

# Georgia Sings!

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## Rodney Eichenberger confirmed to Headline Georgia ACDA Summer Conference



Reserve July 10-12, 2008 on your calendars now, as those are the dates you are going to want to be sure to be in Morrow, Georgia attending the annual GA ACDA summer convention, networking with colleagues from across the state, getting refreshed and rejuvenated about our

common profession, making new friends, attending reading sessions with repertoire selected by our R & S Chairs – and hearing from Rodney Eichenberger, one of the most respected choral conductors of our generation.

Rodney Eichenberger teaches part time at Florida State University and continues to lecture and guest conduct throughout the world. He has conducted more than 70 US All-State Choirs and guest conducted or lectured at more than 60 US Universities. His recent international appearances include guest conducting the Korean National Chorus and leading conducting workshops in Brazil, France, Austria, Australia and New Zealand. He has also served as guest conductor of the Singapore Youth Choir Festival and International Schools Choral

Festivals in London, Vienna, Tokyo and Berlin.

His instructional video on Choral Conducting with Hinshaw Music, "What They See Is What You Get," is now in its thirteenth printing. In 2001, a second instructional video, "Enhancing Musicality Through Movement," was released through Santa Barbara Press.

Eichenberger will present several sessions at our conference, including a choral conducting masterclass for grad students and more seasoned area professionals. His gentle demeanor has a way of disarming any nervousness on the part of his students, as well as endearing him to his audience. We are looking forward to learning from him and consider ourselves lucky to have this opportunity to learn from such a landmark name in the choral field.

## A Word from Our President, Eric Nelson



Welcome to another year of choral music making!

Because the academic calendar gets started a little later in the college teaching world, some of you that are teaching the younger ages may find this greeting a bit belated, you've been teaching for more than a month already! But for me, the season has just now gotten fully under way. Auditions for all the ensembles have finished, syllabi have been handed out, rehearsals have begun, and I find myself filled once again with that singular sort of optimism and excitement that comes only at the beginning of the year when the music is new and potential seems unlimited. It won't be long before reality will set in, limitations will become apparent, and I will find myself scrambling for every resource I can find to aid me in my quest to lift my ensembles, students, and classes from where they are to where they need to be.

Fortunately, aid and resources aplenty can be found in ACDA. Our central purpose is to "promote excellence in choral music

through performance, amazing! The 'expanding composition, publication, ball" to teach breath and the research, and teaching. The "punching dinosaur" to ACDA provides many high-teach phrasing were quality publications, probably my favorites. conventions, festivals, Thank-you to Tony clinics, workshops, and the Thompson and "New opportunity to network Creation," David within the choral Reimshussel and the community." Here in "Georgia Governor's Honors Georgia, our primary Program Choir," and to Kevin opportunity to network and Hibbard and Norma Raybon to learn from each other for their great work with the Men's and Women's Honor summer convention at choirs! Spivey Hall.

I would like to thank all of you who attended the conference June 28-30 and for all those who lent your talents as clinicians and administrative help.

Thank-you to Ann Howard Jones who did a masterful job of distilling years of excellence in teaching and music-making into a handful of clear and inspirational lectures. I don't know if my students have noticed, but recently lot of my sentences begin with the phrase, "Ann Howard Jones says..."

Thank-you to Constantina Tsolainu, our new colleague from Columbus State, for her session on the difference between a "neutral vowel" and a "neutral syllable." Her reminders of the importance of diction to choral artistry were truly inspiring—especially for us "Amuricans!"

Thank-you to Karol Kimmel for her workshop on how to teach musical skills to children and youth. Her box of visual aids was

Thank-you to Adam Con, Rod Caldwell, Karol Kimmel, Brian Black, and Mary Busman for all of their work in planning and leading us in the reading sessions. Finding "just the piece I've been looking for!" makes the reading sessions alone worth the price of admission to the conference.

Thank-you to Brian Black and Sue Mitchell-Wallace for the wonderful church music session: finding common ground in the singing of the psalms.

Thank-you to Kathy Wright and Robin Yackley for their brilliant piano accompaniments throughout the conference.

Thank-you to Kathy Bizarth, Rita Johnston, Erin Keel, Frank Green, and Leigh Ann Wearne for all of their extraordinary administrative help both with the conference itself and with the honor choirs.

Best wishes to all for a great year. Stay tuned for registration information about next summer's conference: July 10-12!

-Eric Nelson

## Amy Hughley, R & S Chair for Men's Choirs



Recent vocal pedagogues agree that the newly-changed male singing voice contains three registers (Miller, 1993; McCoy, 2003; Collins, 1999). The lowest range is referred to as the "chest", or modal, voice (Miller, 1993; Nair, 2003; Cooksey, 1999). The next highest range is called the "head voice", or "*passagio*" (Miller, 1993; Cooksey, 1999, Phillips, 1992). The term "*passagio*", or "passage area" (Miller, 1999) refers to the recently changed male head voice, or the area between the lower chest voice, to the to the upper register (Phillips, 2002). The falsetto voice is the highest range for changed male voices. The entire mutation and settling period for males occurs between the ages of ten and twenty, and therefore the "true" high school tenor is a rare find in high school. Because of this limitation, high school choral directors may tend to assign a baritone with a tenor part.

Many freshman and sophomore boys still have not completed the entire voice changing process. According to John Cooksey, most boys of this age are "settled baritones" (Cooksey, 1977, p. 7) or singers with a

*passagio* of C below middle C to B below middle C. Although their voice type may be classified as "settled", it is still uncomfortable for most of them to sing in their upper range. Since this discomfort is unavoidable, directors of male choirs should be sensitive to the psychology of the changing and settling male voice and cognizant of appropriate ranges and tessituras for each male in the ensemble. In addition, choral educators must utilize specific technical exercises and appropriate repertoire in order to guide male adolescents through this awkward time. Exercises are needed that specifically target the upper range of the high school male voice, since vocal tension and lack of support often occurs as teenage boys sing notes above their comfortable speaking range (Cooksey, 1997; Miller, 1999; Roe, 1983).

One of the most common vocal problems in high school males is tension in the upper range, caused by the high larynx (Miller, 1993; Roe, 1983). The tension particularly occurs near the break in *passagio*. Consequently, lack of breath support can also occur in these areas of the voice, which in turn affects intonation and tone quality. Choral directors can offer exercises that may help these issues.

Begin each rehearsal by introducing exercises that focus on breath support and posture, as proper breathing and positioning are essential in order for

any of the following vocalizes to be effective. Two simple ways of engaging the diaphragm are explosive consonant repeats such as [t], [p], [k] and [ch], or an exhaled [s] for a count of sixteen to twenty beats. Then introduce warm ups in the following order:

1) Start in the falsetto range and use descending five tone scales, or descending eight tone major scales. Use a closed bright vowel such as [i] or [u], and continue transposing the scales downward until all members of the ensemble have reached their lowest register.

2) Then practice the transition in *passagio* going the other direction. Begin in the lowest register and move upward using a five-tone scale until all choir members have reached falsetto range. Practice all pure vowels [i] [ε] [a][o] and [u], but it is best to use the closed vowels [i] and [u] near the shift in vocal registers.

3) Finally, introduce gentle leaps upward to further condition the *passagio* shift. Begin in the lowest register and use an ascending open fifth (do sol do). Transpose the exercise upward until all males have reached their falsetto range.

After performing these suggested warm ups, it is best to begin with literature that moves primarily stepwise in order to continue gently practicing the shifts in register. I've listed some tried-and-true rehearsal starters with appropriate high school male ranges on the next page. Good luck!

## Repertoire Suggestions for Men's Chorus:

"Medieval Gloria" (TB) by Vijah Singh, published by Alfred  
"Kyrie" (TB) by Dan Krunnufusz, published by Brilee  
"We're the Men" (TB) by Jay Althouse, published by Shawnee Press  
"Mon Coeur Se Recommande A Vous" (TTB) by Orlando di Lasso, arranged by Sherry  
"Oh Captain, My Captain" (TTBB) by John Leavitt, published by Hal Leonard  
"Grumble too Much" (TTB), Jamaican folk song arranged by Ruth Elaine Schram,  
published by Lorenz  
"Bridge over Troubled Water" (TTBB) by Paul Simon, arranged by Kirby Shaw,  
published by Shawnee Press

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## Mitos Andaya, R & S Chair for Jazz

### ‘Doo ba doo wah . . . do what? : Recovering the lost art of ‘scatting’



“Scat.” The mere mention of the word has been known to send fear through the hearts of many jazz vocalists. When asked of their initial opinions about this form of vocal improvisation, student replies have included answers like ‘It’s scary’; ‘I don’t know how’; ‘I don’t know what syllables to use’; ‘It’s hard’; and ‘It doesn’t make sense to me.’ Though we have recordings of great jazz singers improvising as impressively and fluently as instrumentalists back in the day, it now seems that fewer vocal artists are practicing the art of scatting, and that today’s students are even less likely to experience it first-hand.

The fact remains that improvisation is an essential element in jazz. However, many of today’s solo singers cover that aspect by way of improvising around the melody - changing a few

notes here and there, as well as rhythmic values and adding inflections. Very few dabble in scatting, perhaps by scatting only over a few bars of a closing vamp for example, but even fewer are ever heard taking a full chorus, let alone several choruses to cut loose with spontaneous vocal creativity. When one thinks of scatting vocalists, Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald come readily to mind. Then next come singers who are less known to today’s students for scatting, like Sarah Vaughan, Mel Tormé, Mark Murphy, Chet Baker (better known for his trumpet playing), Al Jarreau and Darmon Meader (singer/saxophonist in the New York Voices). With these artists, the art is indeed taken to a high level, but through a thorough understanding of jazz theory, the development of their ‘ear’ and overall musicianship, as well as the desire for expression beyond the lyrics. In rehearsals with our own vocal jazz ensembles, it can be easy to get caught up with learning the charts as they are, and a great challenge to give as much emphasis to the art of improvisation by passing on this skill to our students.

The benefits of teaching singers to scat are plentiful - musically and expressively. In order to

scat, one must be able to understand the form of the tune. In the basic sense, this would involve being able to count and keep track of bars as they go by. This also includes melodic and harmonic understanding as they begin to develop their ear for chord changes and harmonic progressions, leading them to the ability to discern where a section starts and ends. The more students are exposed to jazz solo improvisation be it vocal or instrumental, the more they develop an ear for artistic style, and recognizing the elements that make for a good or satisfying solo including variety versus repetition and motivic development. Not only does scatting offer a chance to build musicianship, but also the opportunity to foster individual creativity, spontaneity, as well as confidence.

Below are some suggestions on how to ease the singers through the scatting process.

Play excellent recorded examples. Here are a few suggestions:

Ella Fitzgerald: How High the Moon; O Lady Be Good,

Sarah Vaughan: Sassy’s Blues; Lullaby of Birdland

Chet Baker: Do it the Hard Way; It Could Happen to You

Mark Murphy: All the Things You Are; Boplicity (Bebop Lives)

Remind singers that there are no wrong notes or syllables. I repeat - 'No wrong notes' (though there are better choices as they will come to discover). Even a 'wrong' note can become a right note if repeated with conviction and purpose that gradually leads to a resolution. If a note choice feels uncomfortable, the soloist is usually one half step interval away from a better choice. The most widely used syllables begin with the consonants of 'd' and 'b' (i.e. doo, bah, dah, bu, dee, bee, deh). A pair of eighth notes are commonly sung with the syllables 'doo-bah' with the doo on front part of the pair and bah on the back half. Even though these are the syllables most used in scat, singers should be encouraged to use whatever sound or syllable is appropriate in the melodic and rhythmic context of their improvisation.

Start with what they know - the melody of the tune. Teach everyone the melody of the work and have them practice hearing the melody in their heads while the chord changes are played. This will help them keep track of the form. Then encourage students to sing the melody, not on lyrics, but on scat syllables of their choice. Next, ask them to make gradual changes in scating the melody by changing pitches and some

of the rhythmic values, but always keeping the melody in their heads. The amount of change will differ with each student depending on their comfort level and sense of musical adventure but they should know that the melody is always there for them to serve as a springboard to launching new ideas, and also as a cushion to fall back on, in case they run out of ideas. Another idea is to try alternating a phrase of complete improvisation with a phrase of actual melody.

Sound like different instruments. Encourage singers to improvise as though they were a trumpet player. Next a saxophonist. Then a trombonist, guitarist, even a drummer, and the list goes on. These different instruments may open up a new world of ideas in terms of sounds, timbres, articulations, and syllables. You may be surprised at the variety and extent of their creativity.

Trade and carry on a scat conversation with another scatter. Have the singers scat as though the syllables were part of different language to express thoughts or to converse. This can be useful in teaching sensible phrasing. It can also serve as a reminder that there is no need to fill up every bar with sound, but that sometimes use of silence can be more effective. This can be compared to a person who rambles on non-stop without really saying

much, with someone who speaks succinctly and effectively and pauses to provide time to reflect. Encourage singers to 'trade' sections by taking turns with the other singer. Example: in a 32-bar form, they can 'trade' every 8 bars. In a 12-bar blues, try 'trading' 4 bars. To improve listening skills, have each singer imitate the last idea that their partner sings. This can be an exact note-for-note imitation, or taking a rhythmic or melodic idea of their partner and developing it further within their own solo.

Understand and apply basic jazz theory. The few approaches listed above deal with the singer's ability to deal with melody, harmony, and structure by ear. However, learning and understanding jazz theory including the actual chord changes and the corresponding scales and modes, are also essential to becoming a complete musician. The scope of this article covers mere suggestions of starting points for understanding jazz theory and improvisation. While there are many jazz theory and method books available, one series that is tried and true is Jamey Aebersold's 'An Approach to Jazz Improvisation.' It contains volume of tunes with recordings of a backing rhythm section, with which students can practice improvising and become familiar with the chord changes and form. It also lists numerous scales that correspond to different

chord qualities. A thorough, practical knowledge and application of these scales with the corresponding chords will lead to a more sophisticated sense of melodic and harmonic development in improvisation. However, even without such an additional resource, singers can start with the basics by being able to sing the roots of the chords as they go by in tempo, then

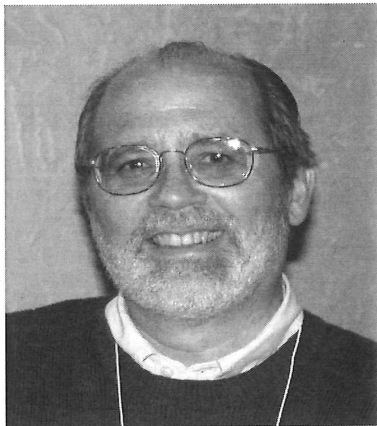
progressing to the ability to sing the arpeggios of the chords.

These are just a few of many ideas that may get singers to be more comfortable with vocal improvisation. Because it is a process of 'trial and error' (less emphasis on error), a positive learning environment with open minds, a great sense of humor, and one in which everyone participates and scats (including the

teacher!) will produce the best results. If you have additional ideas that have been successful with your ensembles and soloists, please feel free to share them. Also, please send news of your vocal jazz ensembles, so that we can share ideas and encourage our jazz ensembles in various programs throughout the state.

Happy scatting!

## Franklin Green, R&S Chair for Women's Music



**It's about literature.** You may recall the presidential campaign that had a slogan "It's the economy, stupid." After the election their slogan became public knowledge and the phrase was paraphrased for many different uses. Choral musicians might have a variety of issues on which they want to focus. *It* could be about tone, or morale, or recruiting, or rhythm. Regardless of what is on your mind however, in my opinion, **IT** is always about literature. If you choose the right

literature, your choristers will excel.

Choosing great literature for choirs has always been a struggle for me. I labor over it. I've heard pieces in a reading session and thought, hmmm, maybe, and put them in my "maybe someday" pile where they remained for years. Of course then I went to one of your concerts where you performed it fabulously and I said, "Wow! What was I thinking? I should be using that all the time."

I want to ask you to do two things. First, go all out when choosing literature. Since 99.9% of all choral literature was not published this year, you've got to assume that 99.9% of the great choral literature will not show up in the publishers promotions for this year. Research is required. But hey, you have a degree, or degrees, and you are a scholar. Do research, find

the great literature and if you need to, raise money to buy it. **It's about literature.**

Secondly, consider these collections. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, by Charles Davidson, published by Ashbourne Music (Charles Davidson), 215-782-1374, \$15 a copy; *Missa Pro Defunctis* by Francesco Brusa (1767) published by SMN Press, 510-222-0564, [smnpress@sbcglobal.net](mailto:smnpress@sbcglobal.net), about \$6 a copy; and *Carols for Choirs vol. 4* (for treble voices), published by Oxford for \$18. (Ellen Fox at Pepper can get the last two for you). Okay, don't buy them all this year, but buy them all.

The Butterfly Songs, as the students will call them, are masterworks of composition. There are nine texts by children who died in the Holocaust in this profound collection, published in 1971. Google the title if you want to

know all about the history of the texts. They are deep (and a fabulous cross-curriculum study). They are also hard, but the composer encourages you to simplify them, singing unison or two parts if you like. There are lots of dissonances (consider the subject matter), but they are so well prepared that they happen easily. There is changing meter and there are many challenges for the conductor. Call me and I'll tell you how I tackled the problems. Your students deserve the chance to know at least some of these songs. I sing seven of the nine regularly. The girls and audiences love them. I talked with Dr. Davidson recently and he said he will make the pieces available individually for between \$1.50 and \$2.00 a piece. These works are also available with orchestra.

In 1767, Francesco Brusa was a retired opera composer called in to do a one-year stint as chorus master at the Venetian Ospedali in place of Galuppi who had been invited to the Russian Court. The girls loved him

and asked him to write for them and he wrote this mass for the dead. It is such a solid piece for women. It has the same text as the Mozart Requiem but the sections are treated in miniature so it is only 20 minutes long, and about 8 minutes of that are solo. You'll need two good sopranos for the solo work, but otherwise it is very approachable by a good woman's chorus or massed choir. Every college women's choir should have it on the must list. The piano reduction works fine, but the original string parts are also available for \$10 and a string quintet will transport your students into the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

For years I've heard a variety of fine arrangements of carols for women's voices on recording, only to search and be disappointed not to find them available from publishers. It turns out they are all in the same place, *Carols for Choirs 4: Fifty Carols for Sopranos and Altos* ed. and arr. by John Rutter and David Willcocks. It is hard to come up with \$18, but it

breaks down to 36 cents a title, and includes *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*, *Star Carol*, *Personent Hodie*, *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day*, and lots of familiar things arranged. Yes there are three other volumes for SATB choirs.

I am constantly finding wonderful literature that has been around and I just don't know it. I'd love it if you'd send me suggestions of pieces you think are fabulous but are little known or unknown so I could consider them for next summer's reading session. They may be difficult or simple, but should be wonderful.

Finally, there are a couple of pieces for women that I'm looking for and can't find, *A Feast of Lights* by Frederick Silver, permanently out of print, (any one have a copy?) and *Timid girl on a Swing* (*Küigel Kartlik*) from *Swing Songs* (*Küigelaulud*) by Veljo Tormis. Can't find it published anywhere. Has anyone seen it?

Have a great semester!  
Be in touch!

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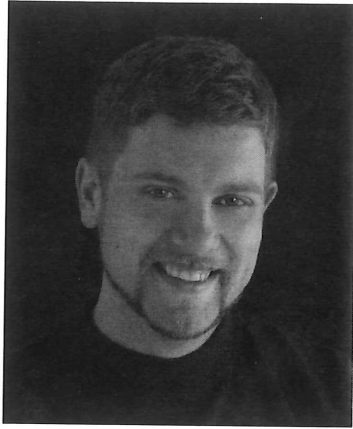
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## Guest Article: Text IS Music — Text AS Music!

Editor's Note: Each issue, as space permits, Georgia Sings! will include the best articles from other states' ACDA newsletters, with the author's permission. This issue's contribution comes from Dr. Ian Loeppky, who is the R&S Chair for Multicultural and Ethnic Music in Alabama ACDA and the Director of Choral Activities at the University of Northern Alabama. He can be reached at [irloepky@una.edu](mailto:irloepky@una.edu).



Dr. Ian Loeppky

There is nothing more difficult than finding time to prepare a score for performance. We've all been there: uniforms to order, risers to move, parents to keep happy, buses to rent—the list goes on and on! When we DO take time to “sink our teeth” into a score, we make sure that we've learned all of the parts, know how they line up harmonically, have a few ideas about dynamics and articulations, and hope we can teach it. **But what about the text?**

Paying attention to the text — whether it is in a foreign language or otherwise — means more than just understanding what it means. We are all capable of making the **meaning** of text “meaningful” to our students—

whether it's a Latin motet for District or a familiar holiday text that we've known for years. But how often do we think of text AS music?

Choral composers are attracted to certain texts not just because a poem contains ideas that they like or that they can illuminate with their music, but because they like the **sound** of the text itself. The best example is the first verse of the world's best-known hymn:

*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.*

Try speaking it out loud and you'll notice a few things:

1. Not only do the last words in each line rhyme, but there are internal rhymes as well: “**amazing**” and “**grace,**” “**once**” and “**lost,**” “**now**” and “**found**”

2. All of those wonderful “S” sounds in the first line that pile up on each other

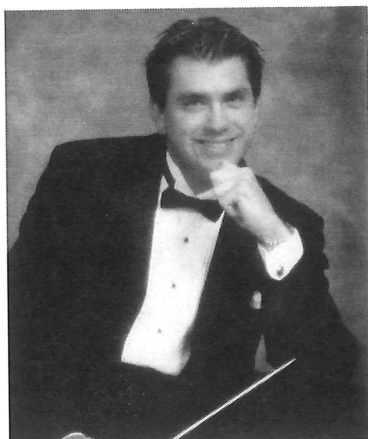
3. The “weak-strong” rhythm of the text which emphasize every other syllable (try saying these words **without** humming the tune!)

What does this mean for us as choral directors? First of all, it means that there is textual “music” in every choral piece before we play a single note, and we can help our singers discover it. We can show them how to pay attention to those repeated consonants, bring out and unify those rhyming sounds, and fall into the natural rhythm of the text.

It also means that doing a piece other than in the language its written in might be easier (and at times necessary), but we may miss this music! To put it another way, we can show our singers the beauty and fun of singing “Gloria in excelsis Deo” or “Dirat-on” or “Betelehemu”—not just in the language that the composer intended, but the language that's the most **musical!**

Perhaps the single greatest thing that makes singers different from clarinetists, pianists, and drummers is that **singers sing words.** (I've met instrumentalists who are jealous of singers for this reason!). Let's remember that the text is not something that's “tacked on” to a piece, but is a legitimate—and **musical**—part of it!

## Vaughn Roste, Newsletter Editor



Two members of the current Georgia ACDA Board – Drew Bowers and myself – were selected from a pool of applicants (each of whom supplied a CV and a video recording of a rehearsal) to be one of 18 Conducting Fellows for the recent Chorus America A Cappella Choral Conducting Masterclass, held in Minneapolis, MN, October 5-8, 2007.

The three faculty for this event were of exceptionally high caliber. Phillip Brunelle is the Director of Music at Plymouth Congregational Church in downtown Minneapolis, where most sessions were held. The church is proud of its choral heritage and of the fact that Phillip is only the third Director of Music there since 1900. (I know churches who are on their third Director of Music since 2000, never mind 1900). He's also the conductor of the 32-members (8 per part) professional choir called VocalEssence, which he founded in 1969. Suffice it to say they are easily the best choir I have ever had the pleasure of conducting, however briefly. Their website, <http://www.vocalescence.org> has more information about them if you're interested – and

you should be interested in their website, it's a phenomenon in itself, never mind the choir – possible the best choral website I've ever seen. Sigrid Johnson is the associate conductor of Vocal Essence and is also employed on the voice and choral faculty at St. Olaf College, conducting the 100-voice freshmen women's choir there called the Manitou Singers. Finally, Anton Armstrong completed the trio. In 1990 he became the fourth conductor of the Sr. Olaf Choir since F. Melius Christiansen started it in 1911. If you haven't heard of Anton Armstrong, you can read up about him at Wikipedia, where he has his own article devoted to him (I realize that's not the ultimate measure of success, but it can be an indication). In short, the faculty for this event was world-class, and I was lucky to be able to take part.

Before we arrived, each of the Conducting Fellows (there were also Conducting Associates, who sat in on all sessions and got private conducting lessons with the private coaches, who were also incredible – as well as some dozen auditors) was assigned three pieces – one from each of three different genres. The classical performance stream was represented by Mendellsohn, Durufle, and Parry; the four Spirituals were composed by Moore, Powell, Hogan, and Johnson; and the contemporary composers represented were Paulus, Larsen, and Argento. They had chose contemporary American composers who lived in the Twin Cities area in the hopes we might even be able to meet them, but in the end only Libby Larsen ended up ultimately being available. Nonetheless

we met her, and what a brilliant mind and dynamic presentation style she has! She is the type of person who probably accomplishes more before 9 am than most people do all day.

We Conducting Fellows each paid \$650 for the opportunity to conduct this professional choir, and we were rewarded with 20 min on the podium on three of the four days of the event. I figured this meant we were paying \$10 per minute that we spent conducting these choirs, but even at that price it was well worth it!

I was more nervous for this event than perhaps any other conducting event I had ever done before, including my graduate recitals; it felt like no amount of preparation was adequate. I feared that once you stood before a professional group (whose eyes I swear never once left the conductor, unlike any of the choirs I conduct currently!), any mistake(s) you made would be completely transparent and that everyone in the room would quickly realize that the Emperor had no clothes. However, the experience was nothing less than incredibly positive for me (and I'm sure Drew would agree) – the coaches so supportive, the choir so enthusiastic and attentive, the atmosphere so collegial - that I am very glad I went and I am convinced that it was worth every penny. Opportunities such as this for professional development at this level do not come often (Chorus America does these things once every two years), so make sure you take advantage of them next time they come around! Undeniably daunting, but well worth it.

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## Last Word: Alicia Walker, President-Elect of GA ACDA



Working with the people of ACDA has been a great privilege for me in recent years. It has opened wonderful doors of friendship and collegiality, as well as professional connections that have enriched my work. The opportunity to serve the choral directors in Georgia as president-elect instills in me a great sense of responsibility to you and to our craft.

We have much to accomplish together! One of the goals of our board is to create a greater partnership with the Choral Division of GMEA. A

stronger connection between these two entities to which so many of us belong can only benefit our singers and the choral art. Some of the plans include: reading sessions and workshops sponsored by ACDA at GMEA events, greater communication and partnership with the choral division chairs, and greater visibility for ACDA among the GMEA membership. Renee Wilson-Wicker, choral division chair, and Robin Yackley, the chair-elect, have both expressed their enthusiasm for and commitment to these goals. I believe we share a vision of seeing choral music thrive at every level in the state of Georgia, and a closer partnership between these two great organizations will have a tremendous impact on that process.

Looking ahead to 2008, I urge you to make plans to attend the Southern Division ACDA convention in Louisville, KY. It promises to be a great convention. The venues for performances include Whitney Hall in the

Kentucky Center for the Arts, Cathedral of the Assumption, and Christ Church Cathedral. The Galt House, the convention hotel, has enough space for the entire convention, including interest sessions, honor choir rehearsals, and exhibits. Best of all, everything is within walking distance - no buses necessary! The headliner concert will feature Anonymous 4, and Georgia will be wonderfully represented by the Atlanta Sacred Chorale, directed by Eric Nelson, the chamber choir from Peachtree Presbyterian Church, directed by Bryan Priddy, the Concert Choir from Lassiter High School and their director, Brian Williams, and the North Cobb High School Women's Choir, Bella Voce, and their director, Stefanie Cash.

Our congratulations to these fine choirs and their conductors! You will want to be in Louisville, KY, March 6-8, 2008!

Georgia ACDA online at [www.gaacda.org](http://www.gaacda.org) Thomas Yackley, webmaster

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