

Carolina Caroler

*An official publication of the North Carolina Chapter
of the American Choral Directors Association*

Dates to Remember for the Coming Year

September 16—17, 2005

FALL CONFERENCE 2005

**Guest Clinician~Anton Armstrong
UNC Greensboro School of Music**



February 22—25, 2006

SOUTHERN DIVISION CONFERENCE

Charleston, West Virginia

Visit the website for forms and info:

www.acdaonline.org/Southern/charleston2006.html



Future NC ACDA Conference Dates

September 22-23, 2006

September 21-22, 2007

NC ACDA Sr. High Women's All State 2006

January 27-28, 2006

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Summer 2005

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2003-2005**

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President's Message

Janna Brendell, NC ACDA President



As I sat down to begin writing this article, I suddenly realized that this is my last newsletter contribution as president of NC ACDA. I cannot believe that my two years as president have gone so quickly! It has been such a pleasure to serve in this capacity and to serve an organization that I love and believe in so much. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to NC ACDA members for your support and to the Board for their dedicated service to this organization. This has certainly been a team effort! It is my distinct pleasure to pass the torch to your new president, Tom Shelton. Tom has done a tremendous job as president-elect and will serve you very well in the coming years. I am so pleased to announce that the membership has elected Daniel Bara as NC ACDA President-Elect. I wish Tom, Dan and the 2005-2007 NC ACDA Board all the best as they begin their work together.

NC ACDA members have been involved in several significant events during recent months. North Carolina had a large delegation in attendance at the 2005 National ACDA Convention in Los Angeles. Several NC ACDA members were also featured on the convention program:

- The Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham, Rodney Wynkoop, conductor
- University Singers, Appalachian State University, Stephen Hopkins, conductor
- Lisa Fredenburgh, National Women's Choir R&S Chair
- Thomas Sibley, National R&S Chair for Boychoirs
- Maggie Ashworth, East Carolina University conducting student

How wonderful to have so many North Carolina ACDA members on the National Convention Program!

In spite of adverse winter weather conditions, the 2005 SSA All-State event was a tremendous success! I would like to congratulate Daniel Bara, Director of Choral Activities at East Carolina University, for his outstanding work with the choir. A special thank you goes to Amy Daw for her dedicated work as SSA All-State coordinator.

There are several exciting ACDA events scheduled for the upcoming year. In this issue you will find more information about our 2005 fall conference. Tom Shelton and the Conference Planning Committee have an exciting conference planned for you. The conference will be held on September 16-17, 2005 at UNC-Greensboro. Mark your calendars now - you will not want to miss an opportunity to work with Anton Armstrong!

The ACDA Southern Division Convention will be held February 22-25, 2006 in Charleston, West Virginia. Highlights of the convention will include: a performance by CANTUS, the West Virginia All-State Chamber Choir, a worship event at the Charleston Baptist Temple, honor choirs, performing choirs, interest sessions, and much more. The Clay Center is an exciting new concert facility in Charleston. Most choral performances, including the Honor Choirs, will

President's Message

(Continued from page 2)

be held in this venue. The Charleston Civic Center is the site for interest sessions, reading sessions, and exhibits. Located just eight blocks apart with a mall, hotels, and eating venues in between, these facilities are perfect for the convention. Make plans now to attend the 2006 Southern Division ACDA Convention.

As many of you may already know, in the coming months my career is moving in a new and exciting direction. By the time you receive this issue I will be packing and preparing to leave East Carolina University to return to my first love – middle school choral music. This fall I will begin a new journey as the choral director at Waynesville Middle School. I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to spend thirteen very meaningful years on the Music Education faculty at ECU. I will always cherish fond memories of times spent with students and colleagues. I also feel blessed and humbled by the opportunity to return to the area where I grew up and begin a new chapter in my life in the public school classroom. I look forward to the many challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

I hope that each of you will take time this summer to relax and rejuvenate. Have a wonderful summer!

Fall Conference 2005, Guest Clinician~Anton Armstrong

Tom Shelton, NC ACDA President-Elect

Mark your calendars now for the 2005 NC ACDA Fall Conference. This event will be held Friday, September 16 - Saturday, September 17 at the UNC Greensboro School of Music. Please note that the conference is EARLIER this year.

Let me give you a little background on the "Date Change" for the conference. The conference planning team met over a year ago to discuss the date of the conference and the direction we wanted to take for the future. Normally the Conference has been held in October, and this date has been problematic. Many Colleges/Universities are on Fall Break during this time and Honors Chorus auditions for Middle School and High School were often held the same weekend. We did not want to exclude any segment of our membership from attending. The October date also fell close to the NCMEA conference. We are hoping with the new date, we will not have as many conflicts. We realize that the early date of the conference will create a hardship for performing groups, but we are willing to be creative and make changes in the performance aspect of the conference. Performance groups are invited to share a concert session with another group, or present an abbreviated concert if they wish. Our hope is the conference will be a musical energizer for the start of your "choral year", providing you with new ideas and techniques you can take back to your choral settings.

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NC ACDA Specially Appointed Officers

Ace Mentoring/Auditions

Sam Doyle
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sam2ann@triad.rr.com

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Sam Doyle
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NC ACDA R&S Chairs**Boychoirs**

Ben Outen
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
115 W. 7th Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
704.332.7746
Ben@st-peters.org

Children's Choirs

Anne M. Saxon
Main Street United Methodist Church
306 South Main Street
Kernersville, NC 27284
336.993.3411
Midpatch@aol.com

College/University Choirs

Robert Holquist
Music Department
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC 28723
828.227.3259
holquist@email.wcu.edu

Community Choirs

Daniel J. Bara
School of Music
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858
252.328.6243
barad@mail.ecu.edu

Ethnic and Multicultural Perspectives

Jacqueline P. Robinson
Hunter Huss High School
1518 Edgefield Avenue
Gastonia, NC 28052
704.866.6610
Mikear@bellsouth.net

Jazz Choirs

Stephen A. Futrell
(see Newsletter Editor info on page 2)

Junior High/Middle School Choirs

David Dobbins
SE Guilford Middle School
4825 Woody Mill Road
Greensboro, NC 27406
336.674.4280x4175
dobbind@guilford.k12.nc.us

Fall Conference 2005

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I'm excited to tell you that our Guest Clinician for the 2005 Conference is Dr. Anton Armstrong from St. Olaf College. Dr. Armstrong is an internationally known conductor and leading force in the choral world. He will present and direct sessions including: "Our Vocation as Choral Music Educators"; "Working with the Adolescent Voice"; "Artistry in the Choral Rehearsal"; as well as a "Conducting Masterclass".

In addition, we will have Choral Performances, Interest Sessions presented by the different R&S Areas, a Music Reading Session, and an "All Conference Reception" at the Conference Hotel.

Thank you to the Conference Planning Team for their hard work in making the conference a meaningful musical experience. The Conference Planning Team consists of: Janna Brendell, Sam Doyle, Lisa Fredenberg, Stephen Futrell, Bill McConnell, Reta Phifer, Ann Pratt, Tom Shelton, Ginger Wyrick, and Welborn Young.

Anton Armstrong Bio

Anton Armstrong is the Harry R. and Thora H. Tosdal Professor of Music at St. Olaf College and Conductor of the St. Olaf Choir, a position he assumed in 1990. He came to this position following ten years in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he served on the faculty of Calvin College and conducted the Campus Choir, the Calvin College Alumni Choir and the Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus.

A graduate of St. Olaf College, Anton Armstrong earned a Master of Music degree at the University of Illinois and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Michigan State University. He holds membership in several professional societies including the American Choral Directors Association, Choristers Guild, Chorus America, and the International Federation for Choral Music. He also serves as editor of a multicultural choral series for Earthsongs Publications and co-editor of the revised St. Olaf Choral Series for Augsburg Fortress Publishers. Dr. Armstrong is widely recognized for his work in the area of youth and children's choral music. He served for over twenty years on the summer faculty of the American Boychoir School, Princeton, New Jersey and held the position of Conductor of the St. Cecilia Youth Chorale, a 75 voice treble chorus based in Grand Rapids, from 1981-1990. He has conducted the Troubadours, 30-voice boys' ensemble of the Northfield Youth Choirs since 1991. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Boychoir School. In June 1998, he began his tenure as conductor of the Oregon Bach Festival Youth Choral Academy.

Anton Armstrong has conducted the St. Olaf Choir in critically acclaimed solo concert performances at the 59th National Conference of the Music Educators National Conference in April 2004, the Sixth World Symposium on Choral

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Anton Armstrong Bio

(Continued from page 4)

Music in August 2002, and at the 1999 National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Chicago, Illinois. In February 2005, The St. Olaf Choir will share the stage with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in presenting the finale concert for the national conference of the American Choral Directors Association at the new Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles, California.

He has frequently conducted ensembles and appeared before regional and national gatherings of the American Choral Directors Association, Music Educators National Conference, Choristers Guild, American Guild of Organists, Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, Organization of American Kodaly Educators and the Orff-Schulwerk Association. In August 1996 he was featured as a clinician at the Fourth World Symposium on Choral Music in Sydney, Australia.

Dr. Armstrong is active as a guest conductor and lecturer throughout North America, Europe, Scandinavia, Korea, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Venezuela, and the Caribbean. In June 2003, he was honored to serve as the first Peter Godfrey Visiting Professor of Choral Music at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. In recent years he has guest conducted such noted ensembles as the Utah Symphony and Symphony Chorus, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Westminster choir, the American Boychoir and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has also collaborated in concert with Bobby McFerrin and Garrison Keillor.

In 1992 Anton Armstrong made his European conducting debut at the International Band and Choir Festival in Brussels, Belgium and returned to Vienna, Austria in March 2000 to conduct the 25th anniversary concerts of this festival. He led the St. Olaf Choir on a concert tour of Denmark and Norway in 1993, which included a performance at the Bergen International Festival, Norway and in January 1997, he conducted the ensemble in a four-week concert tour to New Zealand and Australia. In June 2001 he guided the St. Olaf Choir on a three-week concert tour of Central Europe and will return to Norway with the St. Olaf Choir for a three-week performance tour in June 2005. In the summer of 2001, Dr. Armstrong conducted the World Youth Choir sponsored by the International Federation of Choral Music with concerts in Venezuela and the United States.

During 2004-2005 Dr. Armstrong will serve as conductor of All-State Choirs in New Jersey and Michigan. He will also lead choral festivals in Carnegie Hall, New York, Davies Hall San Francisco, and Orchestra Hall, Chicago. During Spring 2005, he will serve as the Visiting Housewright Scholar in the School of Music at Florida State University and guest clinician with the Singing City Choir of Philadelphia. Additional conducting and lecturing engagements this season include appearances in North Carolina, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon, Tennessee, Alaska, New York, South Carolina, Illinois, and California.

NC ACDA R&S Chairs

Male Choirs

Daniel Huff
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919.962.4219
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Music & Worship

Tony Spencer
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211 West Main Street
Forest City, NC 28043
828.245.6626
tspencer@rfci.net

Senior High School Choirs

Melissa B. Murphy
Havelock High School
101 Webb Blvd.
Havelock, NC 28532
252.463.1533
missy.murphy@
craven.k12.nc.us

Show Choirs

Amy W. Daw
(see SSA Coordinator info
on page 3)

Two-Year College Choirs

R. Michael Daugherty
Coastal Carolina Community
College
444 Western Blvd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910.938.6315
daugmuse@hotmail.com

Women's Choirs

Mary Lycan
Women's Voices Chorus
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Chapel Hill, NC 27516-1521
919.932.5455
mlycanclef@aol.com

Youth & Student Activities

Welborn E. Young (Bill)
(see Conference Site Host
info on page 3)

ACDA Advocacy Resolution

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

Whereas serious cut-backs in funding and support have steadily eroded arts institutions and their programs throughout our country,

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

2005 NC ACDA Senior High Women's All State Choir

Amy Daw, Sr. High Women's All State Coordinator

The 2005 Women's All State Choir concert was a huge success thanks to conductor Dan Bara! This event was held at the coliseum complex in Greensboro, NC. The combination of many talented singers, a fantastic clinician, and excellent repertoire seemed to reign over the threat of a wintry, icy mix predicted for the day. The concert time was pushed ahead so that all might attempt to return home safely.

Plans are already in the works for the 2006 All State. ACDA is fortunate to have Lisa Fredenburg agree to be the guest conductor. Lisa is the National ACDA Chair for Women's Choirs so it seems a natural for North Carolina to benefit from her expertise. She presently serves as director of Choral Activities at Meredith College in Raleigh, NC.

National Convention 2005 & Children's Choirs

Anne Saxon, NC ACDA Children's Choir R&S Chair

Upon returning from the National Convention in Los Angeles, I am energized and excited about the many wonderful people I met and the new things I learned. It always feels great to be in the company of so many people who spend their lives in the field of choral music, as these people in your everyday life are few and far between. I will tell you that North Carolina was WELL represented, and with thousands of people in attendance it was great to randomly run into someone you knew throughout the course of the week. I'm so proud to be a part of such an active state chapter, and to be so affirmed that we are going in the right direction.

Many of our state choral mentors were present, and my admiration for them deepens as I see them go to these events to celebrate the process and gain new insight, always seeking the brightest and the best this organization has to offer. Besides all of the information-gathering, how inspiring and fulfilling it is to "feed your musical soul" from your head down to your very toes. To end the convention with none other than the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in the new Walt Disney Concert Hall made me feel like I had died and gone to heaven! Truly, a choral *experience*.

The "hottest" news I have for Children's Choir Directors is that Doreen Rao's new book, "Circle of Sound," is now in print. I actually met her in person and had a moment to share the insights I gained while learning T'ai Chi. This book tells about that very thing: using T'ai Chi as a way of engaging the breath source and integrating those techniques for singers and choirs. I read "Circle of Sound" from cover-to-cover during the plane ride home, and now am currently working to use the suggestions in the book with my choirs. Don't worry, you don't have to join a T'ai Chi class to learn these exercises, as they are fully illustrated throughout the book. For those of you who are not familiar with Do-

Meet the President-Elect~Daniel Bara

Daniel Bara is the Director of Choral Activities and instructor of conducting and choral literature at East Carolina University, in Greenville, North Carolina. At ECU, Dr. Bara heads a program of four university choral ensembles, administers the Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting, and is the founder of the *East Carolina University Summer Choral Conducting Institute*. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the Eastman School of Music where he also taught conducting and served as assistant conductor for each of Eastman's choral ensembles.



In increasing demand as a conductor and clinician, Dr. Bara served on the faculty of the Eastman Summer Conducting Institute at the Eastman School of Music during July of 2003, and is on the summer conducting and choral faculty at the renowned Interlochen Arts Camp in Interlochen, Michigan where he conducts the high school choirs. Dr. Bara enjoys an active schedule of guest conducting appearances with middle and high school honor choirs, and has conducted all-state and all-county choirs in North Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Active as a church music clinician and community chorus conductor, Bara is the Artistic Director of the Greenville Choral Society and New Carolina Sinfonia, where he conducts the Concert Choir and Chamber Chorale, and oversees two additional choral ensembles. Bara has also assumed a leadership role in the NC-ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) as the Repertoire and Standards Chairperson for Community Choirs.

Choirs under Dr. Bara's direction have performed by invitation at state and regional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and the Music Educators National Conference including a marquee performance of Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* at the fall 2003 NCMEA Conference with the combined choirs and symphony orchestra of East Carolina University and Metropolitan Opera soprano, Heidi Grant Murphy.

Prior to his appointment at East Carolina University, Bara served on the music faculty of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY, where he was the conductor of the Colleges Community Chorus, and he was the Director of Choral Activities at The Hill School, in Pottstown, PA from 1996-1999. In March of 2001, prior to graduating from Eastman, Bara won first place in the graduate division of the American Choral Directors Association National Conducting Competition at the national convention in San Antonio, TX. He was subsequently awarded Eastman's top conducting honor, *The Walter Hagen Conducting Prize*. In the summer of 2002, Bara served on the Artist Faculty of the New York State Summer School of the Arts - School of Choral Studies. Bara earned Master of Music degrees in organ and conducting from the University of Michigan where he also completed a Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance.

Dates to Remember

**NC ACDA
Conference~UNCG**
September 16-17, 2005

**Future NC ACDA
Conference Dates**

September 22-23, 2006

September 21-22, 2007

**ACDA Southern
Division Convention**
Charleston, WV
February 22-25, 2006



*"In a world of political,
economic and personal
disintegration,
music is not a luxury,
but a necessity,
not simply because it is
therapeutic nor because
it is the 'universal
language,' but because
it is the persistent focus
of man's intelligence,
aspiration and good will."*

—Robert Shaw

Children's Choirs

(Continued from page 6)

reen Rao, you can visit www.choralmusicexperience.com for a full biography. The book is published by Boosey and Hawkes, and can be purchased through your local music retailer.

The Los Angeles Children's Choir hosted a reception for Children's Choir Directors on the first day of the convention, which included a "who's who" of the nation's leading Children's Choir Conductors. It was also an opportunity to network with people who share the same passion, as it truly takes a person with a passion for children's choirs to face the unique challenges one incurs. The energy in the room was palpable, and the exchange of ideas and information was rampant. This tells me that we need to seek out other people that do what we do, and share, share, share! We need this for renewal and affirmation as much as for gathering new ideas. I challenge you to do this very thing at least once this calendar year.

At the reception I ran into Renee Anders from our state, who is the Elementary Section Chairperson for NC-MENC. She and I made instant friends and vowed to work together in collaborating to help empower more higher-level experiences for children's singing in North Carolina. And to think, I had to travel all the way across the nation for this! Please know that I invite YOUR insight and ideas as well, as to how our organizations can accomplish these goals.

We are still riding the wave of the "Children's Choir Explosion" here in America, of which choral greats such as Doreen Rao have begun. This is a time of great collaboration, creativity, and constant defining for us as we move forward. Never hesitate to talk with colleagues and to seek out good choral literature—Hinshaw Music and Treble Clef Press are two publishers in our own state that are dedicated to providing quality music for (treble) choirs. Read your *Choral Journal* and keep current with national trends and ideas. Take your singers to a summer workshop such as the N.C. Summer Institute in Choral Arts, or hone your conducting skills with other Children's Choir Directors at the Choral Music Experience at Elon University. The conversation over lunch with other directors is worth the price of admission! It will re-fuel you to forge ahead.

Before you do any of the above, however, take a moment to affirm the wonderful work that you do, and know that you are not alone, *but part of something great.*

Anne Saxon is the full-time Director of Music Ministries at Main Street United Methodist Church in Kernersville, and the Artistic Director of the Central Carolina Children's Chorus in Winston-Salem.

ECU Senior Selected for ACDA National Conducting Semi-finals



Maggie Ashworth

Congratulations go out to East Carolina University senior Maggie Ashworth on being selected to participate in the semi-final round of the National ACDA Undergraduate Conducting Competition this past February in Los Angeles, CA. A Music Education major concentrating in vocal/choral conducting with piano as her applied instrument, Maggie has been an active member of the student ECU-ACDA since May of 2004 and is a conducting student of Dr. Daniel Bara. Currently, she is completing her student teaching at Leesville Road High School in Raleigh with Diane Covington and is anticipating graduating *magna cum laude* in Summer 2005. We wish Maggie the best as she begins the application process to graduate programs and teaching positions.

NC ACDA Treasurer's Report (Through April 15, 2005)
Ginger Wyrick, NC ACDA Treasurer

Income	
Interest Income	72.40
Dues	75.00
Newsletter Advertizing	225.00
Conference Registration	6220.00
SSA Honor Choir Registration	3330.00
Church Festival Choir Registration	1300.00
Allotment from Southern Division	6517.00
NCMEA Luncheon Tickets	153.00
TOTAL INCOME	17892.40

Expenses	
Bank charges	19.25
Newsletter Printing	1094.63
Newsletter Postage	160.02
Conference Meals	2586.00
Conference Clinicians	1200.00
Conference Clinician Food/Travel	303.90
Conference Clinician Housing	290.98
Conference postage	76.88
Fall Conference Awards/Certificates	26.60
Conference Printing	4.30
Conference printing/duplication	49.92
Conference accompanist/instrumental	100.00
Conference Music	865.73
Postage	105.90
Printing	227.92
Dues transfer	75.00
Awards	47.98
Online/website	132.93
NCMEA Convention Booth	225.00
NCMEA lunch pre-sale	170.00
SSA Rental	1137.68
SSA Clinician	1000.00
SSA Clinician Housing/Food/Travel	485.00
SSA Postage	75.79
SSA Office Supplies	79.01
SSA Awards	27.50
SSA Accompanist	500.00
SSA piano moving/tuning	283.67
Church Festival Choir Clinician	800.00
Church Festival Clinician food/travel	52.58
Church Festival Printing	34.24
Church Festival Choir Accompanist	300.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	12538.41
Operating Profit	5353.99

The Carolina Caroler is the official newsletter of the North Carolina chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. Articles and advertisements may be submitted to:

Stephen A. Futrell, Editor, via email at sfutrell@elon.edu

Articles may be submitted via email as Word documents. Times New Roman, or similar, with font size 11 is preferred. Please do not double space after punctuations (periods)—a practice held back in the days of typewriters—it is not necessary with word processing.

For advertisements, contact our **Advertising Editor:**

Lisa Fredenburgh
 Meredith College
 Raleigh, NC 27607
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 fredenburghL@meredith.edu

Issue	Deadline	Publication
Fall	July 15	Aug. 1
Spring	Dec. 15	Jan. 15
Summer	April 15	May 15

NC ACDA reserves the right to edit any application for appearance and to edit all materials proposed for distribution.

Advertising Rates

The Carolina Caroler will accept advertising at the following rates:
 Full page-\$150.00 (c. 7.5"x10")
 Half page-\$100.00 (c. 7.5"x4.5")
 Quarter page-\$50.00 (c. 3.75"x4.5")

Discounts are available on multiple ads of the same design. Rates listed are for camera-ready copy or digital .jpg or .tif file. A check made payable to "North Carolina ACDA" must accompany the order. Advertisers will NOT be billed. Copy will not run without advance payment. Advertising copy is subject to editorial approval. The editor reserves the right to head and/or box any advertisement bearing confusing resemblance to editorial material.

An Open Letter to Pastors and Supervisors of Church Musicians

Tony Spencer, NC ACDA Music & Worship R&S Chair

I am writing on behalf of the people who serve your parish in planning, coordinating and directing the music program. A need for such is made because a repetitive mantra heard among church musicians at ACDA conventions is, "My pastor does not understand how this convention applies to what I do." To assist our understanding of each other, let us compare the ACDA conventions to a pastor's conference.

At pastors' conferences, one would expect times of inspiration as well as sessions which would be more pragmatic. Inspiration could be defined as arousing the mind to special or new creativity. It might come to a pastor from a lecture by a neo-orthodox theologian or it might come from a fundamentalist preacher. Individuals have a responsibility to themselves (and to the people they serve) to identify the source of their inspiration. Of equal importance is the "how to" classes which help us all with the practical aspects of our professions.

INSPIRATION

ACDA conventions provide inspiration for all choral musicians. Just as your proclamation style may not be in the same league with one of your "heroes," you still listen, learn and grow by hearing these great proclaimers. The music director at your church may never be able to perform most of the literature performed in concert at an ACDA convention, but hearing the greatest choirs in the world inspires him/her to greater heights.

Forest Herren was dean of the School of Music at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, from 1952-1980. From that position, his leadership and guidance had a profound influence on countless church musicians. Dean Herren once said to me, "You come to this place to study first-rate music so you can go the churches and make third-rate music sound second-rate."

Whether or not you agree with Herren's system of rating church music, certainly you want expressions of faith in worship to represent the best offering of your people. Hearing choirs and choral directors at

the top of our profession (and studying great choral literature) gives us a vision of greater artistic possibilities. Only when we offer our best can we say that this is a "pure sacrifice" of our time and talents.

PRACTICALITY

At our last convention, a sampling of interest sessions offered for your musician's edification included: Simplifying the Conductor's Lifestyle; Making Technology Work for You; The Marvelous Middle School Voice; The Panorama of African-American Choral Music: Spirituals, Gospel, Compositions by Black Composers and Black Musical Theater; Children's Choral Music in the Church; Vocal Science in the Choral Classroom; and Making Sight-Reading Fun.

These sessions were presented by your musician's colleagues who were willing to share their successes and failures. Every topic listed above could be relevant to a church musician as well as choral musicians in schools and universities.

We acknowledge that an ACDA convention is not a church growth seminar. But is it not possible that what we gain in inspiration and practical application has the possibility to make the music program of your church actually attract new members? And if we find ourselves in a situation where numerical growth is virtually impossible, are quality and theological depth not desirable goals of our worship leadership?

When your musician asks to attend the next ACDA convention in Charleston, West Virginia, or Miami, Florida, they are not planning a ski trip or a day at the beach. They are about the business of honing their skills to better accomplish their mission with you in your parish. Please allow them the time away to do so.



Sound Reinforcement for Jazz or Show Choir, Pt. 2

Stephen A. Futrell, NC ACDA Jazz Choir R&S

This article serves to pick up the conversation from the previous article on sound systems (*The Carolina Caroler*, Spring 2005, Volume 6, Issue 2). It seems appropriate to quote the first paragraph of that article:

“Any discussion of what type of equipment to use must begin with a brief reminder that it is the natural sound we are trying to amplify. The goal is to use the best possible equipment in a manner which truly represents the sound source. For singing, the sound source is the voice. The primary goal in singing is to produce a tone quality which is natural, free and vibrant. The sound system amplifies whatever is put into it. Although a sound system might mask some defects, it is not a substitute for solid, fundamental technique.”

One small note that may have been missing in the first article: it is recommended that boom stands should be used for your vocalists if they are not going to hold the mics. The boom stand allows the singer to bring the mic to the mouth. A straight mic stand often causes the singer to move their head forward or lean forward to get to the mic, which of course puts undo stress on the vocal mechanism.

After acquiring the equipment needed for your ensemble, it's time to hook it up and get going. Starting with the sound source, in this case the voice, we can trace the path of the signal:

- From the voice into a mic.
- From the mic into an input module (channel) of the mixing board. If it's a corded mic, the mic cord goes from the mic into either the board or the snake if you have one. If it's a wireless mic, the patch cord goes from the mic receiver into the desired input module.
- From the main-out, or speaker-out, of the board into the speakers (including monitors).

Before you turn on or off the system, it is wise to turn the amps all the way down. If you do not have a power switch, the order that you should turn on a system is as follows: turn on your power supply, then the board, then the amps.

Run the amps wide open. To power down, just do the reverse: turn master faders down, turn down amps, turn off amps, turn off board, turn off power supply.

Any auxiliary or outboard equipment (EQ, signal processing, etc.) are hooked up as loops. You send the signal via a patch cord out of the board into the effects unit, out of the effects unit and back into the board. Your mixing board should have sends and returns that are marked for effects or auxiliary sends. To use the processing gear, you have the corresponding auxiliary level for the specific input module you want to affect, but remember you also have to be sure the main auxiliary send and return control knobs are at an appropriate level.

To get a signal on a mic, put the fader of the input module all the way down. Hopefully, you've chosen a board that has meters or some kind of signal indicators. If you have VU (volume unit) meters, speak into the mic and slowly bring up the gain (located at the top of the input module) until the signal is mostly at zero VU. It's okay if it peaks every now and again, but you don't want to overdrive the channel. If your board has signal indicator lights on the input modules, bring the gain up so that you see the signal peaking (it will usually be a red light when the signal peaks). You will want to bring it back so that it does not peak out often. Once you have set the gain, you can then bring up the fader on the input module to the desired volume. Remember to bring up the main faders for the overall volume of the mix. Think of the gain as your signal. If the gain is low and the fader is very high, it may look and sound like you have volume, but the signal will be weak—the timbre will not sound full. If the gain is too high and you see the signal peaking most of the time, you will hear the sound become distorted.

Each input module should have EQ knobs with which you can adjust the tone quality of that module whether it is for a voice or instrument. The idea is to adjust the equalization so that the amplification of the sound is representing the original sound

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source as naturally as possible. In other words, listen to the voice or instrument acoustically and then see if the amplified sound matches the acoustic sound in terms of its timbre. Adjust the EQ on the input module accordingly.

The separate EQ unit, if your board does not have a main EQ built in, is used to tune the overall system. Each performance space is going to have different acoustical properties depending upon the size, shape, building materials, drapery, carpeting, flooring, number of people in the audience and other factors. Recall in your concert choir performances you may have experienced being in a space which is sympathetic to a certain pitch or frequency. Or you may have been in spaces which are extremely live and the reverb time is long. If you are using a sound system, the best places to perform are those which are dead in terms of reverb or echo. This is mainly due to what is known as feedback. A room with no reverberation means that the frequencies do not have any hard surfaces to bounce around on. Feedback is caused when certain frequencies (itches) ring in the system

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and can range from just irritating to ear shattering. First and foremost, it is important to train your singers not to point a mic directly toward a monitor or main speaker. Your main speakers are always placed in front of the group so that the mics are not picking up the reinforced signal and thus producing more feedback.

To tune the system and avoid as much feedback potential as possible, one can “ring the system”. Although there are devices which can analyze acoustical properties of a room and automatically adjust the EQ, it is possible to do it yourself. First turn the main faders and the fader for whatever input module you are using completely down. Place a mic directly in front of a speaker, perhaps five to ten yards, pointing at the speaker. This is the only time you want to point a mic at a speaker—remember start with all volume faders completely off. Bring your main faders up to a good volume level. Then slowly bring up the fader of the input module for the mic. Go very slowly until you here some ringing. When you begin to hear ringing, immediately stop and bring the volume back a little to stop the feedback. Identify the frequency/pitch you heard. Remember the tuning pitch of A440? Recall that to get an octave higher multiply by two (A880), to get an octave lower divide by two (A220). Locate the pitch you heard on a piano or some other instrument and determine the frequency. For example if the pitch or frequency you heard is around 200 (just over an octave below A440), then look at your multi-band EQ unit and bring 200hz down. Slowly bring up the volume fader of the input module and see if the same frequency or another one rings. You can experiment with bringing up the overall volume (main faders) as well. This process allows you to specifically take out frequencies that are inherently present in that performance space and give you as much head room as you may need for volume. Too many times the answer to feedback has been simply to turn a specific channel or even everything down. Another simple fix has been to use the EQ on an input module to take out the frequency. This is not a good solution because the EQ on the channel will take out a range of highs

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or mids or lows and not just the specific frequency that is ringing back. When you are looking to buy, consider that the more bands you have on your main EQ, the more flexibility you have in controlling timbre and feedback.

When you are purchasing the equipment, the flexibility of the board is important regarding your overall mix. The number of inputs, etc. is important, but the board's ability to route the signal in a variety of ways is also an important consideration. If your board has a "group" or "assign" function on each input module or channel, this allows you to group a number of channels to one fader. You will still be able to mix each individual channel relative to the others. For example, you can mix your vocals relative to each other, assign all of them to a sub-fader or group (different boards will have different names for these) and thus control the overall volume of the vocals as a group. The same can be done with your rhythm section. Once you get a good mix on the instruments, you can then assign them to one sub-fader and control the overall volume of the rhythm section. If you have a horn section, the same process can be done. Thus, as the concert proceeds, if you need more vocals overall,

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all you have to do is bring up that group; if you need less horns overall, all you have to do is change that one fader, etc.

After the gig, it's time to strike. Many hands often make quick work. However, sometime with so many bits and pieces, a number of bodies can simply just keep getting in each other's way. It is helpful to assign specific tasks to individuals in your group. They learn how the system is put together and you're not the only one stuck with packing up. Have someone responsible for powering down the system. If you have a sound tech, that person is the obvious choice and you are indeed fortunate to have that extra set of ears. Then have someone responsible for collecting the mics and putting them away, have someone responsible for the mic cords, have someone take care of the speakers, and so on. It is always a good idea to go back to the venue one last time after you've taken everything out just in case there's a stray cord.

There are even more technical details that one could cover. Hopefully, this series of two articles provided some useful information for you to get started and a little insight into the myriad of details regarding sound reinforcement.

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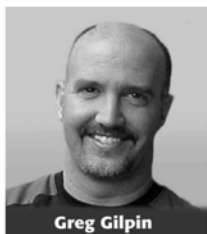
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