



# Colorado RE:View

The Newsletter of the Colorado Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association  
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## From the President

Bill Erickson  
Cherry Creek High School



As we say another goodbye to summer and welcome fall and all the excitement of beginning a new season and school year, it is good to reflect on these past few weeks and months, now putting into action that which we spent the summer studying in workshops attended. We can all offer a special thank you to Dan Grace for his term as interim-president, as well as to his board that presented one of those workshops to be cherished for many years. What a complete joy those 3 days were in July. With day 1 and Dr. John Yarrington's perspectives and demonstrations of economizing conducting gestures and many yarns of his decades of experience to days 2 and 3 with Dr. Karen Kennedy's creativity on the podium. Her demonstrations and command of the voice coupled with her genuine love of the choral art was strongly evidenced in her spontaneity and humor. What a fantastic experience for 3 young conductors to receive her sincerity in developing a stronger sense of communicating the score through thoughtful planning and execution of purposed conducting. How great it was that we all witnessed her guiding them through conveying the score through unique activities and self-assessing, honing communication through effective and efficient gesture. She achieved with them in one session the progress that reflected months of growth.

The time Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory gave to the Children's Honor Choir and to the CoACDA contingency was a special treat indeed. If you had the opportunity to watch them in action you would agree not only are these two proven and celebrated composers and clinicians, but they are meticulous technicians in the rehearsal. The gems I gleaned from even a few minutes in the rehearsal room with them will, certainly, go a long way. Their performance with the Children's Honor Choir on Wednesday evening was breathtaking. Knowing we were going to be in for a treat was a given. However, I don't think we were anticipating being so moved, so taken by their work with this wonderful workshop chorus. That said, our special thanks also goes to those conductors and parents who sent these amazing and well prepared kids to serve us at the summer workshop.

As we all begin a new year, let's do our very best to be purposed in calling upon those experiences we've recently had that, at the time, we couldn't wait to try in our own rehearsals. Let's remember that feeling of excitement to have learned something new, even if it perhaps was only one or two techniques. I always loved that feeling of learning something new and how this new technique, concept, historical perspective, performance practice or simple quote, hit me for the first time. I couldn't wait to try it out on my singers and hoped so strongly that it hit them with the same impact that it did me. The evidence was always on their faces, but more importantly, in their sound, their

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## From the President, cont.

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artistic execution and in their appreciation of the experience. Then, could they convey this to an audience, to those who chose to come to listen to them? That was the final test.

As we move into this new year, we have the opportunity to demonstrate a renewed willingness to stretch ourselves, to improve our teaching and conducting, to hone our planning and rehearsal management, to strive for healthy balance in our lives and to present performances that are innovative, informative, of high artistic integrity, that educate, move hearts and recall past experiences with which to identify. We also have the opportunity to continue to teach fundamentals that give a more firm foundation for learning and performing. We have the opportunity to take time to listen with our ensembles through exercises in “listening for” instead of “listening to”.

We also have the opportunity to attend our SWACDA convention in Dallas Feb. 29 through Mar. 3, 2012. SWACDA president, Margie Camp, and her board, with past president, Dr. Galen Darrough, have a spectacular convention planned. (See the SWACDA website for details). Book your reservations now and give your support for Sarah Harrison and the CCHS Meistersingers, Richard Larson and the Church/Community Honor Choir and interest session presenters, Dr. Jill Burleson (rehearsal techniques) and Dr. Galen Darrough (men’s choirs).

So, let’s remember to step back, pause and breathe, plan and execute without any fear and give those with whom we work our very best. Our gift of choral music is unique. It is our tool of service to others that makes a profound connection at every possible level. In our rehearsals, we can either have a bunch of “me’s” or one big “we”. Let’s also do our very best to set aside a little time to support each other through mentoring or attending performances directed by our good friends in ACDA. Or, take advantage of an in-service day or fall break to watch someone else run a rehearsal. Relish those moments you will have that deserve pause.

I wish you all the very best for a year filled with growth, happiness, manageable schedules, balance, courage, and, the satisfaction of being an instrument in doing good in this world.

All the best,

Bill Erickson

## Special Announcement:

### Complimentary one-year membership for NEW ACDA members

ACDA National has made available 10 complimentary one-year memberships to NEW ACDA recruits. Please pass this information on to any new, professional choral musician in our state.

Contact Bill Erickson at [mr.emusicstudio@gmail.com](mailto:mr.emusicstudio@gmail.com), and a certificate for the one-year membership and registration form will be forwarded to you via snail mail.

## Music Advocacy: Should we re-think our terminology?

Dr. Jill Burleson, Women's Choir R&S Chair  
University of Northern Colorado



As I write this article, I am sitting in an airport waiting to board a plane that will transport me home after meeting meet my newly born twin grandsons. My thoughts turn to the many things I would wish for these (incredibly handsome and brilliant!!) little guys, such as health, safety, political and financial stability, personal fulfillment, and happiness. And of course, as a musician and proponent of the arts, I would unashamedly wish them a society that values the arts, and an opportunity to each personally experience the transformative power of the arts in their lives.

In the course of travel (and this trip was no exception), I inevitably meet people who ask me my line of work. When I respond that I teach choral music at the university level, I am met with two distinct reactions: either they affirm how important music *was* in their life (notice, it is almost always “was” as they reflect on their high school days), or their response is one of bewilderment or surprise, unaware that such a course of study is even offered at the university level. (How many times have I heard: “Wow, you can get a doctorate in that?”) There is a very different response from those who have (or whose children have) *personally experienced* musical involvement over the course of their lifetime, and those who have not.

This leads me to the topic of advocacy. When it comes to music (arts) advocacy, I have to admit that I'm bothered a little bit. I'm not sure why. Perhaps it is actually the terminology that makes me squirm.

According to Merriam Webster, an advocate is:

1. One that pleads a case for another (specifically before a tribunal or a judge)
2. One that defends or maintains a case or proposal

I think the second definition is more appropriate, but I must admit that in my own mind, the word *advocate* elicits an image of the first definition: that is, an image of advancing music from a position of *weakness*, giving a sense that music is powerless, needing a spokesperson so that it can be heard. Quite the contrary. Whether you are a “music for music's sake” person or a “music for all of the intellectual and quality of life benefits it provides” person matters not; the transformational aspects of the arts are inherent. They represent a historical, biological, intellectual, social, and spiritual connection to what is at the very core of our humanity.

Regarding the definitions, I think that our societal reality of *advocate* actually lies somewhere in the middle of these two definitions, for even though the arts DO have an inherent voice, the voice is often not heard. This is not due to arts weakness, but due to the clamoring roar heard from every other area wanting a piece of the financial, political, or activity pie, making it more difficult to hear. Rather than just speaking on behalf of music, maybe we need to also focus on ways in which we can allow the music to speak for *itself* in our communities.

*Cont. on page 4*

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I would suggest that we use a two-pronged approach: one that is not only *outside-in* (the legislative line of defense) but also *inside-out* (community engagement). The real persuasive voice of the arts emerges through *arts acculturation*. As our communities experience the arts themselves, we create a base of arts supporters who have been transformed internally, and in turn value the arts in their families and communities.

What are some ways in which we can engage our communities in musical experiences? It is critical that we find ways to get people involved, not just to sit on the sidelines as spectators. This may be through inviting parents to sing on our concerts (parent's chorus), bringing in prominent community members who were/are involved in music as an avocation into our musical experiences, creating partnerships with service organizations, getting our musical groups into the community to perform, creating partnerships between school and community musical groups, presenting "informances" rather than "performances" (taking time in the performance to show the audience what we have been working on, various training aspects that were involved in the preparation process), involving our choirs in volunteer projects in the community, involving parents in their children's musical educations, etc. The community engagement possibilities are vast, and merit their own ongoing discussion within our profession. The College Music Society includes a community engagement component in their national conferences. Presenters and performers at the conferences are given an opportunity to also present, perform for, or collaborate with community organizations in the city that hosts the event, creating a wonderful exchange of ideas and musical experiences, engaging the community.

I've kicked around in my mind some terminology that might substitute for "music advocacy," such as: "music pro-activity," "music engagement," "music empowerment," and "music activism." I'm not sure any one of these terminologies alone defines our work, but certainly music advocacy must be multi-dimensional and reflective of all of these terminologies to be most effective.

## Music as a Living, Breathing Art

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Dr. Beth Robison, College/University R&S Chair  
Adams State College



I remember a tenor from Georgia with whom I worked in New York saying in that wonderful Southern drawl that I cannot begin to spell phonetically that 'the notes are just a guide!' Music is a living art where only the smallest part is seen as our static, limited notation of black dots on a page. How often do we tell our students that? Yet giving our choirs the opportunity to work with living composers is a wonderful way to bring music to life. During my time as a free-lance musician, I was very fortunate in having the opportunity to work with a number of composers. It was always an insightful and thoughtful experience that made me realize that we are given the responsibility of realizing another's personal expression, and that that may take many different forms.

This past spring, the Adams State College Chamber Choir was invited to be part of a composers' weekend presented by our composition professor, Dr. Matthew Schildt. We performed works of Dr. Schildt as well as those of Los Angeles composer, Jenni Brandon and worked extensively with both of them through the final rehearsal process. What a wonderful experience it was! First of all, performing for the composers added an extra dimension of accountability for the choir. It also got them asking questions about the composers' intent. It was no longer theoretical or intellectual, but contained personal meaning and expression. Yet it also taught us that there are multiple ways of interpreting music and, if the justifications are there, there are no wrong interpretations. These composers brought us new insights into what their musical intentions were while we offered interpretations of their music that they had not considered. Music is a wonderfully fluid process and a collaboration that is not limited by a single performance, but ever evolving and different for each group.

Composers want their works to be performed and I have found them very willing to work with performing groups and often accept commissions at a reasonable rate for that exposure. Offering that exposure is a wonderful way to support our art and bring a new dimension of musical awareness and education to our choirs. And, while we may not be able to ask questions of those composers who are no longer with us, we can still breathe life into music of any age.

## Vocal Jazz Standards: A Double Standard . . .

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Julie Williams, Jazz and Show Choir R&S Chair  
Eaglecrest High School



As I was getting prepared to present my interest session at the 2010 Colorado ACDA summer workshop, I went to the ACDA website and found the ACDA National Vocal Jazz R & S Standards. I came across this statement: “It is important for all vocal jazz directors to develop strong, independent musicians.” I found this statement under the rehearsal techniques and instruction heading. The Vocal Jazz standards reinforce the 4 components of music literacy in vocal jazz: pitch, rhythmic, harmonic and improvisational literacy. The standards also state that vocal jazz solo and ensemble singers must develop these standards of music literacy in order to be successful in a small jazz ensemble. As choral educators, we know that having at least 2 to 3 strong musicians in each section, aids in the group’s success of obtaining their individual parts.

Reflecting on my own teaching situation, while reading the standards, helped me make a decision with regards to my vocal jazz choir at Eaglecrest H.S.

I want to give as many students as possible an opportunity to sing in a select vocal jazz choir. This poses a problem because I am the only choir director at Eaglecrest High School and only have one 99-minute block period available for a jazz choir. Last spring after jazz choir callbacks, I had 12 ladies that had to be in the 16 voice mixed choir. This left me with 4 ladies more than I needed for mixed choir. The level of talent and/or the returning member situation lead me to add a ladies vocal jazz quartet during the same class period as my mixed jazz choir. I chose 4 ladies that were strong, independent musicians with discipline and motivation that would be able to learn and hold their own parts independently. They all had strong musical backgrounds, play an instrument to some degree and have been singing in choirs for most of their lives. Most of all, I was confident that they would be able to listen to vocal jazz recordings and instruction in order to incorporate that vocal jazz style and inflection into their performance. We are exactly one month into the school year and the ladies jazz quartet has been able to learn their tunes independently, listen to examples of style, incorporate that style and vocal jazz technique and then quickly take the comments that I make with regards to interpretation, style and inflection, etc. I am so thankful that my instincts were correct in choosing the ladies’ quartet. Interestingly enough, they call themselves “Afterthought.”

Reading through the National R & S Vocal Jazz Standards aided in helping me choose the best 4 ladies for my new vocal jazz quartet. The standard that mentions having strong, independent musicians sing in a vocal jazz choir was the key component in making the right decision. Being a choral educator allows us to the flexibility to be creative and creating our own standards. Using tried and true national standards proves once again that the standards work.

## Upcoming Events

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### **ACDA Middle School Choral Festival**

Oct. 14, Lewisville Middle School

Adjudicators: Phillip Drozda, Sue Williamson, Tina Dozauer-Ray,  
and Janice Vlachos

[www.coloradoacda.org](http://www.coloradoacda.org)

### **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Choral Celebration at Metro State**

Nov. 3 & 4, King Center Concert Hall on the Auraria Campus

[www.metrochoralcelebration.com](http://www.metrochoralcelebration.com)

### **ACDA Collegiate Choral Festival**

Nov. 11, 7:00 pm, King Center Concert Hall on the Auraria Campus

[www.coloradoacda.org](http://www.coloradoacda.org)

### **Denver Public School District Choral Festival**

Nov. 19; Contact Priscilla Shaw for more info

### **Cherry Creek School District Jazz Choral Festival**

Nov. 21, Eaglecrest High School

Contact Julie Williams:

[jwilliams67@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:jwilliams67@cherrycreekschools.org) for more info

### **ACDA Children’s Choir Conductors Retreat**

Jan. 14 & 15, Downtown Denver Sheraton &

King Center Concert Hall

\$85 registration fee

[www.coloradoacda.org](http://www.coloradoacda.org)

## Repertoire Suggestions available at [www.cpdl.org](http://www.cpdl.org)

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### Ave verum corpus

William Byrd (1543?-1623)

SATB a cappella - Sacred

### Non vos relinquam orphano

(Or: I Will Not Leave You Comfortless)

William Byrd (1543?-1623)

SATTB a cappella - Sacred

### 6 Lieder, Op. 33

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

TTBB a capella - Secular

### Liebst du um Schönheit\*

Clara Schumann (1819-1896), arr. Drew Collins

SSA with piano – Secular

\*Not on CPDL; order from Santa Barbara, SBMP 913

### Four Quartets, Op. 92

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

SATB with piano - Secular

### Ave Maria

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

SSAA with piano or organ - Sacred

### Liebeslieder Waltzes

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

SATB with four hand piano - Secular

### 6 Notturmi

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

SAB with keyboard or 2 violins and cello - Secular

### Ave verum corpus

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

SATB with keyboard or strings - Sacred

### O vos omnes

Carlo Gesualdo (1560-1613)

SSATTB a cappella - Sacred

### “Awake the Trumpet’s Lofty Sound” from *Samson*

G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

SATB with piano - Secular

### “Sanctus” from *Lord Nelson Mass*

F. J. Haydn (1732-1809)

SATB with piano – Sacred

### Chor de Norwegischen Matrosen (Chorus of Norwegian Sailors)

from *The Flying Dutchman*

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

TTBB a capella - Secular

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

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### **Ars Nova Singers**, Conductor Thomas Edward Morgan

“Piety: A Mozart Panorama” w/ Boulder Chamber Orchestra, Oct. 28-29

[www.arsnovasingers.com](http://www.arsnovasingers.com)

### **Cherry Creek Chorale**, Conductor Brian Patrick Leatherman

“Glorious Gifts: Journies of Rebirth,” Oct. 14-15

[www.cherrycreekchorale.com](http://www.cherrycreekchorale.com)

### **Colorado Chorale**, Conductor Frank Eychaner

“Music of the Bard: Choral Settings of Shakespeare,” Oct. 7 & 9

[www.coloradochorale.org](http://www.coloradochorale.org)

### **Denver Gay Men’s Chorus**, Conductor Ben Riggs

“Holiday Concert,” Dec. 16-18

[www.dgmc.org](http://www.dgmc.org)

### **Denver Women’s Chorus**, Conductor Mark Zwilling

“Monsters Under the Bed,” Jan. 28-29

[www.rmarts.org/dwc.php](http://www.rmarts.org/dwc.php)

### **Harmony, A Colorado Chorale**, Conductor Bill Loper

“Deck the Halls,” December

[www.harmonychorale.org](http://www.harmonychorale.org)

### **Kantorei**, Conductor Richard Larson

“This Shining Night,” Oct. 22 – 23

With guest conductor Dr. Anton Armstrong

[www.kantorei.org](http://www.kantorei.org)

### **Longmont Chorale**, Conductor Scott Hamlin

“Steal Away to Spirituals and Gospel Music,” Oct. 22

[www.longmontchorale.org](http://www.longmontchorale.org)

### **St. Martin’s Chamber Choir**, Conductor Timothy J. Krueger

Brahms *Liebeslieder Walzer*, Oct. 21-23

Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, w/ Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Dec. 2-3

[www.stmartinschamberchoir.org](http://www.stmartinschamberchoir.org)

## The Editor's Last Word: Reality Television for Dead Composers

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MB Krueger, Newsletter Editor  
Metropolitan State College of Denver



I'm not a fan of reality television. I think it glorifies pettiness, selfishness, and self-centeredness, and that its primary purpose is to give us all a sense of superiority over whomever is being publicly humiliated for the sake of the ratings. However, I have to admit that reality television has given me some interesting ideas to apply in the setting of the choral rehearsal. Because I am a firm believer in the importance of exposing my singers to music of all eras of history, I have often struggled with how to make William Byrd, for example, just as exciting to students as Eric Whitacre.

So, taking a cue from "John & Kate Plus 8" or "The Real Housewives of New Jersey," I gleefully descend into the scandal, gossip, and innuendo surrounding our most revered composers, and I'll occasionally even throw in some actual facts to preserve my self-respect.

William Byrd (1543? – 1623) was a devout Roman Catholic composing in England at a time when it was illegal to be Catholic, and some Catholics (such as Mary Queen of Scots, sister of the ruling monarch, Queen Elizabeth I) were even executed (beheaded, in Mary's case) for refusing to renounce their religion in favor of Protestantism. Setting sacred Latin texts was a dead give-away, since one of the tenets of the emerging Protestant faith was that the vernacular language should be used in all religious services and music; yet Byrd wrote some 200 Latin motets and anthems. Even so, he managed to maintain his position as composer of the Chapel Royal, Queen Elizabeth I's private place of worship, and he never was made to actually pay the heavy fines levied against him for "recusancy." Many historians like to think that Queen Elizabeth I recognized his genius and loved his music so much that she refused to punish him for his obvious crimes. Anybody care to sing "Ave verum corpus" or "Non vos relinquam orphanos" (later translated to "I Will Not Leave You Comfortless")?

And how about that suspicious love triangle between Robert Schumann (1810-1856), his wife Clara Schumann (1819-1896), and Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)? Young Brahms is welcomed into their home as a student of Robert, whom J. B. idolizes. But, alas, Robert experiences mental health issues, is institutionalized, and dies in the asylum. J. B. then moves in with Clara and the kids – he's an old family friend, after all – and takes over as man of the house. He had such high respect for Clara as a musician and composer that he showed her everything he wrote before he ever showed it to a potential publisher; if she didn't like it, he burned it. We can all do the math and wonder whether Clara was a "cougar," or whether she was a mentor, or some of both . . . Perhaps a rendering of some of the *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, or the *Opus 92 Four Quartets* is in order.

Then there's Mozart – how did Nannerl feel about her little brother being encouraged and fawned over while she was told music could only be a pastime for her, and never a career? Did Antonio Salieri really hate Wolfgang as much as the movie would have us believe? Did Wolfie really have that annoying laugh?

Carlo Gesualdo – murdered his wife and her lover when he caught them together; is the craziness of his harmonic language the result of a deranged mind? George Friderich Handel — told his Austrian employer a little white lie about going to England for a while and then returning, but in reality stayed and took a job as court composer for the King; was caught out when several years later his former employer became King of England and Handel was still there. Franz Joseph Haydn – phrenological enthusiasts bribed the cemetery's sexton to let them open his grave, then severed his head and took it; the skull was passed on as a curiosity for centuries, until it was finally reunited with his body in a new grave in 1954. Richard Wagner – was having an affair with the wife of a friend and colleague of his; they were such good friends that an amicable agreement was reached whereby the husband would divorce her so Wagner could marry her.

There are lots more; all those dead composers were human after all, and probably experienced all the same upheavals, misfortunes, and family drama that we normal folk and our reality TV star counterparts do. And since human nature is what it is, we will probably always enjoy dishing the dirt, even if we feel a little guilty about it later. So I will continue to abase myself by gossiping shamelessly about dead composers in an effort to bring their music to life for my students.

*Special thanks to Timothy J. Krueger for his help with this article.*



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Mark your Calendars for the **CoACDA Summer Workshop:**  
**July 23 – 25, 2012**

## **National ACDA Advocacy Resolution**

**Whereas** the human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself through study and performance in the aesthetic arts; and

**Whereas** serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded arts institutions and their programs throughout our country,

**Be it resolved** that all citizens of the United States actively voice their affirmative and collective support for necessary funding at the local, state, and national levels of education and government, to ensure survival of arts programs for this and future generations.

Learn more and find ACDA Membership Application forms at [www.acdaonline.org](http://www.acdaonline.org).

Visit the CoACDA Website:  
[www.coloradoacda.org](http://www.coloradoacda.org)