you doing? Start playing!"

Gastoldi was an Italian composer of the late Renaissance-early Baroque periods. He served at Santa Barbara Church in Mantua and is best known for his madrigals, dance songs, and sacred music. Gastoldi's balletti music basically had a simple chordal texture, with sometimes a quick declamation and rhythmic accents at the expense of contrapuntal display, as is to be expected from their close relationship to dance music in general. He was best known for his *Balletti a cinq voci*. However, *Sonatemi un balletto* is derived from *Balletti a tre voci*, 1594.

*Tanzen und Springen (Dancing and Leaping)*  
Music by Hans Leo Hassler 1564–1612

Hans Leo Hassler studied in Italy with Andrea Gabrieli. He was one of the first composers to bring the innovations of the Venetian style across the Alps, which was a prominent move toward the Baroque style of writing. In Germany, he held many successful posts as organist and composer. Hassler wrote music for both the Catholic and Protestant churches as well as secular music.

This arranged work by Leavitt should be performed in a "spirited" fashion. There is a balletto-like rhythm in 3/4 meter with long stresses on certain text, and usual dotted quarter note to eighth note rhythms. Much of the text is playful using the fa-la-la syllables.

A quote from John Leavitt & Hal Leonard:  
"The small collection of pieces represents the high art and refinement of the choral song from several countries during the age of the Renaissance. The vocal chamber music in this collection was designed for entertainment in a palace chamber or the home."

This collection of songs set for women's voices is a quality choice for women's choir performance in a

Madrigal Dinner Theater setting. For more information, please read my article on the subject.

Available are two additional Renaissance re-works by John Leavitt:

*The Renaissance Singer*, an a cappella setting of a collection of songs by John Dowland, Thomas Morley, Heinrich Isaac, Johann Jeep, Orlando DiLasso, and Pierre Certon, edited and arranged by John Leavitt, SATB, Secular. Hal Leonard Corporation 08596774.

*Renaissance Men*, an unaccompanied setting of a collection of songs by Giovanni Croce, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Guisepppe Ottavio Pitoni, Jacob Arcadelt, Michael Praetorius. Edited and arranged by John Leavitt, TTBB, Secular. Hal Leonard Corporation 08596797.

Citations include *Music in the Renaissance*, W. W. Norton, 2012, *Strunck's Source Readings in Music History*, Sept. 1997, Wikipedia.org

### **Choral Reviews for Junior High School**

*Written by Jason Neumann*  
*AzACDA Reading and Sessions Chair—Junior High School Choral/General Music Teacher, Elective Team Leader, Royal Palm Middle School*

*Songs of a Summer Afternoon*  
Arr. Emily Crocker  
3-Part Treble and Piano  
Hal Leonard 08753050

This arrangement contains a wide variety of American folk tunes that are perfect for a beginning or intermediate choir. All four of the melodies used in this piece can be taught individually first, allowing the conductor time to solidify the melodies by rote before showing the choir the music. If you are a Kodály trained teacher, these melodies are very familiar and can be a part of your sequential instruction. The piano provides a simple accompaniment by outlining chords and providing a simple rhythmic drone.

In the middle section the arranger adds some variety to the piece by changing keys with the introduction of the fourth melody. The closing section then combines phrases from the previous melodies,

creating a layering effect that helps students feel a sense of accomplishment by singing in a dense melodic texture. This piece is perfect for a spring concert in which parents, students, and teachers are all thinking about the wonderful things they would like to do in the upcoming summer months.

*The Adventures of Isabel*  
Music by Andrea Ramsey  
2-Part with Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon  
Hal Leonard 08752679

This wonderful set of two pieces is an original composition by Andrea Ramsey that is part of the Henry Leck *Creating Artistry Choral Series*. The text is two poems by poet Ogden Nash entitled “Isabel and the Doctor” and “Isabel and the Bear.” In each movement the choir shares the story through the text, while the instruments provide the character of the bear and the doctor, both of whom interact with Isabel. The oboe part depicts the slippery and crafty nature of the hack of a doctor that Isabel meets. In movement two, Isabel meets the bear, portrayed by the bassoon. The large footsteps are represented by the low and long sounds written for the bassoon player. This set is the perfect addition to any concert to lighten the mood and share a choir’s ability to communicate through text, timbre, and facial expressions.

### **Choral Reviews For Boys Choirs**

*Written by Scott D. Glysson*  
*AzACDA Repertoire and Standards Chair—Boys Choirs*  
*Director of Music, Good Shepherd United Church of Christ*  
*Assistant Director, The Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus*  
*Vice President University of Arizona Graduate ACDA Chapter*

*A Hanukkah Remembrance*  
Music by Victor C. Johnson  
Two and three-part  
Heritage Music Press

Victor Johnson combines the traditional Hebrew text “Nes gadol haya sham” with additional English text in this simple setting for beginning choirs. Typical of Victor Johnson, the harmonic progressions are well thought out so as to be both interesting

and accessible to young choirs. The voice leading is well constructed and mostly stepwise. The accompaniment and solo violin line add an additional element of beauty to the piece. Three-part mixed and two-part editions are available.

*Riu Riu Chiu*  
Audrey Snyder  
Hal Leonard

This simple setting of the Spanish Carol *Riu Riu Chiu* is an excellent arrangement for any beginning choir. Snyder sets the carol in a way that is accessible to choirs, and still maintains the integrity of the carol. The carol’s rhythmic challenges are simplified by the use of a steady time signature and the way that Snyder sets the two voices against each other. Snyder provides both English and Spanish options for the verses. The piece also lends itself to a variety of ways the conductor can highlight the dance like nature of the carol, such as use of various percussion instruments.

### **Choral Reviews for Show Choirs**

*Written by Kathrine Kouns*  
*AzACDA Repertoire and Standards Chair—Show Choirs*  
*Horizon High School, Paradise Valley, AZ*

*Mambo No. 5*  
Arranged by Jeff Bowen  
TB  
songsrus@showchoirmusic.com  
www.showchoirmusic.com  
1-800-725-2243  
Music Arrangement Services  
P.O. Box 356  
Owensboro, KY 42302-0356

Many of you are probably familiar with this tune. It was popular on the radio a while back, and you may be wondering how it could ever be appropriate for students to sing. The original lyrics talk about “gin and juice” and a few other questionable topics. This arrangement, done by Music Arrangement Services is great. All of the lyrics are cleaned up and at first glance, it looks like a really basic, almost unison song for your guys. Of course, we are all looking for songs that are easy enough for our beginning men

to sing, but that also make them look and sound cool. Well, this is it! Here is what you do: find about 15 to 20 girls in your program that are outgoing and would do well in this situation. Sit down for a few minutes and make a list of their names. Replace the names in the song with the names of your girls. For example, "A little bit of Kristen in my life, a little bit of Jennifer by my side, a little bit of Caitlin's all I need, etc." Then have your freshman guys sing, but have these girls come on stage and dance with them or even just strut across the stage when their "name" is said. The audience loves it, the guys get to sing with the girls and feel "cool," and then they sign up for choir the next year, which is, of course, the goal, right? If you don't have a band, you can buy the karaoke track to the original song and cut it in Garageband to make it fit this arrangement. It works great!

*You'll Never Walk Alone* (from *Carousel*)

Arr. By Mac Huff

SATB and piano

Hal Leonard 08621227

This is an oldie but a goodie. Truly, this is one of my all-time favorite pieces for the end of the year or graduation. Although the original version of this song from *Carousel* can sound like a funeral dirge, this once certainly does not. It starts small and grows throughout the entire piece, reaching an overwhelming climax at the end that brings an audience to tears and to their feet. It has a soulful feel than really modernizes the classic tune. It works with just piano, but it is better with the full orchestration. The track that is prerecorded and available to order is surprisingly well done, and works well if you are singing on the football field for graduation. Believe it or not, the song also works well when performed unaccompanied. Give it a try: you won't be disappointed.

