



Colorado RE:View

The Newsletter of the Colorado Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association
Vol. 28, No. 2 Spring 2011

Inside this issue . . .

Children's Honor Choir	2
From the President	3
Headliner Bios and Sessions	4 – 5
Infusing Vitality in the Community Choir	6
Concert Dates	6
School, Renewal, and the Pool	7
Back to the Future	9
Editor's Last Word	10



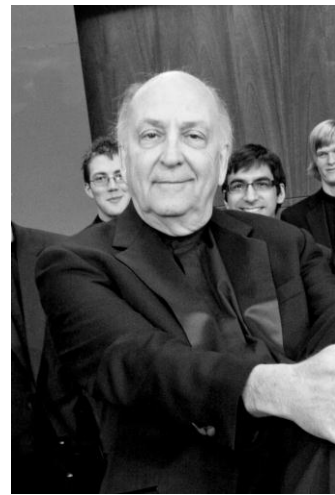
CoACDA Summer Workshop 2011 July 25- 27

Bethany Lutheran Church, 4500 E. Hampden Ave.

Featuring Headliners:



Karen Kennedy



John Yarrington



Paul Caldwell



Sean Ivory

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Caldwell and Ivory to conduct Children's Honor Choir at Summer Workshop

This dynamic duo of composers is also widely sought after as clinicians for honor choirs world-wide! Paul Caldwell, Artistic Director of the Youth Choral Theater of Chicago, and Sean Ivory, Director of the Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Chorus, will provide your singers with a "mountain-top" experience this summer. Jena Dickey (Founder and Artistic Director, Young Voices of Colorado) says:

"(Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory's) work at last summer's Sing A Mile High children's choral festival was beyond my wildest dreams. They were extremely engaging with the singers, demonstrating a charisma that is rare and, frankly, "off the chart." Paul is the flamboyant creative genius ("Has Djembe, Will Travel") and Sean is the quiet wizard of the keys who pulls together the accompaniment and plays the balancing straight man. Together they defy description."

Don't miss this incredible opportunity for your singers to work with these world-renowned clinicians!

WHAT: Colorado ACDA Children's Honor Choir conducted by Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory

WHEN: July 25, 26, 27 2011

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Rehearsals Monday evening, Tuesday & Wednesday during the day
Concert Wednesday at 5:00 pm

WHERE: Bethany Lutheran Church, 4500 E. Hampden Avenue, Englewood

WHO: Singers exiting grades 4, 5, 6 & 7 (all treble voices welcome)
Please recommend only well qualified singers who can match pitch well, who will be dedicated to practicing their music and learning it ahead of time, and who have the ability to focus attention well in rehearsal!
Teachers/Directors of all participants must be current members of the American Choral Directors' Association

COST: \$50.00 per student to cover the cost of music, rehearsal CD, performance t-shirt, lunch on Wednesday, snacks

Direct questions to and request more information from:
Lori Bammesberger, CoACDA Children's Choir R&S Chair
Colorado Springs Children's Chorale
lori@kidssing.org
719-633-3562 (office)
719-963-3878 (cell)

**Download the REGISTRATION FORM
at www.coloradoacda.org.**

From the President

Daniel Grace, Interim President
Bethany Lutheran Church



Hello. In the last issue of this newsletter, the picture that appeared next to this article was that of a pretty woman. And in this issue it is my picture. The thought “beauty and the beast” comes to mind. Nevertheless, here I am for the next few months.

For those of you who were able to go to Chicago, I hope you felt as rewarded as I did by the many informative interest sessions and round table discussions as well as the exquisite performances that were heard every day. And speaking of exquisite, wasn't Colorado's own Kantorei absolutely wonderful? Dick Larson and his singers are to be congratulated for the performances that they gave on Saturday in Orchestra Hall. I was particularly captivated by the US premiere of FUTILITY by British composer John Duggan. Kantorei certainly brought a sense of pride to every choral director in Colorado. Of course, along with other highlights, there was the meeting and greeting of old friends, the catching up, the comparing of notes, the good times.

And now here we are back at work, preparing for end-of-year concerts, auditioning for next year's choirs and dealing with all the many details that go with our job (including parties--golf tournaments, etc., etc.). So you may not want to think about summer plans and the start of next year, but the fact is that the 3 days at this year's Summer Workshop will be filled with fun times and great insights to help make your teaching and directing even more rewarding next year.

Our annual Summer Workshop will be held July 25-26-27 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Cherry Hills Village, CO. The schedule will include 15 reading sessions where almost 200 choral selections will be sung; 12 interest and headliner learning sessions; 2 concerts (a church choir and a children's honor choir); and an opportunity to visit exhibits, to greet old friends and to meet new ones.

Please take a moment to read the bios of our headliners in this newsletter. These out-of-staters will bring their unique perspectives and expertise to share with us. Doubtless many of you will know their names from your previous experience or from their publications. If they are new to you, more's the better--you are in for a real treat.

Those of you who have previously attended the Summer Workshop know that Tuesday and Wednesday of the 3-day event are filled with sessions aimed at school and community--wonderful interest presentations, round table discussions, reading sessions, and headliner exchanges. Dr. Karen Kennedy offers hands-on and exciting information presentations, and the team of Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, dynamic teachers, is not to be missed. These headliners will send you home with new skills and renewed enthusiasm for the year to come.

For the first time, for our day of emphasis on Music in Worship, we have a featured headliner whose expertise crosses most of the fields of choral music, but whose concentration has been on choral music in worship. Dr. John Yarrington will bring us fresh insights into all aspects of that peculiar combination of people called The Church Choir. His sessions will be filled with work and wisdom, but presented with such wit and humor that you will recognize your singers and yourself, in much that he is saying. Of course Music in Worship Monday has also expanded to include various workshops for the non-church director. Reading, interest sessions and other secular music events will run simultaneously with the church choir sessions. Since many of us will direct a church choir on a part-time basis at some point in our career along with our other directing opportunities, this is another day not to miss.

So there you have it--3 days of learning, listening, singing and enjoying--a rewarding and memorable experience. You owe it to yourself to attend.

Repertoire & Standards Chairs

College and University

Beth Robison
Adams State College
bwagstrom@adams.edu

High School

Sarah Harrison
Cherry Creek High School
sharrison7@cherrycreekschools.org

Jazz and Show Choir

Julie Williams
Cherry Creek High School
jwilliams67@cherrycreekschools.org

Multi-Cultural

Sue Williamson
University of Colorado, Boulder
sue.williamson@colorado.edu

Men's Choir

Larry Meerdinck
Westminster High School
lmeerdinck@me.com

Middle School/ Junior High Co-Chair

Abigail Kilcoyne
Sunset Middle School
klilcoyne_abigail@stvrain.k12.co.us

Music and Worship

Dan Grace
Bethany Lutheran Church
dgrace@cybox.com

Women's Choir

Jill Burleson
University of Northern Colorado
jill.burleson@unco.edu

Children's Choir

Lori Bammesberger
Colorado Springs
Children's Chorale
lori@kidssing.org

Youth and Student Activities

Leila Heil
Colorado State University
lheil@colostate.edu

Community Choirs

Scott Hamlin
Longmont Chorale
pianochoral@yahoo.com

Summer Workshop Headliner Bios



Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory began writing music together spontaneously in the early 1990s when they were both working with a community-based youth choir in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Fifteen years later, their work has earned a beloved stature in the standard choral repertoire, often performed and recorded by the world's finest ensembles. Their music has been telecast on PBS and A&E and performed at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, the Sydney Opera House, and throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. They have been commissioned by the Crescent City Choral Festival in New Orleans, the Children in Harmony Festival at Walt Disney World, the Sing A Mile High Choral Festival in Denver and ACDA Southern Division. In one way or another, their music has been featured at every national conference of ACDA for over a decade. In the past four years, the National Endowment for the Arts has funded three different commissioning projects allowing them to create new works for American choruses.

Paul is Artistic Director of the Youth Choral Theater of Chicago. In recognition of his work in this capacity, he and his chorus were awarded the 2006 Chorus America/ASCAP prize for Adventurous Programming. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Chorus America. In this capacity, he chairs Chorus America's Committee on Programs and Education and serves on the organization's Executive Committee. He was honored for his contribution to the choral community nationwide at the 2008 National Performing Arts Conference when he was selected as the recipient of Chorus America's Michael J. Korn Founders Award for Philanthropic Contribution to the Arts. His recent guest conducting engagements include the Jr. High Honor Choir for ACDA Southern Division and the Festival Vocalizze in Portugal.

Sean directs the Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Chorus, an affiliate organization of the Grand Rapids Symphony. The ensemble maintains a heavy schedule of appearances with the orchestra (*Carmina Burana*, *On the Transmigration of Souls*) in addition to its independent concert series. Sean is also the choral director at Forest Hills Central High School and an affiliate artist with the Youth Choral Theater of Chicago. He lives in Grand Rapids (MI) with his wife Leah and their children, Emma, Samuel and Meredith.



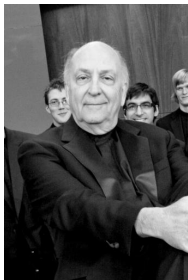
Praised by the San Francisco Classical Voice for her "wizardry with voices" and named by the Honolulu Star Bulletin as "... a popular and charismatic leader," Karen Kennedy currently holds the position of Director of Choirs at Towson. Before joining the faculty at Towson, she held the positions of Chorus Director for the Honolulu Symphony, Artistic Director for the Hawai'i International Choral Festival, and Director of Choral Activities at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. A recipient of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral music from Arizona State University, Dr. Kennedy also received a Master of Music in choral conducting from Butler University and a Bachelor of Music Education from DePauw University.

During her time in Hawai'i, Dr. Kennedy conducted the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in performances of Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Durufle's *Requiem*, Faure's *Requiem*, Mozart's *Great Mass in C Minor*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Rutter's *Gloria*. She has conducted the New England Symphonic Ensemble and a 200-voice festival chorus in a Carnegie Hall performance of Mozart's *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, as well as choirs in venues such as the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah, the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, Sweden, Ely Cathedral in Ely, England, Southwark Cathedral in London, England, and Greyfriar's Kirke in Edinburgh, Scotland. She also enjoyed a residency at Stanford University as Conductor for the Stanford University Summer Chorus Festival. In addition, she is well known as a choral clinician and adjudicator, regularly working with Gateway Music Festivals, Music in the Parks, and Heritage Music Tours. She is also a popular honor choir clinician, having served as conductor of All-State and Festival Honor Choirs in Minnesota, Colorado, North Carolina, Oregon, Hawai'i, Florida, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland.

In addition to regular podium performances Dr. Kennedy enjoys the opportunity to present workshops on choral repertoire, conducting, choral pedagogy and vocal pedagogy. Her workshops have been a part of recent ACDA and MENC regional and state conventions, most recently in Virginia, Connecticut, Oregon, Maryland, and Hawai'i.

Dr. Kennedy has received numerous awards for teaching, including the University of Hawai'i Chancellor's Citation for Meritorious Teaching, Arizona State University's Manzanita "Top Prof" Award, Butler University's Faculty Distinction Award, and is a two-time recipient of the Lawrence Township Schools Superintendent's Award.

Dr. Kennedy is currently serving as the ACDA Eastern Division Collegiate Repertoire and Standards Chair, and is a past-President of the Hawai'i chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. She is an active member of Chorus America, and is a founding member of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, where she currently represents the state of Maryland.



Dr. John Yarrington is Director of the School of Music and Chair of Choral Studies at the Houston Baptist University. Additionally, he is Director of the Chancel Choir at the First Presbyterian Church of Houston. Former churches include McFarlin United Methodist, Norman, Oklahoma, First United Methodist, Dallas, Texas, and the Pulaski Heights United Methodist, Little Rock, Arkansas. In Arkansas, he founded the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Chorus which he directed for five seasons, and was Interim Conductor of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra for one season. He was also Artistic Director of the Arkansas Chamber Singers.

After graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Music Education degree, Yarrington completed the Master of Sacred Music degree at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City, studying with Sergius Kagen, Madeleine Marshall, Abraham Kaplan and William Gephart. Continuing graduate studies at the University of Oklahoma under Dr. B.R. Henson and Dr. Dennis Shrock led to completion of the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree.

An active contributor to professional journals, his writings on choral techniques, organization and philosophy of church music are well known. His published choral compositions are with Augsburg-Fortress, Choristers Guild, Abingdon Press, MorningStar and G.I.A. Published books include *Building the Youth Choir*, *Somebody's Got My Robe*, *Somebody's Got My Hymnal*, *Choir Crackups* and *Have We Had This Conversation*.

Yarrington is active in the American Choral Directors Association and served as Southwest Division President. He has been featured conductor for numerous honor choruses and All-State events. His workshop schedule takes him throughout the United States and Canada. In the summer of 2011, Dr. Yarrington will be leading workshops for the Oklahoma ACDA, the Colorado ACDA, and the National Methodist Music Week at Lake Junaluska.

At HBU, his choirs have distinguished themselves for their artistry and range of literature. In a recent residency, composer, Morten Lauridsen said of the choral work: "this was among the finest, both on a college and professional level. Their sense of pitch, vocal color, and interpretation of the music is very high."

Dr. Yarrington and his wife, Diane, have six children and five grandchildren.

Sessions to be offered at the Summer Workshop

CALDWELL AND IVORY:

Teaching Historical and Cultural Context Through Choral Music

Much of the world's music finds its power through relationships with events, cultures and the great stories of civilization. Choral performances of world music provide us with a way to identify with and remember those things we should never forget.

Behind the Scenes with Caldwell and Ivory

Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory will present their most recent work, scores available only at www.caldwellandivory.com. This is all new stuff from the *Go Where I Send Thee*, *Hope for Resolution* and *John the Revelator* guys. And they'll take us on a fascinating walk behind the scenes to show us how two guys write the same song. Hear all the back story - first hand.

SESSIONS PRESENTED BY YOUR CoACDA BOARD MEMBERS:

Recruiting Men for the Choral Program

Singing Without a Net: Piano-Free Rehearsals

Setting up the Next Four Years for Success:

Freshmen – Day One and 184 to Come

Hosting Student Teachers: Creating a Win-Win Experience

Three Cups of Tea (Ti)

The Best Vocal Jazz Arrangements

So What Do They Have That We Don't?

KAREN KENNEDY:

The Golden Rehearsal: Using Ancient Principles to Focus Modern Singers

This workshop focuses on using golden proportion and the Fibonacci number series as tools for rehearsal planning and pacing.

Idol Worship: How American Pop Star Technique is Affecting Our Singers

This is a fun but informative presentation that delves into how to prescribe warm-ups for specific vocal issues, many of them originating in our students' own iPods.

Acoustical Seating: Maximizing Sound and Tone

This workshop will focus on how to use timbre matching as a vehicle for optimum choral tone.

Conducting Masterclass

JOHN YARRINGTON:

Sessions to be announced.

Infusing Vitality in the Community Choir

Scott Hamlin, Community Choir R&S Chair
Longmont Chorale



I was recently asked by the Longmont Times-Call newspaper to answer the following questions: “What are the greatest challenges working with artists?” and “What are the greatest rewards?” What a great opportunity to tell about the joys of rehearsing and performing excellent choral music and the positive experience of working with individuals who have joined our community choir.

As Artistic Director of the Longmont Chorale, I am privileged to lead singers of varied ages, skill levels and experience. Over the last couple of years we have made a concerted effort to include high schoolers in our group. (One way we welcome them is by waiving all fees that other choir members pay.) We had noticed that the average age was on the rise, which isn’t too healthy for most community choirs. The Chorale has benefited tremendously with nearly 25 students joining us during the last two seasons. The vitality, excitement and enthusiasm they have brought have been invaluable - so has the training we’ve given them. Some go on to college as music majors, some to sing in their college and church choirs - one who sang with us last year now sings with the Naval Academy Glee Club - and all with good memories of singing in a large community choir. And for those that return to Longmont, they know there is a place for them to continue singing.

These students sit next to Chorale members who have sung in choirs for up to 50 years – in settings with directors such as Peter Wilhousky, Robert Shaw, Rene Clausen, Anton Armstrong, and Galen Darrough (director of the Longmont Chorale from 1990-2001). Music teachers sit next to those just learning to read music. Some can sight read any music put before them, while it takes others all their effort to get it learned by the concert date. Some are experienced soloists; others would never think of singing solos in public. Some, the picture of vitality and health sit next to those with Parkinson’s disease and failing health. While some can stand on choral risers for hours, others with hip and knee replacements need to sit. What a dynamic experience this brings, along with a feeling of family, as we support each other musically and emotionally.

So, the greatest challenges in working with vocal artists, in my situation, also yield the greatest rewards. The Longmont Chorale is one of the few non-auditioned community choirs in the Front Range. Our choir is open to anyone who loves to sing, as long as they can match pitch. What a diverse and delightful group of people make up the 100+ voices of the Longmont Chorale! With this openness, also comes the challenge: to motivate each of us to move beyond ourselves and to blend into an excellent team as positive ambassadors of beautiful choral music in Longmont and beyond (a British Isles tour is being organized for 2013).

The Longmont Chorale is a diverse group of people who work together to rehearse and perform excellent choral music for personal enjoyment and for our audiences. May we all continue to grow in this wonderful experience! Long live the community choir!

Concerts by area professional, semi-professional, and community choirs

Ars Nova Singers, Conductor Thomas Edward Morgan
“Horizons & Reflections: Ars Nova at 25,” June 3 and 4
www.arsnovasingers.com

Cherry Creek Chorale, Conductor Brian Patrick Leatherman
“Songs of the South,” May 13 and 15
www.cherrycreekchorale.com

Colorado Chorale, Conductor Frank Eychaner
“Choral Voices from the New World,” May 20 and 22
www.coloradochorale.org

Denver Gay Men’s Chorus, Conductor Ben Riggs
“The Road Home,” May 6, 7, and 8
www.dgmc.org

Denver Women’s Chorus, Conductor Mark Zwilling
“Here, There, and Everywhere,” May 21
www.rmarts.org/dwc.php

Harmony, A Colorado Chorale, Conductor Bill Loper
“20 Years in Harmony: Singing our Mission,” May 14
www.harmonychorale.org

Kantorei, Conductor Richard Larson
“The Road Home,” May 20 and 22
www.kantorei.org

Longmont Chorale, Conductor Scott Hamlin
“Spotlights and Highlights from Broadway,” May 7
www.longmontchorale.org

St. Martin’s Chamber Choir, Conductor
Timothy J. Krueger
“A Mighty Fortress,” June 10 and 12
Fauré *Requiem*, with the Colorado Music Festival, July 24
www.stmartinschamberchoir.org

Summer Chorfest 2011, Conductor Howard Skinner
Bach *Magnificat* and Mozart *Grand Mass in C Minor*, June 26
choralfest@comcast.net

School, Renewal, and the Pool: A List of Books for Rejuvenation and Renewal!

Susan J. Williamson, Multi-Cultural R&S Chair
University of Colorado at Boulder



As the school year nears an end and we contemplate how to spend our precious summer vacation, I encourage you to consider a book on teacher or life renewal as part of your summer fun. Each book in the following list features a unique perspective on creating a well-balanced and joyful life. Some books are specifically for teachers; others for artists; others still for any professional struggling with issues of life balance; yet each offers a thoughtful perspective on the unique challenges we face in the rigorous pace of American life. Enjoy one or all of them this summer!

Selection 1:

“The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of A Teacher’s Life”, Parker Palmer, 1998,

Jossey-Bass Publishing.

One of my favorite books on the subject of teaching, Palmer begins and ends with the premise that the self must be included in our concept of teaching. Based on some of the Quaker principals of his heritage, this book and its corresponding program, *The Courage to Teach*, has won national acclaim. Here some of my favorite quotes:

- ❖ “Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.” (p. 10).
- ❖ “As good teachers weave the fabric that joins them with students and subjects, the heart is the loom on which the threads are tied, the tension is held, the shuttle flies, and the fabric is stretched tight. Small wonder, then, that teaching tugs at the heart, opens the heart, even breaks the heart--and the more one loves teaching, the more heartbreaking it can be. The courage to teach is the courage to keep one’s heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able so that the teacher and the students and subject can be woven into the fabric of community that learning and living require.” (p. 11).

Selection 2:

“Bird by Bird”, Anne Lamott, 1994, First Anchor Books Edition.

Anne Lamott is one of the funniest writers there is and will ever be. Among her many gifts is the ability to so humorously describe her personal flaws that the reader feels less neurotic about theirs. Although this book provides advice regarding the writing process, since many writing challenges are the same for musicians’ artistic challenges (i.e. perfectionism, being jealous of others’ talents, etc.). Portions of this book are required reading for my choral students. This book is a great laugh, a good read, and solid advice for any teacher struggling with perfectionism. Here’s a sample favorite paragraph:

- ❖ “Perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor, the enemy of the people. It will keep you cramped and insane your whole life and it is the main obstacle between you and a shitty first draft. I think perfectionism is based on the obsessive belief that if you run carefully enough, hitting each stepping-stone just right, you won’t have to die. The truth is that you will die anyway and that a lot of people who aren’t even looking at their feet are going to do a whole lot better than you, and have a lot more fun while they’re doing it. Besides, perfectionism will ruin your writing, blocking inventiveness and playfulness and life force (these are words we are allowed to use in California).”(p. 28)

And this lovely funny exercise for quieting the loud critical voices within:

- ❖ “Close your eyes and get quiet for a minute, until the chatter starts up. Then isolate one of the voices and imagine the person speaking as a mouse. Pick it up by the tail and drop it into a mason jar. Then isolate another voice, pick it up by the tail, drop it in the jar. And so on. Drop in any high-maintenance parental units, drop in any contractors, lawyers, colleagues, children, anyone who is whining in your head. Then put the lid on, and watch all these mouse people clawing at the glass, jabbering away, trying to make you feel like shit because you won’t do what they want---won’t give them more money, won’t be more successful, won’t see them more often. Then imagine that there is a volume-control button on the bottle. Turn it all the way up for a minute and listen to the stream of angry, neglected, guilt-mongering voices. Then turn it all the way down and watch the frantic mice lunge at the glass, trying to get at you. Leave it down and get back to your shitty first draft.” (p. 27)

Selection 3:

“Take Time for Your Life”, Cheryl Richardson, 1998, Broadway Books.

This book was one of the first best sellers of the life coaching movement. It features numerous easy exercises to self-monitor and discover what parts of your life are not in balance. It has an extremely practical approach and is filled with exercises about time management and working in ways which honor the self and family. The following quotes demonstrate Richardson’s easy writing style and her hands-on practical advice:

- ❖ “During weekly telephone meetings, I listen carefully as clients talk about what they want and don’t want in their lives. Over time, I’ve identified seven common obstacles that consistently prevent people from living lives that they love:
 1. You think ‘selfish’ is a dirty word.
 2. Your schedule does not reflect your priorities.
 3. You feel drained by people, places, and things.
 4. You feel trapped by money.
 5. Adrenaline has become your main source of fuel.
 6. You’re missing a supportive community in your life.
 7. Your spiritual well-being gets last place in your busy life.” (p. 6)
- ❖ “Making the decision to change your life starts by making a personal choice. Too often we get caught up in all there is to do and forget that we’re the ones running the show.” (p. 9).
- ❖ “We all need ‘soul food’. When we feed our souls, we open ourselves to the experience of grace--a moment when time stands still and we can feel a Divine presence enter our hearts and minds.” (p. 233).

Selection Four:

“A Gift from the Sea”, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, 1955, Vintage Books Edition.

A classic book written by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, featuring wonderfully poetic writing. Though gender roles have changed in American culture since it was written in 1955, Lindbergh’s questions are still salient for the reflective person of today. She draws deeply from metaphors and real-life examples of nature and beauty. I selected the following quotes to represent her voice and viewpoint:

- ❖ “Now, instead of planting our solitude with our own dream blossoms, we choke the space with continuous music, chatter, and companionship to which we do not even listen. It is simply there to fill the vacuum. When the noise stops there is no inner music to take its place. We must re-learn to be alone.” (p. 42)
- ❖ “For it is not physical solitude that actually separates one from other men, not physical isolation, but spiritual isolation. It is not the desert island nor the stony wilderness that cuts you from the people you love. It is the wilderness in the mind, the desert wastes in the heart through which one wanders lost and a stranger. When one is a stranger to oneself then one is estranged from others too. If one is out of touch with oneself, then one cannot touch others.”...Only when one is connected to one’s own core is one connected to others, I am beginning to discover. And, for me, the core, the inner spring, can best be refound through solitude.” (p. 44)
- ❖ “...intermittency--an impossible lesson for human beings to learn. How can one learn to live through the ebb-tides of one’s existence? How can one learn to take the through of the wave? It is easier to understand here on the beach, where the breathlessly still ebb-tides reveal another life below the level which mortals usually reach. In this crystalline moment of suspense, one has a sudden revelation of the secret kingdom at the bottom of the sea.”

Selection 5:

“I will not die an un-lived life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion”, Dawna Markova, 2000, Conari Press.

A deeply profound book regarding how one can re-discover passion for work, family and life. Elegant narrative writing and deeply provocative personal stories are provided by the author. Written by a friend of Parker Palmer, the author is also two-time cancer survivor and the coeditor of the original "Random Acts of Kindness". This book is filled with thought provoking questions and personal stories regarding finding deep meaning in one's life. I find these quotes particularly profound:

- ❖ “I know that for me, each point on the compass will be an evocative question. In the past five months, I have come to recognize that the question I wake up with is the path I follow for the whole day...be it, ‘How will I ever get everything done?’, which guarantees a blurred day spent in pursuit of crossing everything off the list so I can collapse into bed at the other end, or ‘How could I love this day as if I’ve never been hurt?’, which results in living wide open.”
- ❖ “No one can tell you how to find your purpose. It can only be found, slowly, in your own dark sky, in whatever is sacred to you, be that church or woods. It can’t be found by searching around for a role model or learning how cultural heroes handled their difficulties. It is seldom found by following anyone else’s rules. It lives in the rest in the place where music is born, the fertile void, the silence between notes. It is simple and basic. It emerges slowly as a sunrise, as we search through our gifts, our darkness, our losses and loves. Your job and mine is to be quiet and alone from time to time. To be present to ourselves and the natural world, to be in conversation with what is hidden in us in such a way that we can explore what brings us more alive.” p. 96.

Back to the Future!

Modern Options for Authentic Choral Performance Practice

Dr. Jeffrey S. Gemmell, guest editorialist
University of Colorado at Boulder



While watching the movie *Back to the Future* recently, I was inspired to apply the concept to choral performance. The plot is familiar: Marty (Michael J. Fox) uses a 1980's DeLorean time machine, engineered by Doc (Christopher Lloyd), to travel back in time to the year 1955. While there, Marty's adventure teaches him two lessons that have become law in time travel theory, at least in the movies: (1) our *perception* of the past is different than the *reality* of the past; and (2) any interference with the past changes the future. The first lesson is the theme of this brief article.

If we were able to travel back to the Renaissance Period and listen to performances of choral music, the *reality* of that experience would be different than many *versions* of Renaissance choral performance we hear today. Our current efforts have been influenced by hundreds of years of performing varied music of contrasting genres and styles. How can we recapture an authentic sound and style in modern performances of early choral music without actually going back in time?

A visual analogy may provide some answers: the restoration of Michelangelo's fresco in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel. A December 1989 *National Geographic* article presents a stunning array of dramatic photographs and describes the restorers' job:

The restorer's credo is like the physicians: First, do no harm. The treatment was to lift layers of Rome's dust, sooty grease from burning candle tallow, and other substances -- even the residue of Greek wine used as a cleaning solvent some 275 years ago. All had obscured Michelangelo's work. Worst of all were varnishes made of animal glues. Applied in various centuries to brighten the darkening surface, they did so for a time. Then each deteriorated and turned the ceiling darker than before. Despite its dingy appearance, most of the fresco remained in good condition (p. 697).

As the accumulated grime [and faulty "restorations"] of nearly five centuries were removed, the once gloomy masterwork was renewed to a glory of color and light. "[A] light to amaze the eye and blind the soul," writes author David Jeffery (p. 688).

In choral music, a similar kind of restoration can be applied to our performances; we can clean, renovate, and reawaken pieces that have become staid, dull, dark and gloomy. A fresh energy and interpretation may be brought to historic music by researching the most current ideas related to performance practice. In the early 1960s, conductors began to take a more musicological approach to interpretation, and this practice continues today. In preparing "early" (pre-19th century) repertoire, researching historical extra-musical context, size of ensembles, nature and use of period instruments, tone quality (timbre), phrasing, articulation, tempo, etc. — encourages the discovery of "authentic" ways to interpret and perform. Books to read include:

- Brown, Clive. *Classical & Romantic Performing Practice: 1750-1900*. Oxford, 1999
- Butt, John, ed. *The Sacred Choral Music of J. S. Bach: A Handbook*. Paraclete, 1997
- Conlon, Joan Catoni. *Performing Monteverdi: A Conductor's Guide*. Hinshaw, 2001
- Kenyon, Nicholas. *Authenticity and Early Music*. Oxford, 1988/2002.

New recordings of Renaissance, Baroque and Classical repertoire have brought these ideas to life in performances that are exuberant, captivating and vibrant. Artists to enjoy include:

- The Consort of Viols with Red Bryd
- Andrew Parrot and the Taverner Consort
- John Elliot Gardiner and the Monteverdi Choir
- Jeffrey Thomas and the American Bach Soloists.

Listen carefully to these recordings, especially the fresh interpretation of familiar works, and your musical imagination will allow you to travel acoustically back in time.

The Editor's Last Word: Preparing High School Singers for College Auditions

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1. Where to go?

If you have a student who has decided to major in music, help them define their goals and choose a program that will help them reach those goals. For example, a student wanting to become a high school choir director should look for a college or university with a strong music education program, and will most likely pursue a Bachelor of Music Education degree. The singer who wants to be the next American Idol (or the Idol's agent or recording engineer) should look for a Bachelor of Arts program specializing in commercial music, recording technology, and music business. The budding opera singer or composer will be drawn to a program with excellent studio teachers and performing opportunities in their area of interest, and may be looking for a Bachelor of Music degree.

2. What to expect from a typical audition

Most auditions will begin with introductions between the faculty panel and the student. In order to make a good first impression, it is a good idea for the student to look dressed up and clean. Women might wear a skirt or dress, or very dressy pants; men could wear a coat (if possible) and a tie. Both should wear dress shoes that are comfortable to stand and sing in without affecting posture. A student who acts friendly and respectful, and is able to introduce themselves and articulate what they hope to study, is generally more interesting to the panel. Following the introductions, most auditions will include (not necessarily in order) performance of a prepared song, some vocal exercises and/or aural testing, sight singing, additional questions and information, and a theory placement test.

3. Choosing appropriate repertoire

Many students will have very little experience with choosing repertoire for an audition, and may need a lot of guidance. Tailoring the choice of repertoire to the audition is extremely important. A student seeking a degree in musical theatre performance should definitely sing a piece from the musical theatre repertoire for his or her audition; in this situation, singing one of the 26 Italian arias would not be the most appropriate choice. A jazz standard or pop tune is not appropriate for a music education program audition, but would be a very good choice for a commercial music audition. An operatic aria may be a good choice for a music performance program audition, but not if it is beyond the student's vocal maturity (as most operatic literature is); no faculty panel is comfortable hearing a 17-year-old attempting "The Queen of the Night."

4. Sight Reading skills

Most college auditions require the student to exhibit their current knowledge and practice of music theory in some form or other. Students should be prepared to sight sing, to identify intervals if asked, to take a written test, etc. The best help you as their teacher can give is to be continually reinforcing musical skills in your classes and ensembles. Although tutoring and cramming before the audition can be of some help, it is the consistent learning and reinforcing of skills that will really be on display in an audition setting. In particular, the ability to identify key signatures is vital. Using a pitch reading system such as solfege, numbers, or intervals shows the panel that there is some understanding behind a student's sight singing attempts. In general, singing the correct rhythms (and choosing a steady tempo at which the student is able to accurately read the rhythms) is of primary importance. And remind them that slow and steady wins the race; there is no need to rush headlong to the *fine*.

5. Being prepared

Most music programs ask for audition repertoire to be memorized, and some will absolutely require memorization. Encourage your students to be completely confident and accurate in their memorization. Entering with an excuse is never impressive, even when it is intended to be. For instance, my skin crawls when a bright young singer comes to an audition and proudly announces that "I just learned this song yesterday." They may intend for us to be impressed that their musical skills are so advanced they can learn a new piece overnight, but the actual effect is to make me think they did not take the audition seriously enough to prepare. I would so much rather hear that same old song they have been singing for months, because I want to hear how far they can go with a piece of music, not how well they can fake it. Along these lines, most audition committees would rather hear something simple and well-prepared than something complicated and sloppy.

6. Accompanists

Some colleges and universities will provide an accompanist for auditions, and expect the student to bring a second copy of their music for the accompanist to use. Other schools will require the student to furnish their own accompanist. Still others might allow recordings instead of live accompaniment, but this is pretty rare, so help your students check out the rules before turning up at the audition.

7. Maintaining a positive attitude

Encourage your auditioning students to be willing to try whatever is asked of them, no matter how odd the request. They want a siren on an [i] vowel? Sure! They'd like to hear me sight read while standing on one foot? Why not! They want to hear me sing as though I'm a hippopotamus? Stand back and watch this! Faculty panels almost always have very specific reasons for asking strange things, and it is in the student's best interest to give it a shot and thereby give him or herself the chance to display exactly what the committee might be looking for in a prospective student.

8. You don't have to be a music major to sing!

This is a very important message you can give to all those singers in your choirs who are not planning to become music majors. Nearly every college music program in the country has both auditioned and non-auditioned choirs, and almost every single one of them is open to any student on campus, not just to those in the music department. So the wonderful experience of choral singing doesn't have to fade into the past for your college-bound singers!



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