

Choral Activities at MSU

Fall 2007

Dear MSU Choral Alum,

Welcome to our annual choral newsletter – keeping you informed about Choral Activities here at MSU. Once again, our year seems to be off to a great start, and we hope yours is as well.

We have an excellent group of new and continuing graduate students in choral conducting. Our new DMA students are Kelly Miller, who received her master's degree from the University of Nebraska–Omaha working with Z. Randall Stroope and has been teaching high school in Orlando, Florida, for a number of years; and Trent Patterson, who has taught in Davenport, Iowa, and Winter Park, Florida, and who did his master's work with Charlene Archibeque at San Jose State University. Karen Salvador, a graduate of Western Michigan University, joined our MM program in January, and three new students joined our summer program this past year – Ryan Beeken, a Drake University graduate and a high school teacher in the Des Moines area; Elizabeth Hogan, a graduate of the University of Missouri–Columbia and a middle school teacher in the St. Louis area; and Kristy Caswell MacMullen, an MSU grad who is teaching at Brighton High School. Our new MM students are Michael Hanawalt, a graduate of St. Olaf College and a founding member and former executive director of the male ensemble, Cantus; Matthew Olson, also a St. Olaf alum, who has been working in the Twin Cities as a church musician and as an administrative assistant at the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra; and Kristin Zaryski, a graduate of Ithaca College who comes to us after several years of public school teaching. We also have a terrific class of new freshmen voice majors and several first-rate new graduate students in voice. This is a tribute to the continuing recruiting activities of everyone in the Vocal Arts Area.

If you will be attending the Central Division convention in Grand Rapids in February, please plan to hear the MSU Women's Chamber Ensemble's performance and to attend the MSU alumni reception. As this

newsletter goes to press we are uncertain of the date and time, but please check the convention program book for specific information. You'll also receive an invitation in the mail prior to the convention. If one of your present or former students is looking at graduate programs in choral conducting or voice please bring him or her long with you.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a schedule of all the vocal and choral events for the 2007–08 season. It's an amazing list and serves as a reminder of the many fantastic opportunities we have available at the MSU College of Music.



Please contact me if you would like to include information about yourself or another MSU choral alumni in the next issue. If Jon Reed, Sandra Snow, or I can be of any help to you, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail.

David Rayl, director of Choral Programs
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Fellowship Honoring Dr. Smith Reaches Its Goal

The Charles K. Smith Endowed Fellowship in Choral Conducting, created upon Smith's retirement in 2002 by members of the MSU Choral Society, has reached its initial goal of \$30,000 in gifts and pledges. This means the scholarship is fully endowed and will permanently honor Dr. Smith's work and provide important financial



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help to graduate students in choral conducting. This year, Matthew Olson is partially funded by a scholarship from this endowment. Last year's recipient was Kate Wolfe.

Thank you to the following donors, many of them graduates of our choral conducting program, whose generosity has made this endowment possible: Anton Armstrong, Karyl K. Carlson, Jean Fickett, Stephen and Nicola Findley, George and Jean Grof, Louise Hemond-Wilson, Tom and Lynn Hoffmeyer, Gerald Langner, Curt and Mary Liechty, Olin and Janice Mace, Cecil and Clare Mackey, Maureen Moloney and Douglas Peterson, Ron and Katherine O'Neill, Robert and Johanna Oster, James and Elaine Parker, David Rayl and Joel Maurer, Patricia Riggs, Bonnie and Richard Sneed, William and Joan Stapleton, George and Marilyn Stephens, Alan Suits and Jane Vieth Suits, and Donald and Janet Van Gorder.

Although the scholarship is fully funded, additional gifts are needed to increase the principal, thus providing additional scholarship dollars to our graduate students. All gifts directed to this fund are invested, and only 5½ percent of the principal is spent each year while the remainder of the income earned is added to the principal. If you would like to make a contribution, please contact Rebecca Surian, Director of Development in the College of Music, at surian@msu.edu.

Performance Highlights for 2007-08

The Women's Chamber Ensemble (WCE), conducted by Sandra Snow, has been selected to appear at the Central Division ACDA convention in Grand Rapids and will perform on Friday, February 22 at 1:30 p.m. Repertoire will include *Columba aspexit* by Tarik O'Regan, *Magnificat in A Minor* by Nicolas Porpora, *i thank you God for most this amazing day* by David Brunner, *Vivos voco* by Joan Szymko, and *Song of Propriety* by Carol Barnett.

The WCE gave a featured performance at the Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids in January 2007. The 30-voice auditioned ensemble is made up of women from the College of Music and across the campus.

On Saturday, October 27, the MSU Choral Union, Chorale, and State Singers will join the Lansing Symphony Orchestra under the baton of music director Timothy Muffit in a performance of Orff's *Carmina burana*.

On December 7 and 8 the University Chorale will join the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and guest conductor Nicholas Kraemer for Handel's *Messiah*. The previous

weekend (December 1) the MSU Men's and Women's Glee Clubs, directed by Jonathan Reed and DMA student Kelly Miller, and the MSU Children's Choir, conducted by Mary Alice Stollak, will join forces with Leon Gregorian and the MSU Symphony Orchestra for *Home for the Holidays*, a concert of seasonal music for the entire family.

On Sunday, March 16, the University Chorale and members of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra under the baton of David Rayl, will present Bach's *St. John Passion* at St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral in downtown Lansing.

On Saturday, April 26, the University Chorale and State Singers will join the University Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Leon Gregorian for the world premiere of *Serenade: To Hearts Which Toward Each Other Move*, by award-winning composer and MSU alumnus Adolphus Hailstork. The work is a co-commission of the College of Music and the Wharton Center in honor of Clifton and Dolores Wharton.

The MSU Opera Theatre will again present two fully staged productions with orchestra this year: Rossini's *La Cenerentola* on November 16, 17, and 18, and Bernstein's *Candide* on March 28, 29, and 30. Both productions will be double cast, a tribute to the continuing quality of our vocal students. Additional vocal activities include numerous faculty and student recitals, the third MSU-China Collaboration, the sixth annual Celebration of the Beautiful Voice, and an evening of selections from Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Guest Clinicians and Lecturers

Once again, we will host a number of interesting guests on our campus, including conductors Richard Bjella and Christopher Cock.

Bjella will be our guest for the Choral Invitational to be held on Monday, October 15, when he will work with eight high school choirs from around the state. He will spend the following day on campus working with our ensembles and graduate conducting students.

Richard Bjella is director of Choral Studies at Lawrence University, in Appleton, Wisconsin. Ensembles under his direction have performed at state and divisional ACDA conventions and the National Kodaly Music Educators Convention in New Orleans. The Lawrence Chorale's CD, *A Time for Remembrance*, was given national recognition in the May 5, 1995 issue of the *Chronicle for Higher Education*. The choir was the first to record "Songs of Children" by Robert Convery, a cantata of

nine poems written by children interned at Terezin, a Nazi concentration camp. The Lawrence University Jazz Singers received a *Downbeat* magazine award for outstanding vocal jazz performance in 2001 when Bjella was co-director of the ensemble.

Bjella has conducted in Prague, Paris, Lucerne, and London and has guest conducted more than 350 festivals and workshops in 25 states. He appeared as guest conductor at Alice Tully Hall in New York with Manhattan Concert Productions in 2003 and has been invited to appear in Korea for the National Kodaly Choral Directors Convention in January 2009.

Christopher Cock will be on campus February 19 and 20 as the seventh annual Paul and Martha Niland Endowed Lecturer in Choral Music to Honor Charles K. Smith. His campus activities will include presentations on the music of J.S. Bach, specifically the *St. John Passion*, to undergraduate and graduate students in choral conducting.

Dr. Cock is director of Choral and Vocal Activities at Valparaiso University, where he holds the Duesenberg Chair in Lutheran Music. Through his activities as a choral music educator and as a distinguished solo artist, he has forged a unique career path combining the roles of conductor and performer.

He is the founder of The Bach Institute at Valparaiso University, which was inaugurated in January 2004 with a performance of J.S. Bach's *Mass in B minor*.

As a solo artist, Cock's extensive range and communicative performances have established him as a premier lyric tenor. In particular, his appearances as a Bach Evangelist take him to concert venues throughout the United States. He has for numerous seasons appeared as a guest artist with the Oregon Bach Festival, led by German conductor Helmuth Rilling. He frequently appeared as a soloist with Maestro Robert Shaw and the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, and his solo performances with the ensemble can be heard on recordings released by Telarc International.

Choral Society Sponsors Banquet and Sing-Along Messiah

The MSU Choral Society will host its biennial banquet and silent auction on Friday evening, October 19 at the Kellogg Center on campus and will sponsor a "sing along" *Messiah* on Sunday, December 2 at Plymouth Congregational Church.

Through its dues and fundraising activities the Society provides scholarship assistance to graduate students in

choral conducting. This year, the Society is able to provide assistance for DMA student Clint Desmond and MM students Michael Hanawalt, Chris Thompson, and Kristin Zaryski.

Keeping up with MSU Alumni

This section of the newsletter is intended to help you keep up with the careers of our MSU choral alumni. The following is obviously incomplete, so please contact us if you've recently changed jobs or want to share some aspect of your professional life with our alums. You can submit your information on line at <http://my.music.msu.edu>

Jessica Allen, MM '04, is assistant director of annual giving at Middlebury College in Vermont and music director of the First Congregational Church in Middlebury.

Joe Bentley, DMA '05, was selected for a research poster session at the national ACDA convention in Miami in March 2007. His presentation was based on his doctoral document: "The Anthems from The Singing Master's Assistant by William Billings: New Editions and Performance Suggestions."

Jevon Bindman completed his MM degree in the summer of 2007 and is the choral director at Lakeview Middle School in Winter Garden, Florida.

Meredith Bowen, MM '06, continues as choral director at Lansing Community College and as conductor of Sistrum, a community-based women's choir in Lansing.

Jeff Buettner, DMA '05, has been appointed director of choral activities at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, and music director of the Vermont Youth Symphony Chorus.

Jen Tompa Burkemper, MM '06, is the choral director at Hinsdale Central High School in Hinsdale, Illinois.

Sarah Graham, DMA '05 and **Trey Jacobs**, DMA candidate, presented "Education of the Heart and Mind: More Than Music in the Classroom" at the Northwest Division Convention of the ACDA in March 2006. Sarah presented a similar session for the Illinois Music Educators Conference in January 2007.

David Howard, DMA candidate, has been appointed assistant director of choral activities at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Trey Jacobs, DMA candidate, has been appointed director of choral activities at Eastern Michigan University.

Phil Johnson completed his MM degree in the summer of 2007. The Traverse City West Junior High Choir, under his direction, has been selected to perform for the Michigan-ACDA convention in October.

Marci Morrow completed her MM degree in the summer of 2007 and is beginning doctoral studies in music education and choral conducting at Ohio State University.

Julie Olson, MM '06, works as a K-5 elementary music teacher for the Anne Arundel County Public School District in the Baltimore-Annapolis area.

Jonathan Palant completed his DMA degree in the spring of 2007. He is the newly appointed artistic director of Dallas's Turtle Creek Chorale. His article, "High School Boys: Relish the Rowdiness with Repertoire," appeared in the June issue of *The Choral Journal*.

Marnie Roberts, completed her MM degree in the spring of 2007 and is the choral director at Williamsville North High School in the Buffalo, New York area.

Luciano Silva, MM '02 and DMA '05 in vocal performance, has accepted a position as assistant professor of voice at the University of Campinas in Brazil.

Jason Thoms, DMA '05, is now director of choral activities at Concordia College in Bronxville, New York. In recent months, he has had three Christmas carols published by GIA Publications as well as several articles in the *Chorister's Guild Journal*.

Sean Vogt, DMA '05, has been appointed director of choral activities and music department chair at Mt. Marty College in Yankton, South Dakota. He was selected as one of the conducting participants for the 2006 Oregon Bach Festival Masterclass in Choral-Orchestral Conducting, led by Helmut Rilling

Robert Ward, DMA '86, presented a session, entitled "The Choral Music of Percy Aldridge Grainger," at the first meeting of the National Collegiate Choral Organization National Conference in November 2006 in San Antonio.

Brent Wells completed his DMA degree in the fall of 2007. He is the choral director at Hemet High School in Hemet, California.

Gary Weidenaar, MM '88, is beginning his second year as director of choral studies at Central Washington University.



Visit the New Music Alumni Website

The College of Music is proud to announce the launch of the Michigan State University Music Alumni and Development Community Website at <http://my.music.msu.edu/>.

The new interactive website is designed to serve you – our distinguished and valued alumni. My.music.msu.edu enables alumni to network socially and professionally with friends and colleagues from around the world. You can share photos of performances, family, or your life stories since leaving MSU with blogging capabilities the site offers.

Announce your accomplishments with simple to use forms on the website and we will celebrate your successes with the MSU music community. It may be published in our website, next electronic newsletter or our annual print publication, *Music Notes*.

Use the career center to post openings you know of or search the various open positions within various segments of the music industry from our constantly updated database.

Find out about the latest happenings of your College of Music, alumni activities, and the newly established Alumni Board with the latest news section and register for our next celebratory event.

Bryan Jao is the recently appointed Alumni Relations coordinator in the College of Music.