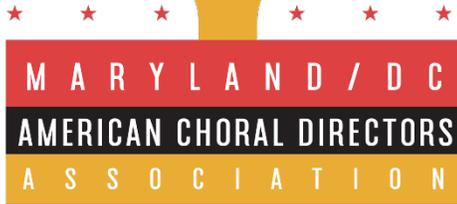




Sight Readings



September 2019 Newsletter, American Choral Directors Association, Maryland/DC Chapter

Chapter Events

Happy Hour!

Saturday, September 21, 2019 | 5 to 7 p.m.

Bar Louie | 150 Gibbs Street | Rockville MD 20850 | Near Rockville Metro | In Rockville Town Center
We will buy the appetizers, let's get together and socialize, network, and fellowship!

Reading Session for All Kinds of Choirs

Saturday, October 19, 2019 | 9 a.m. to 12 noon

The Music Box at The UMBC (University of Maryland Baltimore County) | 1000 Hilltop Circle | Baltimore, MD 21250

Presented in conjunction with The Musical Source (<https://www.musicalsource.com/>)

Featuring:

- Annick Kanter-Saint Hubert, Women's Choirs
- Dr. Edryn Coleman, High School
- Ann DuBose-Li, Children's Choirs
- Max Nolin, Community and Lifelong Choirs
- Free music packets, bagels, coffee and juice, another chance to get together
- Registration: \$20 members online **before October 15**; \$25 members at the door; \$25 non-members on-line **before October 15**; \$30 non-members at the door.
- Register online! <http://acdamaryland.info/2019/09/fall-reading-session/>

Comprehensive Choral Musicianship with David Conte

Sunday, April 19, 2020 | 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Church of the Epiphany | 1317 G Street, NW | Washington, DC 20005

- In collaboration with Washington Master Chorale, Thomas Colohan, conductor
- \$10 admission for members; members also welcome to purchase discounted, \$10 tickets to attend 5 p.m. Master Chorale concert at the church the same afternoon, where a David Conte commissioned work is part of the program.

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- President's Letter
- Everyone is Welcome: Intergenerational Chorus
- Lifelong Choirs Repertoire Suggestions
- David Conte Comprehensive Choral Musicianship Information

From the President: Practice. Persist. Love.



As I wish each of you a season filled with beautiful music and artistic success, I reflect on the privilege of interviewing leading American choral conductors through our Maryland, DC, Delaware and Virginia ACDA annual conference, Voices United. These leaders of our craft mention mentors and moments that were pivotal to the launch of their careers, and their themes point to practice, persist, and love.

Practice. Whether Dennis Shrock reminds us that conducting is our language and our art, or Thea Kano speaks of the deep dive and hard work she embraces and undertakes to create not only repertoire, but ensemble and community cultures of diversity, in all the implications that diversity entails, we must demonstrate the disciplined work that defines a major pillar of our craft. We must practice and instill the love of practice among our constituents.

Persist. The teachers who had the most profound impact on us found the strength and courage to get through the moments and situations that lesser individuals would neither push through nor overcome. Through the 2019 Chorus America Choral Impact Survey, we discover that choristers demonstrate greater levels of engaged citizenship, including higher levels and percentages of active volunteering and more generous giving to causes in which they believe. As we embrace the good of choral singing and we advocate for our art knowing such lifetime benefits, we must believe and we must demonstrate that we can do hard things at trying times.

Love. We know that music is the most efficient connection to emotion that humankind has, and we know that choral music adds more understanding of cultures, times and places—real or imagined—included with setting text. We cannot count the number of choral settings based on the theme that we cannot be enemies when we sing together. And whether we embrace the Latin phrase “amor vincit omnia,” (love conquers all), or the biblical verse that sums up the laws and the prophets as “love God, love each other,” we maximize our connection and impact on students, choristers, ensembles, and audiences when we focus all we do from a place of love.

As you reflect on the people most influential in your life and in your life in choral music, I am confident that you can find the practice, persistence, and love embodied in their interactions with you. Pay that forward and watch your music and your craft thrive. It might even inspire people around you to become the next generation leaders of our choral art.

With appreciation for all of you who make Choral Music,

Michael

Michael Wu
President

Notes:

1. ACDA Voices United happens the first weekend in August on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University. It includes a Children’s Honors Chorus for auditioned children with unchanged voices, ages 10 to 15 inclusive; ACDA Voices United Chorus for sopranos, altos, tenors and basses ages 15 and older, and a Directors Chorus for choral conductors and choral music educators participating in the conference. Our headliners August 6-8, 2020, are Michael John Trotta, Ysaye Barnwell, and Janet Hostetter. See interest sessions from these leaders; attend or present interest sessions important to you in our choral art; shop the bins from our founding sponsor, The Musical Source; network with friends and colleagues at chapter lunches, networking dinner, conference banquet, and closing concert. For more information, go to www.acdavoicesunited.org.
2. To see the results from the 2019 Chorus America Choral Impact Survey, go to: <https://www.chorusamerica.org/resource/chorus-impact-study-singing-lifetime>.

Everyone Is Welcome: An Intergenerational Chorus

Megan Fitzharris, Middle School / Junior High Repertoire and Resources Chair



Choral directors know the benefits of singing in a group: lower blood pressure and heart rate; reduced stress levels; feelings of belonging, and much more. It is part of the reason we do what we do. We want to share this with the greater community. However, much of our community feels intimidated, self-conscious, or just downright too busy to sing in a year-long choral ensemble. We need to create opportunities where a variety of singers feel welcomed, encouraged, and supported, and we need to create opportunities that can fit into the busy lives we all lead. This is why I pioneered an “everyone is welcome” intergenerational chorus at my school.

The Briggs Chaney Intergenerational Chorus (BCIC) is open to any singer in the community ages 11 and up. They do not need to have any musical experience; EVERYONE is welcome! The ensemble meets for only 6 weeks in the fall, from the second half of September to the end of October. The group puts on a short concert on the final evening. The condensed schedule means that participating singers do not have to worry about a long commitment. This encourages some to participate when they may not have done so with a year-long ensemble. The group is comprised of current and former students, students’ family members, school faculty, and greater community members. In addition to learning the repertoire, I take time to build community within the ensemble, so that everyone can make music in a supportive atmosphere.

With the goals of building community and joyful music making, and with a “y’all come” policy, one might think that the caliber of music cannot be high. Of course, we are not performing Mozart’s *Requiem* at the end of six 2-hour evening rehearsals. However, by filling the rehearsals with good singing techniques, modeling, and providing practice recordings, we are able to perform good repertoire with a beautiful sound. Music literacy and vocal skills are not required. Yes, this means that rote teaching is happening, but it also opens the door for two things to occur. First, musicians who have been in instrumental ensembles or played piano previously, but who have not had the courage to sing in a chorus before are willing to take a risk and try it. These musicians quickly found that they could remember and use a lot more of their music literacy skills than they expected. Second, younger singers who are still actively participating in school programs are able to share their skills with the other singers and “teach” them (#CommunityBuilding). Additionally, each rehearsal is started with specific, repertoire related warm-ups to get voices of all types matching pitch and using a healthy tone.

Finally, the repertoire needs to be accessible and achievable for a variety of experience levels. There are many ways to approach repertoire for intergenerational choruses, but here are a few things I ask myself as I explore music.

1. Is the music approachable for multiple age levels? Will the text be meaningful to a 12-year-old student as well as her 75-year-old grandmother?
2. Are there musical stretch opportunities for the more skilled singers?
3. Relatedly, are there opportunities for simplification or consolidation of parts for the less confident singers, if needed?
4. Can the different vocal groups be highlighted (can the student singers take a verse and the adult singers take another verse, etc.)?
5. Is the repertoire flexible to accommodate different ensemble make-ups? For example, what if I have more tenors and basses than sopranos? (This actually happened last year.)
6. Can this piece/program be successfully achieved in less than 10 hours of rehearsal?
7. Are the repertoire choices inclusive? If there’s a theme, is the theme inclusive?
8. Will it be joyful?

Here are three examples of pieces that fit the questions above.

“Dreams of Harmony” by Joanne Hammil, from [Rounds and Partner Songs, Volume 1](http://www.joannehammil.com)
<http://www.joannehammil.com>

It is a beautiful partner song with the text “goodnight” in 9 languages. It can be performed accompanied or unaccompanied, in unison or two parts, and has an easily accessible vocal range for all singers, even unsure ones.

“Peace on Earth . . . and Lots of Little Crickets” by Paul Carey

A fun story that can be sung by everyone in unison with great rhythmic text. The cool accompaniment includes lots of percussion, including wind chimes, cricket clickers, frog guiros, shakers, and marimba/xylophone. The final section can be sung in 2- or 4-part harmony, and it has a part for an optional small ensemble.

“How Can I Keep From Singing” arr. Gwyneth Walker

An accessible SATB arrangement that is joyous and uplifting. This would be a challenge for a 6-week ensemble, but was successfully performed by another intergenerational ensemble with a 12-week season. The message is poignant and relevant.

I believe that the true beauty of choral music comes from the spirits of the singers being lifted up together in song. What better way to do that than with the greater community? If we want to spread the word of choral music, we need to do so in action, not just in words. An intergenerational ensemble provides the wonderful opportunity to build community and joyfully make music together. Everyone is welcome. Come sing!



Three Repertoire Selections for Lifelong and Community Choirs

Dr. Rachel Carlson, Lifelong and Community Choirs Repertoire and Resources Chair



She moved through the fair, arr. Anne Barry (SATB)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_ae9vIsTc0

This is a great new arrangement of the Irish air, “She moved through the fair,” arranged by Irish composer Anne Barry. There is some divisi, but the piece should be achievable by intermediate to advanced SATB groups. I particularly enjoy the unusual harmonies and varied textures throughout the piece.

Sigue, Ivette Herryman-Rodriguez (SSAA)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZizOBXA5vtY>

“Sigue” is an upbeat piece for SSAA choir by Cuban composer Ivette Herryman-Rodriguez. The piece features a syncopated piano accompaniment and interesting Cuban Son rhythms that will strengthen your singers’ rhythmic reading abilities. “Sigue” is definitely catchy and will very likely get stuck in your head!

Now our meeting’s over, arr. Jocelyn Hagen (SATB)

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

“Now our meeting’s over” is an arrangement of an American folk tune by Minnesota-based composer Jocelyn Hagen. This arrangement showcases interesting harmonies and calls for a full choir sound about halfway through the composition. The piece opens with Tenors and Basses only, so you want to make sure that your choir can handle that. And, it ends with a whistle solo!

David Conte and “Comprehensive Choral Musicianship” April 19, 2020

Dr. Joshua Fishbein, Co-Chair, Music in Worship Repertoire and Resources



Composer David Conte will be in Washington D. C. on April 19th, 2020 to attend the world premiere of a new work for chorus and orchestra on the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop commissioned by the Washington Master Chorale, Thomas Colohan, conductor, in celebration of their tenth anniversary. The MD/DC Chapter of the ACDA will present a workshop “Comprehensive Choral Musicianship” with David Conte from 2-3:30 on April 19th, 2020 at the Church of the Epiphany in Washington, D. C., followed by an opportunity for questions and conversation with the composer. Admission is \$10. Those who attend the worship can purchase discounted \$10 tickets to attend the 5PM Master Chorale concert at the Church.

David Conte is Professor and Chair of the Composition Department at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He is the composer of over 150 works published by E. C. Schirmer, and won the ACDA Brock Commission in 2007. He has given workshops for many national and regional conventions of the ACDA, AGO, MENC, GALA, and Chorus America.

ACDA Eastern Region Conference March 4-5, 2020

- Rochester, New York
- Elementary Honor Choir, led by Henry Leck: ***[Auditions reopened to September 18](https://acdaeast.org/division-conferences/rochester-2020/honorchoirs/2020-elementary-honor-choir/)***
 - Treble Voices
 - Students in Grades 4, 5 or 6 in March 2020
 - Application information and materials: <https://acdaeast.org/division-conferences/rochester-2020/honorchoirs/2020-elementary-honor-choir/>
- Junior High Honor Choir, led by Lynnel Joy Jenkins: ***[Auditions reopened to September 18](https://acdaeast.org/division-conferences/rochester-2020/honorchoirs/2020-junior-high-honor-choir/)***
 - SATB Voices
 - Students in Grades 7, 8 or 9 in March 2020
 - Application information and materials: <https://acdaeast.org/division-conferences/rochester-2020/honorchoirs/2020-junior-high-honor-choir/>
- More information about the conference and our Eastern Region: <https://www.acdaeast.org>

Repertoire Resources, Chapter Events, Member News? Check Out our Webpage:
acdamaryland.info



Your Maryland / DC Chapter is participating in the ACDA National Sing Up Membership Drive!

- September 15 to November 15, 2019
- New college students (*majoring in choral music education or pursuing careers in music*): **YOU PAY \$5** for this year's annual membership dues, and MD/DC and ACDA National subsidize the rest
- Colleagues, refer colleagues! If you are a current MD/DC member of ACDA and you recommend a colleague who then joins MD/DC ACDA, your chapter and national offices will send Thank You notes in addition to SWAG (Stuff We All Get) to be determined!
- MD/DC can offer up to 10 complimentary annual ACDA memberships! Students or professionals can qualify based up teacher or colleague recommendation AND attendance at a MD/DC chapter event. We hope this also means a plan for continued ACDA membership beyond this year.
- Questions? Concerns? Recommendations? Email:
 - Michael Wu, Chapter President, Singingwu67@gmail.com
 - Chapter Gmail, mddcchapteracda@gmail.com