



North Central ACDA Divisional Newsletter

RESOUND

Vol. 3, No. 1

REsounding Throughout The Division

September 1979

Church Music Corner

Would the choir director like to take over the pulpit on Sunday morning and expound his views on church music as they could be applied to the local congregation? Would he! Just ask him! Here was the opportunity of a lifetime, a chance to explain and to justify some of his pet theories on the use of music in the church service and to guide the congregation away from their apparent misinterpretations of the intent of the music program.

Just such an opportunity presented itself to me some time ago in a lovely little church in a mid-western university community. The initial impetus for such an arrangement came about through efforts to fill the pulpit while the minister was on a short leave of absence due to a slight heart condition; however, the actual consummation of the idea came about sometime later, when the minister was able to be present — he apparently wished to be in on the “great revelation,” too!

As further evidence of interest and cooperation on the part of the church council I was allowed to arrange the music in the morning service to fit my purpose, specifically that of showing the importance of the use of music in worship. Toward that end I omitted music completely from the major part of the service!

The results were startling. As the worshippers came into the church, they entered a sanctuary which was quite silent — except for the efforts of the more hardy conversationalists in their midst, and the efforts of those usually outgoing individuals were more subdued than usual because of their conspicuousness. As the services began, the Call to Worship was spoken by the minister. The choir, which had been inconspicuously, but strategically, placed in the congregation, led the unison reading of the opening hymn. Later in the service the offering was taken, accompanied only by the satisfying whisper of the paper money and the self-conscious clinking of the silver.

After my remarks — they could

not rightly have been termed a sermon — the choir and the congregation joined in singing the closing hymn, the latter with considerably more than their usual phlegmatic gusto. Following the Benediction and Choral Response I was complimented by members of the congregation with such appealing remarks as, “You made your point before you ever opened your mouth!” and, “Don’t ever do that to us again!”

Such hoped-for reactions are prone to making directors spread their musical tails and preen themselves over the success of their efforts, but a friend of mine — another choir director who was on a vacation — had attended the service out of curiosity. He voiced a second and much more insidious reaction to the experiment, one which I had felt, but had hesitated to admit. The calm serenity of the worship without music showed better than words just how cluttered up with music our services can be.

There had been no all-prevading Prelude to tempt the congregation to add to the decible level with their conversational exertions. There had been no chance for inadvertent blooper as the organist sounded the chord for the prayer response, when actually the pause in the continuity of the prayer by the minister was either to allow him to get his second wind, to marshal more subject matter, or to get himself out of a grammatical jam. And there had been no fumbling for the pitch as the choir gradually oozed in on one of its brief choral commentaries in the service.

It was fortunate that those quite prevalent characteristics were seldom conspicuously present in that small and friendly church.

The majority of the foregoing situations are really products of physical factors which are important in the total picture of the effective use of music in the church. Improvement in those aspects can be accomplished principally through the understanding cooperation of the minister, the church council, the music committee, the organist, and the choir director.

A second factor contributing to the sum total of the effective worship service is the use of music which has a legitimate place in worship — music which, when used, will not clutter up

the service because of its incongruity, its lack of spiritual depth, or downright irreverence. Improvement in the type of music used during the worship service also needs the harmonious cooperation of the aforementioned people; nevertheless, some progress can be made by the director, the organist, and the choir as they subtly wean the congregation away from questionable practices and suggest, by example, more adequate substitutes.

CHORAL AND ORGAN GUIDE,
“ ‘ Church Music’ and Music in the Church,” J.R.V. (excerpt). Dec. 1959.

The Conservative Arts

by Robert Shaw

(ED. — The following are excerpts from an address given by Mr. Shaw at the Minnesota Orchestral Association’s annual meeting on December 8, 1978.)

It has weighed upon me more than once that a conductor has certain characteristics in common with the preacher, the politician, and the professor. Chief among them are a high regard for survival and an acquired skill at quick cover-up, cowardice, and camouflage. The preacher has the psalmists and the prophets (as well as the fears of his own congregation) to veil his own lack of vision; the politician can hide behind his party’s plat-forms and slogans and the words of his “funding” fathers. The professor can fall back upon his textbooks and his libraries and last year’s lectures, and, if all else should fail, the Socratic method. But the conductor has the inexhaustible bounty of the real creators, the composers, as well as the ministrations of musical servants to deck the halls behind him with beauty. In the very worst sermon or campaign address or lecture, or even musical performance, something of value may happen. You may blunt the words of Isaiah, or Abraham Lincoln, but they will make their own point. In any piece of symphonic music there are so many millions of possibilities for errors that no one person can make them all. But

the conductor who takes to the speaking rostrum is a fool as well, and damned, for he has abandoned his podium and his costume and his jousting stick, which normally enable him to ward off the perceptive mind. You now see him, as they used to say in my father's hymn, "face-to-face," and you know him from the middle man he is...

The truth of the matter is that each of us is an artist whether he wants to be or not. The only question is whether he is enough of an artist to fulfill his humanity or to fill full his short mortality. For finally, the understandings of the spirit are not easily come by. It takes a creative mind to receive the Creator's mind. It takes a holy spirit to receive a Holy Spirit. And "just as I am" is not nearly good enough. There is no "easy on," "easy off" for truth. There is no landscaped approach to beauty. You scratch and you scramble around intellectual granites, you try to defuse or tether your emotional tantrums, you pray for the day when your intellect and your instinct can coexist so that the brain need not calcify the heart nor the heart o'er flood and drown all reason. But in that struggle lies a tolerable dignity and a tolerable destiny. And the alternatives to life aren't all that attractive anyway. Administrator, advisors, supporters and friends of the arts (should) hold fast to the joys and the responsibilities of the creative, liberating arts, for man in all his glory is only clothes by such as these; and without them there soon would be no body to clothe.

Minnesota Star of the North. April '79, George Berglund, editor.

Editor's Edifice

VOICES OF WYOMING. Now that's a romantic thought: cowboys, campfires, cattle, and guitars, all by the light of the silvery moon. Perhaps, but it is not meant to be so in this instance. VOICES OF WYOMING is the name of the Wyoming ACDA Newsletter. In the Winter issue of '78, then-President Richard Flood writes, in part, to his membership in his President's Message:

Things are happening!

It looks as though the Wyoming chapter of ACDA is beginning to move. At the time of writing this letter, our membership has increased to twenty four members. Unless my records are wrong, that is an all-time high for us.

Our newsletter is now a fact. This is the second issue and I am very excited about it but we need members to contribute of their time and talent. Everyone of you has at least one article locked away inside. No article will be

refused. Share with others what has worked for you.

Before members of the NC Division smile indulgently at Wyoming ACDA's pioneering efforts, let me point out to you that Wyoming, even with its modest number of choral directors, is pledging 100% increase in membership during '79. Has any North Central state, with the choral density that many have, made — and made good — any such pledge in recent years? How has your pioneering spirit been recently?

This Fall brand new teachers without experience will be hired to fill positions which have been vacated for a variety of reasons. To the inexperienced, that's like signing a blank check — you put your name down but don't know what you're going to get for it. Much the same has happened to some experienced teachers. They have left positions because of problems and sought new positions. Sometimes they will inherit many of the same conditions for which they and their predecessors resigned their respective positions. For such faculty with some professional savvy, that may be like buying a bond with variable interest — the principal will be known, but the returns will be dependent on the market.

And there are those teachers who return to the same situations, facing much the same positive and negative conditions which they left in the Spring. Will they return to the same rut which they dug for themselves or which, somehow, was dug for them? (A rut is a grave with the ends knocked out!) Or will they turn the rut into a free-flowing channel through which fresh summer-accumulated technics, philosophies, repertoire, and resolves can sweep their choral program toward more successful goals?

Could joining ACDA help fill in that blank check? Could it assure more specific returns from that bond? Could it turn that rut into a moving stream of ideas which will lead somewhere, professionally?

Each of you must know someone who could benefit from membership in ACDA — it must mean something to you since you belong! Call on and welcome the new kids in the profession, contact your new neighbors who have just transferred in, encourage the complacent and the musically myopic, and help prime the professional pumps of those who have been sucked dry of workable ideas during the previous year.

GO AFTER 'EM! Tell 'em why you belong to ACDA and why they should — there might even be some who don't know they need us. It's not too late for the Great Lakes and the Mississippi Valley in the heart-land of the good, old U.S. of A. to spawn pioneers for ACDA too.

Flow Gently, Sweet Juices

The creative juices of the membership are beginning to churn again, a fact made evident in the state papers and newsletters recently received. It is significant that some of these efforts have come about as the result of preparations for convention presentation or are post-convention reactions. If conventions and convention attendance can induce such a stirring of ideas in some, it is not possible that even the most jaded or self-satisfied directors might have their musical sludge stirred to the point where they are sensitive to new ideas and perhaps even move upward in the profession if they attend conventions?

In a broader view, there are advantages to membership in ACDA which accrue when the creative juices flow. To repeat a statement in **Resound**, Vol. 2, No. 1, one of the initial reasons for the establishing of a NC divisional newsletter was and is to bring items published in state letters and papers which are of possible divisional interest to the attention of the total divisional membership. While editorial policies of state publications vary, there are no state editors who would not welcome articles from their readers.

As an incentive to members to kick a little time in an already heavy schedule to pull together some ideas and put them down for publication, attendance at and reaction to conventions and workshops, large and small, can be a source of new ideas — and even questions — within the profession. They need to be stated, elaborated on, pruned, altered, answered, challenged, or defended by someone — why not you? But you have to attend to be exposed to those ideas.

The more articles published in state organs and thus available for consideration for publication in **Resound**, the less the divisional membership is subjected to the views, biases, and querulousness of the **Resound** editor. That should provide an additional incentive for state members to advance their own ideas via their own papers.

Speaking of advantage of convention attendance, Michigan past-president Larry Gray (Mich., ACDAM, April '79. Tom Hardy, editor) puts his finger on it with admirable directness: Where in the — were you??? If only we could get more of our members to take advantage of these fine events! ... If you are wondering why you're so talented and knowledgeable, yet your choral program doesn't seem to be going anywhere, could it be because you can't get yourself to go anywhere?

With Timbrel, Harp, Or...

Minnesota The Star of the North,
February '79 George Berglund, editor.
Excerpt from "The President's
Message," by Past-President Chet
Sommers.

I would like to comment on a scene that is repeated every Christmas in almost every school in Minnesota. Often, the first performing group on the Christmas concert program is a band, orchestra or brass choir. They play and leave. Then the choral groups and ensembles perform. Usually, the instrumental and choral groups do very well as individual entities — but they rarely perform together. I've often wondered why. Is it because there is a scarcity of music for vocal and instrumental combinations? Considering today's vast publishing market, I think not. Most publishers can supply with selections for voices and instruments in a wide variety of combinations (of course, some publishers are more active than others in this area).

What about continuo pieces? Our library contains a selection by Heilmann that calls for cello, harpichord, first and second violins; if I were unable to use these instruments, I would use piano, bassoon or bass clarinet, and two flutes. In other words, it would be far better to substitute some of these instruments if necessary — than to never expose your singers to Baroque vocal and instrumental combinations.

I can imagine that there might be a potential market for more music for voices and winds, for we have these in abundance in our schools. Of course, you can't perform if the instruments overpower the voices; what we need is more music scored for voices with smaller instrumental combinations. Let's say we had a well-scored piece for two flutes, a clarinet or two, a horn or trumpet, and a trombone, bassoon or bass clarinet as bass instruments. This could be a group of five or six instruments that could provide a choral basis without piano, and it could provide excellent textures for the choir to sing against. We would have a built-in reason for sustaining sound under these conditions, since the wind players and singers have essentially the same breath problems. I would think that almost every school in the state could find six good wind players to accompany the choir.

In conclusion, I hope that more choral musicians will consider using instruments with their choirs. The interesting textures, stylistic characteristics, and expressive possibilities add an exciting new dimension to the choral experience. Even the "pop" music scene has

recognized for years that instruments and voices are most successful in combination. The extra time spent to rehearse and perform with instruments is well worth the effort.

A listing and some catalogues containing instrumentally accompanied voices:

CHORAL MUSIC FOR THE JAZZ, SWING, OR SHOW CHOIR, Belwin Mills Pub. Corp., Melville, NY 11746.

A variety of selections for various voicings with various combo accompaniments. Anita Kerr's arrangements are well represented.

A CATALOGUE OF CHORAL MUSIC WITH INSTRUMENTAL ACCOMPANIMENT, Concordia Pub. House, St. Louis, MO 63118.

Sacred selections for various voices.

ings. Accompaniments include solo obbligato instruments, brass, string, and other small instrumental ensembles.

A SELECTIVE LIST OF CHORAL VOCAL MUSIC WITH WIND AND PERCUSSION ACCOMPANIMENT, Robert Vagner, Journal of Research in Music Education (Ed 14:276-88 n4 1966).

A broad variety of selections, vocal combinations, with instrumental obbligatos and accompaniments from a number of publishers.

INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL MUSIC CATALOGUE, Life Line Music Press, Box 338 Agoura, CA 91301.

Contains a section on stage choir charts accompanied by small jazz combos, particularly trpt., tenor, gtr., bass and drums.

President's Letter

A great sense of pride, humility, and awe accompany me as I write these initial words to you. The traditions of North Central Division are awesome in their depth and breadth; its previous leadership, a choral hall of fame; its current strength unequalled. I am truly thankful to so many of you for placing your confidence in me. You can rest assured I will work diligently to earn the confidence you expressed.

I must convey to you a recent source of immense satisfaction and excitement. The location — Lawton, Oklahoma, site of the new national headquarters of ACDA. The time — June 15-17. The participants — over seventy-five ACDAers representing every state in the nation. The National Board, several past national presidents and special guests joined each state and division president-elect in the first honest-to-goodness ACDA workshop. It was a truly exciting event which will generate much for ACDA and its mission in the years ahead. I can not, as President, help but say that we members in the North Central Division are extremely fortunate to have such great leadership in the persons of our state presidents. I've never met with a group so gifted, so motivated, so concerned about ACDA as our ten state presidents. They stand ready, eager, and more than competent to answer our needs.

Mark your calendar March 6-8, 1980, Madison, Wisconsin, Concourse Hotel. The North Central Division Convention will be held to a predicted record number. Now that will mean a big bunch of choral devotees, given the fact that over 1,000 registered two years ago in Minneapolis. It's going to happen though. Final tape screenings have been completed and sixteen of the leading choirs and their conductors have been invited to share their talents with us. There are choirs representing every voicing and age level. Something for everyone with a special emphasis for the church director. The list of clinicians couldn't be more appetizing — but I'll hold you in suspense for a time on this. Please make plans now to attend. If you can only make one trip this year, this is definitely the one to make. People are still buzzing about Minneapolis, and rightly so! But we have always grown in ACDA. We don't or won't know what a recession is in our business. So plan to come and be a part of the BIG SHOW!!

In closing, may I again express my thanks to the North Central membership. If this office can ever help you in any way, please feel free to call or write. I've already begun a file marked "Considerations and Changes." Don't let this file become dormant.

My warmest personal best wishes to each of you for a great and rewarding new year. SEE YOU IN MADISON!!!

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Music For Middlers

Howard Risner's listing and detailed insights into selections for middle school choirs (Mich. ACDAM, Nov. '78, Tom Hardie, editor) provides that oft-neglected group with some badly needed repertoire, particularly for the Christmas season:

1. Christ Is Born To You Today.

Two part/piano, optional descant for violin. Also published for SSA. German Folk Song, freely edited and arranged by Walter Ehret. Published by Marks #15132-5. Duration 2 min. 35 sec.

An excellent piece for a 7th grade unchanged voice choir that has learned keys, D, E^b and G, rhythmically simple with eighth, quarter and half notes. Each of the two parts (Sop. and Alto) has a chance at the melody, supported by a descant or harmony in the other part. The ranges are very conservative and the piano part is harmonically supportive and interesting. Some simple chromaticism: re-ri, doh-di, doh-te, soh-si. The text is very appropriate; the composition is a good reading piece. I recommend it highly. You will also notice that entrances are logical. The alto begins on Doh, and the next phrase also begins on Doh, with the entrance in the soprano an octave apart. The next time the alto enters on doh just after the soprano sings it. The next entrance is a soh below a doh, and the last time a repeated soh an octave below.

2. In Thee, O Lord, Is Fullness of Joy. SA/organ or piano. Francois Couperin, edited by Marion Vree, published by Concordia #98-2059.

For unchanged 7th grade or 8th grade girls. Key of B^b with two chromatics. Tessitura is high, with moving eighth note runs. Excellent vocalization piece to get the voice high and light. A very useful teaching piece.

3. Christmas Dance of the Shepherds. Zoltan Kodaly, English words by Elizabeth M. Lockwood. SA. Published by Presser #312-40573. A Capella, with obbligato piccolo.

If your students are familiar with the 66 Two-Part Kodally Method, they will enjoy this piece. It is in D minor and has the typical Kodaly intervals beginning with Lah-Mi₁ in canon form. The familiar Mi-Fi-Si-La occurs a couple of times. The Cambiata voice could handle the alto part. A good piece for repeats and first and second endings.

4. It Soon Will Be Evening. SA, accompanied with soprano solo. Tyrolean carol, arranged by Gerhard Track, published by Schmitt, Hall and McCreary #220.

Another good piece for your 7th graders in the key of G. Nice flowing piano part that lends adequate support to the vocal lines. Its simple harmonic construction should make this piece easy to learn. Only one chromatic Soh-Fi immediately followed by Soh-Fah should cause no problem. The solo section is simply the melody with two-part obbligato underneath it. The tessitura is conservative, and the last page gives the singers a chance to sing very softly and delicately.

5. Hallelujah, Glory Hallelujah.

Natalie Sleeth. Two-part or unison, published by the Sacred Music Press #S-5768.

As with other Sleeth pieces, this one is very singable and melodic. It would be appropriate for a 6th grade choir that knows the key of G. There are several intervals that are basic for the singers to learn, and the two parts compliment each other, overlapping, plenty of octave unisons and basic intervals to establish secure tonality. No chromaticism in the vocal lines, but just enough in the accompaniment to make it interesting and complimentary to the vocal line. My kids always like this piece.

6. Noel, Noel, A Boy is Born.

Natalie Sleeth. Two-part published by A.M.S.I. #223.

In 6/8 with very limited tessitura. A typical Sleeth piece of simple construction in the vocal lines with interesting piano part. Two handbell part could be vocalized with an "oo" sound preceded by an "l".

7. So Far To Bethlehem. Marie Pooler, two-part or unison, optional flute part. Published by Flammer #B5011.

A Christmas cantata for children. All or part of this work is very suitable for a 7th grade choir. It is varied and you could use various combinations of voices on any of the selections. Excellent opportunity for young soloists, too. This work is well worth its price of \$1.10 and should be in very 7th grade choral library. Each piece is adaptable to syllabing, and if you have a good 6th grade choir, this would be a challenge for them. Highly recommended.

8. Make a Joyful Noise Unto God. George F. Handel. SSA/piano. Arranged by Robert S. Hines, published by Lawson-Gould #L.G. 51395.

You need a good pianist for this selection. For middle school choirs the vocal parts may be a little strenuous and musically challenging. Careful, sectionalized rehearsal is necessary to establish the correct vocal and musical facility to manipulate the parts, both homophonic and polyphonic. Several "r" sounds could cause problems, and there will be a tendency to oversing because of the busy piano part in order

to attain clarity of parts. I would also recommend this piece for high school treble choirs.

9. As It Fell Upon the Night. SSA or SSAA. English carol, harmonized by Katherine K. Davis, published by Galaxy #G.M. 1380.

If you want to stress a nice flowing vocal line, this piece illustrates it very well. Nice ascending lines make for a good vocalization, lightening up as the high F is reached. This is also an excellent syllabing piece in the key of E^b. If you have a couple of light high sopranos, the descant (soprano solo) is a lovely example of what they need to practice. I might substitute an "oh" or "oo" vowel in place of the "ah" in this section, getting the voice placed more forward. If the high A near the end is too high, a substitution would be permissible. In fact, you may want to omit the solo part for the last 9 measures.

10. Psallite. Michael Praetorius. SSA. Edited and arranged by Norman Greyson, published by Bourne #3057.

This piece isn't as difficult as it looks. First, study it in 4/4 with syllables to establish good articulation, and do it slowly. This will also help in getting the syllables into the head voice. When you go into two then try for lightness, but not hurried. A lovely legato section can be realized at (3) to (4) in the SS parts with the hint of the recurring style in the Alto part just before (4). An excellent piece, recommended highly for high school girls' choruses. It is also available for SATB, Bourne ES21.

11. The Colorado Trail. SACB, American folk song arranged by J.B. Lyle, published by Cambiata Press #U17316.

Many arrangements by this publisher are difficult to understand. They appear hurriedly done, with little thought of vocal reasoning for the age group they are intended for. This one is an exception. I like it because it is adaptable to the personnel you have. It doesn't lock you into one part for a particular range. The Cambiata range is very low in this piece, but the key established makes it possible for them to sing Alto when the four-part section occurs. Also, the baritone soli at the beginning allows for Cambiatas or girl altos to sing the part also if needed. The two part at change of key could be done by Baritone and Cambiata very nicely. It would be a boy's piece until the last verse, at which time the arranger wisely modulates into the key of E^b for an easy time of it for the sopranos singing softly as the piece closes.

12. Psalm 95. SATB (optional). Allen Pote, published by Choristers Guild, P.O. Box 38188, Dallas, Tx.

A good piece for the mixed 8th grade

choir. First two pages in unison with a nice melodic line in 4/4 and 3/8 supported by light chords in the piano part. The brief four-part section will need concentrated study perhaps unrelated syllables at this point because 8th graders may not understand so many accidentals. There is plenty of opportunity to explain dotted quarter and two sixteenths as opposed to dotted quarter and eighth. A nice full ending with no vocal difficulties. My singers really liked this one.

13. A Christmas Bolero. Paul Hamill. SATB/piano & flute obbligato, published by Lawson-Gould #51848.

There is something enticing about a minor modulating to D Major in this piece. I think the 6/4 meter adds feeling to the tonality. It has a medieval sound which enhances the adapted medieval poem from which the text was taken. The piece caught on with my 8th graders and I didn't have to sell it to them. There is enough unison to allow the singers to get the feel of the music and nice four-part cadential sections. I would ritard at the end of the piece.

14. O Bambino. Remo Capra and Anthony Velona. SATB/piano and finger cymbals. Adapted from a traditional Italian Christmas song, published by Shawnee Press #A-774.

A generally nice piece for 8th graders. It swings smoothly in 2 (6/8). A good syllabing piece with plenty of thirds in Soprano and Alto. The Bass and Tenor parts are extremely simple. Some parts for the tenor may be too low, so you may have to divide your basses with tenors coming in whenever the range is correct for them.

15. Sanctus. W.A. Mozart. SATB. Arranged by Theron Kirk from *Missa Brevis* in G Major, published by Pro Art #2851.

This is a good training piece for syllabing and learning Latin. I think 8th graders should begin Latin training, but with great care that it be correct Latin. Listening to various recordings is the best way to learn pronunciation. It is the way to learn style, also. I suggest that choral directors find masses performed by boy voices rather than adults, so that singers will feel the influence of it as they should be doing it. There are several range problems for tenors in this piece, especially the fact that it centers around middle D much of the time. Don't let them force; better that they use as much falsetto as they have and lighten the rest of the voice parts accordingly. I suggest that you drill this piece in sections — first with syllables, then the vowel of the word without consonant — before putting it all together. I like Hosanna better than osanna. Don't allow your singers to slip the "na" after the syncopation

preceding the rests, and work for a smooth line of vowels. Finally, I put a fermata on the last note before the Allegro section.

Orphaned Soloists, Errant Ensembles

In her first *President's Pen* to the Iowa membership (Iowa Sounding Board, May '79, Sandy Chapman, editor) new Iowa president Gloria Corbin writes of her concern about the state solo and ensemble contest situation. Among them she registers legitimate concern about the teacher's responsibilities in the total undertaking:

One doesn't have to sit in any (contest) center long until a teacher's stamp-of-style surfaces. The good performances are going to be consistent and the bad performances are also going to be consistent. No hoping or praying is going to change that marvelous or just plain awful fact.

...why are some (contestants) so consistently good and some so consistently bad? There is only one answer. Because the method used is so good or so bad. With the obvious exception of a medically bad throat or the student that didn't hold up his end of the bargain in preparation (and what is that student doing at state level competition anyway?) the instructor is mirrored in every detail.

In an effort to encourage self-growth on the part of the teacher, Gloria asks: How long has it been since you (teacher) have learned a new piece of literature just for you? If you are a performer, how long since you have performed? The only reason I mention the above items is because we all have tendencies to forget the stages of learning and may miss reading some very vital signals coming, inadvertently, from our charges.

By interesting coincidence Tom Hardie, editor of *ACDAM* (Mich.), April '79, sees problems in the contest situation, too:

I am concerned about the performance and music I hear when adjudicating solo performance. In most cases of concern the student sings inappropriate music, either that which does not show contrast, or music which is unsuitable because of range demands or most critically, music with which the immature voice can not successfully cope... Nineteenth Century operatic arias which put demands on the mature voice can do harm to the growing high

school age singer's instrument. Such a choice is certainly questionable. National Association of Teachers of Singing, for example will disqualify singers in NATS auditions for performance of arias other than some approved ones of the Baroque period. Caution and patience for vocal maturity to arrive slowly seems advisable.

Whatever the level of difficulty of the music attempted, teachers responsible for the selection of appropriate repertoire for specific singers should view the scene from Gloria's seat in the contest center:

The theme must suit the student's age and emotional comprehension. You've all seen a gangling boy sing "fa-la-la through the meadows" — while you were dying for him. Think how he was feeling. Even one up on that awful scene: an alto performing a sea chantey!

Ah, yes, and your editor has memories of adjudicating such diverse selections as the "Habenera" from *Carmen*, followed closely in the same voice classification by *Mood Indigo* — the latter sung by a sultry brunette whose figure and histrionic blues style brought to mind darkened lounges, clinking glasses, and smokey spotlights.

Tom feels that a list of possible selections — not a required list — might be evolved by voice teachers who would know what repertoire would be suitable for the high school voice.

The Ohio Music Education Association publishes a 62 page list of music selected by specially designated committees from within the membership for vocal and instrumental solos and ensembles from which selections are to be selected for contest use. Selections are divided into three levels of difficulty: Class A (considered state level and suggested for advanced students), Class B (for students of developing ability), and Class C (usually reserved for beginners). The students registering to enter the contest must designate the class level at which they wish to compete and they are adjudicated with that classification in mind. That list goes a long way in solving problems of quality repertoire at all levels of capability.

Both Gloria and Tom are concerned about teachers meeting the individual needs of the student, with enough time provided for adequate preparation of the music and for advice on such fundamentals as posture, ease in front of the audience (for both student and auditors!), and insights into musicianship, interpretation, practice discipline and just plain persistence toward understanding and excellence.

That prompts further recollections of the teacher who inquired as to how I thought his student had sung in the competition — he himself hadn't had time to hear the aspiring performer sing before the contest. And what about the two little junior high school girls who sang a "duet" — both of them finally settling (almost) on the ALTO part in unison (almost).

And how can we tell how well students have learned these musical necessities? Why not have 'em sing for someone? How about using a choir rehearsal or maybe two for recital time? After all, a good number of the soloists and ensemble participants will be in the choir and available at that time. The non-participant-auditors ought to make a — well, at least a diverse and challenging audience!

If you wish their experience to be a little closer to life in the cruel world — including the contest situation — clear a recital evening and invite parents, friends, and the private teachers of the soloists to be guests. Hire an adjudicator who is sensitive to the needs of the students to listen, to write critiques of their work, and to discuss the performance of each participant. Consider the recital as a local contest and suggest that the adjudicator recommend students who are prepared to perform creditably at contest level.

The Time Is Now

Pre-civilization touring choirs were challenged by the absence of a Function Junction, or, as some of the more earthy members inelegantly called it, Thunder Corner, in the rear corner of the travel busses. This forced directors to be increasingly sensitive to the need for what the less-inhibited members called "potty pauses," or, more pointedly, "tinkle time."

My cultured accompanist was able to raise the aesthetic level of "the call" when the need made itself known. As the time approached, from out of the rear of the bus his high-flying baritone would come with the Messiah tenor's first enunciation, "Comfort Ye!"

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Do something: lead, follow, or get out of the way.

Rehearse difficult passages, not the easy ones.

What price progress: Beethoven's Fifth is now about .757 of a liter.

Notes of short duration lead to notes of longer duration. Robert Shaw.

Choirs rehearse to remove distractions from the performance so the composer can be heard.

No director tries to make a choir sound worse.

Growth comes only through risk. Harriet Simons.

The conductor has the advantage of not seeing the audience. Andre Kostalanetz.

We're lucky that we're not getting as much government as we're paying for. Will Rogers

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