

MARCH 2019

CHORAL JOURNAL

CHARLES IVES
AND TECHNIQUES OF
CHORAL NARRATIVE:
EXPLORING
THREE HARVEST HOME
CHORALES

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THANKS FOR VISITING WITH US AT ACDA

STATISTICS

VOICE PART?
Bass Baritone

FAVORITE COMPOSER?
The one that can captivate my imagination

FAVORITE HOBBY?
Reading fantasy novels about Drizzit Do'Urden

INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?
I am a Biologist with a specialization in plant reproduction

FAVORITE DCINY MEMORY?
A photo taken during my first concert in DCINY with the entire choir, myself included, is hanging in the air

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COMPOSER/CONDUCTOR

ERIC WHITACRE
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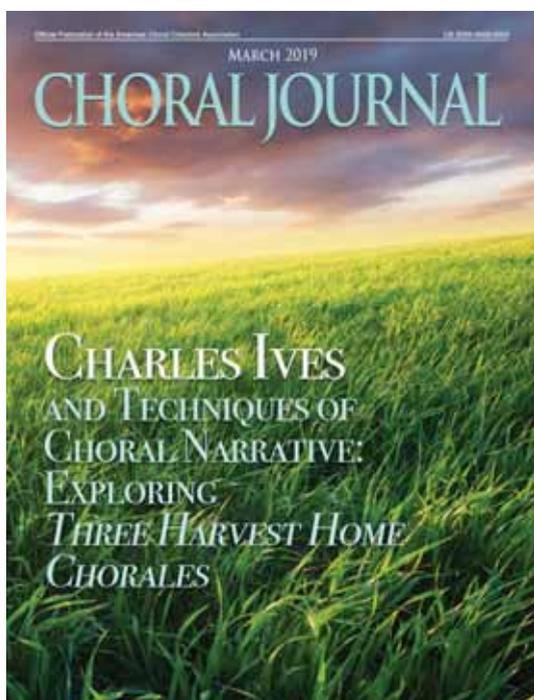
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Changing Lives through the Power of Performance

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On the Cover This month's cover article highlights the music of American composer Charles Ives, specifically his work *Three Harvest Home Chorales*.

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From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tim Sharp

A recent Duke University study reported 92 percent of business executives believed improving their office and workplace culture would increase the value of their company. According to another survey, 77 percent of millennials said that culture was “as or more important” than pay and benefits when considering a job. I see this to be true within the office culture I influence, and I want to consider this further into the choral culture of the American Choral Directors Association.

ACDA is a “director’s” association, which means we comprise many thousands of conductors who stand on a podium almost every day of our career. We got there, and we remain there, first and foremost because of our passion, and this passion is the starting place for building our culture.

As an association, we have defined our culture to be characterized by excellence in choral music performance, education, composition, and advocacy. This means that whatever we are passionate about, we intend to pursue the very best as we work at our pedagogy, performance, literature, and the fostering and promotion of our art form. A pursuit of excellence, therefore, defines our culture.

Further, if you study the purposes of ACDA, you will see that the object of our effort is, in essence, to promote choral music for everyone. It is our desire as a collective that everyone have the opportunity to sing in a choir. This intent is reflected in the verbs used in our mission and purpose statement. Those verbs are “inspire,” “foster,” “promote,” “encourage,” “cooperate,” and “disseminate.”

- To foster and promote choral singing, which will provide artistic, cultural, and spiritual experiences for the participants.
- To foster and promote the finest types of choral music to make these experiences possible.
- To foster and encourage rehearsal procedures conducive to attaining the highest possible level of musicianship and artistic performance.
- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral groups of all types in schools and colleges.
- To foster and promote the development of choral music in the church and synagogue.

ADVOCACY STATEMENT

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

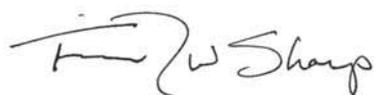
Whereas serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded state institutions and their programs throughout the country;

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

- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral societies in cities and communities.
- To foster and promote understanding of choral music as an important medium of contemporary artistic expression.
- To foster and promote significant research in the field of choral music.
- To foster and encourage choral composition of superior quality.
- To cooperate with all organizations dedicated to the development of musical culture in America
- To foster and promote international exchange programs involving performing groups, conductors, and composers
- To disseminate professional news and information about choral music

The whole purpose of having a culture is to make your people and your organization more successful. I consider the passion of our conductors, the pursuit of excellence, and the desire for everyone to be able to experience choral music, as the defining aspects of our culture as an association. These are our superpowers. These elements define our art.

Our choral culture shines through to all that we come in contact with through participation and performance. Whether we are collaborating with colleagues, recruiting singers into our ensemble, or performing, so much behavior and attitude is driven by the culture we create around our ensemble. Creating a culture is not easy work, but it will be created, either by default into just letting things happen or by proactive effort. I believe the question we can all ask ourselves is: How do we create the culture we want in our organizations and the environment in which we work? It is never "too late" to begin work at culture building, both within our own organizations and in our membership association. I hope you will join me in the important work of culture building as we continue to build value within and beyond our choral community.


sharp@acda.org

What's on
Tim's daytimer ?



- Feb. 27- Mar. 2 ACDA National Conference
Kansas City, MO
- Mar. 2-3 IFCM Executive Committee Meeting
Kansas City, MO
- Mar. 2-3 Musica International Board Meeting
Kansas City, MO
- Mar. 3-4 WCMS Board Meeting
Kansas City, MO
- Mar. 6-8 OKC Advisory Board
OKC, OK
- Mar. 9 *Flos Campi/Dona Nobis Pacem*
Tulsa, OK
- Mar.15-17 San Francisco Conservatory
San Francisco, CA
- Mar. 21-24 Raleigh Choral Festival
Raleigh, NC
- Mar. 29- Apr. 1 Carnegie Hall,
NYC, NY

What's on
Tim's Ipad?



The Art of Social Media
Guy Kawasaki and Peg Fitzpatrick

What's Tim's
Latest App?



We Collect

What's Tim
Listening to?



We Are
Bob Chilcott
The King's Singers

Hear more at <www.acda.org>.
Log in and click on the First Listen icon

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From the PRESIDENT



Tom Shelton

It is so appropriate that I'm writing the column for the March issue of the *Choral Journal* on January 21, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. My focus for this month is on the importance of volunteering, and I would like to start with this quote:

"Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve.... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

I was on Facebook this morning and came across a post that had a recording of an inspiring speech from Martin Luther King Jr. This speech was recorded at the Groton School in 1963. I was blown away... What a visionary! I felt incredibly fortunate to experience this moment fifty-six years later. I love the following quote:

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, "What are you doing for others?"

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

We can never compare our efforts to Martin Luther King Jr., but what are we doing for others? ACDA is an organization that is made up of volunteers. I have learned so much from this organization and its members, and I am honored to give back to this great organization by volunteering as an officer. I want to encourage you that you, too, have the opportunity to make a difference. Every region and state chapter has opportunities for you to serve. Find an area that you are passionate about and contact your state or region representative and let them know of your desire to serve. There is a place for everyone!

Martin Luther King Jr. changed the fabric of our world. He worked tirelessly to bring equal rights to all people. He gave his life to make the world a better place, and we are all indebted to him for his sacrifice. May we all live our life with such purpose.

From the EDITOR



Amanda Bumgarner

By now you will have received the February 2019 issue of *Choral Journal*, which serves as our official program book for the 2019 National Conference in Kansas City. Because we work a few months ahead on these issues, at the time of this publication, the conference is still a few weeks away. I wanted to draw your attention to a few things that will hopefully aid in your reading of the program book.

We used the following “key” throughout to designate tracks: a yellow bar across the top of a performance means this is for gold-track badges. A blue bar is for blue-track badges. A green bar means that this concert is open to both gold and blue badges. Attendees with badges other than yellow and blue may enter conference venues if there are still seats available 10 minutes prior to a performance. Our ushers will be enforcing this system due to the limited seating capacities of these wonderful Kansas City venues.

A few other things to note: the first 31 pages of the program book contain a variety of charts, organized by day/time, event, and alphabetically to allow for easy searching of sessions, performances, and receptions. Use the side tabs to locate daily schedules, which are organized chronologically with the color-coding system noted above.

Switching gears to the current offering, the cover article of this March issue of *Choral Journal* highlights the music of American composer Charles Ives, specifically *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. While this composer’s music may feel unapproachable to many, author Derek Myler “aim[s] to address some of [the] challenges and offer tools for demystifying a few of Ives’s most intimidating musical operations.”

Our second feature article is a look at conducting history. The article provides an overview of conducting history in today’s classroom and then moves through history, exploring conducting in the ancient world, medieval Europe, Baroque and Classical Periods, and finally the modern conductor. Our quarterly Hallelujah, Amen section is back with sacred music choral reviews and a feature on the choral music of McNeil Robinson, written by Jason A. Wright.

This March issue also contains the final column of “New Voices in Research” under the helm of Magen Solomon. Magen has been part of the *Choral Journal* editorial board as article reviewer and head of this column since 2006. I would like to publically thank her, once again, for her work. As I stated in my December 2018 editorial, this column will now be called “Research Report” and officially move under the umbrella of ACDA’s Research & Publications Standing Committee. Finally, you will find choral reviews and a special On the Voice article on voice science tools from author David Harris.

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Letters to the EDITOR



Editor,

I just read Lynn Brinckmeyer's "Advocacy and Collaboration" article in the August issue of *Choral Journal*. I appreciated the suggestions and plan to utilize most, if not all, of these in the new school

year. I agree that advocacy needs to begin with us. I specifically appreciate the point about listing state and local representatives as well as advocacy websites in concert programs. Something so simple could have a deep impact in my situation.

Keith Tankersley
Choir Director, Addison School Dis. 4
Addison, IL

I enjoyed reading the article "Excellence in Choral Music: A Chronology of the American Choral Directors Association" by Marvin E. Latimer Jr. in the September issue of the *Choral Journal* (Vol. 59, no. 2). I would like to add to something that he included in the portion about December 2016. He wrote "ACDA launched two forward-thinking initiatives...Next Generation...was intended to identify, train, and encourage high school choristers with future leadership potential."

As a past president of the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association for several years, it's important that the larger ACDA world know that the Next Generation project was created and developed by WCDA. The project was a brainchild of WCDA past president and NC-ACDA past president Kevin Meidl, along with Rick Bella and Greg Carpenter (two other past presidents of WCDA) and has been held every summer since 2000. I, along with several other WCDA leadership members, served on the staff of the project when it was held at Green Lake, WI.

The decision was made to take this to a national level after consultations with Tim Sharp, Kevin Meidl, and current WCDA leadership. This summer was the first time that the event took place (in WI)

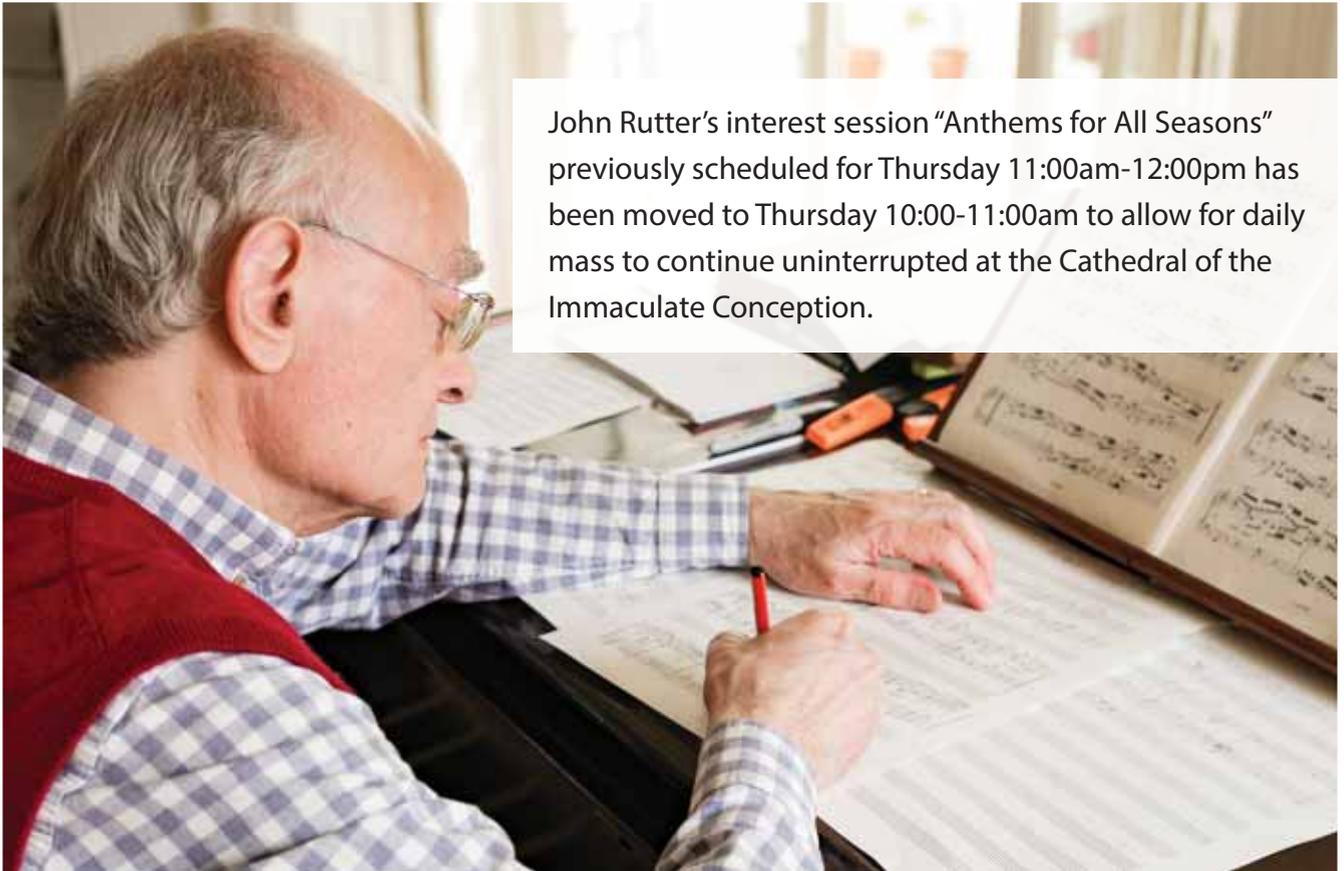
under the ACDA aegis. While this terrific project is now being managed at a national level, the original launch came from WCDA.

Lucinda J. Thayer
Professor Emerita
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Many of the topics covered in the September 2018 *CJ* were moving and inspiring. The article on the Stop Shopping Choir, however, was disquieting and seemed out of place. Unlike the previous articles' themes, which focus on bringing people together, the Stop Shopping Choir appears to be focused on a narrow and divisive form of political activism. Including an article about this choir in *CJ*, by itself, not necessarily problematic and may even be informative. However, by including this article in an edition intended to focus on social justice, ACDA has, perhaps unwittingly, taken a political position, implying that causes for social justice are synonymous with far left political ideology. Aside from being wildly presumptuous, this position is an affront to those members of ACDA who seek justice for society but do not share a hard left political ideology. It is also an affront to those members (among whom I count myself) who see the growing bifurcation of every facet of society into left vs. right tribes as dangerous and unproductive.

History has shown that any ideology or cause, no matter if its origins come from the left end or right end of the political spectrum, when taken too far, becomes pernicious. In a culture of ideological warfare, in which each person is convinced of the righteousness of his or her political beliefs, I would suggest we use music to rise above ideological perspectives rather than as a weapon to bolster those perspectives. George Orwell said, "All art is propaganda." Let's not become a profession that enthusiastically proves him right.

Dennis Malfatti
Evansville, IN



John Rutter's interest session "Anthems for All Seasons" previously scheduled for Thursday 11:00am-12:00pm has been moved to Thursday 10:00-11:00am to allow for daily mass to continue uninterrupted at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.



The National Conference will feature our first-ever **Composer Fair & Happy Hour**, a meet-and-greet opportunity for ACDA members to have quality face time with composers from across the world. The Composer Fair will take place on **Wednesday 5pm-7pm in Exhibit Hall B**, in a separate area distinct from the regular conference exhibitors. A list of the composers who had registered for the composers fair is on page 29 of the program book.

CHARLES IVES

and Techniques of Choral Narrative: Exploring *Three Harvest Home Chorales*

DEREK J. MYLER



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For many musicians, the sophisticated choral works of American composer Charles Ives (1874–1954) can often appear simultaneously compelling and unapproachable, alluring and opaque, artistically stimulating and elusively difficult. Whether amateur or professional, many musicians might relate to a feeling of coming up empty-handed following an attempt to unravel the intricacies of one of Ives’s denser scores. In this article, I aim to address some of these challenges and offer tools for demystifying a few of Ives’s most intimidating musical operations. Toward this end, I discuss Ives’s idiosyncratic compositional language as it pertains to his choral music; more specifically, my goal is to provide choral musicians with analytical tools for exploring narrative techniques embedded within Ives’s inimitable style.

We will follow this line of inquiry because, in one sense, for Ives all music was program music—“is not pure music, so called, representative in its essence?” he asks in his *Essays Before a Sonata*.¹ A central goal of composition for Ives was the act of musical narrative, the impulse for musical storytelling.² Ives’s biographer Jan Swafford writes that Ives “could never quite approve of music that was not *about* something more than the notes.”³ In his music, then, we see a composer sensitive to extramusical meaning. The Ivesian instinct for narrative is particularly well displayed in the choral works; analysis in this repertoire reveals a rich network of interactive narrative devices both at the level of the textual-musical surface and below, at a deeper subtextual level. Thus, through the lens of narrative analysis there appears a method for deconstructing and understanding some of Ives’s most arcane compositional techniques.

In this article I explore Ives’s *Three Harvest Home Chorales*—a particularly challenging set of sacred pieces for chorus, organ, and brass (or reduced keyboard accompaniment) that Aaron Copland characterized as “unquestionably among the finest works ever created by an American artist.”⁴ In navigating a narrative analysis of the *Chorales*, I investigate the music from three analytical viewpoints: 1. Detecting surface literalisms, 2. Connecting formal clues, 3. Discussing deeper meanings. First, in detecting surface literalisms, we discover Ives’s applications of traditional text painting principles. Second, by connecting formal clues, we learn more about Ives’s plans for local and global structure and how they contribute to his choral narratives. Lastly, we turn to discussing deeper meanings, and speculate on some of Ives’s more obscure narrative methods.

The ensuing analysis of the *Three Harvest Home Chorales* is intended, then, to act as a model or workshop by which directors, educators, and choral musicians of varying degrees of experience may learn to more effectively explore the music of Charles Ives. While the analysis is limited to one work, my suggestion is that the principles outlined herein may be applied with success to all of Ives’s choral music—to the Psalms and other sacred works, as well as to the secular pieces. Engaging with Ives’s works in this manner will benefit the choral musician at all stages: in the process of score preparation, in the execution of successful rehearsal strategies, and ultimately in enriching the experience cultivated in the classroom or performance hall.

CHARLES IVES and Techniques of Choral Narrative

Detecting Surface Literalisms

Consider Figure 1, the first six bars of vocal music appearing after a short instrumental introduction in “I. Harvest Home,” the opening movement of the *Chorales*. Ives’s canon by inversion (a technique to be discussed later in greater detail) that begins this passage explicitly illustrates its accompanying text. To complement the text “the harvest dawn,” the soprano and bass voices initially expand the space between them by imitative contrary motion, as if opening a new day. The following text immediately expresses an opposing idea—“is near” suggests narrowing. Consequently, the voices move abruptly inward by leaps of a seventh, closing the newly opened space as they near one another. Through this spatial tightening, together with shorter note values, Ives produces a literal quickening effect attending the words “the year delays not.” The canon then breaks up just prior to one of the longer-held notes of the phrase—appropriately, on the word “long.”

This type of musical literalism at the surface of *Three Harvest Home Chorales* exemplifies classic text painting technique. The presence of such text painting devices can constitute a clearly observable means of discerning

a composer’s sensitivity to text, and Ives’s vocal music richly displays this narrative intuition. Conspicuous wordplay of the variety described in Figure 1 abundantly populates the *Chorales*; throughout the work, Ives capitalizes on opportunities to literally and systematically depict textual events by musical means. Indeed, Figure 2 on page 11 (a later passage from the same movement) illustrates conscious correlation between such techniques. Here, portraying twilight’s effect of *downwardness* with a soprano descent exceeding an octave (“he shall come at twilight close”), Ives parallels the effect of *upwardness* invoked by the ascending soprano in Figure 1 to depict dawn. Together, these upward and downward motions of the soprano create a balanced musical metaphor for the rising and setting of the sun. Additionally, Ives again manipulates registral space in the narrative delivery of this portion of the text. To accompany the phrase “he shall come at twilight close,” the upper and lower voices close together in an inexact wedge of contrary and oblique motions.⁵ The wedge ultimately constricts the word “close” to a perfect fifth (F₃ to C₄), the exact lower inversion of the perfect fourth (C₄ to F₄) that earlier began the expanding phrase “the harvest dawn” (Figure 1).

The image shows a musical score for the first six bars of "I. Harvest Home" from Charles Ives' *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. It features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "The har - vest dawn is near... The year de - lays not... long and". The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *p*, and a *col* (coloratura) marking for the piano part. The piano part is in the bass clef and features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment.

Figure 1. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “I. Harvest Home,” mm. 6–11.

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Exploring *Three Harvest Home Chorales*

Other examples of the work's surface literalisms, or text painting devices, demonstrate Ives's penchant for rhythmic and gestural experimentation. Figure 3 presents a short excerpt from the third movement, "III. Harvest Home." In depicting the text "winter storms begin," Ives employs three distinct, layered techniques to illustrate the tempestuousness of the lyric. First, Ives sets the upper melodic line in a short, jagged arch shape consisting of an ascending augmented fourth, minor second, and perfect fifth, followed by a descending major seventh. Secondly, the dissonant leaps of the arch (paralleled in the alto by a lower perfect fourth) are not all traditionally executed, for the widely descending major sevenths in the soprano and alto (and major ninths and diminished fourths in the tenor and bass, respectively) are accomplished via a *fortissimo* vocal glissando. Lastly, though such a setting is already so evocative of winter storms, Ives includes an additional layer of turbulence by indicating a fiendishly difficult rhythmic figure for "winter" of two eighths

Figure 2 shows a musical score for the first movement of Charles Ives's *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. It features four vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), along with a piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "he shall come at twilight close and". The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *mp*, and a triplet of eighth notes in the vocal lines. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated figures.

Figure 2. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "I. Harvest Home," mm. 28–29.

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Figure 3 shows a musical score for the third movement of Charles Ives's *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. It features four vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), along with a piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "gath-ered in ere the win-ter storms be-gin: God". The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *f*, and a triplet of eighth notes in the vocal lines. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated figures.

Figure 3. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "III. Harvest Home," mm. 14–16.

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CHARLES IVES and Techniques of Choral Narrative

notes set against an irregularly grouped triplet of a dotted eighth, a regular eighth, and a sixteenth.

Still other text painting techniques on display in *Three Harvest Home Chorales* suggest roots in antiquity, even hearkening to the madrigalisms of the sixteenth century. Figure 4 shows Ives's treatment of the text "sows with many a tear" in the first movement. When the soprano melody is reduced within an octave as shown in Figure 5, one can more clearly see that the mournful text is set in the traditional chromatic fourth of the lament bass. This device, famously used by the madrigalists of the

late Renaissance, consists of a descending perfect fourth spanned by its intervening chromatic semitones.⁶ That the somber words "sows with many a tear" are reflected with a displaced chromatic fourth displays Ives's sensitivity to the text's doleful tone. The technique is then juxtaposed against a sudden loud leap—effectively, a joyous shout—into the highest registers of the movement with the contrasting line "shall reap with many a song" (Figure 6 on page 13).

In such literal representations of text, we are shown the most obvious of Ives's narrative methods. While the

12
S he who sows with man - y a tear
A he who sows with man - y a tear
T long and he who sows with man - y a tear
B long and he who sows with man - y a tear
col 8vb

Figure 4. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "I. Harvest Home," mm. 12–13 (beat 3).

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he who sows with man - y a tear

Figure 5. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "I. Harvest Home," mm. 12 (beat 3)–13 (beat 3).
Reduced Soprano Melody

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Exploring *Three Harvest Home Chorales*

text painting of *Three Harvest Home Chorales* draws from historical precedents in the choral idiom, paradoxically, the devices here seem originally and robustly Ivesian. Indeed, though such techniques have been occasionally disparaged as trite and simplistic, Ives's text painting in the *Chorales* demonstrates a fresh, careful, and contemplative approach to literalisms in musical narrative.⁷

Connecting Formal Clues

Surface devices such as text painting represent only one layer of the dramatic techniques found in Charles Ives's unique narrative brand of choral composition. Like many composers, Ives embedded an additional level of storytelling in his music with detailed plans in formal structuring and organizational design. Whether at the local level of phrase structure within a verse, the larger relationships between verse settings within a movement, or ultimately the interconnected elements of global design that provide structure across multi-movement dis-

tances, Ives left clues toward the narrative implications of his formal choices in the *Chorales* and throughout the choral works. And congruent with compositional practice before and since, Ives worked elements of narrative into musical organization by both accepting and reimagining traditional structures.

Symmetrical Phrase Structure

A particularly Ivesian example of departure from established formal norms is found in the local structuring of phrases in the *Chorales*' second movement, "II. Lord of the Harvest." The phrases in the movement follow symmetrical schemes that produce layered harmonic and melodic palindromes. In addition to discussing their systematic derivation, we will see that this technique reflects a narrative choice in the representation of the hymn text.

Several analysts have written about the phenomenon of harmonic symmetry embodied in the accompaniment of "II. Lord of the Harvest," including Ives scholar

Figure 6. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "I. Harvest Home," mm. 12–16.

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Philip Lambert in his book *The Music of Charles Ives*. Figure 7 reproduces Lambert's analysis of the movement's introduction. The letters below the staff indicate chordal roots of each of the sonorities in the passage.

Lambert's analysis illustrates the palindrome that is created within the phrase by Ives's symmetrical organization of harmony. Lambert writes that after the opening C[#] minor chord, "every measure begins with a major triad that becomes minor when the voice that has the third of the chord falls a half step on beat three... The chord roots underlying these modal shifts, as indicated in [Figure 7], are related by whole step."⁸ Lambert observes that the whole of the phrase acts as a palindrome, "since equivalent measures are paired around m. 7: m. 8 duplicates m. 6, m. 9 duplicates m. 5, and so forth, with a few subtle exceptions."⁹ In other words, reading the chords right to left or left to right will produce an identical result (C[#]-B-A-G-F-E^b-C[#]-E^b-F-G-A-B-C[#]). Moreover, the symmetry of the harmonic organization is further underscored by the choice of chord roots themselves; the harmonies present a whole tone collection centering on C[#], a collection that is derived from the symmetrical division of the octave into whole steps.¹⁰

This harmonic structure fits Lambert's definition of an *event palindrome*: a "reordering [of] individual events so

that the second half of the structure is an exact mirror of the first half."¹¹ Lambert explains, "Ives typically applies this treatment to harmonies, rhythms, and instrumentations, in addition to pitches."¹² While this prominent harmonic example of an Ivesian palindrome has been thoroughly investigated in the scholarly literature surrounding the *Chorales*, however, there is an unexplored component in this movement that further signifies Ives's conscious construction of palindromic elements—and in contrast to the chordal accompanying passage, it is melodic in nature. Over the accompanying harmonic palindrome (which repeats throughout the remainder of the movement almost unaltered) the tenor section presents the main melodic theme in unison, commanding the entirety of the first verse. Thereafter, the tenors repeat the theme as the other voice parts surround it with additional layers of complex polyrhythmic counterpoint. The athletic and powerful theme, referred to by Swafford as "one of [Ives's] most striking original melodies,"¹³ is reproduced in Figure 8 on page 15. Remarkably, in consort with (but distinct from) its accompanying harmonic palindrome, this theme presents in itself an adjusted melodic palindrome roughly balanced around the downbeat of m. 20. The symmetrical elements contributing to the palindromic structure are visually sum-

The image shows a musical score for Charles Ives' "Three Harvest Home Chorales, II. Lord of the Harvest" (mm. 1-13). The score is in 2/2 time and features a harmonic structure with a whole-tone collection of roots: C#, B, A, G, F, Eb, C#. The tempo is Adagio maestoso, and the dynamics range from mf to Andante risoluto. The score is annotated with Lambert's Chord-Root Analysis, showing the roots of the chords in each measure.

Figure 7. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "II. Lord of the Harvest," mm. 1–13. Lambert's Chord-Root Analysis

Philip Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 141.

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marized in Figure 9.

As the figure demonstrates, the palindromic effects embedded within the phrase are more easily observed when the surface rhythms of the melody are equalized. With this perspective, several motives emerge that are systematically reflected across a midpoint axis. After the melody's opening on C[#]₄, motive *x* is presented: an upper neighbor figure followed by a descending minor third and major second. Motive *y* follows, an ascending major sixth plus an ascending minor third. After two repeated tones, motive *z1*, a major third with C₄ as its lower pitch, begins a large section centering on this C. Motive *z1* is augmented to *z2* by a semitone; it becomes a perfect fourth (still rooted on C₄). Motive *z2* is raised another semitone to an augmented fourth (becoming motive *z3*), then is raised again by a whole step to an augmented fifth. At this point, the reason behind the insistent repe-

tion of C₄ becomes clear—it ultimately acts as an axis around which the melodic palindrome operates. The process is now reversed. After shrinking to a perfect fifth, motives *z3*, *z2*, and *z1* (augmented fourth, perfect fourth, and major third, respectively), occur in their symmetrical positions on the far side of the axis. Motive *z1* is now spelled as a diminished fourth instead of a major third (C[#]-F), and it is placed one semitone higher, but the palindromic effect is preserved. Motive *y* then returns with only the quality and contour of the third reversed (ascending m3 becomes descending M3). Finally, motive *x* arrives in an inexact retrograde inversion (again there are slight alterations in quality). The casting of motive *x* in retrograde inversion at the theme's end especially highlights the palindromic structure of the phrase, since this form of any melodic unit simply constitutes the turning of the contour both upside down and backward.

Figure 8. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “II. Lord of the Harvest,” mm. 13–25.
Theme

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Figure 9. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “II. Lord of the Harvest.”
Palindromic Elements in Theme

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The theme then closes on the same C[#] with which it began, bookending the palindrome. Moreover, what emerges is an organized symmetrical delivery of melodic intervals according to generic size: first seconds, thirds, fourths, and fifths, followed by fifths, fourths, thirds, and seconds.¹⁴

Why would Ives choose to structure his phrases in “II. Lord of the Harvest” symmetrically? What are the narrative implications of palindrome as a formal device? An answer lies in careful consideration of the hymn text. Tellingly, both the axis of the harmonic palindrome and the midpoint-climax of the melodic palindrome coincide in the first verse with the text “the varying seasons haste their round.” This idea is central to the movement—thus the recurring palindromes constructed to depict the eternal and cyclical seasons. As Lambert observes, cycles “[give] unity and structure...just as the cyclic passage of time gives unity and structure to day-to-day existence.”¹⁵ A subtle narrative technique is therefore effectively displayed as the symmetrical phrases continuously “haste their round.”

Organizational Strategies

An additional tool for connecting formal clues to narrative intent within Ives’s choral oeuvre may be found in a basic formal analysis of individual movements with regard to their organizational strategies. Table 1 demonstrates this method; application of traditional formal analysis after this manner reveals a distinct organizational strategy for each of the *Harvest Home Chorales*’ three movements. As Table 1 shows, Ives sets the text of “I. Harvest Home” semi-strophically, “II. Lord of the Harvest” in full strophic form, and “III. Harvest Home” in a through-composed form. The significance of these distinct formal strategies might be easily overlooked, if not examined through the lens of narrative analysis.

The choice of setting the second movement alone strophically, for example, becomes clearer when considered in light of the text. As I have suggested, Ives seems to have set the text of “II. Lord of the Harvest” with compositional references to the cyclicism of time and of the returning seasons. When again considered with the key phrase “the varying seasons haste their round,” then, a setting of the hymn with recurring strophic

Table 1 Organizational Structure of Movements in *Three Harvest Home Chorales*

Movement	# of Verses	Structure of Verses	Classification
I. Harvest Home	2	v.1: First three phrases of text set contrapuntally. Phrase 4 homophonic. v.2: First two phrases set in homophonic chant. Phrase 3 set contrapuntally, referencing v.1. Phrase 4 repeats homophonic texture of v.1, phrase 4.	Semi-strophic
II. Lord of the Harvest	3 (+ coda)	v.1: Unison verse in tenor section. v.2: Tenor section repeats. Bass section adds polyrhythmic counterpoint. v.3: Tenor and bass sections repeat. Soprano and alto sections add additional level of polyrhythmic counterpoint. (coda): Brief homophonic chant, then counterpoint of v.1-3.	Strophic
III. Harvest Home	1	v.1: Four phrases (eight sub-phrases) of various lengths, textures, and harmonic strategies.	Through-composed

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verses seems a singularly logical way to musically portray the eternal round of the year.

In contrast, the third movement's through-composed structure begs a different narrative interpretation. This movement, "III. Harvest Home," is significantly different in its textual content. Whereas the setting of "II. Lord of the Harvest" contains a prayerful text addressing and expressing gratitude directly to God, the hymn text of "III. Harvest Home" constitutes an exhortation to an indefinite mass of humanity ("Come, ye thankful people, come, raise a song of harvest home"). Could Ives's decision to set the single verse of this movement with four highly individualistic phrases be representative of the gathering of many people from various corners and backgrounds to join in the song of the harvest season? A seemingly simple formal analysis as demonstrated in Table 1 may frequently lead conductors and performers to such fruitful narrative and interpretive questions.

Multi-movement Connections

Finally, cross-movement clues can aid the analyst in connecting formal narrative strands within *Three Harvest Home Chorales* and other of Ives's choral works. Consider again the first six bars of vocal music at the outset of the first movement, "I. Harvest Home." Figure 10 illustrates the special contrapuntal character of this music; here, the soprano and bass voices counter one another in a process of canon by inversion.¹⁶ As the soprano's melodic figures are turned upside down and presented three beats later in the bass voice, even the spelling of successive intervals is preserved (see, for example, the augmented unison toward the end of the phrase). Such a symmetrical process is noteworthy on its own; additionally, however, the third movement of the *Chorales*, "III. Harvest Home," contains a counterpart.

Figure 11 on page 18 shows the far-reaching outcome of Ives's inversional canon from the first bars of the work: two movements later there appears the only other instance of systematic melodic inversion in the *Chorales*. Although not canonic as in Figure 10, nor ex-

Figure 10. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "I. Harvest Home," mm. 6–11.

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act in intervallic content, the contrapuntal-inversional rhyme is preserved, especially considering the location of Figure 11 in the work. The outer-voice melodic inversion of Figure 11 takes place just a few bars from the end of the third movement (and the end of the *Chorales* as a whole), corresponding to Ives's placement of the canon just a few bars from the beginning of the first movement. This cross-movement connection thus serves to subtly bind together the entirety of the *Chorales*, contrapuntally and thematically.

Discussing Deeper Meanings

Following an assessment of the surface array of text painting techniques and the underlying formal devices contributing to Ives's choral narratives, directors and performers may benefit from turning their attention to deeper questions, probing still further beneath superficial musical layers. In so doing (especially in relation to Ives's music), one is often met with more questions

than answers. However, as theorist Michael R. Rogers observes:

The value of results that can be conclusively proven...is often overestimated at the expense of the values of speculation, reflection, and contemplative imagination which are, perhaps, more helpful in unveiling novel patterns of thought... Finding loose ends can be as important as tying them up.¹⁷

Indeed, the analytical process and the musical discovery it engenders—even when pursuing issues that may have no ready resolution—is of itself valuable in adding layers of nuance, interpretation, and exploration to performance. By way of example, in demonstrating these more esoteric realms of analytical inquiry in our present case study of *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, we will examine Ives's own words about the pieces, as well as textural phenomena and Ives's peculiar spelling choices.

Figure 11. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “III. Harvest Home,” mm. 24 (bt. 2)–27.

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Exploring *Three Harvest Home Chorales*

“A Kind of Outdoor Music”

In a letter to composer Lehman Engel, Ives stated that the *Three Harvest Home Chorales* “are a kind of outdoor music and have something in common with the trees, rocks, and men of the mountains in days before machinery.”¹⁸ Extramusical statements such as this should be a clue to performers in uncovering the programmatic elements of Ives’s work. Indeed, in all repertoires such first-person commentary often provides a vital resource in attempting to peer into the mind and intention of the composer. Especially when attempting to detect techniques of choral narrative, engaging analytically with such commentary tends to produce fruitful results.

Figure 12 reproduces a passage from the second movement of the work, “II. Lord of the Harvest.” The passage takes place near the end of the movement; at m. 51 a unison chanted texture contrasts sharply with twenty-five preceding measures of dense, polyrhythmic counterpoint. This abrupt shift from polyphony to homophony marks a new idea in the text: “New praises from our lips shall sound.” The voices then, participat-

ing in “a kind of outdoor music,” twice echo the phrase “shall sound” before launching into a coda employing the polyrhythmic contrapuntal texture from before.

A narrative-oriented analysis of the autograph score reveals that this brief pause—echoing with strains of praises—is a deliberate storytelling decision. Written in Ives’s hand on the manuscript sketch above the organ part at the repeating text “shall sound” are the words “Echo on Swell.”¹⁹ The direction “Echo on Swell” is a familiar idea to organists, as the Swell division on the organ is sometimes used to imitate an echo by closing the shutters of the swell box enclosing the pipes, thus producing a muted, distant tone. The composer’s instructions, therefore, provide crucial information to organists in interpreting how the ensuing chords are to be played; the instructions also clearly point to Ives’s conscious depiction of his “outdoor” narrative. The moment of homophonic echo in the voice parts indicates a thoughtful choice meant to evoke a connection to nature—to “the trees, rocks, and men of the mountains” of Ives’s letter to Engel.

The musical score for Figure 12 consists of five staves. The top four staves are for the vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The fifth staff is for the piano accompaniment. The score begins at measure 51. The vocal parts start with a unison chanted texture, marked *f* *chanted*. The lyrics are: "New praises from our lips shall sound. Shall sound, Shall sound,". The piano accompaniment starts with a *f* dynamic. The tempo marking is *Meno mosso*. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *pp*. The piano part features a complex texture with many notes, including some with accidentals.

Figure 12. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “II. Lord of the Harvest,” mm. 51–53.

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And what about the tones of the echoing chords? After the initial C[#] minor sonority of the preceding chant, the repeated “shall sound” chords are cast in an extremely dissonant polychordal environment. First, the vocal C[#] minor chord is set a semitone away from an accompanying C minor chord with an added sixth (or an A half-diminished seventh chord), then an F[#] minor harmony is set against a D minor chord with an added sixth (or a B^b major seventh chord); all of this is set over a C[#] pedal tone. Thus far, Ives has avoided such extreme homophonic dissonances in the movement. So what is his purpose in including them here? Might they represent the decay and blur of sound that occurs naturally in an acoustic echo (also taking into consideration the dynamic contrast between voices and accompaniment)?²⁰

Or do sounds such as these throughout the work have a simpler explanation? Before *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, Ives composed a piece for organ on a comparable theme: *Prelude and Postlude for a Thanksgiving Service*. Of the similarly intense dissonances in that piece Ives wrote that they represent “the sternness and strength and austerity of the Puritan character, and it seemed to me that any

of the major, minor, and diminished chords used alone gave too much a feeling of bodily ease, which the Puritan did not give in to.”²¹ In other words, in order to adequately depict this music of the “men of the mountains”—his own Puritan forefathers—Ives may have deliberately turned to minor and major sonorities used not in isolation but juxtaposed to echo against each other in a reverberating, polychordal context.

Homophony vs. Polyphony

The narrative power of interplay between homophony and polyphony is demonstrated elsewhere in *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. In fact, Ives’s compositional narrative of the entire third movement may be largely characterized by fluency between homophonic and polyphonic textures. Figure 13 shows the opening vocal entrances of “III. Harvest Home.” After an introductory fanfare in the brass parts, the voices present a robust, *fugato*-like passage, dependent on imitative polyphony at successive subdominant points of entry (with the exception of the alto entry one semitone away from the bass).²² The use of a fugal texture here—perhaps the clearest application

The image displays a musical score for the opening of "III. Harvest Home" from Charles Ives's *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. It features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts enter successively, with the lyrics "Come ye thank-ful peo - ple... come... raise a song of har - vest home." The piano accompaniment consists of a series of chords, each marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score is numbered 8 at the beginning of the vocal lines.

Figure 13. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “III. Harvest Home,” mm. 8–12.

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of strict polyphonic technique—seems evocative of a great harvest gathering of streams of people from many corners (“Come ye thankful people / come raise a song of harvest home”). Additionally, the entrance of the alto two beats earlier than its expected arrival at the downbeat of m. 11 suggests a rush to join the growing throng.

Now contrast Figure 13 with the phrase immediately following, shown in Figure 14. In place of the preceding polyphonic voicing, Ives has set the phrase “all is safely gathered in” homophonically. Steven Zopf observes that here “Ives reflects the textual idea of unity by the change to a homophonic choral texture.”²³ And though the abrupt shift to homophony after a unifying downbeat rest already evokes togetherness, Ives further stresses unity by yoking the upper three voices together in parallel motion (with parallel fourths between tenor and alto and parallel compound thirds between tenor and soprano). Additionally, the first measure contains an important voice exchange between the soprano and bass parts (E_5-C_5 in soprano, C_3-E_3 in bass). Voice exchange-

es of this type constitute one of the most effective techniques of prolongation between voices and traditionally achieve a special type of unity between parts.

In the next phrase, reproduced in Figure 15 on page 22, Ives again separates the voices contrapuntally. This polyphonic passage effectively narrates the multiplicity of God’s blessings in providing for our many and varied “wants to be supplied.” The technique here particularly asserts the independence of voices, because Ives’s contrapuntal voice leading achieves moments of true polytonality. As one example, observe the voice leading from the second half of beat four in m. 17 into m. 18. The harmony produced at the end of m. 17 spells an F dominant seventh chord in third inversion. The contrapuntal expectation for this harmony is to resolve to a B^b chord in first inversion, with the lower augmented fourth between bass and tenor (E^b-A) expanding outward to a consonant sixth ($D-B^b$). Indeed, the lower tritone resolves as expected (with B^b respelled as A^\sharp in the tenor). However, the upper half (soprano/alto) of the F dominant seventh

Figure 14. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “III. Harvest Home,” mm. 13–16.

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chord behaves unexpectedly. In this context, the upper fifth would usually retain the common tone F in the alto between the two chords and resolve the soprano C down to the root of the resulting B^b chord. But in this case, against the expected resolution of the lower tritone, the upper fifth contracts inward to a consonant but tonally unrelated third (G–B^b). Additionally, this moment of polytonal voice leading occurs “out of phase,” with each tone of resolution appearing on successive half-beats in m. 18. This extreme polyphonic independence sets the tone for the remainder of the highly chromatic contrapuntal phrase through m. 21.

With the onset of the movement’s final phrase, illustrated in Figure 16 on page 23, Ives signals the return to a unified texture. He first achieves this by means of homophony in the upper three voices at m. 22, once again taking advantage of parallel motion (this time in fifths) between parts to reinforce the yoking of the voices into one. In fact, such writing of parallel fifths is traditionally antithetical to effective voice independence in polyphonic composition and is thus marked as the highest possible

degree of textural contrast against the preceding contrapuntal phrase. Ultimately, the outer voices become so unified as to become locked in the inverted counterpoint at m. 25 discussed in connection with Figures 10 and 11. This intervallic unification effectively subsumes any independence in the non-homophonic inner voices. With the yoking together of voices in the final phrase, Ives ultimately achieves the synthesis of many voices in gathering together to “raise the song of harvest home.” Such descriptive usage of homophonic and polyphonic textures to illustrate a harvest-season congregation is undoubtedly one of the more ingenious deep forms of narrative in *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. But as subtle as this technique is, there may be narrative forces at play that are even less conspicuous.

Spelling and Intonation

For our final considerations, observe the chord spellings in Figure 17 on page 24, the closing bars of “II. Lord of the Harvest.” The passage concludes with a C[#] major chord in the organ accompaniment. Over this

The image shows a musical score for four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in G major and have lyrics: "God our Mak - er doth pro - vide, doth pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied." The piano accompaniment is in G major and features a series of chords with dynamic markings (f) and (p). The score is numbered (16) at the beginning.

Figure 15. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, “III. Harvest Home,” mm. 16 (bt. 4)–21.

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22 *ff*
 S Come to God's own tem - ple Come, raise
 A *ff* Come to God's own tem - ple Come, raise, raise
 T *ff* Come to God's own tem - ple Come, Come, raise the song of
 B *ff* Come to God's own tem - ple and

26 *fff*
 S the song Raise the song the song of har - vest home.
 A the song Raise the song the song of har - vest home.
 T har - vest home, the song Raise the song, the song, the song of har - vest home.
 B raise the song Raise the song, the song, the song of har - vest home.

Figure 16. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "III. Harvest Home," mm. 22–29.

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chord Ives places a unison F in the voices (and also in the brass parts of the full score). At first glance, this F appears to be only an enharmonic spelling of E \sharp , the third of the C \sharp major chord. Why did Ives choose to spell this chord this way? Is the ultimate F simply a byproduct of the voice leading tending toward F major in the vocal parts leading up to the cadence? Is the centrality of F major in the voice parts being favored, and F is to be assumed as separate and distinct from the C \sharp major sonority? Or is one to interpret the F as indeed functioning as the major third of the final chord? In other words, does this passage constitute one of Ives's many experiments in polytonality, does it signify a simple diatonic procedure filtered through a nontraditional spelling choice, or is there some other explanation?

In a 2005 article for *NewMusicBox*, microtonal composer and conductor Johnny Reinhard postulated that Charles Ives may not have conceived his music for the standard tuning system of twelve-tone equal temperament.²⁴ Instead, Reinhard suggests, through a combination of mentoring by his father, George Ives, and early contact with the nineteenth-century text *On the Sensations*

of Tone by physicist Hermann von Helmholtz, young Charlie may have developed an intuitive sense for the "extended Pythagorean" tuning system that would carry into his later compositional endeavors. This theory has intriguing ramifications when considering Ives's vocal music and the impact an alternate tuning system might have upon his narrative techniques.

Standard equal-tempered tuning relies on the concept of slightly diminishing the pure perfect fifth of the harmonic series in order to abolish the thorny Pythagorean comma, or the natural space left between two "enharmonic" pitches such as C and B \sharp . When 1200 cents are used within an octave to measure intervallic distance (twelve semitones with one hundred cents each), the pure perfect fifth (or the ratio of the third harmonic to the second harmonic—3:2) equals approximately 702 cents. In the Pythagorean tuning system, twelve pure perfect fifths (702 cents each) are stacked on top of one another to form a chromatic scale of all twelve pitches. However, a remainder of roughly twenty-three cents exists at the supposed point of origin. To illustrate, in the stack of twelve pure fifths C–G–D–A–E–B–F \sharp –

The image shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The score is for measures 56 to 60. The Soprano part has the lyrics "Thee we hail." The Alto part has "Thee we hail, Thee we hail." The Tenor part has "All is Thine, All is Thine, Thee we hail, Thee we hail." The Bass part has "All is Thine Thee we hail." The piano accompaniment features complex chords and textures, including triplets in the Tenor and Bass parts. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 17. Charles Ives, *Three Harvest Home Chorales*, "II. Lord of the Harvest," mm. 56–60.

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C[♯]–G[♯]–D[♯]–A[♯]–E[♯]–B[♯], the origin point C and the end point B[♯] will lie approximately twenty-three cents away from each other (about an eighth tone). The standard system of equal-tempered tuning eliminates this eighth tone excess, or comma, by dividing it into twelve equal parts and subtracting one part from each fifth in the scale. Thus, “enharmonic” pitches such as C and B[♯] become equivalent in equal-tempered tuning and the 1200-cent octave range is perfectly spanned. It is important to consider that, by contrast, in Pythagorean tuning the concept of “enharmonicism” does *not* truly exist—notes that are spelled differently in reality represent different pitches.

The extended Pythagorean system takes this concept further. Reinhard explains that stacking twenty pure perfect fifths in Pythagorean tuning—without tempering or diminishing any natural intervals—results in the chromatic scale shown in Table 2 (depicted with each note’s accompanying intervallic measurement in cents relative to the initial pitch, A). This scale allows for twenty-one distinct pitches with no enharmonic equivalency. Composition with this type of microtonal collection is still being explored, and while Charles Ives left no concrete evidence that he had consciously worked with such a tuning system, he left certain tantalizing clues. Swafford summarizes several instances of Ives’s grumbling over editors changing his spellings, including one occasion in which violinist Sol Babitz and pianist Ingolf Dahl offered to prepare an edition of the Third Violin Sonata. Writes Swafford: “After endless difficulties getting a workable copy, they sent the engraved proof to Ives; he threw it back at them because they had changed his accidentals.”²⁶ In a letter to Babitz and Dahl referencing their edition, Ives wrote (with the helping hand of his wife, Harmony Twichell Ives):

He is rather sorry that some flats and sharps have been changed into each other. Mr. Ives usually had a reason technically, acoustically or

otherwise, for using sharps and flats. If a D-flat is in one part and C-sharp in another on the same time beat, *it was mainly due to some acoustical plan*—which he had in mind or was working out or trying to in those days [emphasis added].²⁷

Ives’s frustrated writings leave little to the imagination regarding his feelings on the habit some editors had of altering his manuscript spellings. When considered in the light of the telling phrase “it was mainly due to some acoustical plan,” analysts and editors may count on some meaning—musical or extramusical—for unconventional spellings in Ives’s music.²⁸

This contextualizing information invites further reflection, then, on the F placed in the voice and brass parts above the C[♯] major chord of the organ in Figure 17. Does this curious spelling have some other purpose than simply inhabiting a polytonal texture of C[♯] major plus F major? Reinhard indicates that Ives sometimes used what his father termed “first” and “second” spellings of major thirds. In the Pythagorean system, the traditional “second” spelling, as in the chord A–C[♯]–E, would produce a major third 408 cents wide between the chordal root and third—rather sharper than in equal-tempered tuning. However, Ives’s unconventional “first” spelling of this same chord, A–D^b–E, by virtue of the lack of enharmonic equivalence in Pythagorean tuning, would produce a major third 384 cents wide, just two cents short of a *justly* tuned third. Just intonation, particularly the tuning of just thirds, is often considered not only the most natural system of intonation in choral music but also the purest. With regard to the alternate spelling between voices and organ of the C[♯] major chord in Figure 17 (C[♯]–F[♯]–G[♯]), then, Ives’s “first” spelling of this chord would suggest a justly tuned major third—and in fact would be the only notational means in the Pythagorean system whereby a justly tuned third could be indicated.²⁹

Table 2. Reinhard’s Model of the Extended Pythagorean Scale²⁵

A	B ^b	A [♯]	C ^b	B	C	B [♯]	D ^b	C [♯]	D	E ^b	D [♯]	F ^b	E	F	E [♯]	G ^b	F [♯]	G	A ^b	G [♯]
0	90	114	180	204	294	318	384	408	498	588	612	678	702	792	816	882	906	996	1086	1110

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Admittedly, this reading calls into question the E[#] located in the organ voicing of the chord. Did Ives envision two differently tuned thirds as belonging to this chord? Or was the traditional “second” spelling of the C[#] major chord in the organ accompaniment only a practical decision, owing to the fixed intonation of keyboard instruments? Is the spelling of the chordal third in the voice and brass parts as F intended to be the ideal and purely tuned third, representing perfect consonance at the close of a particularly dissonant movement? As such questions arise, an analysis focusing on the composer’s response to textual or subtextual clues is necessary in grappling with them. Indeed, through the lens of a narrative analysis, the interpretation of the triumphal text (and perhaps triumphal tuning) of “Thee We Hail” swells to a singularly more complex issue than its dismissal as a mere F-versus-E[#] spelling idiosyncrasy.³⁰

Conclusions:

Loose Ends and the Analytical Process

A central purpose of this article has been to initiate an exploration into the richness of narrative expression in Ives’s *Three Harvest Home Chorales*. But although my analysis has focused on several of the narrative compositional devices on display in the *Chorales*, there remain topics for further consideration. The narrative implications beneath any number of additional issues within the music could have been discussed, including:

- The narrative effect of heterorhythmic vs. homorhythmic textures extant throughout the *Chorales*, especially regarding the intricate polyrhythms of the second movement—“[a] new kind of integrity in contrapuntal lines,” remarks Swafford, that “stayed with [Ives], steadily becoming more complex and subtle.”³¹

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- The final chord of the work (see Figure 16)—when complete with brass, it forms a complete collection of the C major scale that Henry and Sidney Cowell refer to as “a symbol of universal praise.”³²
- Ives’s practice of musical borrowing, well-documented in the literature, and the apparent lack of overt musical quotations in the *Chorales*.³³
- The A-centric cadences at the conclusion of both verses in “I. Harvest Home,” which conspicuously lack a chordal third.
- Completion of the twelve-tone aggregate (for example, see the first five bars sung by the chorus in the first movement).
- The overall emphasis on pedal points (each of the three movements employs a drone pedal point in the organ’s bass register—a device commonly used by Ives).

As is often the case, however, the chosen subject matter is ultimately of less importance than simply engaging with the music analytically. The undertaking of an interpretive analysis that considers questions of narrative is in and of itself an effective catalyst in coming to informed interpretive choices in performance.

As I have suggested, the analytical procedures we have employed are intended to find useful application throughout Ives’s choral oeuvre. *Psalm 90* alone, for example, contains many of the devices we have discussed, including text painting techniques, vertical symmetry, harmonic palindromes, polyphonic vs. homophonic textures, and nontraditional spellings. An ensemble’s collective understanding of these features through the lens of choral narrative might produce rewarding interpretive results indeed (and, by extension, enhance an audience’s experience). In endeavors of pedagogy, in matters of performance, and in personal music making, such analysis contributes to the notion that no note Charles Ives put to paper was devoid of purpose. Rather, our view demonstrates that Ives’s most enigmatic choices often reveal themselves as integral players in a larger, interactive story. ■

NOTES

- ¹ Charles E. Ives, *Essays Before a Sonata* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1920), 4.
- ² Use of the term “musical narrative” in this article does not approach the comprehensive nature of the term as used by scholars specializing in narrative theory. This interdisciplinary field tends to contemplate the goals and approaches of musical narrative through many intersecting lenses, including music theory, musicology, literary criticism, and semiotics. As Byron Almén recently observed of this multifaceted approach: “Musical narrative resists simple formulation, its complex identity emerging through a confluence of factors” (Byron Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative* [Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008], 38). My use of the term “narrative” should not be misconstrued as an attempt to situate the present study within the broader context of musical narrative theory. Rather, I use “narrative” simply as a term for Ives’s methodology in musically describing programmatic events—whether as represented by explicit textual references or enigmatic subtextual clues—via specific compositional techniques.
- ³ Jan Swafford, *Charles Ives: A Life With Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 93.
- ⁴ Aaron Copland, *The New Music: 1900–1960* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1968), 117.
- ⁵ For more on Ives’s usage of systematically-derived wedge formations, see Philip Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 53–65; and Thomas Dyer Winters, “Additive and Repetitive Techniques in the Experimental Works of Charles Ives,” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1986), 24–126.
- ⁶ The chromatic fourth is not the only Renaissance device potentially referenced by Ives in the *Chorales*. In an early thesis, Sister Emily Marie Bryant provides a penetrating analysis of the work and identifies in the second movement “Ives’s use of a II–I cadence frequently found in various forms in the fifteenth century, and the Picardy third introduced about 1500 [that] confirms...his use of ancient devices in twentieth-century settings” (Sister Emily Marie Bryant, “The Avant-garde Character of Charles Ives’s Music Exemplified in Representative Vocal, Chamber, and Symphonic Works” [MA thesis, Mount St. Mary’s College, Los Angeles, 1966], 23). Additionally,

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and also in connection with the second movement, Julius Tipton observes of its complex polyrhythms: “This type of contrapuntal treatment is reminiscent of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century mensuration canons” (Julius R. Tipton, “Some Observations on the Choral Style of Charles Ives,” *American Choral Review* 12, no. 3 [July 1970]: 103).

⁷ Tim Carter writes that “the more obvious techniques of word-painting have often been decried as childish and naïve by theorists seeking a deeper relationship between text and music: Vincenzo Galilei was one of the first to pour scorn on such devices” (Tim Carter, “Word-painting,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 19, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.30568>).

⁸ Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, 140.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ In the language of traditional post-tonal music theory, and more specifically in Lambert’s terms, this whole-tone harmonic palindrome is a product of a T10/T2 transposition cycle. See Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, 140–1.

¹¹ Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, 70.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Swafford, *A Life With Music*, 161.

¹⁴ Sister Bryant comments that “the tenor voice-line gives evidence of impelling logic as it moves in one long phrase of increasingly larger intervals toward the focal point a perfect fifth from the initial note, and then just as logically recedes toward a sudden deflection of a minor ninth before the cadence in measure twenty-five” (Bryant, “The Avant-garde Character,” 19).

¹⁵ Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, 149.

¹⁶ For a more thorough treatment of Ives’s use of canon and other contrapuntal devices, see Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, Chapter 2, “Contrapuntal Foundations,” 25–38.

¹⁷ Michael R. Rogers, *Teaching Approaches in Music Theory: An Overview of Pedagogical Philosophies*, 2nd ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004), 6.

¹⁸ Letter to Lehman Engel, in Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte, ed., *Letters of Composers: An Anthology 1603–1945* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 345.

¹⁹ This indication does not appear in the current published edition. I am indebted to the Irving S. Gilmore Music

Library at Yale University for their kind assistance in viewing various manuscript facsimiles.

²⁰ Sister Bryant refers to mm. 52–53 as “polychordal impressionism...a text painting described tonally by the varying harmonies” (Bryant, “The Avant-garde Character,” 21).

²¹ Charles E. Ives, *Memos*, ed. John Kirkpatrick (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972), 39.

²² Notably, Ives employed this technique of subdominant fugal writing in an earlier piece on the same topic: the “Song for Harvest Season” for voice and brass, composed in 1894.

²³ Steven Zopfi, “*Three Harvest Home Chorales* by Charles Ives: A Conductor’s Study” (MM thesis, University of California, Irvine, 1993), 21.

²⁴ Johnny Reinhard, “Charles Ives’s Approach to Intonation,” *NewMusicBox*, December 21, 2005, <https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/charles-ives-approach-to-intonation/>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Swafford, *A Life With Music*, 416.

²⁷ Letter to Sol Babitz and Ingolf Dahl, in Tom C. Owens, ed., “Selected Correspondence 1881–1954,” in *Charles Ives and His World*, ed. J. Peter Burkholder (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 249–50.

²⁸ Even John Kirkpatrick, the lifelong champion of Ives, had to gradually learn the lesson of meaning in Ives’s nontraditional spellings. He once related: “When I got going at the *First Violin Sonata*, I was puzzled...[by] Ives’s hybrid spelling of notes... The phrase ‘The most are gone now’ [from the song *Maple Leaves*] goes A-sharp, A-sharp, G-sharp, F-natural...[a] descending fourth; why not spell it as a fourth?... At the time, I thought it was sheer nonconformism, but then, the more I got into his music generally, the more it seemed to me that he had unexpected tunings in mind, that actually the core of the passage was probably a real A-sharp reaching up toward B and a slightly low F-natural reaching down toward E—what used to be called a fourth and a comma. From then on, I had great reverence for these things.” (John Kirkpatrick, panelist, “On Performing the Violin Sonatas,” in *An Ives Celebration: Papers and Panels of the Charles Ives Centennial Festival-Conference*, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Vivian Perlis [Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1977], 138–9.)

²⁹ As measured from A (see Table 2), F[♯] (792 cents) – C[♯] (408

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cents) = 384 cents (two cents short of the 386-cent justly tuned third).

³⁰ The ending of the second movement has been examined in the literature almost exclusively as either polytonal in nature, or as a simple enharmonic respelling of a C[♯] major triad. Sister Bryant, writing in 1966, is the only other analyst to specifically connect Ives's spelling of the chord to a potential tuning plan: "The enharmonic change...implies a quarter-tone interval in just intonation" (Bryant, "The Avant-garde Character," 24). Although the interval would more closely approach an eighth-tone in Pythagorean tuning, Bryant's recognition of the "enharmonic" spelling's distinct role in a justly-tuned context is significant.

³¹ Swafford, *A Life With Music*, 162. Of Ives's canonic writing, Lambert states that "Charles Ives's ultimate goal is a contrapuntal technique that maximizes the separation of the canonic lines" (Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, 30). In fact, this goal extends beyond the relatively

narrow limits of canonic composition and embraces all of Ives's contrapuntal ideals; early experimentation with polyrhythms such as those of "Lord of the Harvest," along with Ives's many other explorations in polymeter, polyrhythm, and polytonality, would eventually coalesce in his mature works into a realization of this goal—the approach of total contrapuntal emancipation.

³² Henry Cowell and Sidney Cowell, *Charles Ives and His Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1983), 157.

³³ Hitchcock goes so far as to describe the *Chorales* as being "without musical quotations" (H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Ives* [London: Oxford University Press, 1977], 35). However, one analyst's exploration of musical borrowing (or the lack thereof) in a given Ives piece should not necessarily be taken as binding or definitive. Presumably, a deeper analysis into the *Three Harvest Home Chorales* could yield evidence of musical quotation, perhaps concealed from superficial investigations.



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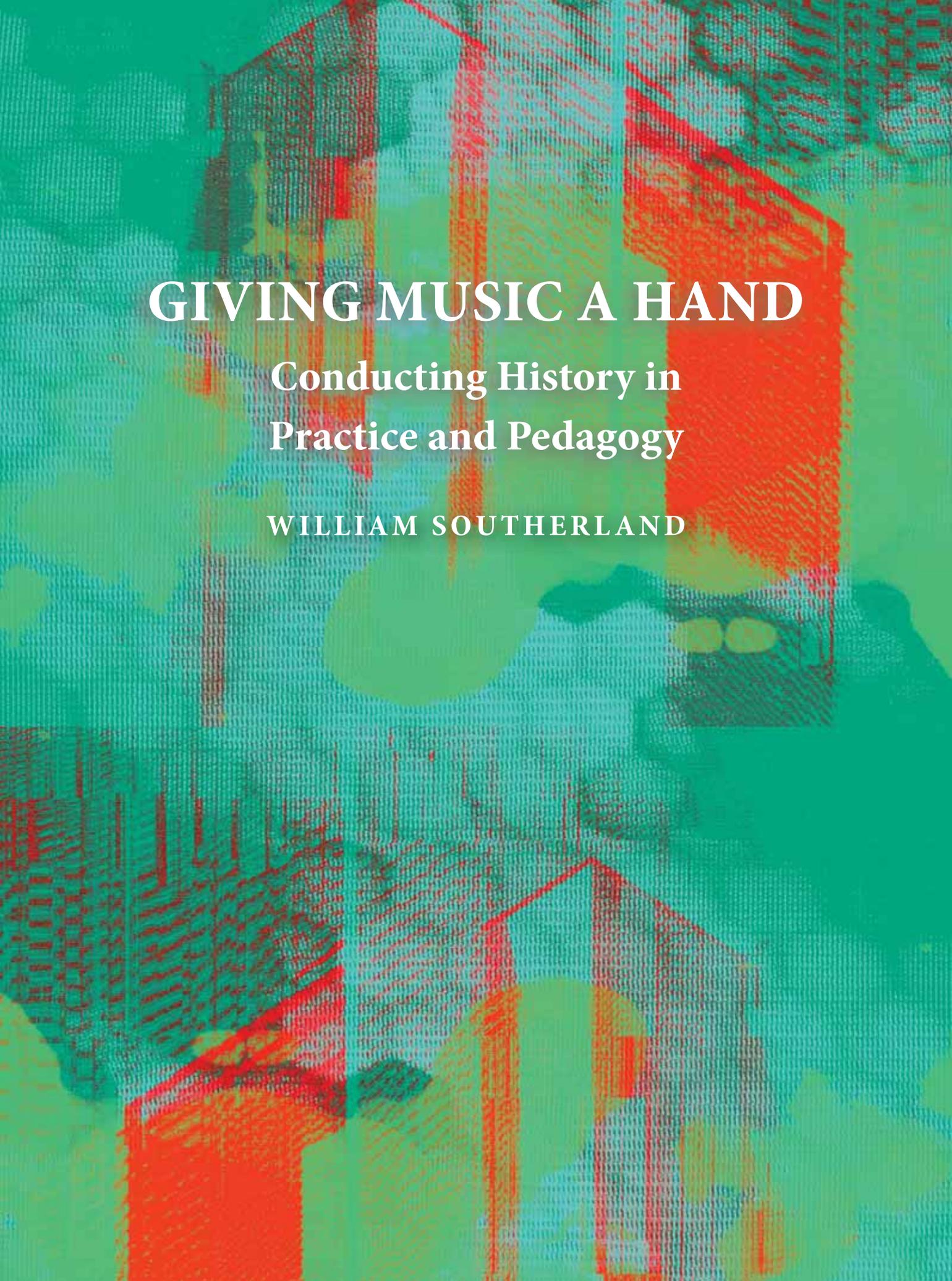
The history of the conducting gesture is as old as recorded history itself. While the modern “professional” conductor did not invade the popular consciousness until the middle of the nineteenth century, depictions of conducting gestures were etched in hieroglyphics and Pharaonic friezes, recorded in Greek and Roman literature, and encoded above Jewish and Gregorian texts as cheironomic neumes. Conductors in the ancient world were so revered, in fact, that the ancient Egyptians dedicated images of the hand and arm in art exclusively to refer to music, musicians, and especially conductors.¹

Yet for some reason, conducting history has been overlooked by instructional programs for choral music educators in America. Studying the development of conducting gestures emphasizes that conducting gestures have an array of meanings and contexts beyond “keeping time.” Analyzing the historical use of gesture to transmit melodic information lends authority to the modern use of kinesthetic educational practices such as the Curwen hand signs.² Understanding the

evolution of the conducting gesture over the years encourages conducting students to develop new solutions to modern conducting problems and inspire them to be innovators rather than imitators. Finally, studying conducting holistically within a historical framework helps students consider different leadership styles to achieve the best possible performance, whether that requires conducting or giving direction in other ways.

The purpose of this article is to review the literature on conducting history, particularly as it pertains to choral conducting and to argue the pedagogical value of history for conducting students. First, I summarize current literature on existing instructional content related to history in conducting course syllabi. Then, I overview the current understandings of the development of kinesthetic musical practices from ancient times to the present day. Finally, I provide implications for teaching conducting history to students in conducting courses and instructors in the choral conducting classroom.

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GIVING MUSIC A HAND

Conducting History in
Practice and Pedagogy

WILLIAM SOUTHERLAND

Conducting History in Today's Classroom

For beginning conductors in conducting classes today, textbooks serve as a primary resource for information. Today's conducting textbooks, however, make either only cursory reference to history or omit it altogether. The typical textbook begins with basic posture and beat pattern guidelines, then describes a system of gestures without any historical context. Timothy Benge's survey of college conducting textbooks acknowledged that these texts are generally excellent examples for the mechanics of conducting. Only six of the twenty-four choral pedagogy texts Benge surveyed, however, contained any information on the historical development of the conducting gesture.³

As early as 1968, Julius Herford called attention to the lack of information that is currently provided to students regarding historical gesture and performance practice.⁴ The most extensive description of ancient conducting history in any textbook appeared in Wilhelm Ehmann's 1968 *Choral Directing*, in which the author described the use of hand gestures and feet by Greek choruses, the Gregorian gesture, and the origins of chant conducting or *cheironomy*. However, this information is extremely brief, only filling about two pages of the entire text.⁵

Conducting instructors frequently provide substantial content to students through handouts, articles, and direct instruction. One might argue that conducting history may be studied in the classroom through sources other than textbooks. Scot Hanna-Weir's 2013 doctoral dissertation surveyed twenty-two undergraduate conducting course syllabi and found no indication of any historical context. The researcher determined that, like textbooks, most undergraduate courses "begin with a discussion of posture...then introduce the basic patterns in the right arm."⁶ Hanna-Weir argued that this focus on metric gesture as the underpinning for conducting syllabi likely was encouraged by popular mid-twentieth-century conducting texts like those of Karl Gerkens and Nicolai Malko.⁷

Research by John Hart published in 2018 on the status of choral conducting curricula surveyed conducting pedagogues at American universities regarding instructional content. The questionnaire distributed by Hart defined content knowledge in exclusively technical

terms—tempo, beat patterns, control gestures, expressive gestures, and score study—but did not address any historical knowledge regarding the discipline. Hart concluded that conducting instructors emphasized technical skills over pedagogical skills,⁸ consistent with the theory that many current conducting courses focus exclusively on hand-waving without substantial historical context.

Some sources that have included conducting history contain incorrect information. Karl Gerkens's 1919 volume *Essentials of Conducting* stated that there was no evidence of conducting gesture before the fourteenth century,⁹ an argument refuted by his own contemporaries. Even as late as 1960, William Finn's *The Art of the Choral Conductor* provided misrepresentations of the use of the conducting gestures during the Gregorian period.¹⁰ Robert Demaree and Don V Moses's 1995 textbook, *The Complete Conductor*, provided inaccurate information about the use of gesture during the Renaissance.¹¹ Charles Chapman's 2010 article regarding chant conducting technique, while not technically incorrect, recommended conducting gestures based on the author's "experimentation" rather than either historic or authentic contemporary cheironomic practice.¹²

There are two comprehensive, accurate sources of scholarship on the full history of the choral conducting gesture. The first was published between 1923 and 1924 by William Wallace, notable Scottish composer and dean of music faculty at the University of London.¹³ In a remarkable series of seven articles, Wallace surveyed conducting history as a whole, from ancient Egypt up to Wallace's own time. The scholarship in these texts is still highly accurate and readable and would be an excellent resource in any undergraduate conducting course. The second is Elliott Galkin's (1988) *The History of Orchestral Conducting: Theory and Practice*. Galkin's review of historical sources on conducting practice is painstakingly comprehensive in breadth and detail. The writing is impeccably sourced and annotated, including primary source authors from every possible European background. Galkin's two chapters on conducting history may be a bit dense for undergraduates but will still provide an excellent overview of the topic for instructors and a comprehensive list of primary sources for study.

Conducting in the Ancient World

The earliest use of hand signals for musical instruction was discovered in Egyptian statues and burial art, particularly in the areas surrounding Giza.¹⁴ This form of musical communication was more than simply an indication of the beat or dynamics. Rather, the Egyptian hand signal system likely communicated both pitch and melodic contour. Edith Gerson-Kiwi and David Hiley argued that this theory is supported by observing contemporary Coptic and Egyptian cantors who today practice similar hand gestures to those found in the ancient Egyptian artwork¹⁵ (Photo 1). Although these theories have been disputed, Hans Hickmann described the great effort made to determine the validity of these claims:

The reconstruction of Egyptian music poses many problems for the scientist. To solve them, several paths are offered to him: the methodical study of the instruments discovered in the thousand tombs; the analysis of works of art and pharaonic paintings that represent musical scenes; and finally, the review of the remains of ancient music in the folk customs of modern Egypt and Nubia.¹⁶

The physical gestures of the Egyptians had a lasting effect on many of the cultures surrounding their territory. Louis Barton believed that the Hebrew people were most likely exposed to it during their captivity in Egypt.¹⁷

Today, some Jewish sects use a system of written symbols within their scripture to indicate the proper gestures.¹⁸ In this tradition, the gestures aided in teaching and memorizing the correct intonation and contour of the scriptural chant with which they corresponded. There is no evidence, however, that this tradition migrated to Europe during the Jewish Diaspora or was used by European Christians until almost a thousand years later.¹⁹

The ancient Greeks, great admirers of the Egyptian culture, later incorporated these traditions into their own musical cultures:

The Greek travelers, already, were impressed by the extreme serenity and the beauty of the Egyptian melodies. Several testimonies bear witness to this: haven't the Greek authors repeatedly underlined that their musical art and its theory came down in direct line from the pharaonic musicians, their masters? In fact, it is scarcely conceivable that modern musicians have not taken into account in their works the historical evidence which we possess about the beginnings of musical life in Egypt, the cradle of civilization.²⁰

In Greek musical ensembles, rhythmic ideas were given by movement of the feet, and melodic ideas were expressed with the hands. Texts performed by the chorus were typically sung in a chant style, so the leader of



Photo 1: An Egyptian relief representing hand gestures used to lead an ensemble.²³

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the chorus (ἡγεμων, “hegemon”) was physically raised above the others to give gestural direction.²¹ The instruments, particularly the flutes, were given authority over the beat. In later periods, Greek flute-players wore wooden shoes and stomped on a hard surface so that the beat was heard. Roman musicians also used this system of keeping the beat, and the wooden shoes are seen in statues and referred to in the writings of Marcus Quintilian. The writer Marius Victorinus identified these gestures by name as “arsis is the raising of the foot without sound, thesis is the putting it down with sound.”²²

Conducting in Medieval Europe

Throughout the middle period, Christian chant melodies greatly increased in complexity. Rather than syllabic style, which dominated earlier forms of chant, European chant of the twelfth century became stylized and ornate.

Melismas at the ends of phrases would be continuously extended, usually on the final syllable of the word. In fact, one Greek chant has a melisma in which the final syllable of “alleluia” is extended for an entire page.²⁴ So as to further complicate ensemble singing, the individual notes of the chant were not sung with equal rhythm but had traditional patterns of *accelerando* and *ritardando* as the pitch ascended or descended.

At first, the monks and nuns who led their ensembles used gestures in the air to indicate relative pitch. Like earlier Jewish manuscripts, these gestures were later inscribed above the words of prayers books and psalters as symbols called neumes. Yet, without an adequate system to notate specific pitches and durations, variations in the chants from place to place inevitably occurred.

The oldest surviving copies of chant texts with graphical neumes are dated to the late ninth century, although chant books without neumes continued to be used as late



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as the early tenth century. These early chant books were too small to be useful during performance, however, so they were likely used more as an occasional reference. As a result, the conductor acted as an interpreter of the neumes to establish consistency in the melody.²⁵ William Wallace cited John Cotton, a writer from the eleventh or twelfth century, who described the tremendous challenges in performing music without standardization:

So, it comes to this, that someone sings the neume up or down at his own sweet will, and when you are at your minor third or your fourth, the next man is singing a major third or a fifth, and if a third man comes in he puts the others out... So, the long and the short of it is that you won't get three people to sing together, far less a thousand.²⁶

As the demands on church musicians grew, these musicians “re-discovered” techniques of musical communication used by neighboring Greek Christian communities. Wallace cited a Codex from the eleventh century, which referenced a form of musical direction known as “cheironomy,”²⁷ derived from Greek word *χείρ* (“cheir,” hand). Similarly, Gerson-Kiwi described a twelfth-century monk from Monte Cassino as the “conductor” in a Greek monastery in southern Italy.²⁸ In this community, the leader, or *cheironomica*, held a bishop’s or abbot’s staff in the left hand to indicate authority while at the same time indicating the neumes with the right.²⁹ Today, Roman Catholic monks in Monte Cassino protect the oldest-known Gregorian-style neumatic manuscripts and still lead songs using cheironomic gestures.³⁰

European musicians were inspired by Greek and Roman influences, but their conducting practices were not identical. Cheironomy, as practiced by Egyptian, Hebrew, and Byzantine communities, was the explicit transmission of specific musical intervals, not a system of communicating musical expressivity. European cheironomic gestures by contrast indicated rhythm and melodic contour, not specific intervals. Therefore, the prevailing cheironomic practice of the Gregorian style must be perceived as a significant departure from its Middle Eastern roots.

In a manuscript dated 1274 by writer Elias Salomon,

Wallace found examples of the gradual evolution of European cheironomic gestures. The first referenced Guido of Arezzo’s “Harmonic Hand”: “having a mental image of the diagram on the palm of the left hand, we mark the pauses with the right, we indicate the ‘points’ with the finger and little stick.”³¹ The reference to the “little stick” is significant here as a potential precursor to the modern baton. This new system provided the monks a means for specifying exact pitch, a practice that several hundred years later was adapted into solfeggio hand signs. Wallace’s second quote from Salomon showed the importance of leadership in the performance of Gregorian chant:

Likewise, be it noted that in the case of four singers equally good, they should be led by one... and he should mark all pauses... and start again after them... Similarly, if the rector does not sing in the quartet, he is to arrange the others in order, and indicate the pauses with his own hand above the book, while he frankly prompts them.³²

European monastic cheironomists borrowed and adapted the classical ideas of *arsis* and *thesis* from the Greek time-keeping practice. Rather than an upward foot motion used by the ancient Greeks, *arsis* became associated with a rhythmic motion forward. Conversely, *thesis* became a movement toward rest rather than a downward motion of the foot.³³ Modern chant performance represents a synthesis of these melodic and rhythmic tendencies with both *arsis* and *thesis*—upward melodic motion quickens while downward melodic motion slows.³⁴

Conducting in the Baroque and Classical Periods

The evolution of the archetypal orchestral conductor, and the subsequent universalization of the baton, happened out of necessity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As the number of performers in the ensemble increased, so did the challenge of maintaining uniform tempo. By the end of the seventeenth century, composers were indicating dynamic and phrase mark-

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ings, utilizing paired voicings across the ensemble, and even implementing extended playing techniques. As a result, more complex and subtle compositional techniques increased the need for some form of leadership.

Early attempts at conducting large ensembles were not well received, and conducting became a source of controversy in musical circles in Europe. During the late Renaissance, some conductors had become quite histrionic in their gestures, as noted by the fifteenth-century text *Philomates de Nova Domo Musicorum*:

There are those for whom it is a custom to direct songs with base gestures, thinking that they know outstanding customs and the exquisite condition of singers. Certain directors moderate the measure with both hands spread apart, at fighting distance, just as when in a lawsuit one of the two people is not able to jump upon the hair of the other with his fingernails, he threatens a lethal contest with his twofold palms unarmed and extended. Also I have seen many signifying the measure by stamping their foot, like a horse that has eaten enough strikes the turf of green grass and salaciously leaps about. Many imitate a vegetable while directing neumes, like the one who sings like a swan with his neck tilted back, or that one accustomed to squat down while singing.³⁵

As a response to these excesses in conducting style, Zaccagni commanded at the turn of the seventeenth century that the conducting beat be “steady and straightforward,” with only an up and down motion,³⁶ suggesting a philosophical return to *arsis* and *thesis*.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many *Kapellmeisters* (“chapel masters”) in Germany had taken to literally “beating time” by banging a stick against a wooden surface or by foot stomping, not unlike Greek and Roman traditions. This form of conducting could obviously be noisy and distracting and was therefore never universally accepted. Jean Jacques Rousseau, in his *Dictionnaire de musique*, stated that French opera directors audibly beat time constantly, “compared to a woodcutter felling a tree.”³⁷ Stephanus Vanneus, as early as 1533, insisted that the beat could be indicated

silently, without any “sounded instrument.”³⁸ Audible conducting could even be dangerous. One well-known story involved Jean-Baptiste Lully, the famous French composer, who often conducted using a very heavy stick that he beat against the ground. After a misplaced beat badly injured the conductor’s foot, he subsequently developed a case of gangrene from which he eventually succumbed.³⁹

Although not well documented, women participated in performance and leadership of musical ensembles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The separation of religious communities by gender had required nuns through the middle ages to have substantial roles in the development and leadership of music ensembles, such as the now well-known composer Hildegard von Bingen. During the Baroque and Classical periods, women of the court such as the Duchess of Alfonso were known widely for their superb musical tastes. The Duchess conducted the *Concerto delle donne*, a chamber music ensemble composed entirely of women founded in Ferraro in the late sixteenth century. Wallace asserted that their performance practice foreshadowed modern practices, such that the performers entered and exited the performance in strict silence and the Duchess conducted using a long, polished baton.⁴⁰

During the eighteenth century, church music in Germany continued to be conducted in the traditional way by a *Kapellmeister*. Opera, however, moved toward a “two director system,” in which the first violin gave the mood and musicality to the ensemble while the keyboardist kept time and indicated entrances and cut-offs to the choir. In fact, by the end of the eighteenth century, the “conductor”—the person keeping the beat—was almost always at the keyboard,⁴¹ a practice that continues in many churches to the present time.⁴²

Wallace argued that the rise of the baton correlated with the decline in prominence of the harpsichord as the central feature of performance.⁴³ Mauceri inferred another relationship between the development of music notation and conducting gesture according to the needs of the ensemble. At first, the conductor was only provided with a reduction rather than the full score. In time, however, it became important for the conductor to know what each part was doing independently.

Early players used subtle gestures like head nods,

eye contact, and other physical gestures during performance. As the ensembles swelled in size, these methods of communication became increasingly frustrated.⁴⁴ Initially, the responsibility for “conducting” went to the first violinists who led the ensemble through bowing gesture or stopping playing altogether and waving the bow like a baton. Indeed, in 1778, Mozart became so frustrated by a bad rehearsal in Paris that he threatened to take the bow and conduct the ensemble himself.⁴⁵

In French opera of the eighteenth century, there was a different approach to the leadership of the ensemble. After an orchestra reached a certain size, neither the violinist nor the keyboardist was enough to keep the ensemble together, and a separate conductor became necessary. Rather than abandoning the principle of “beating time,” the *conducteur d’Opera* used a combination of audible tempo and waving either a stick or a rolled piece of paper.⁴⁶ Wallace suggests this transition toward more rigorous leadership also stemmed from a general lack of musical literacy, noting that between 1715 and 1724, not a single violinist in the French royal band could play music from sight.⁴⁷

In 1739, Johann Mattheson published the first text specific to leading an ensemble—*Der Volkommene Capelmeister* (“The Complete Conductor”). Mattheson’s work focused on the conductor as a composer, arranger, and singing teacher, and especially emphasized the importance of good rehearsal methods over gesture.⁴⁸ Mattheson described the ideal conductor as “a broadly educated artist...knowledgeable in literature, poetry, painting, philosophy, and languages as in the various realms of music...”⁴⁹

Yet, the practice of conducting as a discipline separate from instrument performance developed inconsistently. In 1784, Dr. Charles Burney recounted a story describing a performance of the Handel society that was the “first instance of a band of such magnitude being assembled together...without the assistance of a ‘manuductor.’”⁵⁰ French observers of the time, accustomed to the time-beating of conductors like Lully, must have been amazed that such a large ensemble could be kept together without a visible or audible leader.

Early critics of conductors, especially those who used baton, considered the practice too mechanical and distracting from the performance. In 1807, Weber de-

cried its use: “I know of no more bootless strife...than that of the baton.”⁵¹ Later that same century, Pohlenz attempted to conduct the first movement of the Choral Symphony using his trademark blue baton but was promptly ordered to sit by a double bass player. He did not rise again to conduct until the choral movement.⁵² Even into the nineteenth century, musicians such as Richard Hauptmann complained about the poor use of baton in leadership: “The cursed little white stick of wood always did annoy me, and when I see it domineering over the whole orchestra, music departs from me...when everything goes of its own accord, I am in quite another world.”⁵³

The Modern Conductor

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed the rise of the “superstar” performer, including, for the first time, famous conductors. Choral music apart from the orchestra had declined through the Baroque period, and while Classical composers utilized choruses, these voices functioned as instruments within larger instrumental ensembles. As a result, through the nineteenth century, the orchestra director became the eponymous conductor model. Furthermore, social trends such as the increasing acceptance of democracy and rapid swelling of the middle class during the nineteenth century stimulated these changes. As musicians moved away from the patronage systems that had controlled European formal music in the Baroque and Classical periods, nineteenth-century musicians relied more heavily on name recognition and public popularity to make a living, and conductors of large ensembles like orchestras were more easily recognizable.

The move toward professional orchestral conductors evoked strong disagreement regarding the function of the position. David Charlton described this philosophical disagreement pointedly:

On one hand there seems to have been strong appreciation of fine results achievable under dual control of violin and keyboard, as in Italian opera. Old-fashioned church practices, with foot-stamping and arm-waving, were reviled. On the other hand, there were ‘Roman-

tic' straws in the wind: strong personalities who directed without instrument...⁵⁴

Conductors have had a long history of "strong personalities" indeed. Lully was known to smash a violin in anger during bad rehearsals, after which he paid for its damage. Handel permitted no interruptions during his rehearsals. Gluck's reputation described him as a tyrant who became enraged at any mistakes. Orchestral conductors in the Romantic era appear to have continued this tradition. Berlioz, for example, was known for leaping in the air, hiding under the conducting podium, and thrusting at and threatening the players during performances.⁵⁵

Technical innovations in gesture, particularly among orchestral conductors, became more widely adopted and standardized in Europe through the nineteenth century. The baton had been universally accepted in continental Europe for conducting orchestras by the late eighteenth century and was introduced into England no later than 1820, possibly by Louis Spohr.⁵⁶ The increasing size of the orchestra and the increasing expressive demands of the composers required ever-increasing podium leadership. Among the greatest examples of this shift in conducting expressivity were Felix Mendelssohn, Hector Berlioz, and Richard Wagner.⁵⁷ The pinnacle of this spectacle was the performance of Mahler's Symphony no. 8 in 1910, conducted by Stokowski, familiarly nicknamed the "Symphony of a Thousand."⁵⁸

The "Renaissance" of Choral Conducting

Alongside the orchestral conductor, the professional choral conductor also rose to prominence around the end of the nineteenth century. Before this time, in both America and Europe, the public preferred the large oratorios of Handel or Haydn performed by large, well-respected choral societies. Other choral compositions were rarely held in high regard, and glee clubs and high school choirs were viewed as educational tools rather than outlets for serious music.⁵⁹

During World War I, however, Americans became exposed to new music through military choruses and

bands, as well as popular touring choirs. In the 1920s, the demand for music education in the United States spurred the establishment of several now world-renowned institutions such as the Eastman School of Music, Julliard School of Music, Curtis Institute of Music, and Westminster Choir College. American high schools and liberal arts colleges formed more formal unaccom-

“As choral music became a greater source of entertainment, choral conductors rose to prominence.”

panied choirs to raise the level and stature of choral music, transforming it from a leisure hobby to a professional pursuit. Palmer Christian observed that in 1924, "the old-fashioned 'glee club' is increasingly discarding the sweater-corduroy-pants-brogue type of progress in favor of the long-tails-white-tie-patent-leather-shoes of dignified and compelling choral music."⁶⁰ By the 1920s, the demand for skilled choral conductors had grown so great that New York University and Northwestern University offered courses focused specifically on choral conducting.

During the 1930s, the Great Depression brought about a greater public demand for acapella choral music facilitated by the invention of the radio and fueled by a demand for cheap entertainment. As choral music became a greater source of entertainment, choral conductors rose to prominence. Ensembles conducted by Norman Luboff and Neil Kjos became known for excellence, and their compositions and arrangements are still widely performed today. Robert Shaw, a monumentally influential choral conductor who passed away in 1999, remains a household name to this day.⁶¹ Indeed, the conductors of the mid-twentieth century continue to have considerable influence on the conducting styles of American choral conductors, decades after their careers have ended.

No comprehensive list of impactful choral conductors in the twentieth century has so far been published, but Christopher Smith's 2016 DMA dissertation outlined the conducting philosophies of several influential choral conductors who had substantial impacts on the

Conducting History in Practice and Pedagogy

art.⁶² Frieder Bernius stated that conducting gestures should be unique to each conductor to engage higher-order thinking with conducting students. Bernius specifically recommended resisting beating time as a teaching method and instead focus on compelling gestures. Stephen Cleobury recommended a more organized instructional system for the teaching of conducting and also argued for individualized gestures. Weston Noble asserted that the ensemble members themselves must be trained to recognize and correctly interpret the gestures of the conductor. Robert Shaw believed that orchestra conducting made his gesture more universally recognizable in terms of pattern and therefore more communicative.⁶³

Modern ensembles have approached the issue of musical leadership in different ways. In 1836, Robert Schumann commented that “a good orchestra... needs to be conducted only at the start and at changes in tempo. For the rest, the conductor can quietly stand at the podium...waiting until his direction is again required.”⁶⁴ Most large ensembles like orchestras and oratorio societies typically opt to give the conductor absolute artistic control. Even so, some ensembles have demonstrated that complicated music can be successfully and artistically performed without a conductor.

In the middle of the last century, the Symphony of the Air (formerly the NBC Orchestra) performed without a conductor after the retirement of the renowned Arturo Toscanini.⁶⁵ Contemporary reviewers were impressed at the orchestra’s ability to retain a high level of musicianship,⁶⁶ although the orchestra returned to a traditional conductor-leader less than a year later. Today, some orchestral ensembles choose to perform without a conductor as a way to enhance the collaborative nature of group music making. The Orpheus Ensemble, for example, has operated and performed without a dedicated conductor since 1972.⁶⁷ Likewise, professional choral ensembles like Chanticleer and Cantus perform almost exclusively without conductors, relying instead on rigorous rehearsals and considerable musicianship on the part of the singers to maintain a cohesive ensemble.

The Value of Historical Context on Pedagogy

Every aspect of music may have evolved from its origins—harmony, melody, instrumentation, and even the complete exclusion of humans from music making through technology. Certain characteristics of musicianship, however, have never changed, like the drive for artistic excellence and the intrinsic value of music.⁶⁸ A comprehensive study of conducting history champions the belief that the only true judge of a conductor is the quality of the ensemble’s performance. Whatever techniques are the most effective for accomplishing this goal are the most appropriate for that circumstance.

Philosophically, choral conducting students should understand the similarities and differences between “directors” (*dirigieren* or *conducteur*) and “conductors” (*tacitieren* or *maitre d’orchestre*).⁶⁹ Charlton specifically argued that using the phrase “conducting” without consideration for time period produces inaccurate assumptions about the specific performance practices involved.⁷⁰ Without question, every ensemble benefits from direction, whether dictated by an individual or established through collaboration; but not every performance of an ensemble requires someone waving their hands. Each group music-making circumstance is unique, and students should learn a variety of gestural and non-gestural skills to suitably lead ensembles in a variety of contexts.

Certainly, physical coordination is an essential element of conducting, such as the skills outlined by Nicolai Malko and demonstrated brilliantly by Elizabeth Green’s 1981 conducting exercise demonstration.⁷¹ Yet, conducting pedagogues could allow the history of conducting to inform a developmentally sequenced lesson design rather than focusing exclusively on discrete gestural exercises. The development of gesture occurred organically motivated only by the increasing demands of larger, more complex ensembles. Instructors could experiment with a historically informed, wholistic pedagogy beginning with expressivity through pre-metric gesture and non-conducted performance. Then, as the course progresses, instructors could incorporate more complex conducting gestures, such as metric patterns, as they are needed due to increasingly demanding repertoire being studied.

GIVING MUSIC A HAND

The specific repertoire of each historical period could be used as a framework for studying the repertoire of gesture concurrent with performance practice. The cheironomic techniques of the Middle Ages practiced through Gregorian chant repertoire teach expressivity, fluidity, and the importance of text stress. Baroque performance practice demands a variety of conducted and non-conducted directorial methods, including directing from the piano—an essential skill for all conductors, but especially future K-12 educators. Literature of the Classical period requires strictly disciplined tempi and understanding of form, but by focusing on expressivity early in the process, new conductors will hopefully incorporate fluidity and nuance into these more rigid structures. Finally, the modern period offers a wide range of potential repertoire requiring the widest range of gestures, often fluctuating rapidly between two or more or even abandoning traditional performance altogether such as when conducting aleatory.

The overall scholarship of choral conducting history is, by any reasonable measure, woefully lacking both in breadth and authority, and no single article can possibly provide the complete story. More research into this area must be done. Furthermore, conducting textbooks should include historical examples that demonstrate the technical principles being taught. Not only can young conductors learn a great deal from the historical basis for gestural techniques, but conducting scholars have a professional obligation to situate current practice within a historical context.

Studying primary sources about conducting may encourage a more scholarly approach to our discipline overall, and conductors-in-training should read primary sources written by great conductors whenever relevant. Nearly every notable orchestral conductor of the nineteenth century, such as Wagner, wrote a treatise on conducting. The depth of musical understanding that these masters convey is useful to any conductor, regardless of discipline, and their words of wisdom remain profoundly relevant today.

Throughout history, scholars have stressed the need for conductors to be a “jack-of-all-trades.” As Mattheson recognized three centuries ago, the interpretation of music requires knowledge of political and social history, performance practice, visual art, architecture, and

philosophy.⁷² Today, the National Association of Music Schools (NASM) accreditation guidelines require conducting students to have detailed knowledge not just of beat patterns but of the basic literature of each historical performance period and ensemble type.⁷³ Both history and modern practice reminds us that undergraduate conductors require comprehensive instruction beyond just the technical aspects of hand-waving.

Conclusion

Modern music continues to become increasingly complex both technically and expressively, requiring ever more sophisticated conducting techniques. Simultaneously, choral ensembles are performing increasingly diverse material demanding a wide range of conducting techniques leadership styles. Teaching our students merely the technical basics of gesture and focusing on meter patterns leaves them without the necessary adaptive skills to address future challenges. The study of conducting’s history provides insight into the historical development of gestures and may therefore guide students in development of new gestures to address new challenges in the years to come. By utilizing a scholarly approach to learning in our conducting classrooms, we can produce scholarly conductors capable not just of imitation but innovation for the future of our proud and ancient art. ■

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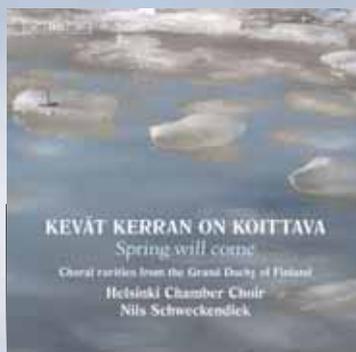
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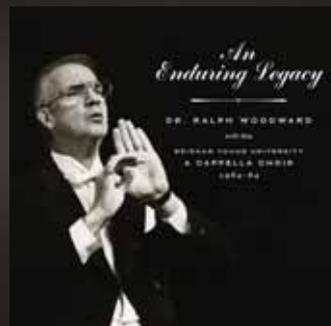


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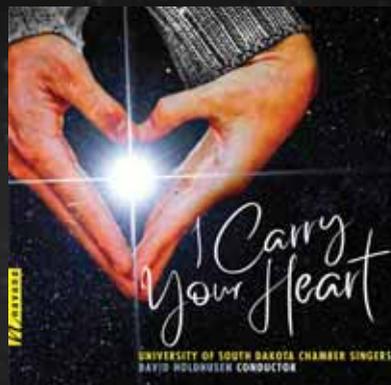


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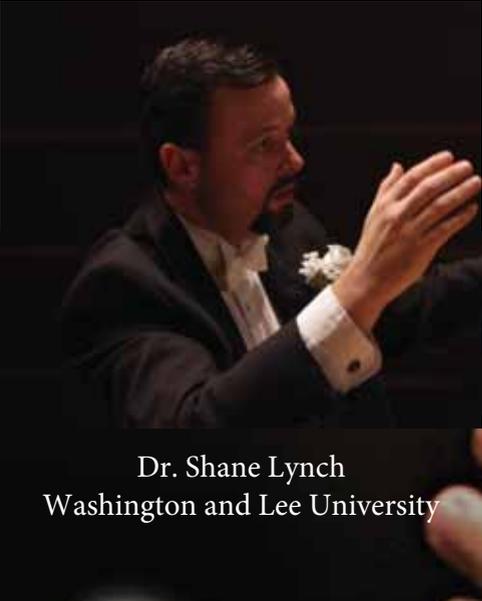
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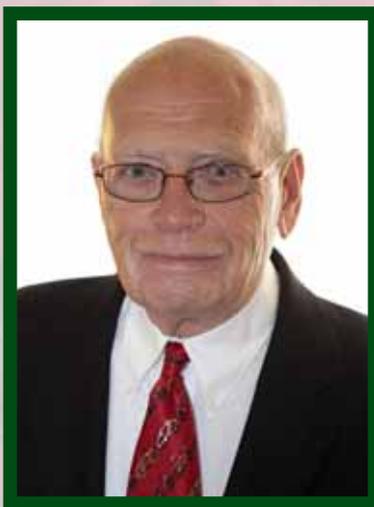


Photo by Andrea Canter

Phil Mattson passed away January 9, 2019, at the age of eighty due to complications from a 2015 motorcycle accident. He was a two-time Grammy nominee, pianist, arranger, conductor, and teacher, who served ACDA as National Repertoire & Resources Chair for Vocal Jazz and as Vocal Jazz Director for the Stan Kenton Clinics. He began his career as director of choral activities at Foothill College in California and later founded the Phil Mattson School for singers and conductors. He taught at Southwest Community College in Creston, Iowa, for eighteen years and retired to the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Phil wrote many arrangements for vocal jazz ensemble and choir and was commissioned to arrange for groups such as The Manhattan Transfer, Chanticleer, The Real Group, The Dale Warland Singers, and The Four Freshmen. As an accompanist, Phil performed with notable singers and players and annually conducted the Carnegie Hall Vocal Jazz Festival.

After the accident in September 2015, Phil relocated to California, where he continued to write arrangements and teach local workshops. The Jazz Education Network awarded him a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016. Sheryl Lynn Monkeliën's 2001 dissertation, "The influence of Phil Mattson on vocal jazz education in America: A case study" (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), explores how the conductor and arranger influenced vocal jazz education in America. As stated in the abstract: "Specific innovations in vocal jazz credited to Mattson include the presentation of smaller groups; first twelve singers, then six; and having them sing 'one on a mic.' This is considered the norm for vocal jazz ensembles today... Phil Mattson has been passionate about quality vocal jazz since his earliest experiences with the genre. He has changed the direction of vocal jazz through creative advancements including arrangements and methods of teaching choral educators the art of vocal jazz."

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ON THE VOICE

Duane Cottrell, editor

Seven Essential Voice Science Tools for Choral Singing

by David Harris

Choral directors are profoundly gifted at helping large groups work together, a skill to be deeply admired. To do this, we often rely on techniques such as asking for line; talking about tuning, blend, and balance; encouraging listening; count singing; goading singers to “have fun with this one”; and of course, begging for the chance to see our fellow musician’s eyeballs. As I became disenchanted with the amount of work that I had to personally put into the group as a whole in order for them to create something less than accurate to my understanding of the music, I began to investigate each of these group approaches individually. This process led me, a decade or so ago, into the budding world of voice science, also known as vocology. The primary element that has changed in me since then is that, in contrast to the group-focused instructions, I now focus on creating space for the individual voice first, even with my professional ensembles.

My instructions aim to give singers opportunities to explore how their voice works, how they feel when

singing the music, and how their contributions are important to the whole. Most importantly, I encourage them to ask continual and educated questions. I slowly integrate information about vocal, brain, and body function, and offer room for them to play with that information, integrating it into their practice. The best part is that I don’t feel like a one-armed wallpaper hanger any longer. Rather, I have the space to fulfill my goals as an educator and an artist with every ensemble I work with from beginners to professionals. The second-best part is that I save time in the long run. This allows for rehearsals to be more laid back, engaging, and enjoyable for everyone involved while we tackle more and more involved repertoire in varied styles. Below are a few of the topics I have found useful in creating this experience with the singers I have the privilege of conducting.

A Working Definition

Voice science in its most narrow definition entails approaching the

voice through the lens of the scientific method. While using the scientific method, questions are more important than answers, and everyone can participate. No one has to wait to know a hundred things before they can begin. Rather, they simply approach what they know with an inquisitive eye and a willingness to learn. This allows the pressure of perfection to play a less-active role and opens the door for joy through discovery.

No. 1: The Brain, Body, and Emotion

A new body of literature on learning theory and neuroscience has embraced the idea that the brain has plasticity, which means that 1) the brain is always changing and 2) people can actively encourage significant changes.¹ A basic understanding of plasticity centers around the concepts of brain mapping and neuron chains. Scientists have known for over a century that human brains have specific maps. Examples include processing visual information

in the back of the brain, aural information in the low center areas, the prefrontal cortex bearing the load of logic and judgement, etc. Neurons are cells that transmit electrical and chemical charges to one another. They link up to communicate information around the brain and to the body. Every brain area, and every task we execute, includes thousands of neurons. Changes in which neurons chain together lead to changes in how our bodies respond. Understanding neuron chains helps us understand how brain maps, while being generally located in specific parts of the brain, actually change based on what we ask the brain to do.

For example, a singer who has never sight-read music before will have no map for this activity and few neuron chains to help. Yet, over time and with practice, the brain begins to devote specific real estate to this task, creating a map for it that alters previously existing maps and devoting precious neurons to the activity so that when the singer sits down to practice they can read music without having to “think” about it. A basic understanding of neurological function and how the brain and body communicate can guide conductors to become more patient with repetition, and free singers from feelings of guilt when they make mistakes. Creating neuron chains takes time and specific repetition. After all, they require the brain to change. Further, people have no conscious recognition of neuron chain development. Knowing these few elements frees musicians to enjoy the process and be open to results as they come.

By contrast to the “learn the

notes, and then we’ll learn the music” camp, science teaches singers to consider emotion during the learning process. The limbic system (the part of our brain most responsible for emotion), competes with the sensory motor system and autonomic nervous system for command over the larynx. Think about trying to give a speech at a wedding and getting so emotional you can’t speak. That’s an example of the limbic system taking over. The opposite is often true in choral settings. Conductors train sensory motor responses so persistently that singers present unemotional performances. Including emotional targets in conjunction with sensory motor targets ensures that singers build neuron chains to

habituate both simultaneously. This way, one feeds the other. Singers who explore emotion as a part of the whole learning process tend to be far more present and engaged in performances, learn more quickly, and remember longer. According to David Sousa’s *How The Brain Learns*, “it is intriguing to realize that the two structures in the brain mainly responsible for long-term remembering [hippocampus and amygdala] are located in the emotional area of the brain”² (see Figure 1).

No. 2: Sensations

One of the greatest tools available to singers is the ability to feel incredibly specific physical sensa-

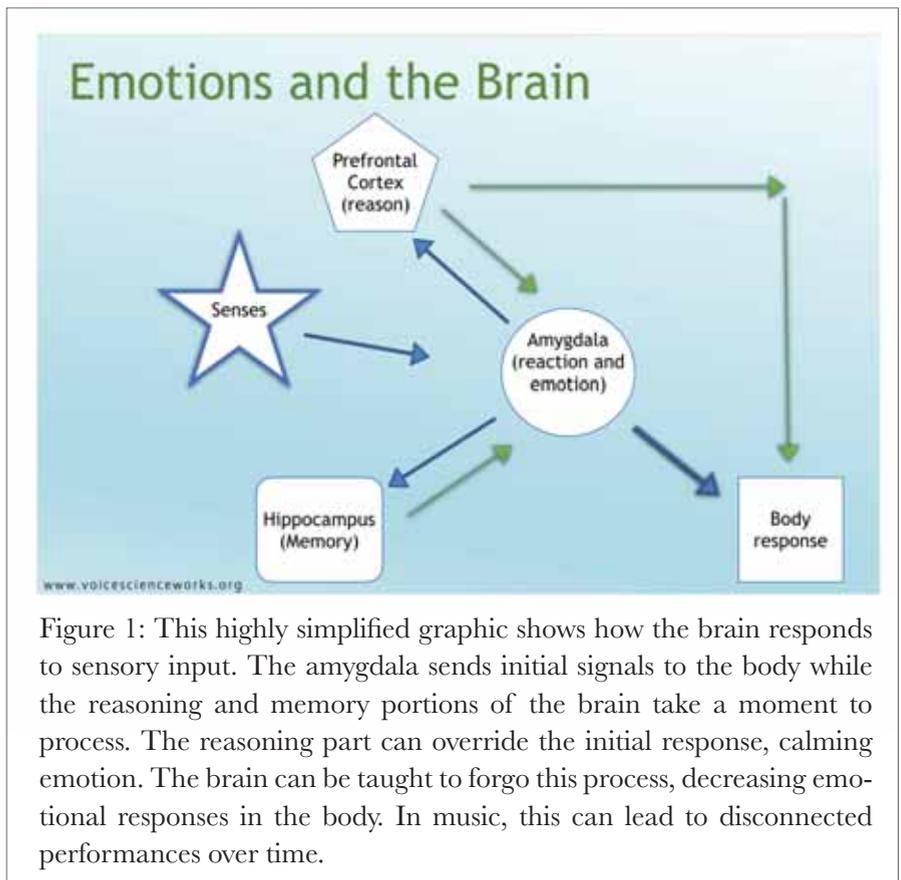


Figure 1: This highly simplified graphic shows how the brain responds to sensory input. The amygdala sends initial signals to the body while the reasoning and memory portions of the brain take a moment to process. The reasoning part can override the initial response, calming emotion. The brain can be taught to forgo this process, decreasing emotional responses in the body. In music, this can lead to disconnected performances over time.

tions within a sea of complexity. Neuroscience paints a different picture of sensations than many traditional approaches.³ Importantly, it encourages us to begin by asking the singer what they feel. Working from the idea of target practice (see No. 4), ask them to execute a certain vocal target and then ask them to reflect on their sensations. Repeat the target exercise. Once they create the target sound, ask what they felt and how it contrasts to their initial feelings. Then ask them to give the sensation a name and utilize their terminology when referring to that sound sensation. Rather than telling them what to feel and asking them to sing a sensation, ask them to assess their own experiences based on mutually agreed-upon target sounds. When singers chase after the instructor's sensations, they are likely to find themselves more confused and can create a series of negative physical responses in an attempt to recreate someone else's intentions. When singers in a group setting share their sensational experiences, they also

learn from one another, notice how their differences are important, and reflect on vocal complexity. The most interesting revelation that comes from this process is the number of people who describe sensations similarly to one another, even without prompting. Although sensations can be helpful tools, they are also fairly migrant. Using sensations as an entry point can be essential, but trying to rely on them ongoing can cause frustration.

No. 3: Muscles, just the nitty gritty

Laryngeal musculature tops the charts of most people's experience with voice science. More specifically, numerous approaches and methods have developed from significant scientific discoveries about the intrinsic muscles of the larynx. Given that sound emanates from them, making the vocal folds the primary factor in sound creation, it makes sense that knowledge of the eleven little muscles inside the voice box is high on

people's list.

A basic working knowledge of the intrinsic (and some extrinsic) laryngeal muscles creates powerful learning opportunities, and vocalists can get a lot out of a little. Instead of knowing the names and placement of each muscle, singers tend to benefit from knowing the function of each muscle grouping. Begin by showing them an image of the larynx (the Interactive Larynx website is amazing for this),⁴ point out the three cartilages (thyroid, cricoid, and arytenoids) and show where the muscles attach to them. Then show them the muscles, and explain their functions (see Figure 2): there are muscles that stretch the folds (CT), muscles that shorten and thicken the folds (TA), muscles that open the folds (PCA), and muscles that bring the folds together (LCA and ICA).⁵ Other important pieces of information include: the stretchy and thickening muscles are antagonistic (e.g., as one engages, the other releases), the bring-together muscles can overreact to outside influences like breath pressure and

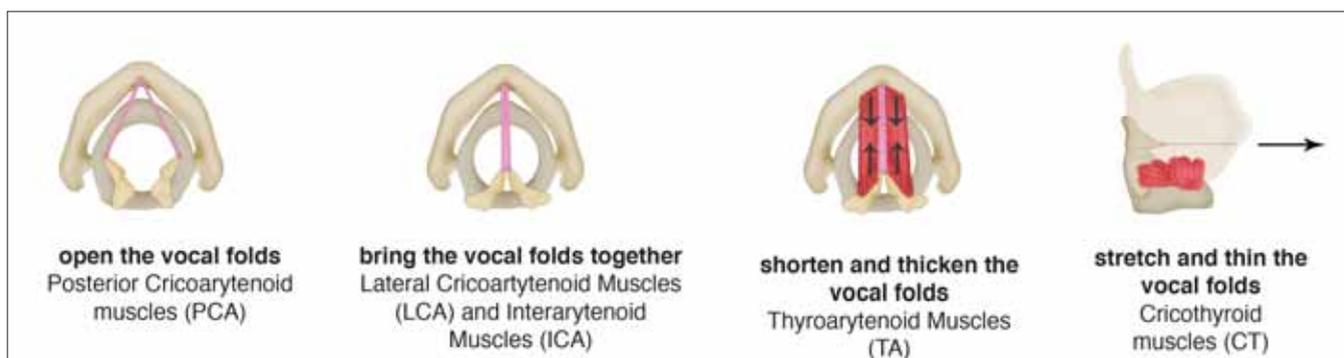


Figure 2: Focusing on vocal fold function with the help of images gives singers immediate information they can begin to experiment with. Note that the first three images are looking down from above the folds; the top of the image represents the front of the throat. The fourth image (CT) is oriented from the side, with the front of the throat represented on the right hand side. Images by www.voicescienceworks.org.

create a pressed tone, the opening and bring-together muscles are antagonistic, and that lastly, depending on how all of the muscles interact, the folds can vibrate with their full mass, up on their edges, or a vast range of options between these two. Therefore, the main goal in addressing the vocal fold muscles is coordination (this is the key). Lastly, people can't feel their vocal folds, so direct feedback is impossible. This means that when we work to train the vocal folds, we have to develop a vocabulary of secondary feedback. When the vocal folds come into vibration, they create a series of harmonics. All of these muscular variations impact how many harmonics are present and their relative strength to one another. Since all the ear hears is harmonics, these muscular variations play a huge role in sound making.

With this basic information, singers perceive a more developed image

of what makes their vocal folds function. Knowledge of function empowers them to begin to understand that they have options and to start to tease out why certain trouble spots happen for them. Understanding that coordination is the name of the game, conductors can begin to make informed choices about what to ask from singers. So many issues like pitch, blend, balance, voice cracking, pitch matching, color choice, "tone deafness," stylistic crossover, etc., can be addressed by experimenting with this idea of coordination. You can find examples of coordination exercises on the "Build Your Own Warmup" page, a free download on voicescienceworks.org. Possibilities create motivation and can be fun. When singers know these basic functions, they can actively participate in the solutions, and they love the freedom to question that comes with knowledge.

No. 4: Target practice vs. Demanding results

I had a friend who once called his choir the Teflon choir because nothing ever stuck with them. How people learn and what makes things stick has been a focus of cognitive science research for some time. Choral directors often default to telling the choir what to sound like and offering regular assessments such as: you're flat; that's the wrong note; tenors, you're too loud; basses, you're slow; we need more energy; or, sing through the phrase. This is what can be called the "demanding results" approach to instruction. It insinuates that if a person hears another person's desired result, they can make a meaningful adjustment that will create said result. With such a complex mechanism as the human voice, that insinuation doesn't hold up as accurately as might be expected by the majority of people.

Target practice, however, creates opportunities for growth and engages the vocalist in their own learning. First set the target, then do the activity, assess the results, and do the activity again.⁶ The trick here is that with target practice, the vocalist has to agree on the target, since they will be the ones engaging in the assessment. For example, "sing brighter" or "bring your tongue forward" are examples of demanding results learning, but "sing [z] and notice where you feel sensation in your mouth" is an example of target practice. Both "bring your tongue forward" and "sing [z] and notice" engage the styloglossus muscle, but only one engages the body in predictable, repeatable, measur-

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able learning. After the first, singers know that the conductor asked them to manipulate a body part, but they didn't discover the reason on their own and are therefore more likely to go back to their previous habit. After the latter, their bodies have a piece of information they discovered, can relate to, and can rely on in future circumstances. Here are a few refining characteristics of target practice:

- *Target practice works through repetition.* Contrary to the "I'll tell you what to do and you do it" approach, target practice requires that we execute the same target multiple times. Think about learning to play darts and how many times you have to throw a dart before you hit bull's-eye.
- *Notice without judgment.* Learn to replace terms like good/bad with "on-target" and "off-target." Praise,

though potentially uplifting, still welcomes judgement. A "good" opens the door for a "bad," taking the learner off of their focus. Save praise for culminating moments, when a strong dopamine boost lights people up.

- *Isolation.* Target practice works best when singers can narrow their focus to one focal point at a time and then put it back together into the whole.
- *Contrast.* Once you have repeated a new sensation to the point of feeling it habituated, do it again in the "old habit" way in order to notice the difference. Contrast also alerts singers to the reality that they don't have to "unlearn" old habits, but simply need to start new ones and allow the body to notice the difference.

No. 5: Breathing equals allowing

Breath is the part of the vocal mechanism that likely receives the most attention across the voice world. After several months of intense focus on breath support with one of my choirs years ago, we sang a joint concert with another group, and one of my singers pointed out a soloist from the other choir, saying, "She's not taking in much breath at all, and she sounds amazing." I was stumped. Everything I knew told me that breath support was key, but she was right—that person didn't seem to be inhaling much at all. The answer came to me years later when I learned that the vocal folds manage the airflow, not, as is often thought, the muscles of the torso and abdomen (e.g., the power source) (see Figure 3). The muscles of the power source influence the vocal folds'

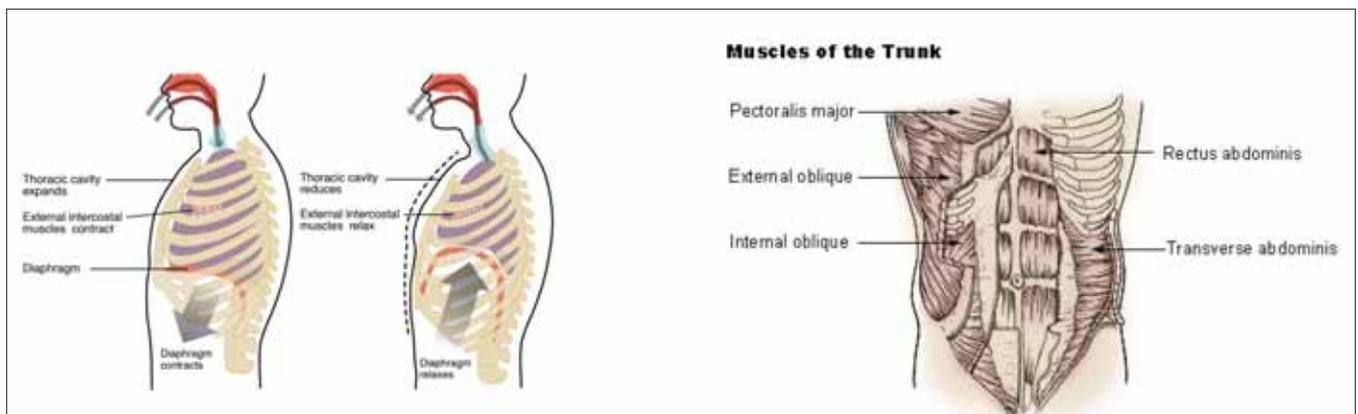


Figure 3: Note that the muscles between the ribs engage to expand and contract the ribs, and that the diaphragm engages on inhalation and relaxes during exhalation.

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Almost all of the muscles of the abdomen cause the ribs to contract when they engage, with the exception of the lowest belly of the rectus abdominis. Training the coordination of the abdominal muscles is complex, and begins by teaching them to relax during inhalation.

Image in public domain

ability to manage airflow, but that's a different story entirely.

All choral singers have encountered a number of approaches to breathing that might include use of a weight belt, pressing against walls, bending over, "pushing from the diaphragm," squeezing abdominal muscles, pushing out and away from the belly, or holding ribs out. In fact, many singers are told they have to choose sides when it comes to how they talk about their breath. Science tells us, however, that the body tends to know what it needs to do to breathe. If the diaphragm, for example, waited on instruction, people would be dead long before they be-

gan to sing. A large part of breathing happens superfluous of voluntary muscle engagement. The lungs operate in relationship to the air around the body, creating pressure vacuums that move air in and out. The diaphragm (like the vocal folds and soft palate) is not under conscious brain control and doesn't contain the kinds of nerves that allow us to feel it, so the phrase "breathing from the diaphragm" leads to confusion at best. Avoiding language like "take a huge breath," and focusing on language that encourages body freedom can go a long way toward helping singers feel healthy and happy with their singing.⁷

The second most important point is that the first job of our bodies' muscles, top to bottom, is to keep us from falling over. Humans have large muscles that are designed for this task. If we align our body off of center, however, the smaller muscles engage to take up the slack. When singers breathe optimally, they tend to say that they don't feel much at all or that their breath feels easy. Far from a passive approach to breathing, training the muscles to engage optimally requires the joint practice of strengthening and coordinating. Knowing about the inspiration and expiration muscles can guide singers to explore freedom inside their own

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skin. Encouraging them to regularly notice their breath and pause to inhale with intention can lead to long-term vocal and emotional health.

In contrast to feelings of body freedom, the concept of posture produces challenges. People often create more muscle tension by trying to enforce postural language like “stand tall,” “push shoulders back,” “raise the breast bone,” etc. These habituations will feel normal because their bodies have learned them, but once singers discover sensations of freedom that rely on the fewest muscles needed to remain upright, they will notice a distinct difference. With greater bodily freedom, the manner in which singers address their breath positively changes. They feel more in control, and as a side benefit, tension in the room decreases.

No. 6: Acoustics

Almost all vocal instructors and choir directors talk about acoustics frequently, yet acoustic theories based in science have been slower to develop. This is partially due to complexity, and partially due to the proclivity of deeply rooted institutional language. Vocal acoustics deal both with the vocal folds (the source of the sound) and the vocal tract (throat and mouth), also known as the resonator. The most important thing to remember is that the human voice, unlike any other instrument, has a resonator that can change shape, and that tiny movements make big changes to the sound. The focus on coordination learned from the vocal fold muscles becomes significantly more complicated when consider-

ing the need to coordinate all of the muscles in the vocal tract at the same time.

When the vocal folds come together to make sound, they create a spectrum of harmonics (e.g., overtones). The vocal tract, then, chooses which of those harmonics will be the loudest. Without the vocal tract, the first harmonic would be the loudest and each successive harmonic would get softer periodically. As the vocal tract changes shape, though, it brings out whatever harmonics it energizes. This is one of the more complicated concepts in voice science, but a few pictures and exercises can

help singers sort it out fairly quickly (Figure 4).⁸

With knowledge that the vocal tract shape directly affects how we hear sound, many opportunities arise: first, the concept of vowel. Traditional language has described vowels as a singularity, a static sound. Yet, vowels are the perceptual result of harmonics accentuated by the vocal tract.⁹ Vowels are, therefore, dynamic. There are many shades of all vowels, but the story doesn't stop there. Since vocal tract shape change is responsible for accentuating and dampening harmonics, singers can pinpoint what kinds of changes af-

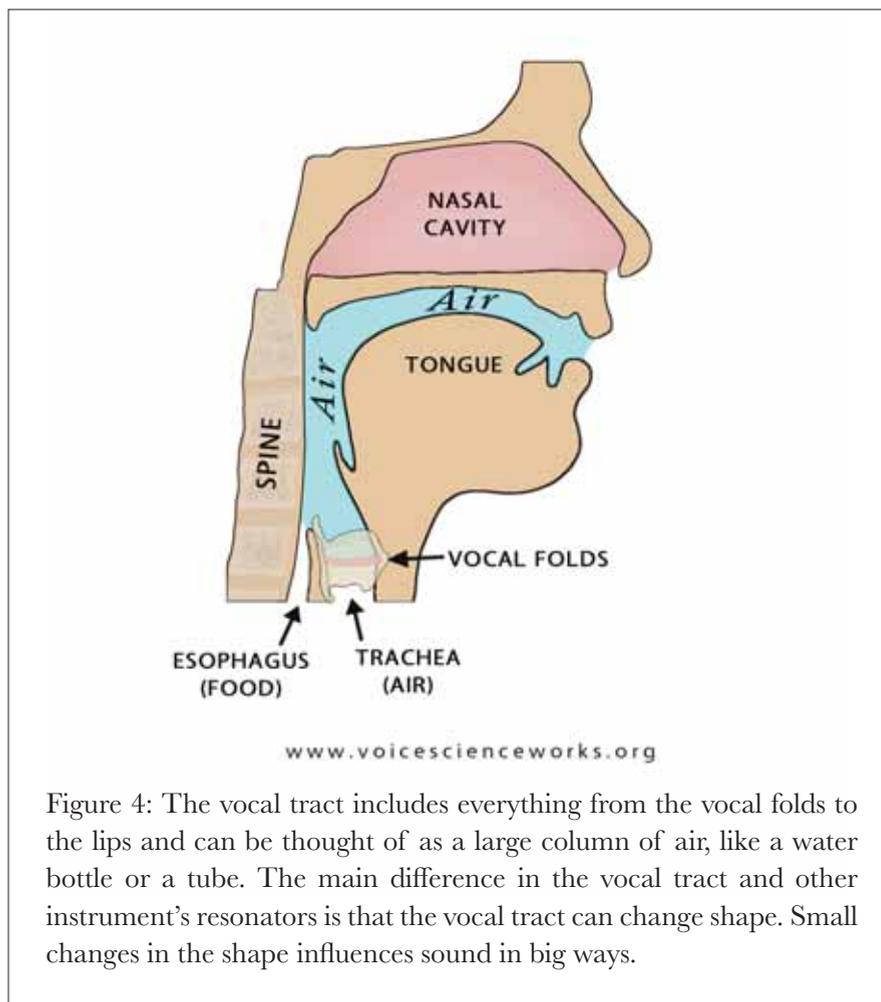


Figure 4: The vocal tract includes everything from the vocal folds to the lips and can be thought of as a large column of air, like a water bottle or a tube. The main difference in the vocal tract and other instrument's resonators is that the vocal tract can change shape. Small changes in the shape influences sound in big ways.

fect their sound output. A smile, for example, brings out higher harmonics, while rounded lips brings out lower ones.

This leads to a language-changing discovery for choral directors. Instead of attempting to sing “pure vowels” (a request that forces each singer to create the same vocal tract shape), singers need to create the vocal tract shape that most effectively impacts the sound output from their specific vocal folds. This shape is

governed more by the pitch they are singing and the style they want to sing than by the word they are singing. To this end, they can learn to tell how their vocal tract shape accentuates the harmonics that best support the note they are singing within each given style (see Figure 5).¹⁰ Critically, if a chord is to blend and balance, each voice part will sing a different version of the same vowel in the chord. The vowel shape they choose will be based in large part on the

pitch they are singing. I often blend chords by asking for singers to sing different vowel shapes for the same word, like: for the word “La,” asking the basses to sing an [a] on G2, tenors an [u] on B3, altos an [o] on G4, and sopranos an [a] on G5, all based on the target vowel perception and the note they are singing. Although this seems like it would create cacophony, the vocal tract shape adjustments aligns the singer’s harmonics in important places, creating

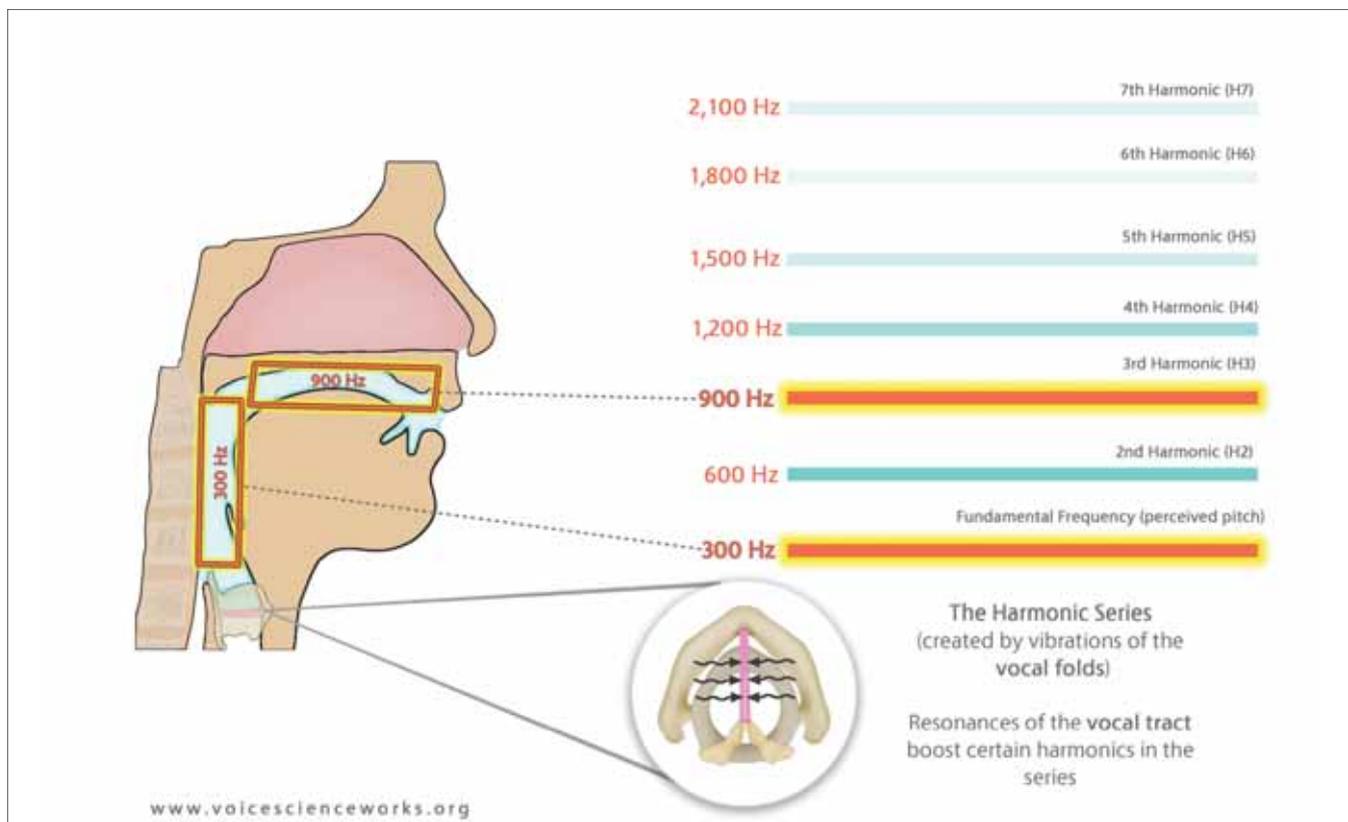


Figure 5: This image shows a singer singing an [u] vowel shape on D4, or 300HZ. The energy boost derived from the pitch of the air in the singer’s throat is 300HZ, matching the first harmonic of D4. The energy boost derived from the pitch of the air in the singer’s mouth is 900HZ, matching the third harmonic of A5. If the singer were to make a single vocal tract adjustment, like spreading their lips in a wide smile, vowel shape would change, causing the pitch of the air in the throat to rise to approximately 450HZ, and the pitch of the air in the mouth to approximately 1600HZ, resulting in a newly perceived vowel, an [I]. Importantly, singers can learn to adjust the muscles of the throat and mouth independently, creating a wide variety of shape options for any perceived vowel.

a truly blended sound. The singers then make subtle adjustments to maintain textual clarity. Developing an active understanding of the difference between vowel shape (the actual shape of the vocal tract) and vowel perception (what vowel people hear) allows singers to actively modify vowels, solving a host of choral challenges. This idea is central to the concept of blend, one of choral music's most elusive animals, since differences in vocal tract shape actually creates blend. Acoustic choices also directly influence the way the vocal folds vibrate, further influencing sound output. This is why pop music singers' mouths look different than opera singers' mouths. The vocal tract shape sends direct information to the vocal folds, creating the kinds of harmonic output that the singer needs for that style. There are many more takeaways from acoustic theories and many more to be discovered. Stylistic variation, for example, can largely be explained through acoustic choices. It is a treasure trove of excitement made more exciting by new technologies like the Voce Vista voice analyzer and the Madde voice synthesizer.

No. 7: Audiation

Researcher and ENT Alfred Tomatis described the ear as the first muscle of the voice, and for good reason. The voice is most effective when it responds to a model, and the ears can guide the voice into profound discoveries. Choral directors love to talk about listening in a group mindset, but we rarely pause to understand hearing. This is likely because

most of what our ears process happens outside of conscious thought. Therefore, to guide singers' ears to occupy their critical place as the first muscle of the voice, we have to make room for the ear to practice without

immediate conscious awareness.¹¹ For this task, a voice analyzer like Voce Vista opens many doors. Voce Vista has a filter capacity that allows singers to isolate narrow harmonic bands and play them back, giving


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the ear the potential to process specific parts of their sound (see Figure 6). When singers begin to hear their harmonics isolated from one another, to see the impact different acoustic and muscular coordinations make on their sound, and to listen to and sing along with filtered versions of their sounds, their ears open to new possibilities. Even more exciting than

that, within a few minutes of hearing filtered recordings of themselves, singers' voices often change significantly. Perhaps the most beneficial element of training hearing, though, lies in the neurological changes it can create. Our ears have direct impact not only on our voices but also on the way our brain processes sensory input. The more we train our ears

to differentiate individual elements within our sound, the more efficient our brains become, helping us focus and learn with greater ease.

Conclusion

Voice science can change the vocalists' world, helping them to realize that they have a wide range of op-

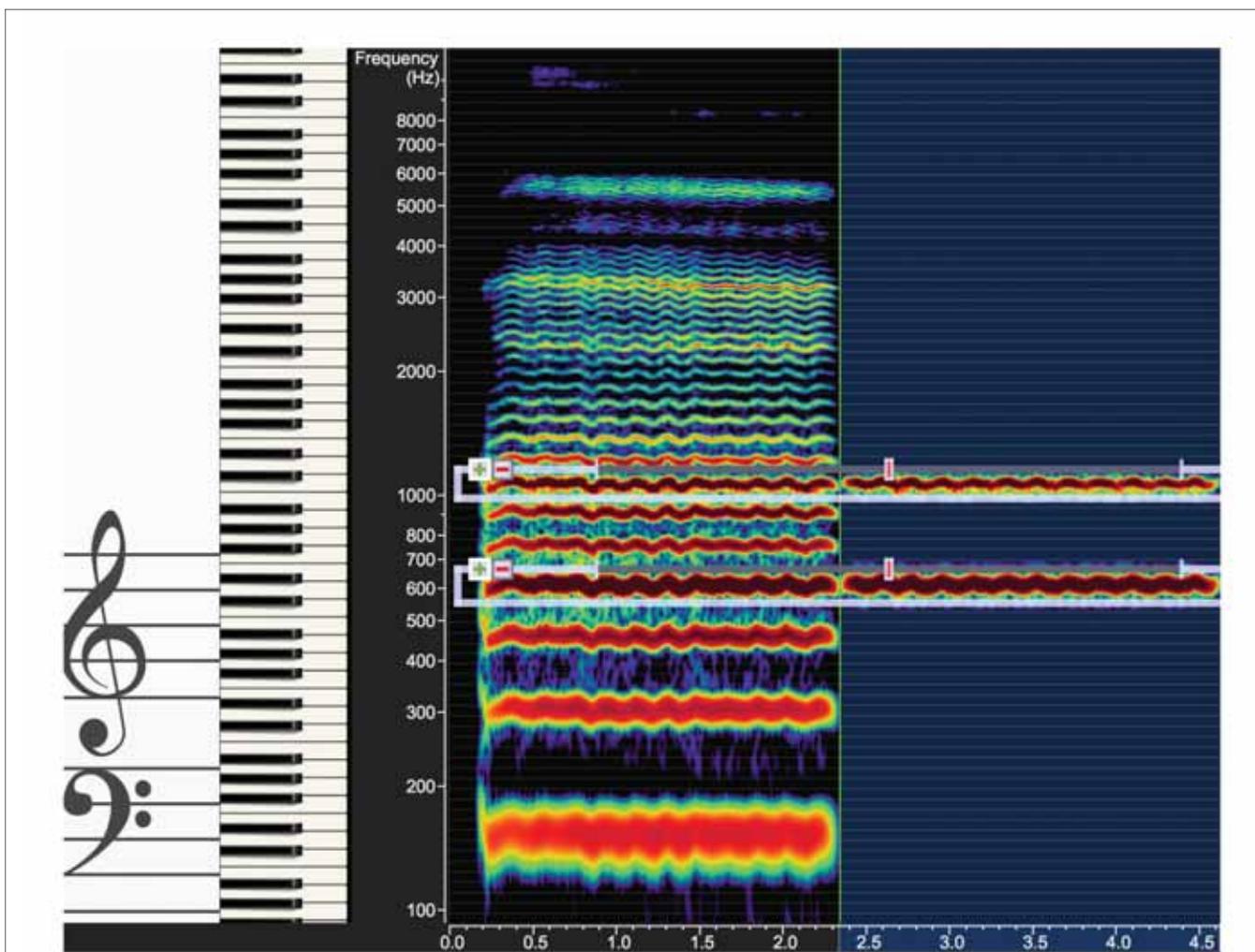


Figure 6: This image, taken using Voce Vista Pro, shows the harmonics present in a male singer singing D3 with an [a] vowel shape. The two filter bands in the middle of the harmonics highlight the locations of the vocal tract's peak energy boosts. They are associated with the throat (@600HZ), called formant 1, and the mouth (@1050HZ), called formant 2. When singers begin to hear these isolated frequencies, their ears open to new possibilities that continue to guide them when they listen to the complex sound as a whole.

tions available to them and that their voices aren't magic, but instead are wonderfully complex instruments whose secrets lie waiting to be discovered. Choral directors see more voices each day than any other vocal instructor. Imagine what meaningful impact we can have on vocalists the world over if we start to work from this new playbook, opening singers' minds to the wonders of how their voices function, and providing space for exploration. By including singers as active participants in their own learning, we help them build confidence in their ability to affect change in themselves as artists and as human beings. ■

NOTES

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- ³ Leon Thurman, *Bodymind and Voice: Foundations of Voice Education* (Collegeville, MN: The VoiceCare Network, et al, 1997).
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- ⁵ Ingo R. Titze and Katherine Verdolini Abbott, *Vocology: The Science and*

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- ⁶ Timothy Galway, *The Inner Game Of Tennis* (New York: Random House, 1997).
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- ¹⁰ Kenneth W. Bozeman, *Kenesthetic Voice Pedagogy: Motivating Acoustic Efficiency* (Ohio: Inside View Press, 2017).
- ¹¹ Doidge, *The Brain's Way of Healing*

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New Voices in Research

Magen Solomon, Editor <magen.solomon@gmail.com>

Telemann's *Brockes-Passion*: A Case for Performance

by Christopher Eanes

Telemann as a Historical Figure

Few composers, it seems, elicit more eye-rolls than Telemann. The reason for this could be debated but primarily stems from his ill-fortune at having been a contemporary of J. S. Bach: the former, a progressive; the latter, a theologian. Where Bach was summing up two centuries of musical thought, Telemann was pushing forward into a newer, more accessible style. And there is another reason: Telemann wrote so much music that it is difficult to know where even to begin a study of his works.

While his music is severely underrepresented in the classical music canon of today (though gaining more traction recently), Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) was perhaps the most celebrated North German composer of the first half of the eighteenth century. To wit: when Johann Kuhnau died in 1722 and the post of Kantor of the Thomasschule came open in Leipzig, the governors fell over themselves to offer Telemann the job.¹ Such was his reputation that he was offered the post despite his outright refusal to teach Latin to the boys, traditionally a required duty of

the Kantor. In the end, however, his employers in Hamburg wouldn't release him, so he was unable to accept the job. Instead, it eventually went to one of the last-choice candidates for the post, Telemann's friend, J. S. Bach.

Telemann was ahead of his time in defining his role as professional musician and composer, in some ways presaging the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the modern musical era. For one, the concept of proprietary intellectual property was beginning to gain ground, and Telemann guarded his music more closely than his contemporaries. Moreover, some believe that his audition with the Thomasschule in 1722 was merely a ploy to show his current employers that he was in demand. If so, it worked: he managed to secure a raise for his work in Hamburg, as well as the repayment of some debts owed to him.²

Also relatively unusual for the time, Telemann worked hard to have his works published and distributed. The *Brockes-Passion*, for example, was widely disseminated throughout northern Europe within a decade of

its premiere. He wrote a good deal of music intended for amateur performers, thereby broadening his audience, and he often included music of composers other than himself in these collections in order to further enrich the growing canon of North German music.³

Telemann's creative output is stunning in its sheer quantity: of the sacred vocal music alone, we know of 1,400 extant cantatas (plus about 300 that are lost), more than 40 oratorios, and numerous masses, motets, and psalm settings. This treasure trove of music is often overlooked, perhaps due to the emphasis instead (since Mendelssohn's revival of *Matthäus-Passion*) on the life and works of Bach and on an erroneous supposition: the larger the oeuvre, the lower the quality. Had Telemann's music found a champion in the same way Bach's did, perhaps we would be familiar with more of his work today.

It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that Telemann's *Brockes-Passion*—a Passion oratorio on the text of a poem by Heinrich Barthold Brockes (1680-1747)—though wildly popular when it was first composed and for some time thereafter, has re-

ceived few performances in recent history. Indeed, this author could find no record of other complete performances of the work on U.S. soil, aside from his own in 2015 with Collegium Cincinnati.⁴ There are, however, two European commercial recordings of the work, both of excellent quality (see below).

Heinrich Barthold Brockes & His Passion

Heinrich Barthold Brockes was a well-traveled lawyer native to Hamburg. He studied in Halle, then returned to Hamburg where he eventually became a member of the city's senate. Brockes wrote numerous works of poetry that were published in nine collections in the early eighteenth century. He penned his Passion poem, titled *Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesus*, ([The Story of] Jesus, Suffering and Dying for the Sins of the World) in 1712.

In this work, Brockes's interest lay in creating a human perspective on the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, going beyond what was provided in

the biblical gospels. Using all four of the gospel stories as a starting point, he reworked the narrative into a dramatic—almost staged—account of the events. His goal, which he achieved, was to make the story more intensely personal, more human, and, at times, quite a bit more grotesque than the gospel versions. Even Jesus's perspective is human: Brockes treats him not as an infallible and divine persona but as a man unjustly convicted and angry at not only his judge and jury but also at God, his Father.

To enhance the human aspect of the story, Brockes gave even minor characters in the story a voice: from the soldier who pierced Jesus's side, to Judas's complete emotional unravelling, Brockes left no dramatic stone unturned. Contained within the piece are numerous vignettes that explore the perspective of many of the characters in the Passion story, characters whose stories had heretofore not been told.

Composers immediately gravitated to the rich text of Brockes's poem; in their ongoing efforts to excite the listeners' passions, the

setting provided just the new material they had been seeking. Within twenty years, there were no fewer than eleven musical settings of his text. Such was the popularity of the text that it became a common occurrence between 1719 and 1730 to present all four of the principal settings (those by Telemann, Georg Frederic Handel, Reinhard Keiser, and Johann Mattheson) during Lent. After 1730, this tradition changed to the presentation of pasticcio versions of the text, in which movements from each composer's work were pasted together to create a new, complete rendering of the text.⁵

Telemann's *Brockes-Passion*

According to his autobiographical notes, Telemann underwent a profound religious awakening while he was employed in Eisenach, 1708-1712, and in his late twenties. Less than a decade later, while living in Frankfurt, he penned his first Passion setting: the *Brockes-Passion* of 1716. Intended for a public concert performance to raise money for local orphanages, it premiered in April 1716 to a packed house with local and foreign dignitaries in attendance. The composer did not conduct the first performance but may have sung in the choir or played in the orchestra. While there was a great deal of enthusiasm around the premiere, the work also enjoyed success over the next decade, receiving numerous performances throughout northern Germany and as far afield as Stockholm and Riga.

For the initial performance, pur-



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chase of the libretto was the ticket to the performance. Due to the excitement and anticipation surrounding the premiere, organizers had to move the concert to a larger church (the Barfüsserkirche, demolished in 1786); they had sold more libretti than they could accommodate people. For one of the first times in recorded (music) history, guards had to be placed at the doors of the church to keep out those who didn't carry libretti (tickets) with them.⁶

Because Telemann did not work from any source other than Brockes's poem, his task was to create the most effective musical depictions possible, and he seems to have embraced and enjoyed this opportunity. His *Brockes-Passion* is substantial; without cuts, it is over three hours long, and there is no obvious stopping point for one or more breaks.

Form & Structure

Telemann's *Brockes-Passion* is divided loosely into theatrical scenes, though they are not always clearly delineated. Among the many arias (33) are numerous accompanied recitatives and arioso movements (21), and choruses and chorales (16). On the excellent recording by René Jacobs, on the harmonia mundi label, the work is divided as follows:

Part I

- The Last Supper
- Dialogue Between Jesus and His Disciples; Jesus Prays
- Peter's Denial and Repentance
- Jesus Appears Before the Council of High Priests; Judas' Despair, Repentance, and Death

Part II

- Jesus is Condemned
- The Crucifixion
- The Death of Jesus
- After the Death of Jesus⁷

Within each scene, however, there is no clear-cut structure such as one might find in Bach's Passion settings. Instead, Telemann follows Brockes's text closely, seldom deviating from the original poetry. Because the text had its origin as a poem and not as a theatrical work, it lacks a structural framework and the clean breaks one finds in staged works. Nevertheless, Telemann's use of unique orchestral and vocal com-

binations help delineate the form.

While there are a number of *da capo* arias, most are through-composed or strophic. Moreover, Telemann sometimes sets two verses strophically but inserts another movement between the strophes. With few exceptions, the arias are relatively short, a clear necessity given the very long text.

One of the work's unique structural devices is the *Soliloquium*; as in a theatrical work, Telemann's soliloquys offer breaks from the action during which characters voice their innermost thoughts. A typical *Brockes-Passion* soliloquy might consist of two short arias separated by an ac-



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accompanied recitative. Many characters—including those in minor roles—sing soliloquys to illuminate the emotional investment of their participation in the story, dimensions that are unexplored in the original gospel stories.

An example of this is Jesus’s soliloquy in the beginning of the work. Jesus has gone to pray, and, after telling his disciples that they will betray him (which they vehemently deny but eventually, of course, do), he offers an intimate reflection of his innermost thoughts on the night before his death (Table 1 on page 63).

This soliloquy is striking in that, prior to Telemann’s setting of Brockes’s poem, there likely hadn’t been a musical setting of the Passion text in which Jesus’s words so graphically reflect his anguish about the events to come. The Jesus of the gospels had been a stoic until this point, in the text if not in musical settings.

Text & Music

The text’s graphic and dramatic nature, then, is what makes *Brockes-Passion* unique. The drama provides endless opportunities for musical depiction, and Telemann took ample advantage of these opportunities. A comparison follows of a scene in Bach’s *Johannes-Passion*, side-by-side with the same scene from Brockes’s libretto:

The music that Tele-

mann wrote for this heart-wrenching text (the final stanza from Table 2 on page 63; music in Figure 1) uses chromatic notes and awkward leaps not simply as inflections but as important illustrative ideas. While the disjunct leaps suggest anguish, the descending semi-tones suggest death. In this way, Peter’s aria musically evokes his distress over both his moment of betrayal and the anticipation of Jesus’s looming crucifixion. Thus, as Peter sings this melodic material, the composer indicates that Peter, in fact, knows the consequence of his denial.

Immediately after Jesus’s death, the three Gläubige Seelen (Faithful Souls) appear—for the first time to-

gether—as anguished angels, crying out, “O Donnerwort! O schrecklich Schrein!” (“O thunderous word! O dreadful cry!”). The movement is highly dramatic—even to modern ears—in its depiction of furious anger coming directly from above. Telemann employs unusual (for the time) orchestral techniques in a strikingly creative way: the string figures depict the earth shaking while the faithful souls sing long, sustained, dissonant lines (Figure 2a and 2b on pages 64 and 65). At the end, the Faithful Souls declaim in unison, “es ist vollbracht” (“it is finished”), and the strings strike one last heartbeat (Figure 3 on page 66).

The image shows a musical score for the No. 27 Aria from Georg Philip Telemann's *Brockes-Passion*. The score is in 6/8 time and marked *Andante*. It features several staves: Violin I, II and Oboe playing in unison; Petrus (Peter) with a vocal line; and Basso Continuo. The lyrics for the vocal line are: "Heul, ... heul, ... du Schaum der Menschenkin - der". The score includes chromatic notes and disjunct leaps, particularly in the vocal line and the string accompaniment.

Figure 1. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 27 Aria, mm. 1–7.

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Table 1

Movement	Music	Text (Translation by Charles Johnston) ⁸
11	Aria – Verse 1	My father! See how I suffer Have mercy on my distress. My heart is breaking And my soul is sorrowful unto death.
12	Recitativo accompagnato	I am oppressed by the heavy burden of sins. I fear the terrors of the abyss; A muddy, bottomless quagmire seeks to engulf me. The wild flame of hell forces the marrow and the blood from my bones and veins. And since, in addition to these torments, O father, I must endure your wrath, Besides which all tortures seem slight, There is no sorrow like unto mine.
13 (=11)	Aria – Verse 2	If it is possible for your anger to be assuaged, Then let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, father, not my will but Your will alone be done.

Table 2

Bach, <i>St. John Passion</i> (Translation by Pamela Dellal)	Telemann, <i>Brocks-Passion</i> (Translation by Charles Johnston)
<p>Evangelist Then Peter denied it again, and just then the cock crew. Then Peter recalled Jesus' words and went out and wept bitterly.</p>	<p>Evangelist And immediately the cock crew. As soon as its raucous cry Rang in Peter's ears, His heart of stone shattered, And just as Moses' rock produced water, A stream of tears Ran down his cheeks, And he cried out wretchedly:</p>
<p>Tenor Alas, my conscience, where will you flee at last, where shall I find refreshment? Should I stay here, or do I desire mountain and hill at my back?</p> <p>In all the world there is no counsel, and in my heart remains the pain of my misdeed, since the servant has denied the Lord.⁹</p>	<p>Peter What immense sorrow Overwhelms my spirit! An icy shudder fills my soul with dread; The fierce blaze of the dismal cavern of torments Already kindles my seething blood; My bowels screech as if I were on glowing coals. Who will extinguish this fire? Where will I find salvation?</p> <p>Howl, you scum of mankind! Whimper, wicked slave of sin! Tremble, for God is just; He destroys impenitent sinners.¹⁰</p>

New Voices in Research

Terzetto

Obs. 1

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Sop. 1

Sop. 2

Alto

B. C.

Obs. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Sop. 1

Sop. 2

Alto

B. C.

O Don - ner-wort, o Don - ner

O Don - ner

O Don - ner-wort, o Don - ner

Figure 2a. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 74. Terzetto, mm. 1–6.

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7

Obs. 1, 2

Vln. 1, 2

Vla.

Sop. 1
wort! o schreck lich Schrei

Sop. 2
wort! o schreck lich Schrei

Alto
wort! o schreck lich Schrei

B. C.
5b 41 61 6 5 6 6

10

Obs. 1, 2

Vln. 1, 2

Vla.

Sop. 1
en! O Ton!

Sop. 2
en! O

Alto
en! O

B. C.
5 5 6 7 4 4 7 5b

Figure 2b. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 74. Terzetto, mm. 7–12.

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Performing the *Brockes-Passion*

Performing a piece of the length and scope of the *Brockes-Passion* is not a small undertaking; due to its length and many solo roles it can be daunting to present. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that there is, as of yet, no performing tradition of the work, so each conductor is forced to make his or her own decisions about how best to build a performance. Furthermore, very few of

the singers and instrumentalists will know the work, and, with the substantial requirements for rehearsal time for orchestral and choral forces, it may seem out of reach.

Nevertheless, there are several practical considerations that can make a performance of the *Brockes-Passion* not just possible, but intensely rewarding for musicians and audience alike. First among these is the doubling of choral and solo vocal parts. Whereas one could cer-

tainly employ a large chorus and cast of soloists, it is by no means necessary. Collegium Cincinnati's 2015 performance was presented with just seventeen voices. It is impossible to know how many musicians were employed in Telemann's original performance of the piece, but a group of this size was certainly in keeping with most performances of the time.¹¹

Second, a number of compromises can be made in the orchestra. It is possible to use only single strings on each part, and to use only modern violins and violas instead of the specified *viola da gamba* and *viola d'amore*, though the latter's addition is certainly preferable.

The roles and voice parts in the *Brockes-Passion* are as follows:

- Jesus – Bass
- Maria – Soprano
- Tochter Zion (Daughter of Zion) – Soprano
- Eine gläubige Seele (A Faithful Soul) – Soprano
- Eine gläubige Seele – Alto
- Eine gläubige Seele – Bass
- 1 Magd (Maiden) – Soprano
- 1 Magd – Soprano
- 1 Magd – Soprano
- Evangelist – Tenor
- Petrus – Tenor
- Johannes – Bass
- Jacobus – Bass
- Judas – Alto
- Pilatus – Tenor
- Caiphas – Bass
- Hauptmann (Captain) – Tenor
- Kriegsknecht (Soldier) – Bass
- Chöre der Jünger (Choir of Disciples)
- Kriegsknechte (Soldiers)

The image shows a musical score for a Terzetto from the Brockes-Passion, measures 34-36. The score is in 4/4 time and features the following parts: Oboe 2 (marked *a2*), Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto, and Bass/Continuo. The vocal parts (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, and Alto) have lyrics: "Es ist voll - bracht es ist voll - bracht!" and "bracht, bracht!". The instrumental parts include dynamics like *p* and *pp*. The score is numbered 6 at the bottom.

Figure 3. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 74. Terzetto, mm. 34–36.

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Juden (Jews)
 Mörder (Murderers)
 Choräle der Christlichen Kirche
 (Christian Church Chorales)
 Coro (Choir)

Choruses, Chorales, and Telemann's Revisions

In its original version, Telemann's work contained little choral writing apart from six chorales.¹² However, his revisions in 1722 were primarily to the choral sections, whose role he greatly expanded. It is likely that the soloists in the original performances also sang the choral parts, and that some singers doubled and/or divided roles. The lesser characters in the text, for example the three Mägde, sing only very small portions of recitatives.

The chorus is used in a variety of ways throughout the work, but the most interesting choruses are in the 1722 revised version. An example of this is found in Figure 4, as the crowd calls for Jesus to be convicted; Telemann expanded the chorus for greater dramatic impact (Figure 5 on page 68).

While there may be reason to perform the original 1716 version for the sake of historical interest, the alternate choruses, without exception, carry more drama. (As a practical note, while the alternate choruses are included in the published Bärenreiter Edition of the work, they are in the appendix, which means one must flip pages or photocopy the extra movements in order to insure a seamless performance.) A further consideration is that, for choral groups, the revised choruses offer a far greater musical reward.

The Daughter of Zion

Tochter Zion (Daughter of Zion) is the most significant character in the work—equal to the role of Jesus—and one of the most interesting. However, with nearly twenty arias and nearly thirty movements in total, the role is extremely vocally demanding. It is possible—and in this author's opinion, preferable—to have just one singer perform the role, but it would also be possible to divide the role among two or more singers. Tochter Zion serves as part emotional narrator, and part naïve little sister to Jesus. The arc of the character mirrors the arc of humanity through the death and rebirth of Christ: she begins as an innocent child, and through Jesus's death she experiences betrayal, pain, anger, and finally acceptance and understanding.

Several times she sings directly to Jesus as might one of his disciples (Figure 6 on page 69). Here she asks Jesus why he won't speak up to deny the charges aimed at him. "I want to show you that I can restore through my silence what you have lost through your prattling," he says. The triplet figure in the A section of the movement is clearly her "prattling."

After Jesus's death, accompanied by a descending string figure (reflecting Jesus's interment), Tochter Zion sings the following (Figure 6):

"Are the deep wounds of my soul now bound by these wounds of yours? Can I now, through your suffering and death, inherit paradise? Is the salvation of the whole world at hand? These are the questions of the Daughter of Zion"¹³ (Figure 7 on page 69).

The image shows a musical score for a chorus. It includes five staves: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Basso Continuo (B.C.). The lyrics are: "Be-stra-fe die-sen Ü-be-tä-ter, den Feind des Kai-sers, den Var-rä-ter." The Soprano, Alto, and Tenor parts have the lyrics written below them. The Bass part has "sagt." written below it. The Basso Continuo part has "sagt. Be-stra-fe die-sen Ü-be-tä-ter, den Feind des Kai-sers, den Var-rä-ter." written below it. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked with a common time signature (C). The score is numbered 4 and 6.

Figure 4. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 39b, mm. 4–6.

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4

Unisoni

Tochter Zion

Spricht du dann auf dies Ver - kla - gen und das

B. C.

7

Unisoni

Tochter Zion

spöt - ti - sche Be - fra - gen, e - wigs Wort,

B. C.

Figure 6. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 40, mm. 4–9.

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5

Unisoni

Tochter Zion

Sind mei - ner See - len ti - fe Wun - den durch dei - ne Wun - den,

B. C.

8

Unisoni

Tochter Zion

durch dei - ne Wun - den nun ver - bun - den?

B. C.

Figure 7. Georg Philip Telemann, *Brockes-Passion*, No. 77, mm. 5–9.

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New Voices in Research

As for Jesus, the role is intended for one singer, a baritone, who has some flexibility in his voice and, most importantly, can bring a strong, dramatic flair to the role. The character's voice is not limited to biblical texts; rather, as was shown in Table 1, Jesus is given a dramatic arc and some very moving and meaningful passages. His is neither the voice of a stoic nor that of an infallible and divine persona, but rather the voice of a human man filled with fear, one who occasionally even lashes out in anger. The great paradox of the work—and the challenge for the singer who portrays Jesus—is to be

able to express both the human and the divine qualities called for by the text.

The Evangelist

In the *Brookes-Passion*, the Evangelist sings only recitatives. However, the action is dramatic and moves quickly, so it can be a rewarding challenge for a tenor who excels at this narrative style. There are also numerous smaller roles, and indeed, some can be sung by experienced amateurs.

Telemann's Orchestra

The *Brookes-Passion* calls for the following orchestral forces:

Clarino (2)
Corno da caccia (2)
Oboe (2)
Flauto dolce (3)
Flauto traverso (2)
Fagotto
Violino solo (2)
Violino (2)
Viola
Violetta (3)
Viola d'amore
Basso continuo (Violoncello,
Violone, Fagotto, Cembalo)

Obviously, having all of these forces at one's disposal is ideal. In Telemann's time it was likely that many musicians played more than one instrument, reducing the number of players required for a complete performance. Indeed, when Telemann hired singers, he was known to look for those who could also play the violin.¹⁴

Orchestration

Telemann's orchestration choices display enormous creativity and variety, which is why he calls for such a diverse body of instruments, not unusual but certainly noteworthy for this period. Using three violette, for example, is a choice that he made which, on the surface, is more theological than practical.

The indication for *violetta*, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, could have either been a reference to a regular viola or to a member of the *viola da gamba* family.¹⁵ That Te-

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lemann indicates distinct lines for *violette* and viola strongly suggests that the instrument being called for was indeed of the *viola da gamba* family. Moreover, even though Telemann calls for three *violette*, they almost always play in unison. While this may have been a practical consideration to ensure balance with the other instruments, it is worth noting that in places where balance wouldn't have been a concern he also calls for unison instruments, violins especially. Consequently, it is clear that Telemann was giving thought to the difference between solo and ensemble sonorities, and he used each to great effect throughout. As a practical consideration, the *violette* parts can be played by modern violas throughout the work.

The *corno da caccia* is an early ancestor of the modern horn, yet its timbre and range are sufficiently different that it cannot be easily replaced by a modern instrument. Since the movements including *corni da caccia* are in only D major or G major, these were likely non-crooked natural horns. Today, in the absence of good replicas (and good players), the parts can be played by trumpets or flugelhorns. The *clarino* parts should also be played by trumpets, though they call for a much higher register than the *corni da caccia*. It is likely that, in Telemann's time, the same players played both the *corno da caccia* and *clarino* parts. Only eight movements call for one or the other of the instruments and they do not play simultaneously.

It is likely, also, that the *flauto traverso* and *flauto dolce* players were one and the same; however, the addition



An eighteenth-century *viola d'amore* made by Johannes Florenus Guidantus (1687-1760), Bologna, Italy. Held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Musical Instrument Collection. www.metmuseum.org Public domain image.

of a third *flauto dolce* part in only one movement (no. 61) suggests that one of his singers (or a member of the orchestra, perhaps an oboist) doubled on this small part. Parts designated *flauto dolce* (recorders) and *flauto traverso* (18th c. ancestor of the modern flute) can both be played on modern flutes, though the sound is much more delicate and evocative if the parts are played on the Baroque instruments.¹⁶ Furthermore, Carsten Lange, who edited the Bärenreiter edition of the work, points out that "It is more than symbolic that this 'new sound' (that of the *flauto traverso*) was deployed in the very first aria."¹⁷ Therefore, when considering what forces to employ for the flutes, it is worth remembering the diversity of orchestral sounds Telemann had in mind.

The *viola d'amore* is a unique and beautiful addition to the *Brookes-Passion* orchestra. It is a hybrid between the viola and the gamba families; the instrument is unfretted and has seven fundamental and seven sympathetic strings, giving it a full, rich, and haunting tone. While the pitches can largely be recreated on modern stringed instruments, the sound and effect are very different. One wonders whether Bach may have gotten his idea for the use of *viola d'amore* from Telemann's *Brookes-Passion*; he employed two in his *Johannes-Passion*.

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Telemann's continuo group is no different than the standard ensemble of the time; in it he calls for cello, bass, bassoon, and keyboard. Specific indications are few (*fagotto solo* appears in a handful of movements, as does *senza cembalo*), so the conductor must decide which instruments should accompany which movements.

Telemann for Today's Audience

Telemann and Bach were well acquainted with each other and, in fact, quite friendly: the two met

numerous times, and Telemann stood godfather to C.P.E. Bach in 1714. One is certainly led to wonder whether they ever discussed the *Brockes-Passion*—either the text itself or Telemann's setting of it—in person: clearly they both admired its freshness and wealth of material. And we know that Bach had a copy of Telemann's *Brockes-Passion* in his library at the Thomasschule.¹⁸ But, while Telemann embraced the text wholeheartedly and set it in its gruesome entirety, Bach's Passion texts are drawn more directly from the gospels and contain more deeply theological reflections, only occa-

sionally using excerpts from Brockes's text.

Today, performances of Bach's Passion settings have become central in Western musical life; any given city rarely goes a year without a performance of *Johannes-* or *Matthäus-Passion*. The chorale tunes and arias are familiar, and these deeply theological works have been analyzed and researched to such an extent that adding meaningfully to the scholarship is challenging. Telemann's *Brockes-Passion*, on the other hand, has not yet had enough modern performances to enter the musical canon, yet it presents a wonderful counterpoint to the works of Bach.

With the spread of Enlightenment ideas, artists across all disciplines were shifting their focus toward depicting the individual and the human condition in their works and leaving behind the more dogmatic attempts to express a purer form of divinity through art. In Bach, these two tracks come together, despite his being considered a master of the "old" way. Telemann was the more forward-looking of the two, which may help to explain his great appeal during his lifetime. Where Bach's aesthetic is unceasingly profound, Telemann's is unabashedly dramatic. Telemann embraced the shift toward the exploration of human nature through art, and his desire to paint gripping, emotional scenes is evident throughout the work.

That Bach was a few years younger than Telemann only demonstrates how musico-historical transitions are neither clear-cut nor defined by a strict chronology. Telemann's *Brockes-Passion* is a more "modern"

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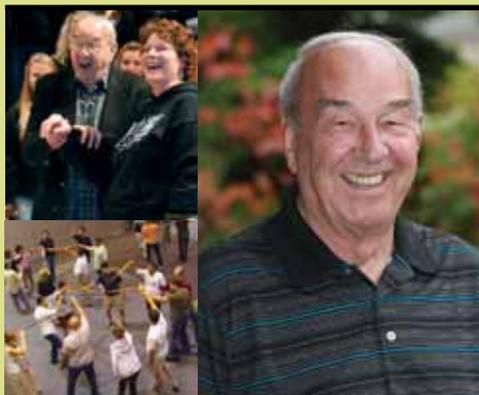
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work than Bach's *Matthäus-Passion*, which was written several decades later. A half-century after that, audiences would read Beaumarchais's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Haydn would compose his intensely intimate piano sonatas, and a bit further on Beethoven would write his epic seventh symphony—all works based on the idea that the human journey was increasingly more relevant than the divine one. Telemann's *Brockes-Passion* represents an early turning point in this evolution. It is an extraordinary piece of music and an important step in the movement toward humanism and the Enlightenment, and well deserving of a closer look by conductors today. 

Christopher Eanes is the artistic director of The Cincinnati Boychoir and Collegium Cincinnati.

Recordings

Telemann, Georg. *Telemann: Brockes Passion*. RIAS Kammerchor & Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, conducted by René Jacobs. harmonia mundi s.a., 2009.

Telemann, Georg. *Telemann: Brockes Passion*. Stadtsingechor zu Halle, Cappella Savaria, conducted by Nicholas McGegan. Hungaroton, 2014.

Score

Georg Philip Telemann, *DER FÜR DIE SÜNDE DER WELT LEIDENDE UND STERBENDE JESUS*, Ed. Carsten Lange (Basel: Bärenreiter, 2008).

NOTES

¹ Christoph Wolff, Johann Sebastian Bach (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000), 219.

² Ibid.

³ Steven Zohn, "Telemann, Georg Philipp." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed June 9, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27635pg5>.

⁴ This information is based on two facts: first, that the publisher of the work (Bärenreiter-Verlag) had never rented or sold instrumental parts for the work in the United States; second, that an internet search conducted by the author turned up no reviews or other records of performances, other than individual movements.

⁵ Carsten Lange, liner notes to Telemann *Brockes-Passion*, René Jacobs, RIAS Kammerchor, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, trans. Charles Johnston, harmonia mundi, HMC 902013.14, CD, (2008).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Pamela Dellal, "BWV 245 – Johannes-Passion." Emmanuel Music. Accessed 9 September 2018, http://emmanuelmusic.org/notes_translations/translations_cantata/t_bwv245.htm#pab1_7.

¹⁰ Lange.

¹¹ Hans-Joachim Schulze, "Johann Sebastian Bach's Orchestra: Some Unanswered Questions," *Early Music* 17, no 1 (1989): 3-15.

¹² Georg Philip Telemann, *DER FÜR DIE SÜNDE DER WELT LEIDENDE UND STERBENDE JESUS*, Ed. Carsten Lange (Basel: Bärenreiter, 2008).

¹³ Johnston.

¹⁴ Lange.

¹⁵ Annalisa Pappano, in communication with the author, January 2017.

¹⁶ Rob Turner, email exchange with the author, January 27, 2017.

¹⁷ Lange.

¹⁸ Andreas Glöckner, "Bach and the Passion Music of His Contemporaries." *The Musical Times* 116, no. 1589 (1975): 613-16. doi:10.2307/960433.

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The Choral Music and Compositional Style of McNeil Robinson

Jason A. Wright

McNeil Robinson II (1943-2015), internationally renowned organist and composer, composed sixty choral compositions along with a wealth of service music for both the Christian and Jewish traditions. Known for writing in a variety of styles and genres, Robinson's works can best be described as ranging from conservative to progressive, simple to difficult, tonal to serial, liturgical to music for the concert stage. Robinson's vast *oeuvre* is predominately choral. These compositions include anthems, Evening Service settings (*Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*), mass settings, including *missae brevi* settings, hymns, and psalm responsorials and service music. This article will provide insight into Robinson's choral music and compositional processes while establishing an exhaustive document on his choral *oeuvre* for both the Christian and Jewish Traditions.

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The Choral Music And Compositional

Brief Biographical Sketch



McNeil Robinson was born in Birmingham, Alabama and educated at Birmingham Southern College, Mannes College of Music, and the Juilliard School. Robinson served at several iconic and celebrated churches and a synagogue in the City of New York. As an academic, Robinson was chair of the organ department and a professor of music at Manhattan School of Music. Over the course of these appointments, Robinson composed music for organ solo, organ and orchestra, choral, and solo voice with organ and orchestra accompaniment. Other compositions include music for a film, a play, and an unfinished opera. Robinson composed sixty choral compositions along with a wealth of service music for both the Christian and Jewish traditions. These compositions include anthems, *Missa brevis*, hymns, psalm responsorials, and service music. Although, much of the choral music was written for use in his own parish and synagogue, other works were commissions received from houses of worship across the United States and abroad and for the concert stage.

Over the course of these appointments, Robinson composed music for organ solo, organ and orchestra, choral, and solo voice with organ and orchestra accompaniment. Other compositions include music for a film, a play, and an unfinished opera. Robinson composed sixty choral compositions along with a wealth of service music for both the Christian and Jewish traditions. These compositions include anthems, *Missa brevis*, hymns, psalm responsorials, and service music. Although, much of the choral music was written for use in his own parish and synagogue, other works were commissions received from houses of worship across the United States and abroad and for the concert stage.

Composition Influences

Robinson's composition teachers include Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987), Virgil Thomson (1896-1989), and Yehudi Wyner (b. 1929), though Robinson states that his music does not sound like any one of his teachers.¹ In examining his music, elements from each teacher's compositional style can be found in his music.

Robinson used Allen Forte's book *The Structure of Atonal Music* (1973) and Charles Wuorinen's book *Simple Composition* (1979/1994) with his students. Robinson's former student Andrew Yeargin states, "Robinson regarded Wuorinen very highly. He used *Simple Composition* extensively with improvisation and composition students. He always took great care to introduce Wuorinen's sacred choral works in his Choral Repertoire classes [at Manhattan School of Music]."²

In 1947, Vincent Persichetti joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music, assuming chairmanship of the Composition Department in 1963. It was at Juilliard that Robinson studied with Persichetti from 1965 to 1970. Persichetti's early style influences, like Robinson, were Stravinsky, Bartók, Hindemith, and Copland, before Persichetti developed his distinct voice in the 1950s. He used polytonality and pandiatonicism in his writing, and his music could be marked by sharp rhythmic interjections. His embracing of diverse strands of musical thought makes characterizing his body of work difficult. Persichetti was credited with having produced a distinctive blend of Classical, Romantic, and Modernist elements. Robinson's music is greatly influenced by Persichetti's style in both harmony, rhythm, and style.

Virgil Thomson utilized a musical style marked by sharp wit and overt playfulness. He composed in almost every genre of music, producing a highly original body of work rooted in American speech rhythms and hymnbook harmony. Though mostly diatonic, some of his work was densely chromatic and even twelve-tone in organization. In an interview with Andrew Adams, Robinson makes note of studying counterpoint with Thomson.³ Thomson's influence can be seen in Robinson's use of counterpoint and chromaticism.

Yehudi Wyner is a graduate of Yale, Harvard, and Juilliard. In his music, Wyner often seeks to reconcile disparate elements of past and present. Classical, chromatic, and serial elements coexist together with notable ingredients of popular and melodic and gestural inflections from his Jewish heritage. The result is an eclectic but personal style that is both poetic and lyrical. Wyner's influence is seen in Robinson's Phase 4 pieces that combine various elements of style.

Stravinsky, Messiaen, Duruflé, and Webern also influenced Robinson's compositions. Stravinsky was known for his Neo-classical styles and his experimentation with serialism. In an interview with Vocal Arts Network, Robinson said that when he composed the *Messe Solennelle*, he had Stravinsky in his head at all times. Robinson noted that he could imitate Messiaen well, but he tried not to do so. Robinson, like Messiaen, was interested in combining Neo-Classical and Romantic styles, with allusions to serialism. Duruflé influenced Robinson's use of harmony. Webern's influence can be

Style of McNeil Robinson

seen in Robinson's organ composition.

Andrew Yeargin draws additional parallels between Robinson's music and that of Hindemith and Poulenc. Yeargin compares Hindemith's contrapuntal texture with the textures used in his composition *Spice She Brought and Sweet Perfume* (1981). Similarly, he compares Robinson's use of harmony, with increasing chromaticism in *Missa in die Tribulationis* (1980) to the compositional styles of Poulenc, where chromaticism grows out of a tonal landscape and then lessens as the piece closes.

Commissions

McNeil Robinson wrote the majority of his choral compositions for churches and the synagogue that he served as director of music and organist and several commissions for houses of worship across the United States, mainly in the East Coast. Robinson received several prestigious choral commissions over his lifetime from academic institutions, professional choral ensembles, and individuals for special events, including La Salle Military Academy (*Messe Militaire/Festival Choral Eucharist*, 1983), The Hackley School (*Salutation, Dance and Nocturne*, 1968), American Guild of Organists National Convention (1988) (*Missa Brevis*, 1996), the 100th Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Michael Ramsey, (*Ecce Sacerdos*, 1967), the Haas Family for CBS Christmas Broadcast (*Hodie Christus Natus est*, 1968), and Music Sacra (*Messe Solennelle*, 1987).

Text and Form

In a 1985 interview with Louis Weingarden on Jewish Music, Robinson said, "You can't write a text if you aren't absorbed in it!"⁴ Robinson strongly felt that in order to properly set the text to music, one had to digest the text and its meaning. The texts of his choral music, psalm settings, and hymns come from both the Old and New Testaments, the Psalms, from the Ordinaries and Propers of the Mass.

The majority of Robinson's choral compositions are through-composed. This method of composition allows for the text to be set in a continuous manner without repeating music. In other instances, he chooses to set the music in an ABA format, especially for pieces that

are sectional (such as the Kyrie and Angus Dei) or have a repeating text.

Choral Ensemble

Many of Robinson's choirs throughout his career were either professional or semi-professional. Robinson's compositions were written with these singers in mind. The majority of his compositions are composed for SATB mixed-chorus or TTBB men's chorus. He was very demanding of sopranos, and a few of his compositions require the soprano to sing in a high tessitura. For soprano solo lines, the tessitura could even be higher (e.g., *Had I But Pinions* 1982, the soprano is asked to sing B5 & C6 *pp* to imitate the flight into heaven). At times, he would apply the same high range to the first tenors, particularly in compositions for male voices only. In general, the alto and bass lines stay within standard range.

Accompaniment

As an organist, Robinson wrote choral pieces with organ accompaniment or a cappella choir. Robinson himself played every piece that he composed. Christopher Creaghan, a former student and close friend of Robinson, remarks that the accompaniments to his choral works are generally difficult. However, if one does score analysis and marks the score accordingly, sharing the inner voices between the hands or moving a voice into the pedal, they are manageable.⁵ A few of his compositions, such as the *Missa Brevis* (1996), contain organ registrations and others do not.

The accompaniments and the choral parts are to be treated as equal forces. This is a common characteristic of English church music: the accompaniment and the choral parts are one voice, not two. Robinson, working in an Anglo-Catholic parish, would have been keenly aware of this practice.

When registering Robinson's pieces for organ, it might be helpful to know what style of organ and type of tonal palette was heard from the organ for which it was composed. It is also important to take into consideration the acoustical environments, which will be addressed in the next section.

The Choral Music And Compositional

The organ at St. Mary the Virgin was an Aeolian-Skinner (1942) with a lush and rich tonal palette. This space and instrument, per Christopher Creaghan, influenced Robinson's compositions the most.⁶ The American Classic Turner organ (1996), presently at The Church of the Holy Family, was not yet installed during Robinson's tenure. Robinson would have been familiar with the Delaware Organ (1965), which was a neo-Baroque instrument. Holtkamp (1982) built a neo-Baroque instrument for Park Avenue Christian Church. Robinson on more than one occasion made tonal revisions to warm up the sound. The organ at Holy Trinity was Létourneau (1997) and was tonally designed to excel in both French Symphonic and German Baroque organ literature. Park Avenue Synagogue had a large custom electronic Allen (unknown installation date), which Robinson himself designed.

Acoustical Environments

The acoustical environment of churches in many of New York City's houses of worship are superb for both organ and choral performances. Robinson was indeed fortunate to have worked in these environments. The three Christian churches where he was employed—St. Mary the Virgin, Church of the Holy Family, and Holy Trinity—due to hard surfaces and high ceilings, had above-average to extremely live acoustics. Park Avenue Christian Church had a dryer acoustic, due to the Guastavino tiles that were added to the ceiling. In the Christian Churches where Robinson served, both the organ and choir were positioned in the back of the nave, which projected the sound down the main axis of the building. Park Avenue Synagogue had a dryer acoustic; the organ was located behind a screen.

When programming Robinson's works, Creaghan suggested it is important to make considerations regarding tempo, accents, and other musical devices that are affected by acoustical treatments. These pieces, having been born out of lively acoustics, would be performed with slight modifications in rooms that have a drier acoustic. Regardless of the room, it is important that the piece not be performed too slowly or with too much sentimentality. The excessive use of rubato would not

be appropriate, but rather a more metronomic approach with some flexibility and good phrase direction.

Compositional Process

In conversation with American organist Stephen Tharp at an American Guild of Organists Chapter event in New York City (September 8, 1985), Robinson explained his compositional process.⁷ Stravinsky's Neo-classical period (1920-1954) had a great influence on Robinson's approach. Stravinsky said that in a piece everything has to be indigenous to that piece, everything must fit into a box and the box must be small.⁸ Robinson added, "Do not add things that do not relate to the music, chicken soup cans or the kitchen sink, or God who knows what else!"⁹ Robinson started with an idea and then saw how many legitimate ways that small idea could work. He then starts transmuting the idea. Robinson referred to Charles Wuorinen's influence of not allowing the piece to get away from what it is. To Robinson, it was important to work on every section simultaneously, making revisions after the composition was finished. He did not believe one could get cohesion in a piece if one did not work on everything simultaneously. After the composition was finished, then go back and make revisions.

Compositional Phases

Robinson's music can be described harmonically as tonal, even when the style of the twentieth century was atonal, experimental, and at times extremely dissonant. His music is firmly grounded in the French Romantic language. At times Robinson's music reflected his own personal periods of interests and areas of study. Robinson claimed to have studied serialism; it is unknown with whom. He also knew Forte's set theory well. These compositional aspects are reserved for his organ compositions. It is only in his organ improvisations that one can see an adventurous harmonic language and where one would experience Robinson at his finest.

Robinson's works can be divided into four compositional phases: Neoclassical, serial, conservative/tonal, and blended. It was Andrew Yeargin who fleshed

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out these phases.¹⁰ Creaghan concurs with the various phases in Robinson's compositional style but cautioned against placing all of Robinson's compositions on a timeline or into a category.¹¹ Creaghan has spent countless hours with Robinson's compositions and feels that Robinson would not have separated his pieces into categories. Robinson referred to Creaghan "as his scribe."¹²

Phase I – post-Neoclassical. Neoclassicism in music was a popular twentieth-century compositional trend where composers desired to return to classical ideals, characterized by order, balance, clarity, and emotional restraint. Neoclassicism was a reaction against Romanticism. Emphasis was placed on rhythm and contrapuntal textures, expanded tonal harmony, and a focus on absolute music versus program music of the Romantic period. There were two camps of Neo-classical influence: the French, influenced primarily by Satie and Stravinsky, and the German with Hindemith. Nadia Boulanger was the teacher of several noted composers in Robinson's circle, including Aaron Copland, Ned Rorem, and Virgil Thomson. Her teachings sought to extend her understanding of Stravinsky's compositional ideals. As Robinson notes, he was greatly inspired and influenced by Stravinsky and many who followed him.

Robinson's post-Neo-classical compositions display the use of progressive harmony, in what can be referred to as twenty-first century tonality. Compositions are written in a clear and balanced form, likening them to the Classical era. The *Jubilate Deo* is an excellent example of this phase. Harmonically, he uses the additive note, where a chord contains an added 2nd, 6th, 9th, or 13th, here an added 2nd as shown in Figure 1.

The use of chromaticism creates an alternation of diminished chords housed between tonic and dominant chords shown in Figure 2. This style is rooted in music of the late nineteenth century, which can be analyzed using Neo-Riemannian theory operations of triadic transformation.

There are six types of triad transformation. The first three are parallel (P), leading-tone (L), and relative (R), where one voice moves by semitone. In parallel transformation, the chord transforms from major to minor

(e.g., C major to C minor). In leading-tone transformation, the third of a major triad becomes the root of a minor triad, and vice versa (C major to E minor). In relative transformation, the root of a major triad becomes the third of a minor triad and vice versa (C major to A minor). The second set parallel prime (P'), leading-tone prime (L'), and relative prime (R'), involves two voices moving by semitone. In parallel prime, major and minor triads share the same third (C major to C-sharp minor). The root of a major triad becomes the fifth of a minor triad (and vice versa) in leading-tone prime (C major to F minor). For relative prime, the fifth of a major triad becomes the root of a minor triad and vice versa (C major to G minor). These operations, made it easy for Robinson to quickly move around harmonically yet remain in the context of one key.¹³ Robinson creates symmetry in the music by dividing the octave by the tri-tone. This can be seen in the *Jubilate Deo* when the pedal part, a third voice, is added against the treble and bass accompaniments. The pedal part creates extreme



Figure 1. McNeil Robinson, *Jubilate Deo*, m. 16.

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Figure 2. McNeil Robinson, *Jubilate Deo*, m. 14.

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dissonance and instability in the choral parts as shown in Figure 3.

Another feature of music of this period is the use of modes. Robinson employs the use of modality in some of his compositions. Psalm 150 (Figure 4) is an example. Published neo-classical compositions that are representative of Phase I include *Messe Solennelle* (1980/1981), *Spice She Brought and Sweet Perfume* (1981/1984), *In the Chill of Bleak Midwinter (Ave Verum)* (1971/1979), *Infant Redeemer (Ave Maria)* (1976/1979), *Terra Tremuit* (1978/1979), *Christmas Alleluias* (1979/1980), *Jubilate Deo* (1980/1987), and *Psalm 150* (1998). Compositions that are more aligned to Francis Poulenc and Sir Lennox Berkeley are

Missa in die Tribulationis (1980/1982) and *Christus factus est* (1976). These compositions are tonal with the use of increasing chromaticism and reflecting limited emotion, characteristics of neoclassicism.

Phase II – Serial. Serial compositions use a fixed series of notes. This technique orders pitches in a row, and these generate melodies, harmonies, structural processes, and variations within a composition. Pitch content can be manipulated by prime, retrograde, inversion, and retrograde-inversion. Robinson would have known of the works of Charles Wuorinen, Aaron Copland, Olivier Messiaen, and Ned Rorem, all of whom used this technique.

Robinson did not employ this technique in his choral music but reserved it for his opera and organ compositions. Compositions that are representative of this Phase include *Scene from Medea: An Opera in Progress* (1979). The first published serial work was his *Dismas Variations* (1980/1982), which was commissioned by Kenneth Starr and dedicated to Vincent Persichetti. It is based on two four-note sets, identified in Allen Forte's catalogue as 4_Z15 and 4_Z29.¹⁴ A second example, *Angels: Variations for Organ and Orchestra*, was seven variations using total

Figure 3. McNeil Robinson, *Jubilate Deo*, m. 14–15.

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Figure 4. McNeil Robinson, *Psalm 150*, m. 54–57.

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serialism, a technique that determined duration, dynamics, and register, in addition to pitch. Robinson uses a mirror-image hexachord melodically.

Phase III – Conservative. Robinson used this phase of writing in his choral music, hymns, the majority of his Jewish and solo vocal music, and in some of his organ compositions. Compositions in this phase are tonal, with slight use of chromaticism (flare of Neo-Romanticism) and highly structured form. Published works that are representative of Phase III include: *Music for the Lord's Supper* (1969/1979) and *Messe Militaire* (Festival Choral Eucharist) (1983/1988).

Of special note is his composition *Had I But Pinions*. This composition stands alone as the most striking piece of Robinson's output. Andrew Yeargin describes it as, "luxurious wave of sound and orchestral color created by the ensemble of organ, horn and harp coupled with

the extremes of tessitura assigned to the solo soprano and surfeit of emotion outpouring from the chorus perfectly paint the image of one's soul flying on the wing of a dove"¹⁵ (Figure 5). The composition was written for a friend of Robinson's who had been ill and was not expected to live. Fortunately he made a full recovery. This composition is a caricature of Neo-Romantic flavor.

Phase IV – Blended. Robinson's blended compositions show characteristics of both Neo-classic and conservative styles. The *Missa Brevis* (1996) is a fine representative of this phase. Robinson combines elements of his Neoclassical style by way of form, harmonic language, and rhythm. The conservative side of this work is seen in its formal structure and its use in the liturgical service.

The Kyrie has a contrapuntal accompaniment, reminiscent of the late Baroque and early Classical periods as shown in Figure 6. Robinson uses several themes

Figure 5. McNeil Robinson, *Had I But Pinions*, m. 67–71.

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Figure 6. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), "Kyrie," m. 1–8.

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throughout the composition. The choral parts in the Kyrie (Figure 7) set up the primary theme, which later returns in the Sanctus. In the Gloria, Robinson uses a rhythmic motive, which becomes a cyclical theme throughout the work as shown in Figure 8. The horn is representative of horns honking in the streets and the left hand represents movement of subway cars underneath the streets of New York City.¹⁶ In the Sanctus (Figure 9), Robinson makes use of ostinato and carillon. A return of the horn fanfare motive from Gloria reappears in the Sanctus in augmentation (Figure 10 on page 83).

The secondary theme, found in the Benedictus of the Sanctus, is used in the Agnus Dei (Figure 11 on page 83). The Agnus Dei opens with the primary theme of the Benedictus in diminution in the organ part (Figure 12 on page 83). The primary theme from the Kyrie is altered

and disguised in the Agnus Dei (Figure 13 on page 83). The horn fanfare motive from the Gloria and Sanctus returns in the last 3 measures in augmentation (Figure 14 on page 53). Published works that are representative of Phase IV include: *God Is Love* (1975/1979), *Improperium* (1979/1979), *Missa Brevis* (1996), and *Missa Christi Ecclesia* (2013).

Conclusion

McNeil Robinson had a long and vibrant career as organist and choirmaster at Park Avenue Synagogue, a relationship that lasted for forty-seven years. During this time, Robinson had the pleasure of working with some of the best-known Hazzans and Cantors in the United States. Over the course of his appointment at Park Ave-



Figure 7. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), "Kyrie," m. 1-8.

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Figure 8. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), "Gloria," m. 1-2.

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Figure 9. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), "Sanctus," m. 1-6.

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Figure 10. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), “Sanctus,” m. 37–39.

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Figure 11. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), “Sanctus,” m. 43–47.

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Figure 12. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), “Agnus Dei,” m. 1–2.

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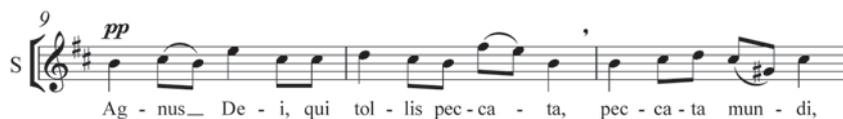


Figure 13. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), “Agnus Dei,” m. 9–12.

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Figure 14. McNeil Robinson, *Missa Brevis* (1996), “Agnus Dei,” m. 32–end.

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nue, he was commissioned to write organ pieces, choral and congregation settings for prayer and hymns.

Robinson's personal musical journey, his teachings, and his contributions to sacred music in the United States deserve to be recognized and included in the canon of Western Music. He was part of a circle of fine musicians, many of whom are considered pillars of twentieth and twenty-first century music.

NOTES

- ¹ Andrew Adams, "Celebrating 40 Years: An Interview with Organist/Composer McNeil Robinson," 2.
- ² Andrew Yeargin, interview with the author, October 29, 2016, Columbia, SC
- ³ Andrew Adams, "Celebrating 40 Years," 2.
- ⁴ McNeil Robinson, "Interview with Louis Weingarden."
- ⁵ Christopher Creaghan, interview with the author, November 23, 2016, Columbia, SC.

- ⁶ Christopher Creaghan, email to author, January 6, 2017.
- ⁷ McNeil Robinson, "Interview with Stephen Tharp," The New York American Guild of Organists Chapter. Recorded 2014. <https://youtu.be/KdUrtK9GxC0>
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Andrew H. Yeargin. "McNeil Robinson: The Complete Musician." (DMA diss., The Manhattan School of Music, New York, NY, 2016), 21-27.
- ¹¹ Creaghan, interview, November 23, 2016.
- ¹² McNeil Robinson, "Interview with Stephen Tharp."
- ¹³ Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*. 4 ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company) 2016, 188-189.
- ¹⁴ Anthony F. Thurman, "McNeil Robinson: His Life and Music (1962-1998)." (DMA diss., The Manhattan School of Music, New York, NY, 1999), 46.
- ¹⁵ Yeargin, 26.
- ¹⁶ John Bradford Bohl, interview with the author, January 12, 2017, Washington, DC.

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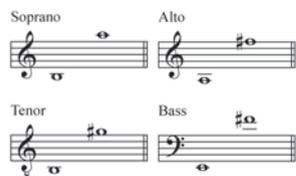
Sacred Music

Choral Reviews

Seven Last Words:

Septem Ultima Verba

Music: Michael John Trotta
SATB, divisi with Orchestra;
Soprano and Bass soli
MorningStar Music Publishers
70-390 vocal score
Multimedia enhancements:
<http://terrencejoycegallery.com/>
e-address:
www.canticleistributing.com



This issue's column will focus on new major works written primarily for, and accessible to, the sacred ensemble with moderate performing forces. Michael John Trotta's new passion setting, *Seven Last Words*, was commissioned through the efforts of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. It is set for SATB choir and soloists, with a full symphonic version available. Churches of modest means will be particularly interested, however, in the chamber orchestration.

Trotta pays homage to the great composers of the past, particularly in the opening movement, "Father, Forgive Them," which lingers on

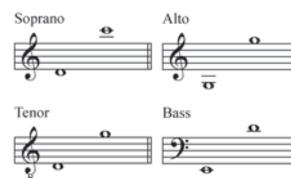
the brief text before launching into a brilliantly written "Kyrie" fugue. The 3rd movement, "Behold, Your Son," combines the gospel text with fragments from the *Stabat Mater*, and is distinguished by an ethereal soprano solo over a more contemporary orchestral texture featuring the harp. Trotta creates continuity throughout the work with recurring melodic fragments.

Conductors familiar with Trotta's work will recognize his familiar syncopated rhythms, which breathe energy into the stunning final movement, "It is Finished." At times poignant and at others fiery, Trotta's orchestral palette is what drives the success of this work, supporting his clear and accessible choral writing, with only very brief extremes of range. Within that framework, the piece successfully balances artistic gravitas with the need for a seasonal cantata able to be performed by church ensembles.

Performance demonstration:
<https://www.mjtrotta.com/seven-last-words-for-choir-and-orchestra/>

Cry of Jeremiah

Music: Rosephanye Powell
Text: Jeremiah 29, adapted
SATB, *divisi*, full orchestra, organ
Gentry Publications
JG0724 vocal score
e-address:
www.GentryPublications.com



Rosephanye Powell's *Cry of Jeremiah* is a moving, gripping setting of this often difficult text, inviting the listener to experience waves of despair, anger, and finally exultant triumph. Powell's piece is a tightly written seventeen-minute mini-oratorio for chorus and full orchestra, though there is also an option for organ and percussion. Powell provides extensive performance instructions and examples on her website (listed below) that are essential tools in the preparation.

The opening movement, "Is Not His Word Like a Fire," is bombastic, influenced by what the composer explains as "Baroque-European" contrapuntal passages contrasted with "chant-like or recitative style." The opening textures seem to obscure the

Sacred Music Choral Reviews

final destination of this work, slowly unfolding and revealing the underlying African American spiritual and gospel content like hidden gems. The further and deeper the listener travels, the more immersed in these

melodic and harmonic gestures one becomes. The world-weary second movement, “O Lord, You Have Deceived Me,” is a lamentation, according to Powell, utilizing “moans associated with the African-Ameri-

can spiritual,” calling to mind songs such as “Poor Wayfaring Stranger.” Powell’s third movement, “Cursed Be the Day” writhes with accented, fiery anguish before giving way to her final “Hallelujah” movement. In her finale, Powell arrives at what seems an inevitable destination—where the influences were textured and fragmented previously, the final movement is an unequivocal “free style” gospel piece, complete with instructions to the ensemble detailing when to sway and when to clap. “Hallelujah” stands as clear proof that a minor key piece can be utterly joyous, making the inevitable catharsis of the final picardy major chord all the more satisfying and powerful.



Performance demonstration:
[rosephanyepowell.com/
compositions/
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Vidimus Stellam ***(We Have Seen His Star)***

Music: Kevin Siegfried

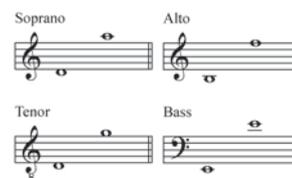
Text: Traditional Latin

SATB, divisi, brass quintet or organ

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Kevin Siegfried's brand-new Christmas cantata *Vidimus Stellam* (*We Have Seen His Star*) fulfills, more

than adequately, a need for a concisely written Christmas piece with moderate performing forces. Commissioned through the efforts of four choirs, including the National Lutheran Choir, for the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Portland, OR, *Vidimus Stellam* is written in honor of, and perhaps inspired by, Daniel Pinkham's 1957 *Christmas Cantata*. Siegfried's fifteen-minute work is in five brief movements.

The lightly accompanied piece employs a brass quintet (expertly written) with the option for organ performance. The solo French Horn and Trumpet, in particular, seem to sing along with the choir, almost like a fifth voice part, creating a haunting atmospheric counterpart to the often homophonic choral texture. The choral parts are limited in range for all but one highlighted moment in the cantata, yet do linger on sparkling unresolved dissonances, like brush-strokes on canvas.

Using chant-like patterns, Siegfried alternates in the first three movements between an almost medieval choral palette over extended pedal harmony and scalar patterns and more playful, dancing fugal passages. The fourth movement, "Surge, illuminare" explores mixed and compound meters that mimic the syllabic stress of the text, while the final movement, "Vidimus stellam" features a warm 8-part choral *divisi* utilizing antiphonal, asymmetric chants to bring the piece to a robust conclusion.

Performance Demonstration:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8-mlq5Ybfo>

Gloria

Music: Daniel E. Gawthrop

Text: Traditional Latin

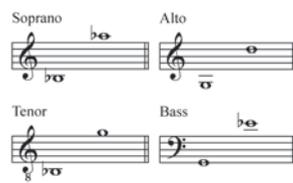
SATB, divisi, brass, organ, percussion

Dunstan House

DH1413 Choral Score

e-address:

<http://DunstanHouse.com>



Daniel Gawthrop's setting of the *Gloria* is written for brass, organ,

and percussion and is perfect for the Advent and Christmas seasons, as well as functioning as a concert piece throughout the year. The first movement initially drives through the Latin text, alternating between a march-like common time to a lilting compound duple to highlight the syllabic stress. Gawthrop employs mild *divisi* and dissonance at climactic moments, and repeats large sections for structural and formal integrity. The opening movement ends unexpectedly peacefully on "et in terra pax." The second movement, "Laudamus Te," acts as a coda of sorts, continuing the lilting mixed meter over playful lower brass, before ending in

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celebration. “Gratius Agimus Tibi” begins with a contemplative, prayer-like simple melody in the upper voices before being joined by the lower voices in similar style. Gawthrop repeats this hymn of praise with all four voices, lightly accompanied by the brass and punctuated by gentle orchestral bells. “Domine Deus” begins with asymmetric rhythmic energy, though the irregular rhythms naturally mimic the text and provide forward momentum into important words, which are suddenly stretched for emphasis. The second half of the movement is a gentle prayer for mercy, which suddenly, brightly, explodes with sound in the final movement, “Quoniam Tu Solus Sanctus.”

Gawthrop’s finale alternates a broad homophonic texture with orchestral punctuation before breaking into a brief fugue. The final section returns to the homophonic hymn of praise.

Performance demonstration:
www.youtube.com/channel/UC-7j2fUOkDowXFqp5tIys3A

Redemption Mass

Music: Julian David Bryson

Text: Traditional Latin, German excerpt by Barthold Heinrich Brockes (1680-1747), and quoting the Common Doxology by Thomas Ken (1637-1711)

SATB, divisi, piano, wind quintet or string quintet, and percussion

MusicSpoke

e-address: www.musicspoke.com

Julian David Bryson’s *Redemption Mass* won the 2013 ACDA Brock Student Composition Contest, and portions were premiered at the 2013 National Conference in Dallas, TX, before receiving a complete performance in 2018.

Bryson’s work is set for either string or winds, providing the conductor with two different options for accompaniment. Due to the extensive cluster-toned *divisi*, rhythmic complexity, and extremes of vocal range, the choral material exceeds the scope of all but the most accomplished church choirs, but is particularly appropriate for symphony

choruses or collegiate choirs in the sacred tradition.

The piece is indeed symphonic in conception, through composed with little or no break between movements, with a movie-score quality. Bryson weaves mantras of melodic patterns together like a hypnotic blanket over driving, frenetic orchestra. Most meters are asymmetric, with the harmonic layers working to obscure the pulse. He moves quickly through the text, often overlapping lines between voices, particularly in the “Credo,” allowing him to cover the entire mass text in under thirty minutes. The “Sanctus” is particularly infectious and could be excerpted throughout the church year.

Redemption Mass takes a unique turn in the “Agnus Dei.” Bryson includes a pietistic text from Bach’s *St. John Passion* to introduce the movement, first sung as an incipit by a baritone soloist, then as a lightly accompanied chorale by the chorus. The German poem gives way to a prayerful and colorful soundscape that slowly morphs into the Latin mass text before finally concluding on a peaceful re-harmonization of the English Common Doxology (Old 100th), reminiscent of Hindemith’s *Trauermusik*. Bryson’s setting springs from a unique and creative voice and deserves a permanent place in the sacred repertoire.

Performance demonstration: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6z3c1K-2vxYc&feature=youtu.be

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ProjectEncore.org/colin-eatock



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ProjectEncore.org/christopher-hoh



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- SATB; some divisi; a cappella; brief aleatoric section; English (E. Pauline Johnson)
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JOHN MUEHLEISEN

Singing Together

- SATB; SATB divisi; a cappella; English (Jill Clymer)
- 4'15". A musical celebration of the power of music to unite and uplift, even in times of struggle. Largely homophonic, richly sonorous, with some duet imitation. Effective text portrayal through metrical variety, cascading lines, and occasional hocket-like declamation. "Closer" potential! Strong high school and above. ProjectEncore.org/john-muehleisen



PAUL JOHN RUDOI (NEW to PROJECT : ENCORE)

If I Were A Dog

- SAB; piano English (Richard Shelton)
- 3'31". At once humorous and touching, life through canine eyes. With only three voices, and an almost completely homophonic texture, Rudoi has created a concert piece sure to bring a smile and maybe a tear. Rhythmic interest largely through piano accomp. Accessible for most; fun for and worthy of all levels. ProjectEncore.org/paul-john-rudoi



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Choral Reviews

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Alleluia from *Musica Sacra*

Pawel Lukaszewski

(b. 1968 : 2016)

SATB divisi unaccompanied (2:10)

Publisher: Walton Music

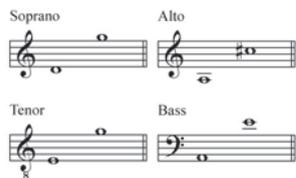
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[Alleluia/10593344.item#/submit](https://www.jwpepper.com/Alleluia/10593344.item#/submit)



Pawel Lukaszewski's "Alleluia" is a lovely addition to the sacred repertoire for mixed voices. Taken from the prolific composer's *Musica Sacra*, this brief setting consists of 32 iterations of the word *Alleluia*, a timeless expression of praise apt across a variety of liturgies and traditions. The lush harmonies and subtly shifting rhythms offer an engrossing experience to both singer and listener.

Though catalogued as SATB divisi, the piece is largely in a five-part texture, with only the soprano part being regularly divided. Phrases characteristically begin on a unison, fanning out into rather rich harmonies. The initial phrase exemplifies

this pattern, beginning on a unison D, moving through major and minor sevenths chords before coming to rest on a dominant six-five chord of E. The subsequent phrase begins on a unison of E, moving through simpler harmonies than the first and approaching the final chord of E major from the major chord a whole tone below. The middle measures are similar in harmonic approach but more vigorous, a sustained *forte* marking the measures from 15 to 18. More restrained, *piano* music follows, the parts lying lower in their respective tessituras. This section comes to rest on a major chord of A, suggesting a half cadence to the reprise of the opening section that follows. In the concluding section a sense of timelessness is suggested by the repetition of the final four measures, first *piano*, then *pianissimo*. The work comes to rest on an E major that is clearly the overall tonality, though the fact is never confirmed by means of a key signature.

Metrically "Alleluia" largely alternates between two/four and three/four, frequent cascades of triplets imparting a sense of lilting compound time in many measures. In the choral writing the alto part is often quite static, with many repeated E's and A's, while the first sopranos generally sing the tune, the seconds har-

monizing below in consonant thirds. The bass and tenor voices are often spread in fifths, the effect sometimes being multiplied by having bass and baritone a fifth apart and tenor an additional fifth above baritone. Textural variety is achieved by moving the melodic writing of the uppermost parts into alto and tenor parts an octave lower as at measure 19. Here the sopranos take on the less gratifying role of doubling the baritone harmonization before returning to a more melodic role for the final reprise.

That the composer, who is conductor of *Musica Sacra*, Warsaw Cathedral Choir, is a practical church musician can be seen in the comfortable compasses of the choral parts and the way that the rhythms are varied but attainable for a good church or college choir. Melodic leaps of perfect 5ths and minor 7ths appear throughout, adding only slightly to the degree of difficulty for the choir essaying this piece. Overall, this is a sumptuous piece of choral music—well worth the effort of any choir willing to tackle it.

Jon Thompson
Langley, British Columbia

Choral Reviews

Saeya Saeya Parang Saeya

Arr. Young-ah Kim

(b. 1972 : 2016)

Text: Korean Traditional

SATB, alto solo, unaccompanied

(5:15)

Pavane Publishing, P1562

\$2.35

Performance Demonstration:

https://youtu.be/y5owGKG_aVo

The image shows four staves of musical notation for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The Soprano and Alto parts are in treble clef, while the Tenor and Bass parts are in bass clef. The notation includes notes, rests, and a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Young-ah Kim's arrangement of the traditional Korean folk song "Saeya Saeya Parang Saeya" (Birds, Birds, Bluebirds) retains the plaintive character of the original melody, in a skillfully composed, contemporary setting. The text (giv-

en only in a Korean transliterated underlay with phrases of English translation above) concerns an unsuccessful nineteenth-century peasant revolt against corrupt Korean rulers and their Japanese confederates but speaks simply of bluebirds who will cause the farmers to weep if they cause their flowers to fall to the ground. The sung syllables are a combination of the words of the Korean original and choral syllables such as "Huhm" and "Dum."

The setting begins with an arresting alto solo of eight measures that gives some indication of the originality of the music to come. The opening solo, written by Connie Haeja Byun, derives its interest from its free and flexible rhythmic setting, restricting the melodic material to the five pentatonic notes (D, E, F, G, A) on which the Korean original is based. Principally in 6/8, the opening is a more dramatic, less

lilting version of what is to come in the choral arrangement.

Kim's choral arrangement begins in the ninth measure with a folk-like humming of offset bass/tenor open fifths, evoking a lilting lullaby. Choral sopranos and altos enter to add harmonic pungency, the divided soprano part settling on a tritone at the end of each gesture. The lack of a key signature that commits to D minor (the arrangement has no key signature) allows freedom to choose various forms of B and C, suggesting D minor at times and the Dorian mode at others.

After the choral atmosphere-setting, the folk melody is uttered by the alto soloist in its pure form, accompanied by tenor and bass. The arranger has both parts in frequent divided major seconds, a notable feature of the entire setting. The fuller harmonies heard when the soprano and alto voices enter emphasize D minor and various forms of E diminished sonorities against D. The section closes deceptively, with an A7 chord that resolves to G7, instead of the expected D minor. The eight slow, reflective measures that follow from measure 29 contain contemporary techniques such as choral glissandi and closing to "m" at varied, somewhat indeterminate points.

The most challenging choral writing begins at measure 35 where the male voices are subdivided and treated contrapuntally. Bass, baritone, and first tenor parts carry fragments of pure folk melody, at times in canonic imitation. The second tenor gives the most rhythmically intricate version of the tune, offset with the other parts. Soprano and then alto

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add to the counterpoint building toward the apparent climax of the composition in measures 51 and 52. Though these measures come at the end of an *accelerando*, follow a *cre-scendo*, and have the sopranos and altos at the high point of their ranges, the sense of climax is lessened by the immediate *diminuendo* from *forte* to *piano* in each of the measures. Harmonic motion away from D minor (to C sharp augmented) also serves to undermine the sense of climax.

At measure 53 a shift to 3/4 marks a new section in which a six-voiced texture (with tenors and basses divided) gives further play to the arranger's variety of treatment of the folk material. The last eight measures form a tidy epilogue rounding off the composition with an almost literal recapitulation of the choral opening.

This fine arrangement is quite challenging (especially in the contrapuntal middle section) but not beyond the capabilities of a good university or community choir. There is some written pronunciation help for non-Korean speakers in a download that might well have been placed on the inside cover of the octavo with the background to the piece. The interesting biographical sketch on the arranger could have been given in the octavo as well. Overall this is a very effective and engaging setting that is a worthy addition to John Byun's growing series in the Pavane catalogue.

Jon Thompson
Langley, British Columbia



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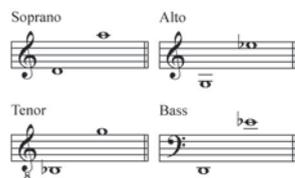
***Stabat Mater*, Hob. XXbis**

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809; 1767)
ed. Clemens Harasim (2017)
SATB, SATB soli, orchestra (ca.
69:00)
Carus Verlag 51.991/03, \$18.95
(piano-vocal score)

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text: sacred, latin: anonymous 13th
century



Joseph Haydn's *Stabat Mater* is the first sacred work he composed while in the employ of the Esterházy court. Though no definitive sources have been found describing the premiere performance, evidence suggests that this work was first performed on Good Friday in 1767.

Haydn's *Stabat Mater* was well regarded by his contemporaries, most notably by Johann Adolph Hesse, who, in Haydn's words, gave this work "indescribable praise." Frequent performances of this composition resulted in a large number of extant scores and parts; editor Clemens Harasim based this Carus edition on three of these sources.

The *Stabat Mater* text is a sequence in the liturgy comprising twenty stanzas with three lines each. Several variations of the text exist, which accounts for some of the slight deviation from the standard *Stabat Mater* text in Haydn's setting. Haydn spread the twenty

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stanzas over fourteen movements, with most movements consisting of one or two of the stanzas. Only six of the fourteen movements (1, 3, 7, 10, 13, and 14) involve the use of the choir; the soloists sing the remaining movements, either individually or in various combinations.

The choral parts are, for the most part, not terribly difficult, either from the vocal or musical standpoint. The biggest challenge for the choir is the final movement, “Paradisi gloria,” an extended *alla breve* fugue with melismatic treatment of the word “amen.” Other movements call for slow, sustained vocal lines, but these are not insurmountable in a choral context. Most curious in this edition, however, is the treatment of the choir in the tenth movement, “Virgo virginum praeclara.” The singing in this movement is mostly by the soloists, with, according to the Carus edition, short choral phrases punctuating between solo sections. Other editions, however, indicate a slightly more involved role by the choir, with additional choral singing underneath the soloists. Though Harasim has provided extensive editorial notes for this publication, he has included no mention of this discrepancy. The omission of these extra choral parts lightens the load of the choir, but only slightly. The most significant result of the missing choral parts is the resulting missing verb *fac* in several sentences, but given the frequent text repetition in this movement with other utterances of *fac*, the omission does not greatly affect

the meaning of the text.

Solo parts are rather virtuosic, with extensive *fioritura* required in several movements. According to the editorial notes, the original parts clearly indicate that the soloists would have been expected to sing the choral parts as well when the soloist parts do not overlap, but this edition makes no suggestion to do likewise. The orchestral parts do not require significant numbers in forces. Both oboists switch to English horn on two movements, and the continuo part is indicated for either organ or cembalo, in reference to the customary “organ silence” on Good Friday in eighteenth-century churches.

Alexa Doebele
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I Love All Beauteous Things

Judith Weir

Text: Robert Bridges OM

(1844-1930)

Chester Music, CH82038

SATB and organ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-k1j6dVbx8U>

Commissioned by the Chapter of St. Paul’s Cathedral to mark the 90th birthday of HM The Queen, this richly harmonized anthem is both stately and moving. The constantly active and undulating organ accompaniment of broken arpeggiations creates a lilting palette, over which the composer has painted a perfectly declamatory SATB setting of the inspiring words. This anthem begins with a thrice repeat-

ed “I love” before the full choir has entered to finish the first phrase together. Each section of the poem is begun by one or more sections of the choir and built upon until the entire ensemble is exclaiming the text together.

Treble voices are paired against Tenor and Bass, Soprano and Tenor against Alto and Bass, finally culminating in the climax of the words at “I love all beauteous things, I seek to adore them; God Hath no better praise, And man in his hasty days is honoured for them.” The work begins quietly and builds steadily to this first iteration of the key text, only relaxing its fervor in the final phrase that reiterates this text and closes quietly.

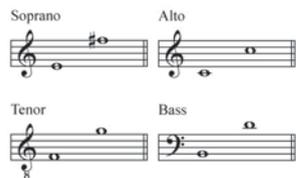
As the piece was written for a choir of men and boys, the soprano line requires no stratospheric tessitura and calls for only two instances of a “g” above the staff, just before the highpoint of drama is achieved and then at the pinnacle of the climax of the work. It would translate beautifully to a mixed choir of men and women, and the piece is written so well that achieving balance in that situation should present no obstacles. The lines are gracious and easily taught, and the work can be brought to a high polish in a short order. The text makes the work appropriate for nearly any season, and any fine organist can produce the organ lines with a reasonable amount of rehearsal preparation.

Tim Glasscock
New Albany, IN

Choral Reviews

Two Seventeenth-Century Carols for Easter and Pentecost

Richard Proulx (arr.),
1937-2010 (1991)
SATB, unaccompanied (2'00)
GIA Publications, G-9196, \$2



Long known as a staple of liturgical music, Richard Proulx's *Two Seventeenth-Century Carols for Easter and Pentecost* brings new life to two existing tunes in a stylish performance edition. Published through GIA's Richard Proulx Legacy Series, these two carols are part of a sizeable collection of manuscripts, the majority of which were written for weekly services at Holy Name

Cathedral in Chicago. Both would be perfect addition for service music during their respective seasons and could be accomplished by choirs of many skill levels.

In the edition presented, both carols are arranged for unaccompanied voices and stand on their own with ease. Directors will gravitate more toward the first carol, *Eastertide Carol*, the strength of which comes from its versatility and bright character. Presented in A major, the melody was first published in the 1628 edition of the Mainz *Gesangbuch* and stands as an example of post-Reformation German Catholic hymnody. At the marked tempo the piece takes under a minute and a half to perform, putting it on the cusp on being long enough to serve as a standalone anthem or concert piece, while brief enough to work as a choral introit, offertory, or similar bit of service

music. Additionally, the macaronic text—featuring the oft used refrain, “In cymbalis, bene sonantibus”—almost begs for the pairing of instruments, which could be done in a variety of creative ways. While it is not edited for, one might even experiment with performing the piece antiphonally should the opportunity arise. As a pedagogical tool, the *Eastertide Carol* presents a wealth of opportunities, from quickly shifting dynamics, to periodic staccato and legato passages, packaged around a catchy tune that will quickly become familiar to the ensemble.

Pentecost Carol, the second tune, is written as a traditional chorale. Presented as a performance edition, there are plenty of editorial markings in the way of dynamics, breathing instructions, and articulations. In fact, the score leaves little for the director to intuit and even provides flexibility of key, stating, “the key may be lowered by a half-step for acoustically dry venues.” The melody, first published in Amsterdam (1685), is set to an English text by George Timms (1910-1997), who wrote the text specifically to pair with the tune, first appeared in *English Praise* (1975) as “Song of the Holy Spirit.”

Lawrence Abernathy
College Station, TX

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a photograph of Dan Forrest, the composer-in-residence, in the lower left. The text is arranged in a structured layout. At the top left, '2020' is written in large white font, followed by 'CHOIRS OF AMERICA' in smaller white font. Below that, 'MASTERWORK SERIES' is written in a stylized, outlined font. Underneath, 'EXTENDED WORKS OF DAN FORREST' is written in white. In the lower left, a photo of Dan Forrest is shown with the text 'NEW YORK CITY MARCH 19-21 \$199 PER SINGER' below it. On the right side, a dark blue box contains white text: 'HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE COLLABORATIVE MASED CHOIR REHEARSALS', 'WORK WITH COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE DAN FORREST', 'WORLD RENOWNED MASTER CONDUCTOR', 'PERFORMANCE WITH PROFESSIONAL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA', and 'OPTIONAL DINNER-DANCE CRUISE CELEBRATION'. At the bottom, the 'CHOIRS OF AMERICA' logo is on the left, and 'ENGAGE. INSPIRE. EDUCATE' is written in large white font, followed by 'VOCALMUSIC.ORG | 1-800-284-2177' in smaller white font. The background of the advertisement shows a cityscape with the Empire State Building.

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