

TACTUS

American Choral Directors Association Western Division Newsletter • February 2016

READ *F*A*S*T*!!!

CONFERENCE STARTS IN A *F*E*W* *H*O*U*R*S*!

Still
need to
register???

TRY THE BUTTON OR
ACDAWESTERN.ORG/CONFERENCE.HTML



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**ACDA
Western Division
Leadership**

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See You In Pasadena

Anna Hamre
President



Imagine the plight of poor George Kaiser, Heinrich Schütz's favorite bass. In his letter to his Dresden Court employer, who had not paid the few available musicians for some time, Schütz bitterly complained that **Kaiser was forced to pawn his coat and jacket and sleep on straw for bedding.** Making music was extraordinarily difficult during the Thirty Years' War.

And yet, some of our greatest masterpieces came out of such dark days.

When we gather in Pasadena in February, let us remember the giants who created the choral world we live in. We will hear incredible music from this division and elsewhere on this ever-shrinking planet, music that has developed because of the generations of devoted choir masters who paved the way for us in 2016.

And that, dear friends, explains the title of this conference:
"How can I keep from singing?"

Travis Rogers
President-Elect



I will never forget attending my first ACDA Western Division Convention in Los Angeles in February of 1984. It was three days of choir heaven! Regular sessions were held at the Airport Hilton Hotel with concerts presented in the evening at the Loyola Marymount Chapel a few miles away.

It was the start of now over thirty years of attending Western Division and National Conventions (now "conferences"). The opportunity to meet and greet the biggest names in our profession has been just one of many memorable and life-changing experiences.

Techniques learned, literature acquired, social contacts begun and continued have been some of the real benefits gained through conference attendance through the years.

It's the concert performances at our gatherings though that remain the most vivid memories. A hall full of choral directors and singers listening to the best-of-the-best in spectacular concert halls or churches, enjoying and experiencing together the choral art and the joy of beautiful singing, have been among the exciting, meaningful and profoundly impactful experiences of a lifetime.

This year's lineup for our upcoming conference in Pasadena is truly exceptional. The venues are beautiful and all sessions and concerts are within a few blocks' walking distance. The Western Division board, under the stellar and effective leadership of our President, Anna Hamre, has planned a terrific conference.

Why should you attend?! Because it's time for all of us to recharge, come together and celebrate the art, reaffirm our community as choral musicians and be inspired to continue to lead and inspire our singers back home with all we learn and experience at the conference.



John Alexander

**Channeling Our Passion:
The Choral Conductor as
Entrepreneur**

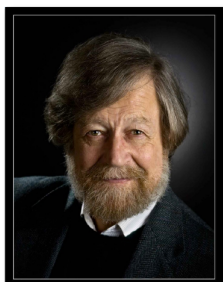
Thursday February 25th, 2016
Convention Center 211
2:15pm-3:30pm



Craig Hella Johnson

**A Workshop
with Conspirare and
Discussion with the
Conductor**

Friday February 26th, 2016
Hilton Ballroom
1:00pm-2:00pm



Morten Lauridsen

**The Music, The Word,
The Process, Inspiration,
and Composition**

Friday February 26th, 2016
First Methodist Chapel
4:15pm-5:30pm



Charlene Archibeque

**The Dynamic Choral
Rehearsal**

with input from the research of
Debra Glaze
Portland State University

Saturday February 27th, 2016
Hilton Ballroom
12:15pm-1:30pm



André de Quadros

**A Global Perspective
on Music, Change,
Building Bridges, and Building
Lives**

Saturday February 27th, 2016
Hilton Ballroom
3:00pm-4:15pm

S.M.A.R.T. TALKS

Seminars on Music, the Arts, and Related Topics

*Five eminent musicians,
scholars, and innovators
explore important issues,
invest in the leaders of the future,
and honor the essential
nature of our art.
It will be informational and
inspirational.*

WHO MAY SIGN UP?

Students may sign up first and
will be given first priority.

HOW TO SIGN UP?

At the REGISTRATION DESK
there will be a booth to sign up,
first come/first served.
Students will receive a **S.M.A.R.T.** wristband.

MAY OTHERS ATTEND?

Subject to available seating, yes.
Students with wristbands
will be given first priority.

RECEIVE CREDIT!

Receive Grad Credit through CSU Fresno
Register online or at the Registration Booth
Cost: \$75 for one credit

More Information:

Cheryl Anderson
cranders@cabrillo.edu

How My Topic Chose Me Interest Session Previews

We asked some Pasadena interest session presenters for **inside information**:
What drew you to your topic? What have you discovered recently?

MUSIC IN THE CALIFORNIA MISSIONS HARMONY MURPHY

I have been interested in missions since we studied them and built replicas out of **sugar cubes** in 4th grade! When it came time to choose a topic for my doctoral dissertation, I happened to be taking a class on American music and found this **whole world of unexplored mission music** that, as fate would have it, was led by my favorite undergraduate professor in music, Craig Russell. I instantly felt at home. Since then, I have loved exploring the music from that time.

This interest session for new music educators was born out of a desire to share the kind of information that is often difficult to acquire—unless one experiences these things first. Much of the career advice I received was so general it didn't seem to apply to me or to my educational, career, or life goals. Music educators are a unique mix of artist and educator, which makes some life choices and career decisions a bit more complicated than those professionals who only have one goal in mind. My session addresses some of the issues that are unique to the music education profession. So if a young music educator can learn some critical tips for navigating their early career, and **avoid some typical career mistakes** from hearing my story—and the resulting advice I can give—without actually having to go through them, I would be delighted.

CHOOSING YOUR PATH WISELY— TIMELY TIPS FOR NEW MUSIC EDUCATORS RICHARD HINTZE

My career has not been the regular, linear career—staying in one job for 15 years, for instance. Over the last 40 years I have taught in nine different school districts, in two different states, in six different cities. I have taught at all levels, including the professional choir, University, high school, jr. high school, and elementary (K-5). I have served as Music Minister in twelve different churches, two of those in a full-time capacity at very large churches, the rest part-time while teaching concurrently. My programs have been highly successful in every instance, but by most standards **my non-linear career as a whole has been suspect**, when observed and evaluated by others. Since I just completed my DMA at the University of Arizona, I hope be able to teach at the University level for the next 20 years, and to share my successes and failures with the next several generations of choral music educators.

MATH AND MINIMALISM IN THE MUSIC OF DAVID LANG CALEB NIHIRA

This project was originally conceived of as part of the culminating lecture recital requirement for my master's degree at NAU. With this project, I wanted to explore the process by which David Lang writes his music. After a **phone interview** and many hours studying his scores, it became evident to me that Mr. Lang is unique in his approach to composition. Most recently, I have uncovered many **medieval techniques** in his music after taking a medieval music course at the University of Arizona (I just began coursework toward the DMA in Choral Conducting this Fall.) I am excited to share with the ACDA community the things I have gleaned from his scores. I think the session will be of interest for choral conductors at all levels and at all stages of their careers.

I have participated in several Jewish Music workshops for ACDA. The usual focus was on the Hebrew prayers, and repertoire for religious services. Having been involved with Jewish Choral music for over 30 years, I wanted to highlight the repertoire of the **non-religious, cultural music** of the Jewish People.

For over 10 years I conducted the American Jewish Choral Society, a national organization dedicated to preserving Yiddish Art Music. For the last 10 years, through the LA Jewish Symphony, I have presented workshops and concerts that use Sephardic music to bridge the gap between the Jewish and Latino populations in LA.

There is a wealth of published and non-published repertoire that can be used for multi-interfaith and multi-cultural programming. My workshop will give an introduction to the richness of the music of two different Jewish cultures; Ashkenazic and Sephardic. Although both pray in Hebrew, the people express the joys and sorrows of life by singing in the vernacular languages of Yiddish and Ladino. We will discuss, listen and maybe sing through examples of some of my favorites, how to incorporate the repertoire in your concerts, and resources on where to purchase.

**INTERFAITH/
INTERCULTURAL
PROGRAMMING—
JEWISH CHORAL
MUSIC FROM THE
SEPHARDIC AND
ASHKENAZI
TRADITIONS
NOREEN GREEN**

**CPU BACH: HOW
CONDUCTORS
CAN EFFECTIVELY
USE TECHNOLOGY
TO HAVE BETTER
REHEARSALS AND
PERFORMANCES
TOBIN SPARFELD**

I think the idea first germinated as I was setting up for choir rehearsal one day in a Smart classroom, which has a sound system, computer, and video projector. I also teach a music appreciation class in there using lots of technology earlier in the day. I thought to myself, **"Why is all of this technology going away for choir rehearsal?"** The students are the same, the teacher is the same...Is this really the best way to rehearse singers?" In my research, I have found a number of resources recommended by great musicians, while other helpful methods are relatively unknown by others.

I came up with the acronym in 2014 when I presented an early version of this session at the Utah Mid-Winter Music Educators Convention and it has stuck since. I find it nicely represents the main unique idea about this approach to listening—**Circulate to Hear Others In Rotation.**

The idea is to give each singer frequent opportunities to encounter all the other voices and consequently to learn their own place in the ensemble. The singers take ownership easily of the ideas and often develop new approaches as we go. Plus, it's great fun in addition to being transformative!

**C-H-O-I-R:
CIRCULATE
TO HEAR
OTHERS IN
ROTATION
MARK
HENDERSON**

**TAKADIMI
RHYTHM AT
SANTA MONICA
HIGH SCHOOL
JEFF HULS**

Using Takadimi rhythm syllables has changed the way my students and I learn, perceive, and perform rhythms. It has provided my students with **concrete tools** for rhythmic accuracy, expanded our **literacy levels** (especially with intricate rhythms and complex meter) and brought an **overall awareness** of the importance of rhythm and beat in all of our music.

Chat with a Composer

in the Exhibit Hall

Lou De La Rosa and David V. Montoya, *presiding*

THURSDAY, February 25

11am Saunder Choi, Shawn Kirchner, Kevin Memley, Dale Trumbore

2:15pm Nilo Alcalá, Kirke Mechem, Ariel Quintana, Denice Rippentrop

9:45pm Sydney Guillaume, Ruth Huber, David V. Montoya, Dale Trumbore

FRIDAY, February 26

9am Brian Holmes, Ron Kean, Kirke Mechem, Denice Rippentrop

4pm Nilo Alcalá, Roger Emerson, Jerry Grant, Ariel Quintana

SATURDAY, February 27

7:45am Brian Holmes, Ruth Huber, Frank La Rocca

11am Jenni Brandon, Jerry Grant, Frank La Rocca, Brad Nelson

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ACDA Western Division

TACTUS Winter 2016

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Summer 2016: TACTUS' first annual workshop list

Looking for a summer opportunity in Western Division? Here are **seven**. For teachers/adults—singers, directors, audiences—and some also for students/teens. *If you offer a summer program that you'd like included in our next list, **let me know!***

June 15-19

(Wed-Sun)

What: **Chanticleer in Sonoma**

Where: Sonoma State University

Website: chanticleer.org/sonoma

Contact: Jenny Bent:

chanticleerinsonoma@gmail.com or 707-664-3925

Who: Chanticleer

Description/Notes: Intensive five-day program of coaching, classes, and rehearsals designed to make you the best choral singer that you can be. Chanticleer's twelve singers participate in chamber ensemble coaching sessions and demonstrations of rehearsal techniques, as well as informal interactions with workshop participants throughout the workshop. And they sing with the tutti ensemble! Designed for experienced chamber chorus or other choral singers at the university level and beyond.

July 11-15

(Mon-Fri, 9:00-noon and 1:30-4:30)

What: **San José State U. Summer Choral Workshops**

Where: San José State University

Website: www.sjsu.edu/music/alumni_community/summer_choral_workshops/

Who: Charlene Archibeque, Jeffrey Benson

Description/Notes: Morning course focuses on conducting, afternoon course focuses on rehearsal techniques.

July 18-20

(Mon-Wed)

What: **AzACDA**

Where: Mesa Community College Performing Arts Center, Mesa, AZ

Website: www.azacda.org

Contact: AzACDA President Elizabeth Schauer
erschaeue@email.arizona.edu

Who: Brad Holmes (Millikin University), Mary Goetze (Indiana University)

Description/Notes: Interest sessions, reading sessions, exhibits, discussion sessions, performances and much more make up this schedule on a wide range of topics and for all choir types. (photo: AzACDA 2015)



c. June 20- July 30

DEADLINE ALERT: MARCH 1

What: **Three-Summer MM in Choral Conducting**

Where: Cal State LA

Website: www.calstatela.edu/choral

Contact: Office of Choral Studies 323-343-4067,
William Belan wbelan@calstatela.edu

Who: William Belan, Donald Brinegar

Description/Notes: By completing three seven-week summer residency sessions, working music teachers, international students and others with scheduling conflicts or location constraints can earn the Master of Music in Choral Conducting (MMCC) degree, accredited through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Each intensive summer session prepares the student in choral pedagogy, performance practice and applied vocal/choral training.

July 31- August 2

(Sun-Tues)

What: **San Diego Summer Choral Festival Conducting Workshop**

Where: San Diego State

Website: [sdscf.instantencore.com/
web/page.aspx?title=Conducting+Workshop](http://sdscf.instantencore.com/web/page.aspx?title=Conducting+Workshop)

Who: Patrick Walders

Description/Notes: Three days of intensive choral conducting study, focusing on gesture, rehearsal techniques, warmups (group voice lessons), vocal pedagogy, programming ideas, and choral literature for K-12, church, and community choirs, including two pieces from the San Diego Summer Choral Festival repertoire (see August 4-7). Private lessons, group lessons, rehearsals, and interest sessions during day and evening. A choir made up of members of the San Diego Master Chorale and auditioned local choral musicians will be available every evening acting as the main vehicle for Conducting Fellows, both in rehearsal and at the culminating recital. Designed for K-12 music teachers (especially instrumentalists who conduct choirs), church musicians, community choir conductors, college and high school students, and choral music enthusiasts. Participate as Conducting Fellow, Conductor, or Auditor/Observer.

August 4-7

(Thurs-Sun)

What: **San Diego Summer Choral Festival**

Where: St. Paul's Cathedral and St. Andrew's by-the-Sea, San Diego

Website: SDSCF.instantencore.com or
www.facebook.com/sdsummerchoralfestival

Who: San Diego Pro Arte Voices

Description/Notes: Improve individual vocal technique, choral repertoire knowledge, and choral performance practices, through performance in two of the city's most rewarding acoustics—St. Andrew's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church (Pacific Beach) and St. Paul's Cathedral (Banker's Hill). Open to all levels of vocal ability and experience: students (rising 9th graders through college), church musicians, amateurs, semi-professionals, and professionals. The artistic vision of the summer choral festival is to perform repertoire in different time periods, languages, and styles: works from the classical canon to unknown gems to new compositions.

August 1-5

(Mon-Fri)

What: **Diablo Valley College A Cappella Camp**

Where: Diablo Valley College (Pleasant Hill campus)

Website: dvc.MUSIC.net

Contact: Bret Peppo: 925-969-2699, bpeppo@dvc.edu

Who: Bret Peppo, Kevin Redrico, Martin Lejano

Description/Notes: Week-long training. New a cappella arrangements. Solo and choral singing techniques. Beat-boxing workshop. Mid-week talent show. Group recording session in DVC studio. Ending performance for friends and families.

Your Workshop Here

To add your summer
workshop to our next list,
contact the editor:
ninagilbert@yahoo.com

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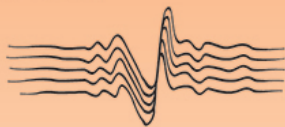
(To attend the Continuing Course, you must have attended the Bodymind and Voice Course

Saint John's University • Collegeville, MN

Since 1982, the *VoiceCare Network* has offered courses to thousands of music educators, choir directors, voice teachers, performers, and voice enthusiasts, from all over the world, and shared research, knowledge and techniques, to reshape what they know about and do with voices.

The *VoiceCare Network* invites you to rejuvenate your passion for the voice and transform your knowledge by immersing yourself in the creative, hands-on, 8-day graduate level, 4 semester credit/**only \$90 per credit**/54 contact hour *Bodymind and Voice Course* or, if you have attended before, return to the 6-day, 3 semester credit, 33 contact hour *Continuing Course* (this year focusing on the *Personal Voice*) where, regardless of your level of experience, you will:

- Explore classroom and rehearsal approaches to help singers build confidence, grow and succeed.
- Discover how to sing for a lifetime and teach others to do the same.
- Invite freedom in yourself and others to produce rich, effortless, and expressive sound.
- Experience how freedom in conducting gestures enhances choral sound and expression (*Bodymind & Voice* and *Personal Voice*).



VOICECARE NETWORK

The *VoiceCare Network* is affiliated with the National Center for Voice and Speech. Endorsed by the National Association of Teachers of Singing and the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota.

Visit our website at www.voicecarenetwork.org
for more information and complete course details
or contact us by phone: (320) 363-3374
or e-mail: info@voicecarenetwork.org



Elizabeth Grefsheim



Carol Klitzke



Babette Lightner



Axel Theimer



Leon Thurman

Repertoire and Standards Reports



Male Choirs Zach Halop

I hope you are all looking forward to the Western Division Conference! There will be plenty of great

roundtables, reading sessions, and wonderful music to be heard and experienced in concert.

As I look back on the past years, I have talked to and encouraged everyone I know to be forthcoming with literature selections that were winners. While I have not heard from many, I hope you all are sharing your ideas for the good of the choral art. The male chorus reading session in Pasadena will share some tried and true nuggets as well as some new pearls. The choices are an eclectic bunch. There are holiday selections, some multi-cultural music, folk songs, and some brand-new octavos hot off the press. Voicings from TB to TTBB divisi.

For everyone in attendance at that session, there will be a list to jot down your favorite and successful selections, which I will then compile and send out to anyone who wants it.

I hope to see you all at the conference!

CHANTICLEER IN SONOMA CHORAL WORKSHOP June 15-19, 2016



Join Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble CHANTICLEER at Sonoma State University for an intensive five-day program of coaching, classes, and rehearsals designed to make you the best choral singer that you can be.

The workshop is designed for experienced chamber chorus or other choral singers at the **university-level and beyond**. Male and female singers with good sight-singing ability are encouraged to apply. Admission is determined by specific criteria, including vocal characteristics and background, recent choral experience, and a reference statement.

Don't miss this exceptional opportunity to learn first-hand from the professionals of Chanticleer, all in the comfort of the Green Music Center at Sonoma State University in the heart of the Sonoma wine country.

For more information visit chanticleer.org/sonoma or contact Dr. Jenny Bent: chanticleerinsonoma@gmail.com or 707-664-3925



UNLV | School of MUSIC

The UNLV CHORAL ENSEMBLES enjoy an outstanding reputation for vibrant performances throughout the southwest and beyond. From Las Vegas to New York, from Mexico to Montreal, the university choirs are ambassadors of art and goodwill through their voices united in song. The choirs perform a wide variety of *a cappella* repertoire as well as major choral-orchestral masterworks. Membership is open by audition to undergraduate and graduate students, music majors and non-majors. Some choirs are also open to faculty, staff, alumni and community members.

CONCERT SEASON 2015-2016

"THE GREAT SPIRIT OF LOVE"

Tuesday, October 20, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

Sunday, Oct. 25, 2:00 pm (GV United Methodist Church)

31ST ANNUAL MADRIGAL-CHAMBER CHOIR FESTIVAL

Friday, November 6, 4:00 & 7:00 pm (UNLV)

"WHAT SWEETER MUSIC"

Friday, November 20, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

"THE SNOWMAN: HOLIDAY CONCERT"

with the LAS VEGAS PHILHARMONIC

Saturday, December 5, 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 6, 2:00 pm

(The Smith Center for the Performing Arts)

"SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE"

Saturday, March 5, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

"ALZHEIMER'S STORIES"

Friday, March 11, 7:30 pm (Green Valley Presbyterian)

Sunday, March 13, 3:00 pm (Mountain View Presbyterian)

"AN EVENING WITH THE UNLV CHOIRS"

Friday, April 1, 7:30 pm (Green Valley Presbyterian)

CHAMBER CHORALE HOME CONCERT

Friday, April 15, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

WOMEN'S CHORUS & VARSITY MEN'S GLEE CLUB

Wednesday, April 20, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

MASTERWORKS CONCERT: BRUCKNER & BERNSTEIN

Saturday, April 30, 7:30 pm (UNLV)

UNLV Concert Singers and Chamber Chorale, Las Vegas

Master Singers & UNLV Symphony Orchestra

UNIVERSITY CHORAL ENSEMBLES

CONCERT SINGERS • CHAMBER CHORALE

Varsity Men • Women's Chorus

LAS VEGAS MASTER SINGERS

David B. Weiller & Jocelyn K. Jensen, conductors

"The UNLV Singers delivered a near perfect concert of sacred and secular music...The singers, conductor, accompanist and audience members all but danced in the pews." (*Concert Singers on tour in Colorado*)

"...joyous singing, remarkable delicacy and poise, impressive performance, expressive fervor..." (*festival adjudication by Martin Bernheimer, Los Angeles Times*)

"The entire performance was glorious, yet disciplined. The orchestra, soloists and choruses performed with unaffected charisma." (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*)

The UNLV CHORAL ENSEMBLES . . .

- have toured the southwestern United States, Hawaii, New York, Mexico and Canada.
- have appeared with the University Symphony Orchestra, the Las Vegas Philharmonic, the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra and the Mexico National Symphony.
- have performed by invitation at western division conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and at regional and state conferences of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME, formerly MENC).
- have appeared in numerous fully staged productions in collaboration with UNLV Opera Theatre.
- sponsor an active student chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. The chapter has hosted the ACDA Western Division Student Symposium numerous times on the UNLV campus.
- proudly perform the music of internationally known composer and UNLV alumnus ERIC WHITACRE, who first experienced choral music while singing in the UNLV Choral Ensembles.

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UNLV Choral Studies office, (702) 895-3008.

E-mail: <david.weiller@unlv.edu>

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www.facebook.com/UNLVChoralEnsembles

Repertoire and Standards Reports



Women's Choirs Jennifer Tibben

Thoughts on Community-Based Women's Choirs

We are a diverse crowd of folks in the women's choir world. There are HS directors that have one or more women's choirs at their school. There are community HS group leaders that have talented and rigorously trained singers. There are collegiate faculty that conduct the women's choir on their campus. And there are those of us that lead a community group, volunteer or auditioned, ages 20+. AND, many of us wear a multitude of those hats!

What role do we play in these varied aged women's lives? What do they give us? What do they (and we) give our communities? And how many of us have had to reply to "Go to a women's choir concert?! No thanks!"—only to have the commenter come to the concert and be moved to tears by the beauty of the singers' tone and expression?

Here's what I am realizing: we are vital. We are vital to our community's music making. The truth of expression of text that a 70-year-old singer brings to music is quite different than what a 20-year-old brings. And we need both of those perspectives. Sadly, because of how our bodies and voices age, the message of the 70-year-old's story is sometimes not as beautiful to hear sung. And, the message from the 20-year-old may not be as rich and complex. So, I strive for balance with the younger voices bringing strength when sometimes the more mature voices wane. And then what happens? Life stories are shared, experiences are shared, burdens are lifted and lightened. The 23-year-old walks out chatting with the 74-year-old about her baby and her work. And they each bring light to the other.

I think when I was a younger whipper-snapper, I missed those opportunities with my group. I worked relentlessly for the perfect programming (Hmm....I guess I still do that), and the perfectly matched vowels and tuned chords (oh, yeah, I still do that, too!). But I missed the community part. I shared less of myself, and in turn, my singers shared less as well. Well, a divorce, career path change and kids growing up and leaving the nest have reshaped me. How my singers can bring their different stories together and make our story, for our time, for our community, is my top priority.

We are vital to our singers' life and health and happiness and well-being. We are vital to our community—sharing songs and stories and providing them with beauty in our shaky and scary world. We provide respite. And hope. And joy. And beautiful singing. Keep up the good work!

ACDA **Western Division Leadership** Repertoire & Standards Chairs

Boys

Jason Raetz, Phoenix Boys Choir
jwraetz@gmail.com

Children

Herbert Washington, Gilbert Christian HS
herbertwashington@pcchorus.org

College & University

Cory Evans, Utah State U.
cory.evans@usu.edu

Community Choirs

Michael Short
Orange HS, Orange Community Master Chorale
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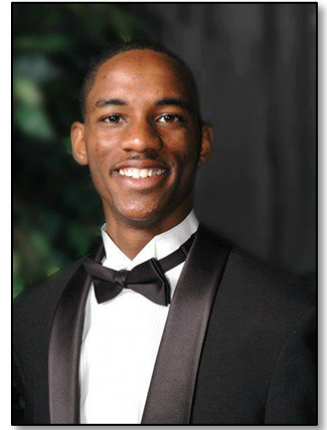
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Executive Board: p. 2

Repertoire and Standards Reports

Children's Choirs Herbert Washington



10 Concepts To Enhance the Everyday Rehearsal “Shake Up” Your Choir Rehearsal

The choir rehearsal is designed to develop the musical skills of the chorister and instill appreciation for the choral art form. More importantly the rehearsal is a major vehicle to create and build long-lasting meaningful relationships through exciting and memorable experiences. As teachers, it can be a challenge to balance daily learning notes, provide individual attention, and engage all students in a fun and intellectual atmosphere. Due to a decrease in our students' attention span, a decrease in ensemble retention, and an increase in their thirst for instant gratification, the “sit and sing,” 45 minute or longer choral rehearsal, has faded. As music educators, this reality challenges us to step out of our own personal shell and reach all students on an exciting, deeper, and personal level. We must find a way to once more inspire student ownership and contribution in the choral rehearsal.

The following 10 rehearsal concepts stem from my conducting experiences which, whether used consciously or organically, have proven to be successful in creating a more interesting, engaging, and relevant choral rehearsal.

“Welcome!” Many times, as we frantically run around preparing our classroom for rehearsal, we miss out on vital opportunities to uplift the moods of our students and encourage them to leave their worries at the door. Greet each student at the doorway with a handshake or a Hi-five as they enter. If this is not possible, then make it a point to sincerely connect with students about their day as they sit down and prepare to learn. Then have students quickly greet those around them to reinforce this concept. Starting rehearsal with positive individual connections will set the tone for the rest of their day.

Family Time As soon as your class begins, have them do a physically and mentally engaging activity together. This does not always have to be related to the music they are learning in class. For example, students can learn a choreographed 8 count, a rhythm or solfège exercise, watch a funny video, or play a fun bonding game. Laughter is the best tool to combat all negativity.

Clear Purpose Music ensembles provide students with the opportunity to practice accountability and readiness. Therefore it is important to share concepts and goals of the day with your ensemble. Place goal oriented information, needs, and rehearsal schedule on the board or projector so that there are clear reminders for students to follow. On a smaller scale, clear concise goals are needed when warming up, fixing a musical section, and providing musical information for the score. This will speed up the learning process and keep students focused on the task at hand.

Creative Warm-ups At times we fall into the trap of monotonous choral warm-ups, which can cause disengagement unless the purpose is consistently reinforced or introduced in new way. Add kinesthetic movement, which corresponds to the vocalise. Such examples to demonstrate articulation are

large sweeping motions, marching in place, hand levels, or dipping. For a greater understanding and ideas study the Laban and Dalcroze methods of movement. The use of tactile objects and props are always successful. Bring in Yoga balls to strengthen their core, straws to assist with breathing, or ropes to help demonstrate the “press and release” of a line. During the rehearsal process utilize movement to enhance and explain musicality. There are a plethora of resources to give you more ideas if you feel this is a challenge. To be clear, this is not a new concept, but it is one that is easily overlooked.

Change Vantage Points You are the president of the room and choristers enjoy when you join the masses. Change their perspective during the rehearsal. Walk the room, stand on chairs, stand in between singers while singing with them, or listening to them. These moments, allow them to see a different side of you. More importantly this allows for individual attention and vocal instruction.

Formations A predictable rehearsal over time becomes stale and disengaging. Occasionally switch the formation of the room, practice without chairs, mix the choral parts, or even rehearse in a new location. This is a great practice as this concept has a direct correlation to the concert performance. A predictable concert for the audience can have an uninspired result as well. Utilize these concepts provided to enhance the concert experience for all. Some examples include surrounding the audience, using props or costumes, different levels and groups, adding musical instruments, performing in unusual venues, greeting and thanking guests for attending.

Managing the Room With a large mix of personalities and levels amongst your choristers, it can be difficult to keep them on task. Teach your ensemble to focus on the “ready signs” of the conductor. This will allow students to engage in positive conversation, which benefits the whole

ensemble. Negative talking consists of speaking out of turn, or side conversations during the rehearsal while other sections are working. Encourage positive behavior and discourage negative behavior without demeaning the student. When a student is off task, refocus the full class. Techniques to accomplish include pointing out positive behavior and actions, seated levels, audible attention getters (clapping, sirens), walking the room, changing formations, or a quick 1 min stretch or game. Occasionally there are unavoidable moments where you must speak directly with a student without anger, which is extremely important as it teaches and demands the choristers respect for the conductor, time, and each other. Our goal is not to create a completely silent environment as choristers are wonderful beings with mind, body, spirit, and voice connected as one.

Use of Technology Media has changed the way we teach dramatically and for some it is an ongoing battle with the machines. However your bold move to incorporate technology will increase the rate of learning and the once tedious process of teaching theory will become renewed and exciting to your choristers. Some example uses of technology in my classes are skypeing with choral composers and musicians as a clinician, colleagues to teach the pronunciation of a language, score preparation and study tips using pdf on screen, listening and watching other ensembles interpretation of repertoire

Teachers are competing every day to audition and keep choristers involved in choral activities. The tools provided for a daily engaging rehearsal are a few ways among many. As stated before teachers have been using the following techniques and more for a long time, but occasionally a reminder is helpful to be imaginative, creative, and personal to reach your choristers everyday. Please feel free to email me and share your wonderful daily techniques and ideas to continue to enhance our incredible choral art form.

or choreography, and sight-reading from our phones. There are many innovative ways to use technology to enhance the engagement level of your rehearsal.

Discussion As teachers we sometimes find it difficult to manage talk with work in the rehearsal. One usually happens in excess depending on our personality. Discussion in the rehearsal albeit quick or long provides a differentiated instruction, which invites the chorister to be engaged and challenged on a different level. I use discussion when repeating a section of music, explaining the historical context of the repertoire, reviewing goals of the day, reflecting on accomplishments or improvement needs, explaining life lessons via music, and expressing the beauty of the choral art form. These moments allow each and every person in the room to be vulnerable and share true thoughts and feelings.

“Enjoy Your Day” Since we have opened the rehearsal with a greeting it is important to come to an inclusive close during the final minutes of the rehearsal. The “Power of the Circle” is a great vehicle where the chorister can feel appreciated, safe, and apart of a family environment as they walk out the door and face the day head on. Ways this can be done depending on your ensemble are through chant or cheer, prayer, games, hugs, or stories. As they exit, be the face of positivity and care by meeting them at the door.

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Exciting things are happening in Arizona!

There are so many people in our state with great passion for choral music and an ardent desire to share it. Here are just some of the things their dedication and hard work are making possible.

Membership

Arizona ACDA currently has over 400 members. During the 2014 Sing Up membership drive, Arizona was 5th out of 50 states in overall growth with an increase of 29.6%, and in the top 5 for student growth with 59 new student members. This year we were one of 5 states to give away all of our complimentary memberships for new members. Our goal is to reach 500 members within the next two years.

AzACDA Summer Conference

Our summer conference has grown to include more offerings, invitational performances, more Arizona presenters, an exhibit space and so much more. Attendance has shown a 60% increase in the last two years, with 160 participants in 2015, with attendees not only from Arizona, but also from California, Washington and Oregon, and as far away as New York. In 2016 (July 18-20) we will welcome Brad Holmes and Mary Goetze as our headliners, and will move to our new home at Mesa Community College Performing Arts Center to accommodate our increased attendance.

Festivals

Arizona ACDA sponsors three festivals each year: the High School State Choral Festival in March, the Junior High/Middle School Choral Festival in May and the Cantaremos Honor Choirs Festival for 5th-9th grade singers in November. This fall our Cantaremos Festival grew to include over 200 students from 30 different schools and organizations! How exciting to catch students at this age and foster a life-long love of our art.

Thanks for everything you *all* do for the choral art, for your singers, and to keep the Western Division strong and thriving!

Arizona State Report

Elizabeth Schauer



Student Symposia

The student chapters at Northern Arizona University and University of Arizona have hosted the last two Western Division Student Symposia in 2014 and 2015, respectively. These events bring together students (mostly from Arizona) who create and attend a mini-conference focused on the needs of our next generation of choral educators, and also provide real-world experience for the future leaders in our profession who design and organize the event.

AzACDA Board

Twenty-three dedicated professionals said yes when asked to serve on the 2015-2017 AzACDA board. They hit the ground running at our first meeting in July, working to craft and realize visions of what our organization will be in the coming years. Our constituents are meeting them through our new In the Spotlight feature, introducing a new R&S chair through our Facebook page and email blasts twice a month.

Western Division Honor Choirs

Arizona will be represented by 197 singers in the three honor choirs offered at this year's Western Division conference. Congratulations and thanks to **Stephanie Brewer**, Andie Chung, Ryan Garrison, Aimee Stewart, Phil Goldblatt, Herbert Washington, Sarah Ross, Andrea Squires, Danya Tiller, Ron Carpenter, Judith Durocher and Julian Ackerley for their support of these ensembles!



Cantaremos Festival (photo credit: Danya Tiller)

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2016

Sharkova – Ireland June

2017

Kennedy – Greece
New Year 2016/17

Loepky – Austria
May, Uniquely for college choirs

Peter – Austria
June, Young men's/women's/mixed choirs

Stroope – Spain
June, Perform with the composer

Dickson – Italy
June, Faure Requiem

Leck – Ireland
June, Children's choirs

Dilworth – UK/France
July, Spirituals/Gospel

2018

Hella Johnson – Sydney Opera House July

