ICDA Notations

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President's Message

This is my final article for *Notations* as President of ICDA. On July 1, Kerry Glann will begin his two-year term as President of ICDA and Michael Hummel will move into the President-Elect position. Kerry has been hard at work preparing an excellent summer conference for ICDA. The Summer Conference is the signature event our organization offers to its members. I hope will plan to attend June 24-26, 2019 at University of Indianapolis. Next year, Michael will be bringing his perspective and insight as he coordinates the summer conference in 2020.

Perhaps the finest thing about the ICDA Board is that, while we all share a love of choral music and a commitment to high standards of music education and performance, we also bring our unique perspectives, values, educational/aesthetic priorities, etc. Some of these traits will resonate more with certain members than with others. What one leader brings to the membership during their term will appeal to some people and not to others. Then, in a short time, new blood will do the same, appealing to a completely different subset of our organization. This is the beauty of our organization and it is completely reflective of the choral art. Despite all our different perspectives and beliefs about music and music education, the mere act of singing together binds us together in ways few other things do.

I have been repeatedly moved by the commitment, seriousness, and work ethic so many of our ICDA members bring to their work. Much of our daily activity may feel like we're constantly swimming upstream, working against the forces of

mediocrity, indifference, and carelessness. Yet, among our members are choral musicians and educators who refuse to succumb to those pressures. ICDA truly represents the best in our state.

It has been a genuine honor to serve as President. I look forward to the years ahead as we all work, in our own unique ways, to foster the best of music making.

Dennis Malfatti Director of Choral Activities, University of Evansville

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Repertoire Worth Teaching



Dr. Jeshua Franklin, Collegiate Repertoire Chair

When I was in my early 20s and working on my master's degree, I had the privilege of performing in the chorus for a performance of Samuel Barber's *Prayers* of

Kierkegaard. While I had known Barber's Adagio for Strings and some of his solo vocal work for some time, this choral/orchestral work was brand new to me. And I hated it. I remember when my mentor conductor told me his plans to do the work, and I looked at the score and listened to the Robert Shaw recording, but it did absolutely nothing for me. I continued to feel that way through the first weeks of rehearsal. The vocal lines seemed obtuse, the orchestration overly dense and muddy. But then my attitude began to change. The music was beginning to make more sense, and Barber's brilliance in how he set the text began to filter its way into my understanding of the work. I also remember my conductor's passion for the work. He was an excellent teacher of the music, but beyond that, his passion and firm belief in the inherent value of the music he was teaching helped lead me into a deep love for this work. To this day, it remains quite possibly my favorite piece of choral music on the planet.

As I write this, I've just come off a performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams' Dona nobis pacem. It was a thrilling performance, and it's been a real pleasure to delve deeply into a work that I've admired for a long time. However, the piece was a tough sell to my choir of college students. Most of my students have never sung a large work of any kind with orchestra, much less something as challenging as the Vaughan Williams. A Mozart or Schubert mass with more tuneful sensibilities or a more contemporary work by Ola Gjeilo or Dan Forrest would probably have been an easier sell to my students. But I believed so strongly in the importance of the Vaughan Williams. That its message is relevant today, that it's an incredible musical painting of warfare, grief, and hope, and I had faith in my choir's

ability to do the music justice. The results have been mixed. I had several students who fell in love with it immediately. Many more have admitted to me that the work has slowly grown on them over the months of us working on it. There remain quite a few who I think went along with it but have mostly missed the profound beauty that the work offers. Yet I remain hopeful that even some of those will be able to look back at this experience at a later time in life with appreciation and gratitude for being part of it.

What's my point in sharing these stories? There's something satisfying in successfully programming a concert that our choristers buy into completely. While we have many competing priorities in how to choose the repertoire we perform, I always have in mind the singers who will be performing, and I desire to choose repertoire that they will come to value during the rehearsal process, even if they don't immediately connect with it. So often when I think of stretching my students with a work, it's about stretching them to a new level of musical difficulty. But I think it's also important to stretch them to a new level of emotional depth, to a new level of expression, to a new level of empathy and compassion, and to a new level of aural appreciation. Maybe it's also ok to stretch them without total confidence of success. It's great to stretch singers when you're confident of their ability to succeed, and certainly we don't want to set our singers up for failure, and yet shouldn't we also stretch them toward something that is just slightly out of their reach?

I don't know what repertoire that means for your specific situation. Maybe it's about choosing settings of poetry that is more complex, maybe it's about experimenting with some decisively avantgarde repertoire, maybe it's about more religious or more secular repertoire, maybe it's about expanding the palette of vocal colors needed for ethnic music, or maybe it's programming music with a social justice

Continued on page 3

theme. Maybe it means more Bach or Mozart, but maybe it means more Pärt, Esenvalds, Muhly, or Golijov. Regardless of what the piece is, let's make sure that we are willing to stretch both our students and ourselves. Let your choir see your belief in the piece. Don't choose a piece from the historical canon (or any other genre) just to satisfy a programming requirement. Demonstrate to your singers your belief in the worth of the music to be performed and your own passion for it.

I don't mean to suggest a reckless disregard for selecting repertoire that is appropriate for your ensemble. Discernment is needed in the repertoire selection process whether you're conducting a 6th

grade chorus or an elite chamber ensemble of graduate students. In either context, though, we should be choosing repertoire that is growing our singers in significant ways, and maybe even choosing some repertoire that is just beyond their ability to fully comprehend and take in. Just like we push ourselves to the edge physically in a work out, or stretch our mental capacities in a logic puzzle, or enlarge the understanding in our hearts and minds when we question a long-held belief, we need to use our repertoire to help both our singers and ourselves grow beyond where we presently are. That is repertoire worth teaching!

Jeshua Franklin is Director of Choral Activities and Music Department Chair at Bethel University in Mishawaka

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Register now to attend the ICDA 2019 Summer Conference **June 24-26** at the University of Indianapolis. Join us for 2 ½ days of inspiring sessions, exciting concerts, and rejuvenating fellowship with friends and colleagues.

Headliner Clinicians:

- Lynne Gackle Baylor University; ACDA President-Elect
- Stacey V. Gibbs renowned composer/arranger

Performances:

- Circle City Sound Barbershop Chorus Theo Hicks, director
- All-State Jazz Choir Kerry Marsh, guest director

Interest Sessions:

- Choir Director as Story Teller
- Collaborative Planning of Choral Concerts
- Expressions of Grief through SATB Settings of the Psalms of Lament
- Getting the Most Out of Choral Contests
- How Speech-Language Pathology Derived Vocal Exercises Can Help Your Choir
- Keys to Selecting Literature for Groups V II ISSMA Vocal Solos and Ensembles
- Music, Faith, Action: Evangelizing Through Sacred Music
- On Improving Rehearsal Feedback and Achieving Your Sound Goal
- Recommendations for High School Level Choirs
- Music and Meditation: Devising an Empathy Concert at Your School The Choral Rehearsal: Reaching Every Singer
- Things Better Left Unsaid: Approaching Composers' Statements by Analyzing What's Not There
- Warm-Ups for the Church Choir: Developing Excellent Singing

Reading Sessions for:

College Choirs, Community Choirs, High School Choirs, Junior High/Middle School/Children's Choirs, Men's Chorus, Multicultural Music, Music in Worship, Show Choirs, Vocal Jazz, Women's Chorus

Registration website: https://www.regonline.com/2019icdasummerconference

Register by May 15 to secure the lowest rates. Registration fees increase after May 15.



Lynne Gackle



Stacey V. Gibbs





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Money Matters
Paula Alles, Treasurer

All State Choir bills have all been paid. Thanks to the excellent planning of Anissa Bradley and Brian Adcock, we finished comfortably in the black. Spring Auditions for All State Choir 2020 are just around the corner.

We currently have \$10,973.08 in our ICDA checking account and \$28,249.18 in savings. This is a bit lower than our totals last year at this time. Yes, we are a non-profit organization, but with the large expenses involved in our two largest events each year, All State Choir and Summer Conference, it is a good idea to have a cushion to cover unforeseen expenses. It is also terrific to have the resources to consider new projects.

Make plans now to attend Summer Conference 2019 at the University of Indianapolis. It's a great place to get new ideas for your choirs, not to mention a large packet of good choral music. Meet new friends, catch up with old friends and reconnect with your college choir directors. Find out what other church, elementary, middle, high school, college and community choir directors are doing.

You can find out how other choir directors deal with the same challenges you have. You will find that ICDA members are very helpful and willing to share their terrific ideas. You might hear about a wonderful Choral Festival in your area or a new song to try with your students. It's always a very productive time. If your school is paying for your conference, be sure to have your school send their check by May 15 in order to qualify for this discount. You may register in early April and make payment later by personal check, school check or credit card. Just don't forget about the May 15 deadline for payment in order to qualify for the discount. Since most of your school offices may not be open in June, it is important to ask for approval and get that school check sent before school dismisses for the summer. When you register online, you will be able to print out an invoice to turn in to your school. Just register online, mark "pay by check" and then print your invoice and turn it in to your school treasurer.

When your school or church secretary pays your dues for you, please ask her to send your membership renewal card with the check directly to the ACDA National Headquarters in Oklahoma City. You may also renew your membership online with a credit card. The ACDA website is www.acda.org . This will renew your national ACDA membership as well as your Indiana membership. If you are wondering why you haven't received your mailings, it could be that you forgot to update your change of address. You may do this online also.

If you have any questions about your membership, please feel free to contact me. My home e-mail is best: alles.paula@gmail.com If you prefer to phone, call 812-631-2625. You may also contact the ACDA national membership chair at membership@acda.org. I hope to see all of you at Summer Conference 2019.

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Chuck Bradley, Editor

Ferdinand. IN. 47532



From the Editor

In the last issue I asked for ideas from our readers for ideas for secondary teachers to use during e-learning (virtual) days. Since this issue will land in your mailbox in the spring, these ideas might not seem like the most timely but maybe they will help next winter. Thank you to Ryan Knight of North Posey and Sarah Kavanagh of North Montgomery for their contributions.

Practice w/ Screencastify. Students use Screencastify to record themselves practicing and upload to their LMS (Canvas, Google Classroom, etc.) I usually provide an accompaniment track for them to sing along with (Brilee, YouTube, ChoralTracks, etc.)

Kami Worksheet - Students complete a traditional worksheet via Kami and submit on their LMS (Canvas, Google Classroom, etc.) Past worksheets usually deal in music literacy. These often take the most time to grade, so I'm trying to move away from this.

Choral Error Detection by Paul Hondorp. Dr. Hondorp includes many short songs and tracks where his choir sings the song WRONG in some way (pitch, rhythm, balance, breathing, technique, etc.) The kids get a scanned PDF of the music and the mp3 of the song. They have to find as many errors as possible in the song and complete an evaluation form provided (this form could be substituted with the ISSMA organizational form if you're preparing for contest.) This is one of my kids' favorite activities!

EdPuzzle videos. EdPuzzle lets you make a quiz out of any YouTube video. Students watch the video and answer questions along the way. EdPuzzle will grade it for you and upload scores to your LMS. The EdPuzzles are already premade, but you can create your own. EdPuzzle tracks which students have actually watched the video and what their answers were (not if you have connected to Google Classroom..which I highly recommend.) Kids CANNOT skip through the video to just "get to the questions". I have used many different videos like TedEd videos for music literacy or history, musical performances where the student evaluate the singing, etc. This is the easiest option for me to grade and the most applicable to both Choir and General Music.

Ear Training and Literacy Skills in MusicTheory.net. This site has a ton of exercises to use for lessons and quizzes. They have several ear training quizzes where students identify chords (Major vs. minor), specific intervals (P4 vs. P5), solfege patterns, pitches, notes on piano, etc. Students receive a score report that can be emailed or pasted in your school's LMS. Unfortunately, you cannot see what students specifically missed.

E-Learning lessons in my school district are expected to connect to the content that would have been covered in class that particular day. Some teachers find this daunting; however, if you have rehearsal resources preloaded into Canvas or saved to your class website (and you have built a culture of students utilizing those recordings regularly outside of class) E-Learning can become a simple opportunity for vocal music students to work on proper practicing skills. I often assign 3 selections for students to rehearse on individual voice parts. Sometimes I make a detailed list of measures or "hot spots" to be cleaned. Other times I will give students ownership to analyze where the difficult passages are in the score or what type of musicianship may need continued work. Students finish the E-Learning assignment by filling out a reflection in Google Forms. A time stamp and spreadsheet of responses is made immediately for easy attendance documentation. The feedback from my students never ceases to amaze me and many claim to enjoy sharing their literature with their families while stuck at home in the winter weather. Students return to ensemble rehearsal with an increased attention to detail and ownership of their concert selections.



Lifelong Learning Report

Andrea Drury, Coordinator

As is the case with many of you, all of the members of my immediate family are musicians. So our house is constantly filled with the

sounds of people practicing piano, clarinet, saxophone, tin whistle, violin and occasionally when I get a chance, singing. But over the last year, a new sound has filled our house. The wonderful and motivating "ding" of a popular language learning app accompanied by someone speaking Spanish has been added to the orchestra of our household. My husband had announced he was going to learn Spanish. Through his journey, he has had moments of being totally secure about this project followed by "is this a ridiculous goal at my age?" This got me thinking about "when is it too late to learn something new".

In my daily job, I am constantly working and coaching choir teachers to try and learn new ways to do things. Sometimes this is received with excitement and relief. Other times, a wall of defense immediately arises which means that time is needed to let the teacher work through this process and change. Many times this defense is driven by fear of change and growth. We get into our comfort zones and find our techniques and strategies that work. We have found our way of running our rehearsal and what works for our chorus. As conductors of community choruses, it is easy to set the limit for ourselves and our group. There are many challenges to community choruses. Often many of our singers are older which immediately causes us to think how pliable are they and are they open to learning and change? I found myself in this boat ten years into my conducting career. I was stuck not necessarily because I wanted to be, but because life kept marching on and I procrastinated and justified that I would do it in the summer or in a few years when my kids got older.

Then a few years back, Dennis Malfatti asked me to serve on the ICDA board which meant I needed to attend the ICDA Summer conference. I was excited but unsure. As a new member, I wanted to make a good first impression so there was no backing out of going. All of the excuses that I had used in the past were gone. So I went, and I am very glad I did. Through this short conference, I found renewal. Just being around others that have a passion for choral music fed my soul. I learned some things as well. This then caused a desire in me to attend more conferences and workshops. I had stepped out and faced the fear and road blocks and came out renewed and enlightened. I also realized that this renewal was way over due and I had wasted years of learning. This made me sad and regretful but also determined to change.

So back to my original thought of "when do we stop learning". The answer – Never. Many times when we are resistant to learning or change, it is driven by fear. I urge you to face these fears or whatever is holding you back. Attend our summer conference or another workshop in your area. There are so many online resources for development that there is really no excuse. When we do not continue to grow and learn, we shortchange ourselves and all of those we conduct. Learn something new this year. Try a workshop or conference. Never stop learning!

Andrea Drury is Fine Arts Specialist for the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation

"Learning is the only thing the mind never exhausts, never fears, and never regrets."

-Leonardo da Vinci

"I am still learning."

-Michelangelo



All-State Honor Choir

Anissa Bradley, Chair

I am excited to announce that Dr. Sandra Snow will be the guest conductor for the 2020 ICDA All-State Honor Choir held in Fort Wayne on January 17-18.

The audition selection for the 2020 All-State Honor Choir is "Awake the Harp" by Haydn. Students must prepare the song in its entirety. Students and directors may find the pdf and the rehearsal files (prepared by Choral Tracks) at www.in-acda.org or by contacting their area chair. Auditions are held in the Fall semester at all 16 areas around the state. The student fee is \$15

and each school is responsible for a \$30 fee. The all-state weekend is part of the IMEA professional conference which will be held January 17-18 in Fort Wayne. The cost to be a member of the ASHC is \$175. Please contact Anissa Bradley if you have any questions at anissa.g.bradley@gmail.com.

All-State Honor Choir auditions are held at 16 different areas across the state, hosted by each Area Chair. Counties are assigned by areas. If you are interested in receiving audition information, please contact your local Area Chair by April 2019. Pertinent ASHC information can also be found at www.in-acda.org.

All-State Honor Choir was one of the best experiences of my life and I will never forget it. The environment was professional and at the same time super fun. We were all like one big musical family! It was so amazing to be in a room of people who share the same passion as you and put their heart and soul into it. The staff was amazing as well, they were always smiling and super helpful. It was an amazing experience and I would not have traded it for the world.

I would have to think that my most memorable moment was seeing hundreds of people my age who are just as passionate about music as I am. That was something amazing.

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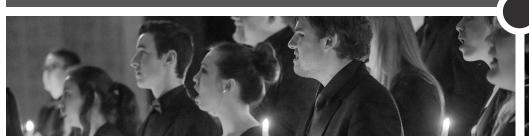
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