

The Choral Advocate

The Newsletter of the Mississippi Chapter of the
American Choral Directors Association

FALL 2011 ISSUE



MISSISSIPPI
ACDA

AMERICAN
CHORAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION



PROMOTING THE ART OF
CHORAL MUSIC

MS ACDA President



John Flanery
University of Southern Mississippi

Hello and I hope your fall is off to a fantastic start! I want to tell you the goal of Mississippi ACDA is to serve you and your needs better than ever before. The board met in early August and has an ambitious agenda to reach out to our membership in new ways, and also seek new members amongst our colleagues as well. Our organization is and always has been as strong as its collective coalition of great educators in schools, churches, and communities. Here are many initiatives that we are setting forth for the next 12-18 months:

- The 2nd Annual ACDA Male Vocal Symposium was held on Saturday, September 10 at Pearl High School with over 175 participants from elementary, junior high, and high schools, as well as young men from churches and communities. There is no better way to encourage male singing than bringing them together in an event like this. Look for details soon for next year's symposium and don't miss this opportunity.
- The deadlines for session proposals and concert performances for our joint convention with MMEA are earlier this year. Session proposals are due via online submission on Sunday, October 30. Concert performances are postmarked due on Monday, October 31. This is to ensure quality concerts and stimulating assemblies at our conference March 22-24, 2012 in Jackson.
- A future music educator's immersion day at our conference is planned for Friday of convention this year. In an attempt to draw our brightest and most talented college students into our annual gathering, there will be a specific track of sessions on Friday, March 23 at the convention to appeal to these future colleagues.
- Our website is undergoing a reconstruction by our new colleague, Nick Cummins of Delta State University. With the assistance of Donna McCommon, Nick has worked tirelessly to update information on our website, www.msacda.org.
- Look for information regarding a new children's choir festival for 2012-2013 soon. Many of our board members are laying the foundation for what is sure to provide a meaningful opportunity that fills a gap in our current offerings.
- We also have a continued commitment to sessions for church musicians at our state conference. We have numerous part-time church musicians among our current membership, and we need to reach out to our full-time colleagues and provide a significant convention experience for them as well.

ACDA is a wonderful organization and your state chapter has a top-notch board. Challenge us to provide you with experiences and opportunities. The time is now. It is an honor to serve you for the next two years. Please contact me if I can ever be of assistance to you.

Have a creative and energetic year!

John Flanery, Mississippi ACDA President
Assistant Professor, University of Southern Mississippi

ACDA Advocacy Resolution

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

Whereas, serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded state institutions and their programs throughout our country,

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

Membership



Carol Joy Sparkman
MS ACDA Membership
Mississippi College

Share the Great News!

Have you had something great happen to you recently? Maybe a terrific classroom of musicians? An amazing sound coming from your choir after only a few rehearsals? Were you on pins and needles until you could get to someone to share the "great thing"?

ACDA is the great thing that we all should be sharing. Plans have been made to add events that would benefit choral directors of every age level. This September the second Male Symposium was held with almost 200 in attendance. In January 2013, a Children's Choral Festival will be held in three areas of our state. The event is designed to give elementary school music students an opportunity to sing together and provide interest sessions for the choral music teacher. Details about this festival will be available at the Spring conference.

It is up to the membership to tell those who are not members how Mississippi ACDA is continuing to offer new opportunities for enrichment. Grow MS ACDA by telling others about the great things that are happening.

The Advocate is the official newsletter of the Mississippi Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. It is published in October and February. The deadline for articles is the first day of the month preceding publication. Items received after the deadline may not be published.

Letters to the editor and advertisements are encouraged and should be sent to: Brad Johnson, PO Box 644, Wesson, MS 39191 or email brad.johnson@colin.edu. Mississippi ACDA reserves the right to select and edit any and all materials submitted for publication. For membership information or address changes contact Carol Joy Sparkman, 410 Winding Hills Drive, Clinton, MS 39056, or email sparkman@mc.edu. Additional information and resources are available on the Mississippi ACDA website www.msacda.org.

Advertising Rates for *The Advocate*

Full Page: \$150.00 (7.5" x 10")

Half Page: \$100.00 (7.5" x 4.5")

Quarter Page: \$50.00 (3.75" x 4.5")

Two-Year College Choirs

5 Tips for Reviving a Lifeless Rehearsal

1. **Change the standing arrangement.** This almost always works for my groups. Since there are no chairs in the choral hall, standing in one place for too long gets boring at times. My choir's favorite alternate arrangement is section circles. I have each section stand in a circle and spread out. If we are working on an a cappella piece, we often form one large circle around the room.

2. **Incorporate physical movement.** Use motion to accompany whatever technique you are working on at the moment. Arm gestures are great when working towards a specific dynamic goal for a phrase. Although it is great to incorporate movement with a teachable moment, sometimes students just need some sort of physical activity to regain their focus.

3. **Break for sectionals.** If a rehearsal is not being as productive as I would like, I will often dismiss some of the group and keep the rest for a sectional. If there is a particular passage that one section is struggling with, I use that time to devote attention to that passage.

4. **Team Time!!** Though I typically only use this approach during the first two weeks of school, I keep a couple of activities prepared for later in the year. With 10 minutes left in class, a team building activity can help students reconnect with each other. Games that help students learn each other's names and character traits are good for early in the year. Later in the year, I use activities that focus on listening, trust, and motivation.

5. **Coach up your choir.** At the end of one of those really long horrible rehearsals (that we ALL have at times), I will often take time to remind students of our purpose. Emphasize goals that you are working towards. Remind the choir of how great they felt after a productive rehearsal. Ask the students to discuss what went wrong in rehearsal that day and how they can improve for the next rehearsal.

Sometimes I pass out index cards and ask students to write down 2 things they like best about rehearsal and 2 things that can be improved upon. Students, particularly two-year college students, like to feel that they have input.



LaDona Tyson

Pearl River Community College



MS ACDA Ernestine Ferrell Award



Milfred Valentine

2011 Ernestine Ferrell Award Recipient presented by Tammy Carney

The Ernestine Ferrell Award for Excellence in Choral Music in Mississippi is a prestigious award established in 1992 and honors the memory of Mississippi's long-time State Supervisor of Music, Ernestine Ferrell. To be selected as a recipient of this award, one must have been active in Choral Music in Mississippi for at least twenty

years, should have made significant contributions to the choral art, and should have the respect and admiration of colleagues and students alike. Previous honorees include Peggy Felder, James Leslie Reeves, Leonard Metts, Jack Donovan, Geneva Reeves, Joanne Edwards, Martha Murray, Roland Shaw, Donna McCommon, Rose Longwitz, Lillian Lee, Richard Joiner, James Hawkins, J Bruce Lesley, Robert Sims, Martha Neilson, Mark Malone, Gail McInnis, Nancy Moore, Brad Johnson, and Milfred Valentine. There are many other distinguished choral musicians who deserve to be nominated for this award. A committee of past presidents will select the recipient of this year's award. Postmark your letter of nomination no later than February 28, 2011. Send a detailed letter describing the career and contributions of the nominee including their current contact information, places and years of service and personal achievements. Send nominations to Tammy Carney.

Men's Choirs



Participants at the 2nd Annual Male Vocal Symposium



U.S.M. Men's Ensemble 2011 Convention

Boychoirs

Boys to Men

2nd Annual Male vocal Symposium

The 2nd Annual Male Vocal Symposium was held on Saturday, September 10th at Pear High School. We had 20 teachers and 180 participating young men. Dr. John Flanery, Assistant Choral Director from USM served as our changed voices conductor featuring 7th graders through adult. Thanks to Reese Norris, we even had some church choir participation! Tammy Carney, choral director at Clinton Junior High was our conductor for the treble voices. It was a joy to see these young boys in Mrs. Carney's rehearsal hang on and follow her – each and every move.



Andrea Coleman
Cantabile Youth Chorale

This event comes early in the year to help boost the young men who are participating in your program. This experience is invaluable to these boys. Below are some comments regarding the experience this week-end.

"My guys enjoyed the vocal male symposium so much. They came back to school raving about how much fun they had and the great music that they got to perform. I feel it gave them better confidence to have the experience of singing with other men."

"My boys really enjoyed the day. Dr. Flannery was excellent with them and they brought back some much needed confidence to MY choral program!"

"I truly enjoyed the MVS Saturday. I have told all of my students what a wonderful event it was. I also told them how wonderful the young men sounded. It was glorious to see all those young men singing together. I think they did a great job, especially after only singing together for the short time they practiced on Saturday."

"What a great way to motivate young men to sing! I thought the gentlemen were engaged, prepared, and excited to be singing among the larger group. It was an encouraging day for all of Mississippi ACDA."

I hope you will consider joining us next year. All details will be on our web-site: www.msacda.org



Student Youth Activities

So Much To Do, Such Little Time

I am excited to be serving as your R&S Chair for Youth Student Activities! As I was thinking about what to write for the newsletter, I kept going back to the idea of over-saturation in available activities at school these days. Today's students are pulled in many different directions – classes, music, drama, art, athletics, testing, etc.

So, how does choir fit into this and how do we, as music educators, further participation in our program? I try to focus on making a positive experience for my groups. Here are a few helpful ideas that I utilize:

1. **Work on building a cohesive family group within your program.** A successful choral organization demands that those in it work together toward a mutual goal. If you approach your choir like any other class without getting to that deeper level, your product will be superficial at best.
2. **Get to know your singers!** Students want to feel cared about and that they would be missed if they were absent. Take time out of your schedule to talk with them before and after rehearsal. Building this type of rapport will increase trust and engagement on both sides.
3. **Remember that it is not always about the end-goal.** So often we focus on a concert, on scores at festivals, etc. What about all the time *in between*? The journey can sometimes be so much more worthwhile than the destination, if you allow it to be. Take time to smell the proverbial roses.
4. **Branch out from the usual schedule.** Think about involving your group in a service learning project. This will enrich the lives of your students and those they touch while bringing your group closer together and helping them to see that music is universal. Also, plan some social events for your groups, both in and out of the classroom. Fun is always good and can definitely have a positive result.
5. **Recruitment should be product-driven.** I have always believed that if the "product" is good, people will *want* to be there. This doesn't mean that you can give up on pounding the pavement and working to build your program, but it sure is easier when potential students see an existing sense of success.



Jonathan Kilgore
Gulf Coast Community College



College/University

HELP YOUR DEPARTING STUDENTS TO PREPARE FOR THEIR FUTURE!

We often let our students plan for their future without the guidance and advice they need from us. I want to encourage you to do three important things for your departing students/singers this year.

Get them started early! If students are planning on attending college next year as a singer or music major, the fall is the time to get started. With the current economy, many schools have made their deadlines for application and scholarships earlier on the calendar. Most music scholarships are stackable with other awards including the types of grants and loans that are available through financial aid. However, if you miss the deadline for other awards, you will often severely limit the number of affordable choices you have for higher education. The same advice goes to students considering graduate school in music. The deadline for application for most assistantships in music is often early spring. If you have students in your college program that will be applying for jobs in music next year, their resume/vita should already be taking shape. Putting together thorough, compelling, and mistake free documents should not be left to the last minute.

Convince your students to shop and apply at multiple schools. Choosing the right fit for higher education is an important and very individual process. Too often, students make choices based on what friends, parents, and teachers have done without investigating several possibilities. While giving serious consideration to the preferences of individuals in that student's life, also help them to look further. Whether visiting several schools confirms their original instincts, or helps them find a new and better option, the outcome of looking at several options for higher education is almost always a healthy exercise. No two students are alike and each has individual needs and preferences. A music student is more successful if they are happy and appropriately challenged. If your student is applying for work in music education, encourage them to expand their search for jobs as wide as they can stand. There is no doubt that limiting your search for employment reduces the percentage chance of finding a suitable job.

Get them ready for the audition/application process. If students are auditioning for a music scholarship, they need a couple of vocal pieces ready to perform. While some have changed their expectations, many schools still require some type of art song, possibly two. It doesn't need to be complex, but it needs to represent the skills of the singer. It is preferable if the piece is memorized. If not, take two copies of printed music so the accompanist has a copy. Prepare your student to sing with accompaniment. Unless you know that the audition center allows the use of a CD track, assume that they don't. Many of your students won't know this without your counsel. Give them advice on how to stand, how to dress, and how to speak to those running the audition process. Many students with ability are hurt by inappropriate decorum and behavior during the audition process. Encourage the parents of students to support this process and travel with their prospective students when they visit/audition. If parents or students ask how they can better prepare for being a music major next year, tell them to practice the piano or start piano lessons immediately. The number one reason that music majors don't finish a degree is the lack of preparation for the science of music. Piano is the primary vehicle for success in this area. No music major at an accredited school can finish without basic competence at the piano. If your students are entering the job market in music education, prepare them for interviews and the types of questions they will have to answer. Teach them professionalism, diplomacy, honesty, and judgment with their ideas, speech and appearance.

There are other things that you can do to help and encourage students as they prepare to continue as musicians, but the basic three listed above are essential. Most of all, teach students to love music for the sake of music, and help them become first-rate musicians. Give them the gift of music by teaching music literacy and musicianship.



Gregory Fuller

University of Southern Mississippi

Music in Worship

What is "worship"? Week to week most of us have at least some part-time duties for leading or directing the music portion of our services. But what IS worship? If we look scripturally at our examples there are no New Testament corporate examples of worship (mainly because most new pockets of believers feared persecution and met privately). The Old Testament provides us with the best examples of what corporate worship of God should be. The most visual tool to use as we instruct others and teach our "Bodies" to worship is the picture of the Temple. The outer courts of the temple is the area for rejoicing; in Nehemiah it says the "noise of Jerusalem was heard from afar". That's exciting to know that the people unanimously agreed to raise their praise to God. Imagine if ALL of our congregations did so as well. The next area was the Altar; it was here that the people brought their offerings to God for acceptance. The most amazing thing to me is that God made provisions for ALL people to bring different forms of sacrificial animals based on what they COULD bring. The point is; bring SOMETHING! Whether you contribute through the choir or help usher or greet folks do what God has gifted you to do. 1st Chronicles shows in detail that David selected the leaders for worship based specifically on their knowledge and skills. I believe this is the area where we the modern-day Church are lacking. We've allowed anyone to do some of the most important duties "at the altar" and therefore our preparation for the Holy of Holies is skewed. OUR Holy of Holies, in the modern-worship area is when we have lead folks through worship and offerings to point of receiving the Word of God (or sermon) and allow the Holy Spirit to meet with those individuals in THEIR Holy of Holies where God can change the heart of the individual.

Did you notice the focus shift from us corporately to a more intimate time of personal reflection and change? Strive to lead your churches with this model and see if it doesn't help refocus your worship. Always remember WHO we are meeting to worship. Please email me if you have any questions or comments. Blessings!!



Wm. Chris Brown

Oxford High School



Print clearly or type. ☐ New Membership ☐ Membership Renewal - Member Number: _____

FIRST NAME

MIDDLE NAME

LAST NAME

Home Address

Office Address

Address: _____ ☐ Primary
Address

Address: _____ ☐ Primary
Address

City: _____

City: _____

State: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Zip: _____

Country: _____

Country: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Fax: _____

Fax: _____

Membership Type (mark one)

Choir Types (mark all that apply)

Activity Areas (mark all that apply)

- ☐ Active US/Canada - \$ 85
☐ Associate - \$ 85
☐ Student - \$35
☐ Retired - \$45
☐ Institutional - \$110
☐ Industry - \$135
☐ Foreign Active Airmail - \$110
☐ Life (\$200 Installments) - \$2000

Installment Amount: \$ _____

* Canadian Fees same as U.S.

- ☐ Boys
☐ Children
☐ Ethnic & Multicultural
☐ Girls
☐ Jazz
☐ Men
☐ SATB/Mixed
☐ Show
☐ Women

* Primary Choir Type _____

- ☐ Elementary School
☐ Junior High/Middle School
☐ Senior High School
☐ ACDA Student Chapter
☐ Two-Year College
☐ College/University
☐ Community Choir
☐ Music In Worship
☐ Professional Choir
☐ Supervisor/Administrator
☐ Youth & Student Activities

* Primary Activity _____

Statement

As an ACDA member, I will comply with the copyright laws of the United States of America as they pertain to printed music or the downloading of music off the internet. (Compliance with these laws is also a condition of participation by clinicians and performing ensembles that appear on any ACDA sponsored event or convention.)

Application Submission Instructions

Please print this application, fill it out completely and remit with a Check, Money Order, or Credit Card in US Dollars payable to ACDA. Fax form to (405) 232-8162 or mail form to:

ACDA
 ATTN: MEMBERSHIP
 PO BOX 2720
 OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73101-2720

Payment Options

Please Select Payment Type: ☐ Check # _____ (enclosed) ☐ Discover ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: ____ / ____ / ____ (Month/Year)

Name of Card Holder: _____

Card Holder Billing Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I agree to pay above total amount according to card issuer agreement and acknowledge all sales are final unless duplicate payment is made.

Women's Choirs

It's that time of year again!! For the 2011 All-State Women's Honor Choir, our clinician was Dr. Judy Bowers of Florida State University. She did an outstanding job, and I know the students really enjoyed working with her. This year our 2012 clinician is Dr. Anthony Maglione from William Jewell College in Liberty, MO. He holds degrees from Westminster Choir College, East Carolina University and University of California at Los Angeles.

This promises to be another great All-State Honor Choir. I am very excited about the great work that is being done in our state. I challenge our directors to take advantage of the opportunities that an honor choir can provide, and I urge you to encourage your young ladies to audition for this honor choir if you have never done so.



Joel Dunlap
Long Beach High School

Most of the time, we directors are concerned with our next concert or contest. I know that all of us are extremely busy with keeping our community and administration satisfied with quality choral concerts or superior ratings to bring home from contest. Please allow me to stress the importance of an honor choir experience. This allows prestige and honor to return to your school and community just as a trophy might from a district or state contest. In addition, this also provides a great educational opportunity and singer camaraderie within the choir by meeting new singers from across the state. Being selected as an honor choir participant is a great privilege to behold and instills a sense of pride, responsibility, and prestige with your students.

Please visit www.msacda.org for the registration form and repertoire information. The auditions will be the same dates and locations as the mixed honor choir auditions. Please email me with any questions or concerns.



2012 ACDA All State Women's Honor Choir

Anthony Maglione, Clinician

Conductor/Composer Anthony Maglione earned his Bachelor of Music degree at Westminster Choir College of Rider University, his Master of Music Degree at East Carolina University, and his Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of California, Los Angeles. An active composer, Anthony has had his works performed by a wide array of professional and amateur ensembles and is published on GIA's "Evoking Sound" choral series. In 2005, he was commissioned to compose "Prayer of Columbus" which was premiered at the United Nations building in New York City. In 2008, his anthem "O Master Let Me Walk With Thee" was performed by the Crystal Cathedral Choir both at the Western Division ACDA convention and on the internationally syndicated television broadcast "The Hour of Power". In 2009, Anthony composed the soundtrack for the video game "National Geographic Traveler's Sudoku: China!" and was the featured composer for the choirs of the New England Conservatory during their 2009 – 2010 concert season. As a conductor, Anthony has made numerous guest conducting appearances and has prepared choirs for such esteemed conductors as James Conlon, James Jordan, David Newman, Donald Neuen, and Alex Treger. From 2001 to 2005, Anthony served as director of the Piscataway High School (NJ) choirs, a large, performance-intensive department that made regular appearances at NJ State Department of Education meetings, Teen Arts Festivals, and Carnegie Hall. From 2007 to 2010, Anthony served as Conductor of the UCLA University Chorus, Director of Music Ministries at American Lutheran Church in Burbank, CA, and Assistant Conductor of the Angeles Chorale. Since 2008, he has served as the Associate Conductor of the Westminster Choir College Summer Vocal Institute.

In addition to his responsibilities at William Jewell College, Anthony serves as the Music Director at Platte City United Methodist Church in Platte City, MO and serves as Artistic Director of the Free-lance Ensemble Artists of NJ, a newly formed symphony orchestra dedicated to providing performance opportunities for collegiate, young professional and veteran musicians.

Anthony is a member of ACDA, ASCAP, MACRO, MENC, the American Composer's Forum, and Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society.



Audition Dates:

January 26, 2012 - Tupelo High School

January, 28, 2012 – Pearl High School

January 31, 2012 – William Carey College

2012 ACDA All State Honor Choir

Dr. Suzanne M. Pence, Clinician

Suzanne M. Pence is Associate Professor of Music and Human Learning, at The University of Texas at Austin where she has been teaching since 1996. Her duties are conducting the Concert Chorale, teaching undergraduate conducting, choral arranging, secondary choral methods, supervision of student teachers in secondary choral music education, and supervision of graduate students in choral music education. The Concert Chorale has toured throughout the southern United States and performed for the regional conference



of the Southwest American Choral Director Association in 2006. From 2003-2007, Dr. Pence held the administrative position of Director of Undergraduate Studies. In the fall of 2007 she began serving the School of Music as Director of Admissions and is responsible for organizing recruitment and admission activities for both graduate and undergraduate students. She coordinates and co-conducts the summer Longhorn All-State Choral Camp. Dr. Pence held the position of Director of Choral Activities at Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina from 1994-1996. She received the DMA in Choral Conducting from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1993 where she studied with Drs. Eph Ehly and Charles Robinson. She holds a Masters of Music Education degree from Wichita State University where she studied with Dr. René Clausen and a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois where she studied with Richard Hoffland. Before pursuing the DMA, Dr. Pence was the vocal music teacher at Neosho High School in Neosho, Missouri for six years. Along with her duties at The University of Texas she served as Minister of Music at Highland Park Baptist Church in Austin, from 1997-2010. She recently accepted the position of Director of Music Ministry at Oak Hill United Methodist Church in Austin. Dr. Pence is active as an adjudicator and clinician/festival conductor throughout the country, and was an invited conductor with the MidAmerica Productions Choral Festivals at Carnegie Hall. She is a member of MENC, TMEA ACDA, and TCDA. She has served ACDA as the College/University R&S Chair of the Southwest ACDA from 2002-2006. She and her husband Rusty have two children, Sara 19 and Alex 17.

Audition Dates:

January 26, 2012 - Tupelo High School

January, 28, 2012 – Pearl High School

January 31, 2012 – William Carey College

Mississippi ACDA All State Honor Choir

March 22-24, 2012

Suzanne Pence, Clinician

Auditions:

January 26, 2012 – Tupelo High School

January 28, 2012 – Pearl High School

January 31, 2012 – William Carey University

Music:

All That Hath Life and Breath, Rene Clausen, Mark Foster 223 (Pepper # - 1461284) \$1.95

Ave Verum Corpus, William Byrd, E.C.Schirmer 393 (Pepper # - 9504246) \$1.85

Hallelujah from "Mount of Olives", Beethoven, Hal Leonard 08679658 (Pepper # - 1586494) \$1.70

Von Ewiger Liebe, Johannes Brahms, Alliance Publications AMP0617 (Pepper # - 10001871) \$1.70

Sure on this Shining Night, Morten Lauridsen, Peer Music 62128-122 (Pepper #- 3303314) \$1.90

Elijah Rock, Moses Hogan, Hal Leonard 08705532 (Pepper # - 1922947) \$1.70

Please refer to your MHSAA Choral Manual for rules and regulations for participation

or visit www.msacda.org

\$10.00 per student non-refundable audition fee, due with registration.

Registration fee includes a rehearsal CD.

November 1, 2011 – Deadline for registration.

Please note early deadline. This is to insure receipt of rehearsal tracks.

School _____ Director _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Fax No. _____

ACDA Membership Number (REQUIRED) _____

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS CURRENT!

Number of Students Participating in Auditions: _____

MUST BE COMPLETED:

Soprano _____ **Alto** _____ **Tenor** _____ **Bass** _____ **FEE ENCLOSED \$** _____

Requested Audition Site: _____ **Tupelo** _____ **Pearl** _____ **William Carrey University**

Return form and registration fee to: **Donna McCommon** **Fax: 601-898-8775**

101 Overlook Pointe Circle

Ridgeland, MS 39157

dwmcccommon@comcast.net

Make Checks Payable to Mississippi ACDA. Please send one check for each school, not a personal check from each student.

Tips for Making Your Choir Musical..."Stolen gems from around the choral world"

TONE

"You do not sing as you talk any more than you run like you walk."

- Posture provides the opportunity for resonance
- It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that ring!
- Resonance is volume
- Keep the soft palate raised with the brightening of the eyes
- Sing with a mature quality
- The inspiration is in the inhalation: "inspirare"
- Breath support, breath management
- Spin the tone
- Facial expressions can improve tone and intonation
- Color your vowel sounds to fit the text, style, and genre
- Keep eyebrows and bottoms up

RHYTHM

"Movement creates musicality; musicality lies in our physical movements. The rhythm of the piece should be internalized."

- Rhythmic integrity
- Attacks and releases
- Consonants in front of the beat, vowel on the beat
- Breathe – Sing
- Cross-listen
- Buoyancy

INTONATION

"Unification of vowel sounds is the single-most important factor that influences intonation."

- The sharper the dissonance, the freer the consonance
- The beauty is in the dissonance (without conflict, there is no resolution)
- Suspensions
- Balance
- Cross-listen
- We should use our ears more, mouths less!

DICTION

"Elegance through syllabic stress"

- Buy in to ALL consonants
- Sing the language and not the notes
- Dynamic contrast and linguistic expressiveness
- Articulation – space between notes

INTERPRETATION

"Squeeze the fruit. Let its juice drip out."

- Let no note go un-nurtured
- Never sing the same thing the same way twice
- Each note should desire to go the next one
- Lines should pull like scarves from a magician's coat pocket
- Dynamics – contrasts explore ranges of dynamics
- Style
- Relationship of phrase and text
- Energize phrases
- Intensity and volume of a phrase grows or diminishes during rests
- Give every note its FULL life (birth, school, marriage, grandparent, death)
- Melody must always be present; back off and allow the melody to be highlighted
- Physical movement can be a catalyst for musical movement
- Don't sing the notes, sing the line
- Lighten the vowel to fit the tempo and "repronounce" with clarity
- Make the release of one phrase the springboard into the next

COMMUNICATION

"Enjoy the music. Sing the meaning of the text. Provide an experience, rather than perform music."

- Inform your face!
- Music begins in the human experience of the poet
- Sing with a performer's mentality: become a character, sell that character
- Don't break my prayer
- Think of a way you can relate to the song then apply it to the music
- Paint a picture with your body, face, and voice
- Know word-for-word translations
- Color
- Use of silence
- Create beauty
- Tell the story
- Become the music

MOTIVATION

"Ask for more!"

- Positive reinforcement
- Build relationships
- Listen to your singers' point of view
- Model what you want
- Refuse to accept poor performance
- Consistent discipline builds pride and esprit de corps among students

- The team effort results in a product that is much greater than the sum of its parts
- Get out of their way

CHOOSE THE RIGHT LITERATURE

"You must love it!"

- Music must fit the abilities and personalities of your choir
- Choose literature of integrity
- Be flexible and creative
- Show off your strong points
- Take risks

ATTENTION IS IN THE DETAIL

"No detail is too small."

- Outfits, uniforms
- People hear what they see
- Riser etiquette and placement
- Create depth and utilize more of the stage during a performance
- Acoustic considerations
- Showering and deodorant help!

OWNERSHIP

"You are responsible for every single note."

- Know, not only your own part, but others as well
- Listen more and do not rely on the conductor so much
- Keep your focus!
- Go over my music alone!
- "I will clear my mind of all external thoughts and dive into the music"
- Become one with the piece
- Put all your energy into what you are singing ♦

Jeff Seaward, California Two-Year College Choir Representative
Original printing: California Cantate Newsletter, Winter 2009
Procured by Robert "Bobby" Sims, Terry High School

Mississippi ACDA

Administrative Board

President

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