

## A Defense of the Choral Art

*As presented April 25, 1991, at Christ Chapel, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota*

Dr. Karle Erickson

What is it that you have been doing lately to be in touch with your inner self, your inner spirit, your whole world of feelings? What have you been doing to educate those feelings, to grow in your awareness and control of them? They are, after all, what make you human. They, more than any other aspect of your being, I think, determine the quality of your daily existence.

Have you considered that all the intellectual brilliance and physical skill or prowess in the world is of little value if you do not and cannot perceive and respond with sensitivity to that which surrounds you in life: to people, to a rose in the garden, a musical composition, the magnificence of the stars in the sky, a theater production, a bluebird, a ballet, a sunset, a painting, a sculpture. All the knowledge in the world is not going to assure you of happiness in your life.

There is a great deal of discussion taking place today about educating the whole person. We say at Gustavus that *that* is what a liberal arts education is all about. Some writers identify that the whole person consists of four areas of potential: (1) intellectual, (2) physical, (3) moral/spiritual, and (4) aesthetic. It is clear that considerable attention is given in our colleges and high schools — as it should be — to intellectual and physical development. Less clear is a focus on moral/spiritual growth which is often left to the home and church environment even with the horrendous decay of the security of the love relationship in many families in today's society. But, in many cases, there exists little awareness at all of the critical need for growth in the fourth area of human potential: the aesthetic realm, the life of one's feelings, one's emotions, one's ability to be sensitive, to feel, to care. Yet this is the aspect of our existence that is the most crucial to our sense of personal well-being. Thus, the question must be asked: do not our feelings deserve as much attention as our intellect and our physical selves?

Persons of all ages, occupations, and intellectual abilities are searching for the ways and means toward personal happiness, the way out of despair, out of loneliness, of negative self-concepts and of feelings of insecurity. Some look to the intellect alone to find the solution, while others turn to alcohol and other drugs or to the material world, but, of course, to no lasting avail.

All of us have the capacity to take control of our lives, our feelings, our inner spirit. But to do so, we must become better able to understand and control our feelingful selves, our emotions. That can happen to the greatest extent possible only if we grow in terms of *that* aspect of our potential, just as we must continue to develop in terms of our intellectual awareness and understanding.

I expect many, if not most of you, have been surmizing where all of this is heading. You were right if you thought

that it would have something to do with the arts. Let's focus on one of the arts — music, a discipline of study whose subject — like any of the arts — is the human spirit and whose goal is the ennoblement of that spirit.

Music deals with the essence of what it is to be human, our capacity to feel and to care. It is a symbolic language, the forms of which can be structured to be analogous to the patterns of human experience, the patterns of our life of feeling. The fundamental relationships in music — we read in Suzanne Langer's *Philosophy In A New Key* — are tensions and resolutions; and the patterns generated by these functions are the patterns exemplified in all music of good quality, and also in all emotive responses in our everyday life. Therein lies the connection which allows music to become the vehicle through which we can study our feelings and grow in our awareness and control of them. Langer says it also in this way: "Music is a tonal analogue of the emotive life."

"A DEFENSE OF THE CHORAL ART" (Continued on page 5)

## From the President:

Kay Hartzell, NC-ACDA President

Everything related to the choir rehearsal and the classroom seems so distant in July. However, for most of us, the plan of action for the activity of our school and rehearsal year takes place during the summer months, not necessarily a lazy, hazy time, but rather a season of rest and rejuvenation brought about by a change of pace and some extended time with family and friends. Summer gives most of us an opportunity to work in a more casual atmosphere at a much more relaxed pace. A special group of people that has not experienced the luxury of a relaxed summer pace is the 1992 North Central Division Convention Planning Committee, a group of outstanding Iowa ACDA members who have volunteered their expertise in planning a superb convention for the benefit of the entire North Central Division membership from March 4-7, 1992, in Des Moines, Iowa.

The committee that has planned so tirelessly during the summer months has had the responsibility of working out the puzzle for the most efficient use of facilities, creating the most meaningful schedule of special interest sessions, headliners, and performing choirs, and developing the best blend of hospitality, fun, and camaraderie for our visit to Des Moines. Am I a bit premature in discussing the March convention in this issue of *Melisma*? Not at all! This is the perfect time to make your plans and to set the dates on your calendar to assure that you will be part of the excitement of March 4-7 in Des Moines.

"FROM THE PRESIDENT"

(Continued on page 2)

## "FROM THE PRESIDENT"

(Continued from page 1)

The North Central Division Board of Directors, recognizing the importance to the individual state organizations of assuming the role of convention hosts, made a commitment to the membership that a rotation of states would occur in establishing the site for the division conventions. This system of rotation has not been formalized, but has remained on the board records as an unspoken agreement between the six states of the division. Every state that hosts a division convention experiences a heightened awareness of the value of ACDA among its membership, an increase in membership, and the sense of accomplishment and friendship that is the result of working together in creating a masterpiece.

What is the importance of this commitment to each of us as members of North Central ACDA? Every state will be awarded the privilege of planning a showcase convention for the division. Even though the site of the convention may be somewhat remote to some of the membership during a given year, we need to understand the importance of supporting the North Central Division, realizing that in the process of rotation, we can be assured of our turn.

This year the North Central Division Convention finds itself in the risky position of sandwich filling between two slices of bread. The Central Division ACDA will hold its convention in Chicago two weeks prior to our convention in Des Moines. Some of the convention headliners will be the same and travel from parts of Wisconsin to Chicago may even be less expensive than travel to Des Moines. In addition, the Southwest Division ACDA will hold its convention in Kansas City two weeks after our convention. Once again, some of the headliners may be the same and we can reason that the cost of travel from parts of the North Central Division to Kansas City may well be less expensive than travel to Des Moines. Why then should we choose to attend the North Central Division Convention March 4-7? Let me ask another question. Do you order a sandwich at the deli because of the bread on the outside, or because of the filling on the inside?

The North Central Division of ACDA has an enviable reputation for exciting and meaningful convention planning. We have a history of taking risks with innovative ideas in programming, and we bring a level of performance to the convention stage that is unmatched. Perhaps on the basis of loyalty and pride alone we should make a commitment to the excellence of our own North Central Division Convention. It is a certainty that in order to continue offering this degree of excellence to the membership we need your presence at the Des Moines Convention. It is indeed a certainty that we want your presence in Des Moines. **This is YOUR convention!**

What benefits might be yours from attending the North Central Division Convention that cannot be derived from attending either of the other conventions? Let's begin with the people. Conventions are a time for renewal of old friendships and acquaintances, a time to talk shop with the expert from Nebraska or North Dakota that you only see at conventions, a time to meet new people and to enjoy the warmth of midwestern hospitality as only the North Central Division can provide. It's a time for fun! Where else would you be able to shake hands and share a "hello" with Cornell Runestad or James Elsberry from Nebraska, Larry Bach or Jane Brambilla from Minnesota, Scott MacPherson or James Hershberger from Wisconsin, John Brohman or Karen Strepke from Iowa, Charles McCauley or Sandra Starr from North Dakota, and Barbara Nolen or Clark Luntstrom from South Dakota?

Last year in *Melisma*, I attempted to relate the ongoing activities of the North Central Board and their "Vision to Action" commitment. I invited each of you to become involved and to begin to work for ACDA in order that the organization begin to work for you. What have you done? Have you procrastinated as busy people so often do? We are offering the membership a wonderful opportunity to be a vital part of the "Vision to Action" planning of the North Central Division during the 1992 convention in Des Moines. The program committee has set aside time for a States Luncheon where we will discuss together the issues threatening the future of our choral art. Your input is valued and will be a very important part of our continued planning. Come to Des Moines to get involved and take ownership in the direction of your organization.

A special audition committee met in late June and listened to over 50 tapes before making their selection of performing choirs for the 1992 convention. This is the first published list of the selected choirs and we extend our sincere congratulations to them and to their directors for a job well done. Only in Des Moines will you be able to hear:

### Selected for Music and Worship Performance:

Matins Choir from Plymouth U.C.C. in Des Moines; Anita Micich, director

The St. John's Boys' Choir from Collegeville, MN; Br. Paul Richards, OSB, director

### Selected as a Demonstration Choir for an Interest Session:

Mount Vernon High School Concert Choir from Iowa; Joleen Nelson, director

### Selected for Solo Concert Performance:

National Lutheran Choir from Minnesota; Larry Fleming, director  
University of North Dakota Concert Choir; James Rodde, director  
Northwestern College Choir from Minnesota; Dennis Port, director  
Kantorei from the University of Iowa; William Hatcher, director  
University Chorale, a women's chorus from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Carolee Curtright, director

St. John's University Men's Chorus from Minnesota; Axel Theimer, director

Wartburg College Choir from Waverly, Iowa; Paul Torkelson, director  
Lawrence University Concert Choir from Appleton, Wisconsin; Rick Bjella, director

The Rapid City Children's Chorus from South Dakota; Gloria Brandt, director

The Freshman Treble Choir from Charles City Junior High School in Iowa; Janiece Bergland, director

Mt. Pleasant Community High School Concert Choir from Iowa; Robert Anderson, director

The Fort Madison High School Chorale from Iowa; Allen Chapman, director

Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School Select Women's Choir from Iowa; Carol Tralau, director

The Dale Warland Cabaret Singers from Minnesota; Jerry Rubino, director

West Side Delegation Show Choir from Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School in Iowa; Peter Eklund, director

All of the above choirs have been extended an invitation to perform at the convention. In the event that a choir cannot make the final commitment to the convention, the following three choirs have been selected as alternate performers:

The Grinnell Singers from Grinnell College in Iowa; John Stuhrrommereim, director

South Dakota State University Concert Choir; Charles Canaan, director

The Moorhead High School Renaissance Singers from Minnesota; Rod Rothlisberger, director

The quality of the audition tapes was excellent and the process of selection was a difficult but rewarding one for members of the committee.

Use the renewal of summer to plan for your professional renewal from March 4-7, 1992, in Des Moines, Iowa. The North Central Division Convention has so much to offer each of you and it needs each of you to guarantee a successful program. Mark your personal calendars, clear your school calendars, seek the blessings of your administrators, and begin to plan for personal or organizational funding that will allow you to be a part of the excitement of Des Moines in 1992 — YOUR convention!

## 1994 NC-ACDA Convention March 2-5, 1994 Rapid City, South Dakota

Steve Parker . . . . . Convention Chair  
James Feiszli . . . . . Assistant Chair  
Dione Peterson . . . . . Program  
Phil Swan, Judie Mathers . . . . . Registration  
Jane Marten . . . . . Finances  
Cathy Britton . . . . . Publicity  
Gloria Brandt, Rebecca Kenner . . . . . Hospitality  
Clayton & Nellie Southwick . . . . . Facilities  
Alan Stanga . . . . . Exhibits

# Our Quest for Choral Excellence: Majestic or Misguided?

by Michael Nuss

(NOTE: Michael Nuss was recently the featured choral headliner at the 1991 Minnesota Music Educators Association Mid-Winter In-Service in Minneapolis. His three sessions were stimulating, thought-provoking and motivational. By popular demand, Michael has consented to write an article for *Melisma* which highlights a few of the critical points he made in his presentation.)

The immortal artist, Pablo Casals, said, "Either you believe in what you are doing or you do not. Music is something to be approached with integrity, not something to be turned on or off like tap water." His observations about life and art were incisive and cogent. This particular Casals quote — powerful its dimensions — compels music educators to be thoughtful and thorough in their philosophy and their pedagogy.

Integrity. The word connotes straightforwardness, authenticity of purpose. But how authentic is our involvement in choral music education? What factors motivated not only our interest in choral music, but our commitment to education as well? Are we truly committed to education, or are we committed to clever impersonations of instructional enterprise masquerading as education — entertainment, public relation, self-aggrandizement, ego enhancement, trophy accumulation, dossier-building and singer exploitation? What role obligation accompanies our decision to teach?

My greatest concerns for our profession currently focus on the glaring inadequacy of preservice and inservice teacher training, the persistent and duplicitous allure of commercialism, the disturbing emphasis of the visual over the aural, and the preponderance of artistically indigent choral music curricula. Under the banner of "our quest for excellence" many choral educators zealously pursue a wide variety of unrelated activities which have little or no pedagogical value and do nothing to awaken the aesthetic urges and sensitivities within their students. These horrific descriptions of choral music education may not apply to the majority of programs in our country, but an alarming and ever-increasing number of programs easily conform to these shocking parameters.

On the surface, it would appear that many choral directors actually believe in what they are doing. They appear to be completely involved with training the singers in their

charge and are responsibly carrying out the duties entrusted to them as custodians of the choral art. However, how much integrity is involved in their quest for excellence? How much of their effort is focused on nurturing their students as autonomous intellectual agents, capable of experiencing and creating art? Art must transcend the pedantry of "learning the correct pitches" and "singing in a stylistic manner," but it is not at all unusual to witness choral programs that do not progress beyond these basic stages of artistic endeavor! In actual fact, an inordinate number of extremely "successful" choral programs owe their continued existence to the justification embodied in display cases filled with awards, trophies, and superior ratings. It is easy for the choral educator to fall victim to the allure "fame and glory" presents. Reputation, self-esteem and professional advancement are enhanced or even established by such "fame." However, disturbing questions about "authenticity of purpose" continue to haunt me. Is integrity involved in the accumulation of "fame" so prized by directors? Is the goal the accumulation itself, or is there a greater, curricular goal? Is the director's motivation learner-centered or director-centered? Does the entire choral program benefit from this "quest for excellence" or just the select singers and select ensembles? Is the director authentically interested in the growth and development of the singers, or is this ancillary to other goals which are of primary concern?

It is our innate capacity to be involved with art — its majesty and its beauty — that enables our life form to transcend the monotony and routine of every day life to encounter unimaginable vistas of experience. Bennett Reimer suggests, "Human beings create and respond to expressive forms not as an adjunct to their lives — as a pleasant activity for spare moments — but as an essential component of their nature." As Auntie Mame reminds us in those immortal words: "Life is a banquet, and most of the poor old bastards are starving to death!" Is it not our primary responsibility, as arts educators, to effectively ensure that every singer in our choral program is given the tools to experience the incredible feast which is art?

Recall Bennett Reimer's *insistant* conviction

that "music education exists *first* and *foremost* to develop every person's natural responsiveness to the power of the art of music." This philosophical framework would seem to indicate that our work with the singers of America must focus on the aesthetic rather than the utilitarian aspect of music. It has been convincingly suggested that an effective balance between the two is achievable and desirable. Even so, we continue to encounter choral music educators who repeatedly confuse the public relations aspect of music with the aesthetic function of the art! As music educators, we must remain committed to the irrefutable verity that teaching and learning are our cardinal functions. Whatever else we do — and in some cases we are simply overburdened with additional concerns and demands — we must not allow the utilitarian and nonaesthetic influences to become the alpha and the omega of our professional and curricular effort. The art of music provided our reason for existence; the process of education determines how we function.

How many of our decisions are based on philosophically sound foundations, authentically legitimate instructional purpose, and ethically justifiable actions? Decisions about curriculum design and implementation must not be a matter of indifference, whim, or marketing, but must be based on tightly reasoned and thoughtful consideration of questions such as: What educational purposes would the choral program seek to attain? What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? These questions have, as their primary focus, an emphasis on a curriculum design which serves the needs of the learner. Once the direction of the choral curriculum is determined, a host of more specific concerns must be handled. This includes organization, repertoire selection, scheduling, instructional strategy, leadership technique, and management scheme.

It is crucial to appreciate the fact that *teacher* is a role word. Entering the teaching profession presupposes an implicit commitment to obligations embodied by the role. Are we "teaching" if our "curriculum" decisions are shaped by the answers to questions like: How can we win first place? What repertoire choices will achieve a stunning program resulting in a vibrant concert? How can our audience be best entertained? Will it impress my colleagues? Will the administration (dean, principal, department head...) be impressed? What kind of program will look best in my vita? Will I achieve tenure as a result of it? Can we make a lot of money? Will it be "flashy" on tour? Will it help raise funds for our European tour? Will it make others finally "see" that I really do know what I'm doing? Will it establish my stature in the profession?

All of us work within the context of an

## Melisma

a publication of the North Central Division of the  
American Choral Directors Association

Published three times a year.

educational setting — whether this setting is formal as in the case of the school or the church, or informal as in the case of the professional choir. Recognizing the significance of our role obligations as teachers, we must be committed to *teaching*. Anything we become in our personal journey of artistic and professional awakening must preserve our authenticity of purpose as pedagogues. This authenticity must be reflected in the critical choices we make which impact on those learners in our tutelage. Successful teaching must include setting aside personal agendas in favor of espousing those which embody the growth and development of our students.

Although there are many different ways to "slice the pie," I am currently quite fond of the suggestion that successful teaching is based on four integral cornerstones: knowledge, curriculum, philosophy, and ethics. Without any one of these cornerstones, we are incomplete as teachers, unable to stand. However, my observations indicate that undergraduate institutions tend to focus on the development of skills and methods rather than on critical thinking. Instead of graduating professional educators who are capable of designing curriculum and developing effective instructional strategy, our teacher-training institutions often thrust first-year teachers into the world as nothing more than neophyte technicians — trained to carry out strategies and curricula handed to them by others. This intellective and artistic regurgitation serves little purpose in the overall enterprise of education and debilitates the "teacher" as a professional educator. Without a strong foundation as a critical thinker, the "new-born" has no framework for growth or development and is effectively stranded in an embryonic stage! Undergraduate preparation has "thrown them plenty of fish" but has failed to "help them discover how to fish." This cognitive bankruptcy evolves into familiar scenarios of artistically endowed musicians who become frustrated with teaching as a profession because they lack the necessary tools which would enable them to develop into first-rate professionals. Over the years, these "technicians" either leave the profession or continue to "exist" in their "fur-lined rut." Even those "technicians" who become highly skilled at creating stunning vessels of art — choral ensembles that sing with flawless intonation, impeccable tones, and incredible precision — rarely achieve the authentic state of mature pedagogy.

Although these technical skills and competencies are legitimate, necessary components of becoming a successful teacher, they rarely coalesce because they are bereft of a philosophical and ethical center. Each choice a teacher makes as a professional should carry out in practice a belief about the value of what is being taught. When the enormous amount of energy it takes to be an effective teacher is not rooted in authenticity and integrity, "flash" becomes the norm and the singers become the "tools of procurement."

In a recent conversation with Jeremy Jackman (formerly the top voice in the King's Singers) I asked, "What is it that makes the King's Singers so engaging in their performances? While there are many outstanding choral ensembles in existence, what element is it that truly puts the King's

Singers in a class all their own?" His response: "Our foremost goal is to *communicate with* the audience." His answer was compelling in its poignancy and its simplicity. Real communication presupposes the basics of ensemble preparation. The artistic enterprise becomes an exercise of community — the performers enter into community with the audience, becoming catalysts that enable their vision of art to be experienced by others through the performance itself. How are we to achieve this artistic unity of spirit if our curriculum and pedagogy centers on peripheral goals? Will true art ever be achieved in experiences which are bereft of beauty in the developmental stages? Can art be thrust upon our singers or must they learn, developmentally, to experience it at their own level? How can beauty be achieved and understood if it is not presented in an artistic, beautiful manner?

On page six of the introduction to the book, *Choral Conducting Symposium*, Harold Decker suggests:

"As conductor-teachers and as custodians of the choral art, we are responsible for developing the taste and musical sensitivity of our singers, our audiences, and

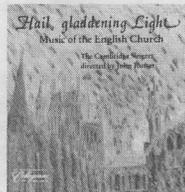
our congregations. Art feeds the soul and stimulates a search for beauty in all things. An effective choral program at any level will contain the following ingredients:

- 1) A conductor with high ideals who elicits the very best from his singers.
- 2) Carefully selected music that combines poetry and music and the highest levels of sensitivity.
- 3) An understanding of and enthusiasm for the music.
- 4) An emphasis on the communicative powers inherent in the choral art."

Being a successful choral music educator involves a high degree of musical sensitivity and pedagogical expertise. We have accepted the role of facilitating artistic experience and aesthetic meaning for those learners entrusted to us. Although this is no easy task — things of significant value rarely are "easy" — it is certainly not insurmountable. It calls for professionalism, authenticity, and integrity. We must know what we are doing, believe in what we are doing, care about what we are doing, and do what is best for the growth and development of the learner. If not, our quest for choral excellence will be without purpose.

## JOHN RUTTER AND THE CAMBRIDGE SINGERS: "HAIL, GLADDENING LIGHT"

**AN EXTRAORDINARY NEW COLLECTION  
OF A CAPPELLA MUSIC!**



NBC called John Rutter, "the best living composer and conductor of choral music." Now, Rutter and The Cambridge Singers bring their acclaimed talent to "Hail, Gladdening Light," just released on Collegium.

Recorded in the soaring acoustics of the Lady Chapel of Ely Cathedral in England, and spanning four centuries of English church music, "Hail, Gladdening Light" features 23 songs including a new Rutter composition. To order, call toll-free.

*Collegium*  
RECORDS

Collegium Records, P.O. Box 31366, Omaha, NE 68131  
**1-800-367-9059 TOLL-FREE!**

# 1992 NC-ACDA Convention to Offer Special Workshop for Future Choral Music Educators

Rick Bjella, NC Chair for Youth & Student Activities

## Workshop Format

Three clinicians for each portion of the clinic sessions would be utilized: Scott Dorsey (Student Times Editor) has agreed to give tape recorded comments to the college student and Carolee Curtright (University of Nebraska) has agreed to give written comments during each session as well. The other clinicians are listed below. Each student will receive a video and audio tape of their session.

Student conductors will be initially selected by the state student representatives and finally an audition at the convention prior to these sessions at the convention will determine which students will be conducting during the sessions. All music education students are encouraged to attend. A demonstration group will be selected for these presentations.

### Level I: Introducing a Work (50-minute workshop)

Clinician: William Wyman, Nebraska Wesleyan

Three students (8 minutes each) would be elected from the North Central states to introduce a composition to the choir for the first time. The three selections to be used would be the *Alma Redemptoris* (Palestrina), *Jesu, meine Freude* (chorale - Bach), and *Alles Hat seine Zeit* (Haydn).

Each student would be asked to consider the many effective ways to begin teaching a new piece of music. After each presentation, Dr. Wyman would make pertinent comments towards more effective communication, efficient use of time, dealing without the piano, and other strategies that may be utilized.

### Level II: Non-verbal Communication (50-minute workshop)

Clinician: Richard Bjella, Lawrence University

Three different students (8 minutes each) would be selected to conduct the *Ave Maria* of Bruckner. The students will be asked to use a minimal amount of verbal communication. Eye contact, conducting technique, facial expressions, and other non-verbal details will be addressed.

The guest choir will come prepared on this selection. Final stages of musical preparation should be addressed in this session.

### Level III: Verbal Communication (50-minute workshop)

Clinician: Karle Erickson, Gustavus

Three different students (8 minutes each) would be selected to prepare *At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners* of Wilmetta Spencer. Students would be expected to show effective non-verbal skills, but this session would primarily address verbal directions, concerns about the meaning of the text, discussion of structure, and delivery of provocative questions to the choir members.

Our thanks to the Wingert-Jones corporation for providing all of the music.

Obviously, all of the clinicians will address many concerns, but the primary focus will be on those listed above. If you or someone you know would be interested and qualified for an experience such as this, have them please write or call their respective R&S state representative listed below or contact me directly.

## State Chairs for Student Chapters

### IOWA

Tim Watson  
305 N.E. 2nd Street  
Eagle Grove, IA 50533  
(515) 448-4239 (H)  
Eagle Grove High School

### MINNESOTA

Stan Wold  
University of Minnesota/Duluth  
Humanities Building  
Duluth, MN 55812  
(218) 726-7504

### NEBRASKA

James Hejduk  
University of Nebraska  
School of Music  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
(402) 472-2293

### NORTH DAKOTA

JoAnne Brorson  
Department of Music  
221 Reineke  
North Dakota State University  
 Fargo, ND 58105  
(701) 237-7822 (W) — 280-0602 (H)

### WISCONSIN

Tom Hale  
Northland College  
210 East 3rd Street  
Washburn, WI 54891  
(715) 373-5773 (H)  
c.c. Carolee Curtright  
Associate Professor  
Music Education/Choral Activities  
University of Nebraska  
School of Music  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0100

### National Chair for Youth & Student Activities:

Guy Webb  
Coordinator of Choral Studies  
Department of Music  
901 S. National  
Southwest Missouri State U.  
Springfield, MO 65804-0094  
(417) 836-5182 (W) — 883-1123 (H)

### North Central Chair for Youth & Student Activities:

Rick Bjella  
Conservatory of Music  
Lawrence University  
P.O. Box 599  
Appleton, WI 54912  
(414) 832-6620  
3011 W. Heritage Ave.  
Appleton, WI 54914  
(414) 731-8594

### Student Times Editor:

Scott Dorsey  
1100 Arthur, Apt. D4  
Iowa City, IA 52595  
(319) 354-4651 (W)  
(515) 673-6112 (H)

Dr. William Wyman  
Nebraska Wesleyan University  
5000 St. Paul  
Lincoln, NE 68504  
(402) 465-2288 (S) — 486-3607 (H)

Dr. Karle Erickson  
RR 3 - Box 29A  
St. Peter, MN 56082  
(507) 933-7347 (S) — 931-2265 (H)

## "A DEFENSE OF THE CHORAL ART" (Continued from page 1)

An important awareness is that music is non-linguistic symbolism. Therein lies one of its strengths. It is not bound by specific meanings. The responses we have to its symbolic language are unique to each of us just as our life of feelings is particular and unique to each of us. But, therein also lies one of the difficulties. Because music is non-linguistic symbolism and does not have specific meanings, no one has yet devised a tool to measure an individual's affective response to it. As a result, it is often thought to be unimportant simply because it cannot be quantified. Affective growth cannot be proved or measured. Results cannot be plotted on a graph. A further difficulty is that the extent to which one has increased in knowledge about the art — which can be tested and quantified — is not necessarily related to how much aesthetic growth has taken place, i.e., growth at the feelingful level of one's existence. Therefore, the purpose of serious study in music is often misunderstood. It may even be considered extra-curricular by the uninformed.

But what, then, of the intellect? Is the aesthetic process void of the use of intelligence? Is it simply an emotional catharsis type of involvement — a simple bit of sentimentality? To the contrary, the mind is crucial. To be sure, one can respond to music based simply on a reaction to the stimuli of the properties of sound alone. *But*, to come in contact with the depth of its meaning, one must know the theoretical and historical body of knowledge of the discipline. Such awareness is necessary in order to perceive the way in which the composer has put together the elements of music (melody, rhythm, harmony, form, texture and timbre) to set up the conditions of tension and release that contain the essence of the art. The more one knows, the greater the possibility of perceiving increased levels of subtlety in musical relationships (this is no different than in the study, for example, of physics or chemistry or economics); and the higher the level of perception of the art, the greater is the potential for engaging feelings of a higher order of subtlety.

I challenge each of us to keep clearly before us the awareness that the arts in education must fundamentally serve the purpose of enabling the growth of each of us in terms of our life of feelings, that part of us which makes us uniquely human, that part of us which determines the very quality — not the quantity — but the *quality* of our existence.

Perhaps music may rightly be called the language of the soul. Johann Sebastian Bach seemed to know from whence it comes, for he often scripted at the end of his writings, *Soli Deo Gloria* ("To God Alone Be The Glory").

Just consider what this place — or any place where you live — would and could be like if more people in the community had a better awareness of, better control of, and greater security in terms of their feelings. Think of the possibilities for enhancing each other's lives. That is a rather interesting thought, isn't it?

September 26-28, 1991

NC-ACDA

Division Leadership Meetings  
Des Moines, Iowa

## Iowa:

**President:** Robert Anderson  
Mount Pleasant High School  
Mount Pleasant, IA 52641

### Thank You to Leadership

ICDA continues to be a driving force for music activities in the state of Iowa. The ongoing strength of ICDA has been due to our organization's dedicated leadership. As our president for the past two years, Lauretta Graetz offered vision and strength that helped ICDA create new programs, refine our existing services, and reach more choral musicians in Iowa. Thank you for all of your caring and relentless work, Lauretta.

The ICDA state newsletter, *Sounding Board*, is our major communications tool among the membership. All of ICDA was very proud to have this great publication recognized as one of the outstanding newsletters in all of ACDA. Aimee Beckmann-Collier has left the editorship of *Sounding Board*, and we thank her for the excellence she poured into it over the past eight years. Carol Tralau of Cedar Rapids will take over as editor and will offer the same marvelous direction.

### Summer Convention News

The 17th annual Summer Convention/Symposium was held at Mason City July 22-26. The list of headliners was diverse and interesting, led by Robert De Cormier and the Robert De Cormier Singers. Others included Henry Leck, Constantina Tsolainou, William Hatcher, Eph Ehle, and Emily Crocker. On Wednesday night the ICDA-commissioned work for 1991 was premiered by its composer, Emma Lou Diemer. Other highlights of the convention were created in excellent interest and reading sessions by Iowa choral directors and a retreat with motivational speaker Carol Harder.

The convention chairwoman for the 1992 summer convention is Dr. Sharon Hansen from the University of Northern Iowa. She has a very creative and exciting convention in the planning.

### District Activities

Many of the activities and services ICDA sponsors happen as a result of the financial success of the summer convention. Within the eight districts of ICDA, our representatives organize many events, including pre-All-State rehearsals, youth choir clinics, church music activities, and district honors choirs. These activities reach thousands of Iowa students and adult musicians.

The label, Youth Choir Clinics, is a revision in a long-standing district ICDA program. For many years ICDA has sponsored Junior High Choral Clinics. With many school districts moving to the middle school concept in Iowa, the ICDA Board felt we needed to expand the base of this service to include all middle school levels. The clinics will begin this definition in the 1991-92 school year.

### Fall Activities

The 10th annual Fall Student Symposium

was held September 14 at Iowa State University. This event is directed toward college choral music majors and first-year teachers as a guide to beginning teaching and working in choral music. This year's event included sessions on state contest rules, a panel of junior high teachers on dealing with that age group, the elementary singing voice, conducting sessions with a clinic choir from Valley High School in West Des Moines, and a panel of second- and third-year teachers discussing first-year problems and joys.

The 1991 Opus Honor Choir will take place on November 22 in C.V. Stephens Auditorium at Iowa State University in Ames. It will feature two 200-voice choirs for grades 7-9, one for girls and one for boys. Lois Nichols will conduct the girls choir and Vern Haagsma will conduct the boys. The second ICDA Collegiate Honors Choir will perform at this concert as well, under the direction of Aimee Beckmann-Collier of Drake University, chairwoman of the 1992 North Central convention.

### McCowen Award Given

During the Summer Convention in July, the McCowen Award, named for long-time Iowa choral director Robert McCowen, was presented to Bruce Norris. The McCowen Award is not presented on an annual basis, but only when ICDA sees the need to recognize an individual's excellence in working for choral music in Iowa. Bruce has guided an outstanding music program in Mondamin, while at the same time he has worked on the ICDA Board as secretary/treasurer. He also was the secretary/treasurer for North Central for many years. Bruce has been the spirit of ICDA for all of the time he has worked for it and truly no one is a stranger to Bruce. He is a great human being. Thank you, Bruce, for all you have done for us!

### '92 North Central Convention

Iowa is very excited about hosting the 1992 North Central Convention in March in Des Moines. We extend a warm Iowa invitation and welcome to you all to join us for this marvelous event.

## Minnesota:

**President:** Stephen Boehlke  
Rosemount Senior High  
Rosemount, MN 55068

### Program Expands Summer Dialogue

For the first time in its seven-year history, the annual Minnesota Dialogue expanded and coordinated its successful program with the annual MMEA All-State Choir Camp, held July 30-August 3 at St. Olaf College in Northfield. Also new for the All-State Camp was the addition of two more select All-State choirs for men's and women's chorus. Dialogue participants were given the opportunity to observe All-State rehearsal

sals under the direction of Anton Armstrong, Mixed Choir; Beth Holmes, Women's Chorus; and Gary Walth, Men's Chorus.

In addition to the All-State conductor presentations and rehearsals, other topics in every area of choral music performance were presented by Karle Erickson of Gustavus Adolphus College; composer Stephen Paulus; Paul Oakley, music director of the Bach Society Chorus; Wayne Kivell, Northfield High School; John Ferguson, St. Olaf College; Kenneth Jennings, St. Olaf College; Axel Theimer, St. John's University; Duayne Malewicki, Osseo All-District Children's Chorus; Rich Wheeler, computer specialist; Northfield public schools; David Jorlett, University of Minnesota; and the Voice Trek Jazz Ensemble.

Rounding out the exciting program were twelve R&S Chorus, each presenting their "Pick Six" winning choral selections for the 1991-92 season.

### Annual College Student Symposium

Targeting college vocal music majors and beginning vocal music directors, the fifth annual College Student Symposium will be held on Saturday, October 5, at St. Cloud State University. In addition to hosting the symposium, the SCSU student ACCA chapter will develop the program, under the guidance of advisor (and former ACDA of Minnesota president) Stephen Fuller.

### Second Annual Combined Male Chorus & Treble Choir Festival

Big plans are shaping up for the second annual Combined Male Chorus and Treble Choir Festival to be held on Saturday, October 26, at St. John's University in Collegeville. Over 1000 select choral students from high schools and colleges are expected to participate in this exciting event. Thirteen collegiate choral ensembles, plus selected SSAA/TTBB quartets from state high schools will be involved. The Festival's finale performance will begin at 4:00 p.m. and will be held in the beautiful St. John's Abbey Church. Coordinators of this year's event are Bruce Becker of Apple Valley High School, Rolf Anderson of Willmar High School, and Axel Theimer of St. John's.

### 16th Annual State Convention

Sir David Willcocks will headline the ACDA of Minnesota State Convention program on November 22 and 23, hosted by Mankato State University. Sir David will present two sessions entitled: "Choral Music of the English Renaissance" and "English Anthems of the 20th Century."

Also appearing on the program will be the first organized Junior High School Honors Choir, under the direction of David Jorlett of the University of Minnesota and Normandale Community College.

Other selected groups appearing on the program will be: Bethany Lutheran College Concert Choir, Dennis Marzolf, conductor; Hastings High School Concert Choir, Lin Warren, conductor; Northfield Children's

## Voices from the States

Choir, Cora Scholz, conductor; and the St. John's University/College of St. Benedict Chamber Chorale, Axel Theimer, conductor.

A special Friday night opening extravaganza will take place with the observance of the 60th anniversary performance of the Big Nine High School Conference Select Choir, under the guest direction of Paul Oakley, music director of the Bach Society Chorus. In addition to his work with Big Nine, Paul, as R&S Church Music Chair, will coordinate a special ecumenical worship festival featuring four Twin Cities church and synagogue choirs, each representing a different musical tradition.

Something has been added to our convention format by the scheduling of select demonstration choirs for various clinic sessions. Groups appearing in this new format are small high school choir programs from Big Lake High School, James Fiskum, director; and Paynesville High School, Cheryl Bungum, director. Junior High School/Middle School programs will be represented by the Madrigal Singers of Plymouth Middle School in suburban Plymouth, with director Dennis Jewitt presenting a session entitled: "Suitable Repertoire for the Junior High/Middle School Choir."

Also scheduled to appear are sessions on music touring, voice building for the

elementary classroom and choir program, and contest music for Class II and III schools.

As a special feature of the convention program, the F. Melius Christiansen Award, the Minnesota Choral Director of the Year, and the Outstanding Young Choral Director Award will be presented at a noon luncheon.

The Convention Chair is Steven Boehlke of Rosemount High School.

### Newsletter Wins National Award

"Star of the North," the state newsletter for ACDA of Minnesota, received an award for excellence from the editorial board of the *Choral Journal*. The special award was presented to ACDA of Minnesota President Bruce Becker at a ceremony during the Phoenix convention last March.

Congratulations to "Star of the North" editor Dr. Ken Hodgson and staff from the University of Minnesota-Morris for your outstanding contributions to our state membership.

---

*"Good art is nothing more than infinite patience."* — Wm. Wallace Kimball

---

## Nebraska:

**President:** Ron Troester  
Northwest High School  
2710 North Road  
Grand Island, NE 68803  
**President-Elect:** Dick Palmer  
1038 N. 28th Ave.  
Blair, NE 68008

Nebraska choral directors have had an exciting agenda this past year and it looks like things are getting even better.

This past February the NCDA hosted the third annual Show Choir Festival with 28 high school groups and four junior high show choirs performing. Twelve received gold trophies for their superior performances. Larry Mason and Pete Eklund served as judges.

Our fall convention will be held on October 25 at Hastings College. Dick Palmer, NCDA President-Elect, has put together an excellent convention, focusing on "The Health and Well-Being of the Choral Director in the 90's." Sessions and activities will address the day-to-day problems and provide information and inspiration for solutions. Paul Brod vik will be one of the featured speakers. Also, our first Junior High Honors Choir will be held on the same day with Nebraska's Michael Nuss serving as the clinician.

The NCDA Summer Convention, held in conjunction with Wingert Jones Music on August 1-2 at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, featured Julie Knowles and Douglas McEwen as clinicians.

Plans are underway for elementary honors choir festivals called "Sing Around Nebraska." Five sites across the state will be used for the 4th, 5th and 6th grade students. This will be a great opportunity to provide students with a unique choral experience with quality literature and clinicians, as well as the opportunity for other teachers to observe and learn. Sharon Smith of Omaha is serving as coordinator.

Finally, on behalf of the NCDA, I want to thank Cheri Helmer for her years of dedicated service to the NCDA and ACDA. She has shown exceptional leadership and we all appreciate all her time and effort dedicated to our organization.

## North Dakota:

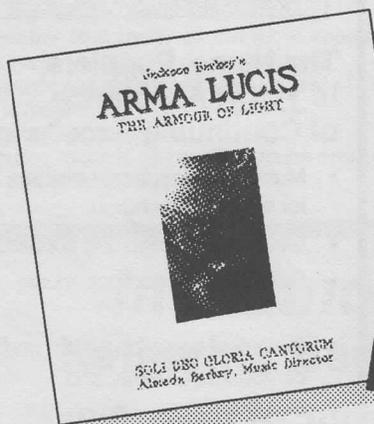
**President:** Gary Walth  
Minot State University  
500 University Ave. West  
Minot, ND 58701  
**President-Elect:** Angie Koppang  
305 Ryan Dr., No. 12  
Bismarck, ND 58501

North Dakota ACDA announces its newly-elected, appointed and reappointed officers, representatives and chairpersons for 1991-1993:

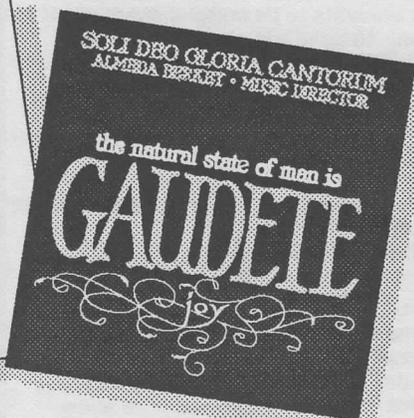
Gary Walth, Minot . . . . . President  
Angie Koppang, Bismarck . . . . . President-Elect  
Joseph Hegstad, Minot . . . . . Sec./Treas.  
Sheila Childs, Kindred . . . . . East Rep.  
Joel Beyer, Bottineau . . . . . West Rep.

## Now <sup>2</sup> Magnificent recordings

**SOLI DEO GLORIA CANTORUM**  
ALMEDA BERKEY • MUSIC DIRECTOR



*"ARMA LUCIS is a super album!"*  
John Rutter



*"Exciting recording, and a marvelous choir..."*  
Anders Öhrwall  
composer of GAUDETE

AVAILABLE ON  
CD OR CASSETTE



SDG RECORDS • 3402 Woolworth Avenue • Omaha, Nebraska 68105

# Voices from the States

## R & S Chairpersons:

Glynes Wignes, Fargo ..... Children's  
JoAnn Brorson, Fargo ..... College/Univ.  
Jim Rodde, Grand Forks ..... Community  
Joseph Hegstad, Minot ..... Men's  
Joel Beyer, Bottineau ..... Boys'  
Charles McCauley, Grand Forks ... Sr. High  
Neal Prichard, Bismarck .. Vocal Jazz/Show  
Karen Traeholt, Bismarck ..... Jr. High  
Herb Parker, Jr., Williston ..... Women's  
James Boschker, Bismarck ..... Worship  
and Church Music

A special "thank you" goes to outgoing ND-ACDA officers and R&S Chairpersons and to ND-ACDA Past President Charles Ruzicka. Your work for ACDA and choral music in North Dakota has been very significant! Thank you for your outstanding contributions to ND-ACDA.

## Coming Attractions

Upcoming events will include a business meeting and general gathering at the Fall NDMEA convention in Fargo on either October 17th or 18th.

ND-ACDA will sponsor a winter choral event on February 7th and 8th in Bismarck, featuring the 1992 ND-ACDA Junior High School Honors Choir. Other events planned include guest choral groups, reading and interest sessions, and an evening church music gala. Bismarck ACDA members Angie Koppang, Karen Traeholt and Jim Boschker will be the "hosts" for the event. More information will be provided in the near future. Junior High Honors Choir members will be selected through taped auditions with a November 1, 1991, deadline.

## South Dakota:

**President:** Charles Canaan  
South Dakota State University  
Lincoln Music Hall, Box 2212  
Brookings, SD 57007

**President-Elect:** Clayton Southwick  
3554 Chapel Lane  
Rapid City, SD 57701

In a recent edition of the Sioux Falls *Argus Leader*, syndicated columnist Dave Barry wrote an article entitled "Group singing falls by wayside." In his opening statement he quoted the *New York Times* as saying Americans are no longer any good at singing. He stated that the lack of group singing is the result of 1) elimination of religion from the public schools, and 2) the rise of rock and roll.

Because of the legal implications of religious music in the public schools, students no longer have contact with good choral literature that has come out of our religious and spiritual heritage. He stated that his children no longer sing religious songs and instead are singing such ditties as "Suzy Snowflake." Barry states that since the rise of rock and roll, today's popular music does not lend itself to group singing.

The author of this lighthearted article has essentially hit upon two crucial issues that have been current topics of discussion at

recent meetings of the North Central ACDA Board of Directors. In these meetings, board members have addressed many important topics that they have entitled "Vision to Action." Topics such as the use of religious music in public schools, quality literature, and overall philosophy of choral music education generated much discussion.

As we begin a new year teaching we need to remember that regardless of what our choral responsibilities are, we are called upon to teach people how to sing. In the choral conducting text that I use in conducting class there is a statement that is somewhat overwhelming to beginning conductors. It states that the choral director is the only voice teacher most people will ever have. If Johnny cannot sing then we are responsible because we have not taken the time to teach him how. Too often we get caught up in preparing for performances and forget that we are called to equip our singers with life-long vocal skills.

We also need to remember that we will be more effective in our teaching skills if we use quality literature. We need to seek out and use literature that is suitable for the age level in which we work, literature that consists of good music joined together with quality poetry. We need music that encourages singing.

Recently I had the opportunity to see "Miss Saigon" in London. The show was powerful and deeply moving. However, another music person who attended the performance made the observation that you did not walk away humming any of the music from the show. It was not that kind of music. It seems to me that we need to introduce our students to choral music that encourages them to sing and keep on singing.

As we embark on a new school year, I would like to challenge all of us to remember that it is our responsibility to teach our students to be better singers and the best way to do this is give them the best possible music we can. Perhaps if we do this we won't read articles that state that Americans are no longer any good at singing.

## Wisconsin:

**President:** Gregory Carpenter  
1604 Cottonwood Dr.  
Waukesha, WI 53186

While the leadership changes, those people that really count, the general membership of the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association, continue to endeavor to allow choral music to flourish. They continue to create the opportunities for choir members of all ages to be touched deeply by choral music in a time when that task becomes more and more difficult.

The goal for the leadership of the organization for the next several years is to make every effort to offer ways for choral directors to: 1) become even more aware of the needs of their choir members; 2) find ways to battle those outside pressures that are eroding enthusiasm for the art; and 3) find ways to develop the understanding in all

singers that they are involved in a wonderful life activity.

The January 1992 convention offers a step in that direction, focusing on choral music for all ages. The Wisconsin convention has grown large enough to allow creative tracking of interest sessions and simultaneous interest sessions for a large number of choral disciplines are scheduled.

Sessions are planned that will feature elementary and secondary music educators who have recently changed the age level that they teach. These teachers will present first-hand insights that they have gained from their job changes. Folk song and interest sessions concerning ethnic music as well as reading sessions for teachers of all age groups are planned. Children's, junior high, high school, college, church, and community choirs will all present performances.

A college-age choir with members from a number of institutions will be utilized as the clinic choir for the student conducting competition and plans are being made to offer a performance spot for this choir and the winning conductor. A children's festival choir and a high school TTBB festival choir with singers from the entire state will rehearse during the convention and offer concerts to close the session.

Add to all of this a grand celebration, "A Night In Vienna," complete with boy choirs, strolling strings and a "Liebeslieder" sing, and you won't want to miss this great celebration of the choral art.



**Popplers**  
Established 1959  
MUSIC STORE  
P.O. Box 398, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58206-0398

**The Name, Popplers, is YOUR Assurance of Continuing Excellence.**

- Music of all leading publishers for school and church
- Methods and teaching supplies
- Full keyboard and pop music selection
- Complete band, orchestra and combo instruments, and accessories
- Instrument rental plan
- Full service instrument repair

**PLEASE WRITE FOR CATALOG AND PRICE LISTINGS**  
P.O. Box 398 • Grand Forks, ND 58206-0398

**OR CALL TOLL FREE**  
United States and Canada  
**1-800-437-1755**

# Choral Art in a Small School

from "Surviving Successfully in a Small School"

Phoenix, 1991

by James Kimmel

For new spirit in the choral art, try to incorporate five new activities or experiences from the following list this year:

## Keys to Success

- 1) Create a select group, or auditioned group, regardless of the size of your school; especially in elementary school, singers need to know they are special
- 2) Don't be afraid to recruit
- 3) Begin traditions, put photos on the wall, display plaques in a professional manner
- 4) Teach sight singing
- 5) Showcase your students in unique ways — singing *The Star Spangled Banner* at athletic events
- 6) Visibility — strive for it
- 7) Design attractive and professional looking programs for your concerts

## New Ideas

- 1) Begin a barbershop or beautyshop quartet
- 2) Showcase your state association contest entries with formal solo recitals at area churches
- 3) Participate or create area festival and concert exchanges
- 4) If you can't get all of your students in one class, meet separately and combine the classes for performance; sometimes the best learning and teaching comes from having just one tenor
- 5) Learn to blend — not bend — school schedules
- 6) Establish a noon-time chorus; students hate the time they have to spend in the cafeteria
- 7) Establish a Night of Arts — combine and feature the Fine Arts Department
- 8) Establish a "lettering process" for music through your student council

## Staying Fresh

- 1) Exercise
- 2) Talk shop with other directors whenever you can
- 3) Attend workshops, reading sessions, conventions and seminars and remember that you are but a small voice, but you are one voice
- 4) Take a course at a nearby university
- 5) Listen to your favorite choral recording over and over
- 6) Do your Christmas shopping in the summer
- 7) Remind yourself that success is the best motivator for yourself, your students, and their parents and relatives

## Golden Rules

- 1) Only encourage, never discourage
- 2) Remember that many of the most valuable lessons we teach in class have nothing to do with music
- 3) We cannot expect more than our best effort, but we do expect our best efforts
- 4) Treat singers as adults
- 5) My music room is not a place to be cool, but a safe place to take risks and learn about yourself

## In Memory

**Katherine Berthold**

**May 8, 1945 to June 9, 1991**

Director of Choirs  
Milwaukee High School of the Arts

Very Active Member of  
Wisconsin Choral Directors Assoc.

Co-Chair of Facilities  
NC-ACDA Convention 1990

# A Grand Finish and An Exciting Beginning

Nebraska's fully professional chorale, Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum, Almeda Berkey, music director, had a grand finish to their 1990-91 season with three fine performances. April 26 brought the Cantorum back to Omaha's St. Cecilia's Cathedral, where their premiere performance and first recording, "Arma Lucis" (by Mannheim Steamroller's Jackson Berkey) was done. The Nebraska Chamber Orchestra commissioned the orchestration of Jackson Berkey's "South Dakota Shadows" to be sung by Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum May 14. Two days later the Omaha Symphony, Bruce Hangen, music director, and the Cantorum presented the second performance since the 1921 premier of the newly found "North and West" by Howard Hanson. The "Ravel Daphnis ed Chloe, Suite II" and a performance of the Max Bruch Violin Concerto by Itzhak Perlman finished the gala performance to a sold-out audience.

The fourth season of Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum shows promise of an even more exciting year. Beginning with the international PEO convention in Omaha September 11 at AkSarBen Coliseum, the Cantorum will do an eclectic program to represent music from all periods and composers from many countries, with an emphasis on American writers. The second recording of the Cantorum, "Gaudete," will be released at the October 3rd and 6th concerts in the Joslyn Fountain Court, as the choir performs the music live. The joyous title work by Anders Ohrwall is for choir and winds. Also included are the "Aniversary Carols" by Jackson Berkey.

Also for October, arrangements are being made for a cultural exchange trip to Taiwan, Nebraska's sister state. The Cantorum is expecting an official invitation from the Republic of China for a concert and cultural tour for the ensemble and Nebraska Secretary of State Allen J. Beermann and Nebraska Governor Ben Nelson. In preparation for this, the Cantorum gave a private performance in the home of Almeda and Jackson Berkey for Dr. Lyushun Shen, Director General of the Council for North American Affairs, and Mr. and Mrs. Beermann, on July 15. The American music that the ambassador was most familiar with was "The Sound of Music," so he led the choir in an impromptu encore of many of the songs. The cultural exchange had already begun, as everyone shared his culture and his love of music.

## Announcement of Public Notification

This is an announcement to notify its membership that NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION ACDA is accepting bids from any and all TRAVEL AGENCIES located within the geographic boundaries of the North Central Division: IOWA, MINNESOTA, NEBRASKA, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, AND WISCONSIN, to serve as the OFFICIAL TRAVEL AGENCY to the North Central Division ACDA Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, March 4-7, 1992.

The sealed bids should be mailed to: Kay M. Hartzell, North Central Division ACDA President, 2414 North 70th Street, Wauwatosa, WI 53213. The postmark deadline for bids is September 15, 1991.

The sealed bids must address the following three areas in order to be considered for acceptance:

1. Arrangements will be made with a selected, accessible, and financially sound airline, by the travel agent, to the benefit of the greater North Central Division ACDA membership. This arrangement will represent discounted airfare to the convention and any other benefits to ACDA from the relationship with the airline.
2. The accessibility of the travel agency to the membership of the North Central Division ACDA.
3. Any other related benefits to North Central Division ACDA from its relationship with the travel agency.

The travel agency whose bid is accepted will receive free advertising in *Melisma*, the division newsletter, as the official 1992 North Central Division ACDA convention travel agency. Free advertising will also be run in the individual state newsletters. Advertising will include details of the special arrangements made for the division membership by the travel agency.

For any further information, please call Kay Hartzell at (414) 774-7582.

# Profile of a Director

This *Melisma* column features successful directors in a variety of choral areas. Our goal is to provide inspiration for all ages, areas and levels of choral directors. If you have nominees for this column, please send them to the *Melisma* editor.

## Michael Dean Esser Lax, Wisconsin

10 years of choral work  
BS - University of Northern Iowa,  
Cedar Falls

Director of: Master Singers (non-select men's group), Robed Choir (select mixed ensemble of 65-75), Show Choir

**A successful director** "has human relation skills — honesty — energy — knowledge of the subject matter — a sense of humor. Keep a sense of balance (equity) in your program and in your personal life."

**I recruit and keep singers by** "Build it and they will come" — This quote from the movie *Field of Dreams* may seem silly but there is a lot of truth in the statement. I am not a good recruiter. The programs I have been a part of grow because students are drawn to the success, the fun, and the individual attention they each receive. They stay for the same reasons."

**My major goals include** "attaining my master's degree in conducting; conducting mini/major works with high school choirs; being a sought-after and effective guest conductor/clinician."

**I select music** "by considering the following: 1) the current natural musical ability of the group; 2) what type of concert I am planning; 3) what the students will gain from working on particular music; 4) accommodating the audience; 5) if the music has a sense of honesty and a sense of simplicity; 6) variety."

**I am in choral music because** "I love it. There are feelings I receive when kids are successful with music that I receive nowhere else. This may seem silly, but I think I am lucky to realize the power of music — what it can do to and for us — how music can make a person feel feelings stronger than they ever feel in their everyday life. I want students to experience these realizations."

**We can be better role models to young directors** "by letting them see us as continuous learners and experimenters. Young teachers need affirmation to try new teaching techniques — then examine and evaluate the impact. Be honest and teach to your style. When a young director asks a question, we need to share information — not tell it."

**My role models include** "Donald Nerum from Eastman; Bruce Chamberlain from the University of Northern Iowa; Sharon Hansen from the University of Northern

Iowa; Weston Noble from Luther; and Pete Ecklund from Jefferson High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa."

**My future goals are** "to keep learning from others; to maintain a quality high school choral program; and to have choirs perform nationally and internationally."

**My career highlight** "was my first day of teaching at my first 'real' job. I was finally getting to do what I had always wanted to do with my life."

**Unique or special activities experienced by my choir:** "Every year I have my students do a written evaluation of me and written self-evaluations. They have the opportunity to attend the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) competition. Hopefully, my students realize I am always there for them as their teacher. I give them as much time as I can to help them develop their musical skills and help develop themselves towards becoming better human beings."



Sharon (Arthur) Hoffman  
Bayard, Nebraska

13 years of choral work  
BS - Chadron State College, Chadron, NE  
MS - Chadron State College, Chadron, NE  
Director of: High School Choir - 9-12 Magic Rhythm - 9&10 Show Choir, 21st Century Singers - 11&12 Show Choir, 7th Grade Choir, 8th Grade Choir, Jr. High Show Choir

**A successful director** "is someone who can teach students to enjoy and appreciate music — whatever the style. Your program can succeed only if the students can take pride in and have fun at whatever they do."

**I recruit** "by promoting the music program from the very beginning. (I teach K-12.) We watch video tapes as well as live performances of the high school groups and I stress, especially to the boys, how many athletes are involved. Recruiting is something that has to be done consistently all year, every year."

**I keep them** "by trying to pick good literature that my singers will enjoy along with keeping current on staging and choreography. I make sure they perform as fre-

quently as possible locally, as well as at festivals and contests. My top show choir goes on tour every spring with money earned from a dinner theatre."

**My major goal as a conductor** "is to be a good teacher. It has always been my belief that if I have taught a number thoroughly, my students should be able to perform it on their own."

**I select music** "a variety of different ways. I attend clinics and workshops, listen to recordings, and I'm always watching other groups for things that would work in my situation. I always try to pick literature that is varied and challenging. Something that leaves you with a sense of accomplishment."

**I am in choral music** "because I have always loved the thrill of performing both vocally and instrumentally and wanted to pass that feeling on to others. Music is such a wonderful way for students to express their feelings and to learn to be successful."

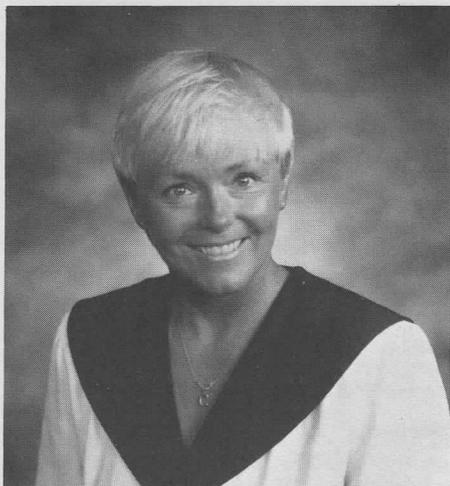
**I can be a better role model to young directors by** "taking time — listening — answering questions — whatever it takes. Young directors need to know that we all had to start somewhere. We have all had our fair share of failure as well as success. The key is to stay positive and work hard."

**My primary role model** "was my college director, Dr. Alfred Blinde. He taught me to never settle for anything less than my best. He had such wonderful insight into each person in his group. I learned that the music is important, but not as important as the people who perform it."

**My future goals are** "in the short-term, to create an even more successful program. Our school district has just completed a new fine arts building. This will enable us to do many new and exciting things. We have had no stage as such so all concerts, etc., have been held in the gym. As to long-term goals — I have always wanted to take a shot at a college program."

**My career highlight** "was probably being recommended by my state ACDA president as well as the Wyoming president to participate in a session at the national ACDA convention in Phoenix. Teaching in a small school in the Panhandle of Nebraska sometimes makes you feel quite isolated. Having my program recognized as outstanding in the state was a real thrill."

**Unique or special activities experienced by my choir include** "I expect 100% from my students and constantly strive to improve their performance. Because of the high standards they achieve, we have been invited to clinics and festivals in a five-state area. Because I do not audition my choir, any student wishing to participate can achieve success. My students take pride in the fact that three-quarters of the student body participate in choir. I have had as many as 120 students in choir which is a handful, but I feel it is important that everyone be given a chance to participate. I have two show choirs on the high school level — one for freshmen and sophomores and one for juniors and seniors. Together they present a dinner theatre in May every year."



**Gloria Brandt**  
Rapid City, South Dakota

16 years of choral work  
BA - Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell, SD

Director of: Dakota Junior High Choirs and the Rapid City Children's Chorus

A **successful director** "teaches basic vocal productions, is consistent in what they do, and asks him or herself, 'What attitude do I create?' Positive reinforcement breeds success."

I **recruit singers** through performance and a visible program throughout the community.

Current students encourage their peers and I encourage them to carefully consider class choices."

I **keep them** "with the 'personal' touch! Each student is encouraged as an individual to pursue the vocal excellence they are capable of. They receive positive reinforcement through a variety of musical styles and experiences. We all try to create an atmosphere enjoyable by all."

My **major goal as a conductor** is "to continue to work with my choirs to reach their full potential and to inspire them to continue with their personal musical growth as they mature."

I **select music** "through countless hours of research, recordings, sharing with colleagues, workshops, and ACDA. The literature must be musically sound and of high quality. I also choose a variety of styles, and a variety of levels of difficulty."

I **am in choral music** because "music gives my life purpose and meaning. That sparkle of youth still remains, that eagerness, that sense of accomplishment. I love what I do! I thrive on it!"

The **best role models to young directors** "need to be available for support and encouragement. We all need to share ideas."

My **role models** include "my current colleagues and friends, and many inspirational directors, teachers and clinicians

that I have had the opportunity to hear through ACDA."

My **goals for the future** "are to continue to revitalize my professional growth through workshops and ACDA. I would also like to attend CME training with Doreen Rao."

The **highlight of my career** "is almost every day, but the ultimate is to experience directing your own choirs while feeling and seeing that vitality, sparkle, energy and spirit in which everyone must sing. We had a great year!"

**Unique or special activities experienced by my choir:** "My Dakota Junior High Choir has a musical review at the close of the year. Everyone in the choir has the opportunity to costume, create and experience the music and the setting of a selected musical. They love dressing up and pantomiming the story as they sing. The personal and musical growth of each individual is very gratifying. The Rapid City Children's Chorus has had the opportunity to do a great deal of traveling. Their unique experience will be performing at the North Central Division ACDA Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, in March 1992."

## North Central ACDA Convention Des Moines, Iowa March 4-7, 1992

Iowa is proud to host the 12th biennial North Central Division ACDA Convention in Des Moines March 4-7, 1992. The beautiful Des Moines Civic Center will be the site of all performances and exhibits. This proscenium theater, completed in 1979, accommodates 2,735 in one continuous "orchestra" level, with nothing to disrupt the audience's view of the stage. Exhibits will be placed in the halls surrounding the performance area for the convenience of those who attend.

The Embassy Suites Hotel, Des Moines' newest, has been selected as convention headquarters. Located in the heart of downtown on the Des Moines River, it offers every guest a spacious two-room suite with many amenities, including free buffet breakfast and afternoon cocktail hour at an affordable price.

Three honors choirs will highlight the convention program, including the Collegiate Honors Choir under the direction of Ann Howard-Jones, the Youth Honors Choir, grades 5-8, under Jean Ashworth-Bartle, and the Adult Church Honors Choir which will perform with Paul Salamonovich.

These three headliners will also present interest sessions, as will Larry Kaptien and Ron Combs, along with many other interest, reading and demonstration sessions. Fifteen outstanding North Central Division choirs have been selected for performance, representing our Division's finest!

Iowa ACDA welcomes you to enjoy our special brand of Iowa hospitality. Your presence at the 1992 North Central Division convention will ensure the success of this experience.

We look forward to sharing our city, state and music with you!

# Experience...

## Eckroth Music

*We Specialize in Music Education*

- A Full Service Music Center
- A Staff Experienced in Music Education
- Combo Department
- Musical Instruments
- Accessories
- Sheet Music



1221 W Divide Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
1-800-437-1762

922 Grand Avenue  
Billings, MT 59102  
1-800-522-1888

1132 28th Ave S  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
1-800-525-9232

## St. Thomas Awards Honorary Degree to Salamunovich

The University of St. Thomas presented an honorary Doctor of Letters degree to internationally-known choral director Paul Salamunovich at its spring undergraduate commencement exercises in May.

Salamunovich, who will become music director of the Los Angeles Master Chorale in September, has inspired and delighted audiences around the world with his work as a choral music conductor in concerts, recordings, movies and television shows.

Salamunovich has been recognized by the Vatican and has served as music director at St. Charles Borromeo Church in North Hollywood for 42 years. He has conducted more than 600 workshops, festivals and clinics throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia.

St. Thomas, with an enrollment of about 10,000, is Minnesota's largest private university. Founded in 1885, it is a Catholic, liberal arts university that emphasizes values-centered, career-oriented education.

## Thank You . . .

Diana Leland  
for your  
positive leadership  
as National  
ACDA President.  
NC-ACDA  
is proud of you!

*We need constantly to tell ourselves that this profession, like every other occupation, demands that we make choices.*

*This should be a continuous process . . .*

*Every technical device used in rehearsal or concert is there because of the conductor's choice.*

*We choose to do this or that as a part of our varied and changing relationship with colleagues and singers.*

*We decide whether to do our job in the same way that a well loved and admired teacher does his.*

— Howard Swan  
*Choral Journal, 3/72*

## North Central Division Officers

### **Division President:**

Kay Hartzell  
24 N. 70th Street  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

### **Vice President:**

Stephen B. Parker  
Black Hills State University  
Box 9098  
Spearfish, SD 57783

### **Division President-Elect:**

Gary R. Schwartzhoff  
Ames High School  
20th & Ridgewood  
Ames, IA 50010

### **Division Secretary-Treasurer**

Donald Peterson  
2509 S. Phillips Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

### **"Melisma" Editor**

Dione Peterson  
Instructional Planning Center  
201 E. 38th Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

### **"Melisma" Advertising Manager**

Barb Myers  
4205 E. 12th Street  
#11  
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

The American Choral Directors Association reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication in *Melisma*.

## GROUP TRAVEL DIRECTORS . . .

. . . YOUR PERFORMING TOUR EXPERTS!

Our long list of services includes:

- Customized Tour Planning
- Educational/Cultural Emphasis
- Worldwide Expertise
- Concert Venue Planning
- Promotion Assistance
- Instrument Handling
- Pre-Departure Services
- Quality Programs Within Your Budget



For a complimentary quote on your next performing tour, call or write:

**GROUP TRAVEL DIRECTORS**  
2000 West 98th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
(800) 222-7907 (U.S. WATS)  
(800) 747-2255 (MN WATS)  
(612) 881-7811 (Twin Cities Metro)

# From the Editor: by Dione Peterson The Defense of Choral Music: A Vision to Action?

*"I would teach the children music, physics, and philosophy, but most importantly music, for in the patterns of music and all arts are the keys to learning."* —Plato

How have we gotten ourselves into a position where we must be defending this art form? A form which we all claim to love and declare our choice of careers?

This is the form that moves a listener to tears or to dance. It soothes the mind and body of the ill and yet inspires the warrior to win. This form ignites the soul to achieve the unbelievable.

Why, with these attributes and more, are we forced to defend its worth in today's world?

Have we taken our responsibilities of promoting quality choral literature too lightly? Have we settled for less than our best? Are we approaching our discipleship with a reluctance to give our all? Are we hesitant to let choral music achieve its total capabilities in *our* lives? Have we failed to excite our singers, our peers and our families to become advocates and appreciators of fine choral music?

Where would choral music be today if Bach had limited the number of hours music could be part of his life? What would choral music be like today if our predecessors had compromised their standards of quality for a quicker, easier approach to repertoire?

What will choral music be in the future? What are we passing on into tomorrow's world? Who will lead us into the future?

Are we educating singers to become leaders in the arts? Will they become board members, community leaders, and political leaders who will become strong advocates for the choral art? Will they be a strong force to increase the power of choral music?

Are we creating experiences which show the need for choral music in the school curriculum, the church, the community and daily living?

Are we positive role models in the support of the arts? Do we make the time to exemplify our love for music? Do we take the time to share this love? Do we care for each other and the choral art as much as we care for ourselves?

What is *your* plan of action?

# A Case for Music

by Mark E. Howarth  
from *The Oregon Choral Notes*  
Julie Saunders, Editor

I believe that in addition to teaching our students to read music and to listen to music, we must teach them music — music of substance, music of quality, and music that has moved generations; not the music of demo records, of boom-chuck accompaniments, of trite texts and unmusical phrases. Sure I do that stuff. Last year my choir brought down the roof with "Let the River Run," performed with an accompaniment tape. The students and faculty loved it! It has its place.

But the student body was also exposed to Gregorian Chant and Victoria, Bach, Haydn, Schubert, and Britten during the course of the year. Did they go wild over it? No, but they experienced it. That is why I consider myself to be a music educator.

It is my philosophy that whatever goes on in my choir is my fault. If the choir has a bad performance, it is my fault. If the choir has a good experience, that is my fault, too. It is not an easy philosophy to live with when things aren't going well. It requires that I work for a solution. But it sure feels great when events turn out as I wish!

When challenged to use more serious styles of music, the most frequent defense by teachers for the plethora of pop music in the junior high school is, "I can't get the kids to sing that stuff!" This may be true, but it is your fault. Realize that our students sing because they like us. After we have done our job, they sing because they like the music.

You can do any music you choose — why not do the music that will allow your students to learn the most? I am *not* an advocate of classical literature only. But as I would not advocate a mostly classical repertoire, I could not recommend a mostly popular repertoire. There are so many styles of music to cover in one year if we are to educate: the five major musical periods, the four major singing languages, the many styles of American music (folk, Broadway, jazz, spiritual, gospel, and, yes, even rock). If these styles are to be only partly covered each school year, there is no room for a lopsided repertoire!

*Music is as much a discipline as mathematics.  
It involves as much logic, abstract thinking, concentration, imagination and academic know-how, and in addition it calls for physical coordination, emotional projection, self-expression and creativity.*  
— Sam Levenson



Low Rates • Professional Drivers

30 Coaches Available

*Complete Travel Agency*  
Hotel Reservations, Attraction and  
Restaurant Services Available



3405 S. Cliff Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(605) 335-2290  
1-800-759-8687



Stay With  
Excellence.



*John Q. Hammons  
Hotels, Inc.*

# JAY'S MUSIC

*Mike Hogan, Owner/Manager*

P.O. Box 1019  
3723 Dakota Ave.  
South Sioux City, Nebr. 68776  
Phone (402) 494-1119

To order, call "toll free" - 1-800-798-5555

ONE OF THE  
**LARGEST MUSIC STOCKS**  
IN THE MIDWEST

- ★ Liberal Three Week Approval Plan
- ★ Director's Listening Room
- ★ Same Day Service on Stock Items
- ★ Large Selection of Standard Contest Material
- ★ All Major Publishers

We now accept **VISA** and **MASTERCARD**

**Exclusive suppliers for the '91  
Iowa All-State Festival Chorus**

A decorative border of musical notation, including treble and bass clefs, notes, and accidentals, surrounds the central text.

*Make beautiful music together  
at the*

**North Central  
ACDA  
Convention**

**March 4-7, 1992  
Des Moines, Iowa**

Performances & Exhibits  
at the  
Des Moines Civic Center  
Convention Headquarters  
at the  
Embassy Suites Hotel

*Sharing their music will be:*

- Ann Howard-Jones
- Jean Ashworth-Bartel
- Paul Salamunovich
- Larry Kaptien
- Ron Combs

**Melisma**

Official Publication of North Central  
American Choral Directors Association  
P.O. Box 6310  
Lawton, Oklahoma 73506

TO:



Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 202  
Lawton, Oklahoma 73501