



# VOICEMAIL



## SCIENCE: From Leonardo Da Vinci to Albert Einstein.

Third Baptist Church in Grand Center was the venue for the first concert of the 70th season, held on October 5. The theme for the new season is Voices of Change which Artistic Director **Philip Barnes** has crafted to address topics that vary from science, as in this concert's program, through protest, transformation, justice, commonwealth, and equality. This allows him to delve into artistic works by composers spanning six centuries and as many continents. It opens up a vast repertoire from which to source materials for each concert, and will include older established pieces and recent compositions.

The program began with *Thule, The Period of Cosmography*, an early piece by Thomas Weelkes. Other celestial works included *I Am The Great Sun* (Jussi Chydenius), *Einstein Considered Light* (Dobrinka Tabakova), *O Stellae Coruscantes* (Claudio Monteverdi), and *An die Sterne* (Robert Schumann.) We heard a new work by former Composer-in-Residence **Melissa Dunphy** that was commissioned by BBC Radio Three and VOCES8: the premiere took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London (at the 'proms') last year. Melissa was inspired to write *Totality* during her visit to St. Louis in April last year when she experienced the solar eclipse. The first half ended with another piece new to the Chamber Chorus - *Leonardo Dreams Of His Flying Machine* with music set by Eric Whitacre to Charles Anthony Silvestri's text in a beautiful collaboration. It included some interesting percussion effects and mesmerizing whooshing sounds all expertly conducted by Assistant Conductor **Orin Johnson**.



The second half began with *What Poor Astronomers They Are* by John Dowland from Elizabethan times. A new addition to the Chamber Chorus's repertoire, it ushered in some more pieces fresh to the singers and the audience. *Stars* by Latvian composer, Eriks Esenvalds, was accompanied by ethereal sounds created by **Diana Umali** (electronic keyboard) and two singers rubbing Tibetan singing bowls. This was followed by two pieces with a more 'engineering' theme; *The Train* set to lyrics from Mary Coleridge by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, and *Turing Believes Machines Think* by Australian composer, Gordon Hamilton. This honors the genius of Turing (cracking the Enigma code) and his early predictions that computers would be part of our future. The penultimate selection *Discoveries* was by Grace Brigham, a young composer who selected quotes from pioneer women in medicine and science to create her libretto. Philip Barnes was so enthusiastic about her music that he said that he would be delighted if a Chorus-supporter would commission a new work by her. This led to one such commission and world premiere, *God Never Anything Of Nothing Made* by Francis Pott, commissioned for the Chorus by long-time supporters, **Stacey and Jon Albin-Wilson**. **George Yeh** (St. Louis Arts Substack) commented that the composer does not "make use of extended techniques or unusual vocal effects, but simply and straightforwardly provides a well-crafted work of the old school, very nicely done by the SLCC." Although Frances Pott was unable to travel to St. Louis to hear his impressive composition, Philip Barnes let him know how well it was received and sent him a recording of the performance. He replied, "The first performance was excellent! I hope the Chorus found it acceptable to rehearse and present to the public. And I'm very glad to hear that Stacey and Jon were pleased - and that you were, too." Yeh remarked that the SLCC did their usual fine work throughout the concert, making the pun that it "made for a stellar start to the anniversary commemorations."

**Gill Waltman**

*Photo caption: Orin Johnson and Philip Barnes*

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SAINT LOUIS  
CHAMBER  
CHORUS

## Message from the President

### Dear Subscribers and Friends of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus,

You are all familiar with the singers and with Artistic Director **Philip Barnes**, and with our Assistant Directors **Orin Johnson** and **Caroline Ibnabdeljalil**. But you may not be as familiar with our Board of Directors and what it does. I am delighted to tell you a little about our Board and to let you know that we have recently added three new members, **Jeanne Bartling Gillanders**, **Scott Lunte** and **Carr Trovillion**. Read more about them in this issue.

As an entity working under Missouri's Nonprofit Corporation Act, we follow the American practice of having a professional, independent Board of Directors. We currently have 14 voting directors, including our newest directors, and we will introduce a further two in a later issue.

The Board of Directors is responsible for managing all the property and affairs of the Chorus. As we make decisions, we have to think through both how they affect the current day-to-day life of the Chorus and how they may affect its long-term future. The key decisions we make involve the singers and the

personnel who run the organization - the Artistic Director, the Executive Director and the Administrative Manager - and our finances.

We have many formal and informal practices designed to assure an independent and professional approach. For example, we have a formal "conflict of interest" policy that each director has to comply with each year. We do not nominate members in the same family to serve on the board together. We seek candidates with different skill sets and interests.

We strive to give voice to the management and singers. Our Artistic Director and Executive Director are non-voting members, and there are two voting board positions for representatives of the choir to ensure that we hear the perspectives of the singers.

So, when you attend a concert or enjoy a recording, you now know that it is the product of musical preparation and careful planning and review by the Board.

**Dick Brickson**

## CARR TROVILLION



The SLCC Board welcomes Carr Trovillion as one of its newest directors. He joined the board in September 2025. Carr brings unique expertise, based on his past experiences.

Carr was born and raised in St. Louis—in Olivette, to be precise—and attended Ladue

schools. He was active in the Boy Scouts and became an Eagle Scout.

Carr graduated from DePauw University in Indiana and then returned to St. Louis to earn an MBA at Washington University. After working in public accounting for ten years, he was recruited as CFO for Drury Hotels Company where he served for 31 years, and he continues to work in semi-retirement with various responsibilities for the company.

Carr's expertise is accounting and finance, but he was also responsible for Risk Management, as well as Purchasing & Distribution of construction and operating supplies for Drury's 150 hotels. While headquartered in St. Louis, Drury's accounting division remained in its previous home in Cape Girardeau, and Carr traveled there weekly over the years. He can do that drive in his sleep!

Carr has served on various boards over the years, including the Better Business Bureau of Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois where he served as board chair, and John Burroughs School, where he served for nine years, two as Board President. In addition to the Chamber Chorus, he currently serves on the board of Premier Charter School, the largest charter school in St. Louis.

Carr and his wife Ellen met on a blind date, set up by a mutual friend. After many years together, three children and four grandchildren, they now have time to travel and have enjoyed trips to the Baltic, the Mediterranean, Australia, Africa and many trips to Italy, most recently with Philip to see Greek ruins in Southern Italy. They have enjoyed Chamber Chorus concerts over the years, but Carr readily admits he is not a singer, or to put it in Ellen's words, he can't carry a tune in a bucket! All their children were Classics students at John Burroughs for all six years. It was through their time at Burroughs that Carr became well acquainted with Philip Barnes. In addition to being a master teacher of Latin and Greek and an accomplished Artistic Director, he is a persuasive advocate for the Chorus and its future. Carr is looking forward to serving on the Board of the Chorus and takes comfort in knowing none of the concerts require audience participation.

## JEANNE GILLANDERS

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We are delighted to welcome Jeanne Gillanders as a recent addition to the SLCC Board. It is always exciting to bring in new faces with skill sets from their own backgrounds that enhance the composition of the overall Board.

Jeanne is a native of St. Louis, has followed a familiar trajectory: move away, return, move away again, return again, move away one more time, and return one more time. Along the way, she married her husband Will, and they welcomed three children into their lives: Emma, Ian, and Teddy. Jeanne has also enjoyed a 20+ year career as an English teacher and a 40+ year commitment as a volunteer in her communities.

The Saint Louis Chamber Chorus first beeped on Jeanne's radar a number of years ago when she attended a Christmas concert in Maplewood with friend and colleague and former board member **Marni Dillard**. Having been accused of Luddism, Jeanne claims that it is no surprise that she found herself attending the concerts with greater frequency, eventually becoming a subscriber. The concerts have become the place where she can immerse herself in the beauty of the music, even though she lacks musical knowledge and talent,

and appreciate the purity of the pursuit of beauty for beauty's sake.

Having worked with the Chorus' artistic director **Philip Barnes** in a variety of venues across the world, (including being a fellow teacher at John Burroughs School), Jeanne learned—up-close and personal—of Philip's passion for the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus. She noted that when Philip speaks of the Chorus his unabashed joy and enthusiasm infects those around him, and she caught the bug, so it was a great honor to be asked to join the Board and become an advocate for the SLCC.

During her years in St. Louis and Charleston, Jeanne has staffed and chaired innumerable committees as a parent and an educator. So as a member of the Board, Jeanne will not only bring a love of learning and an appreciation for the beauty of art, but she will also bring her practicality, her commitment to service, and desire to improve the environment around her.

When not working or sleeping, Jeanne enjoys spending unstructured time with her family, immediate and extended, and her herd of pets. (She defines the 'herd' as 3+ cats and one big-boned dog called Dizzy.) She also enjoys starting projects she will likely not finish, playing in her garden, cooking, reading mysteries, walking the family dog, and the occasional bout of exercise.

## SCOTT LUNTE

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We welcome Scott Lunte to the SLCC Board as its newest singer representative. You may recall reading an article about Scott in the February 2024 issue of [Voicemail](#). He is the youngest of five children and was born and raised in Arnold in an incredibly musical family.

His parents encouraged him to pursue music from an early age. Scott's earliest musical memory is singing a solo in church before the whole congregation at the age of five.

Music remained an important part of Scott's childhood. He was a member of the St. Louis Children's Choirs for seven years, providing foundational musical training and opportunities, including singing at Carnegie Hall. With full parental encouragement, he auditioned and performed from fifth to tenth grade in the Summer Youth Choir organized by the Missouri Choral Directors Association each summer in Jefferson City. In high school, Scott was always involved in choir, taking solos and small ensembles to state each year, and participating in All-State Choir in his junior and senior years. Read his full musical journey [here](#).

Scott obtained a political science degree from Webster University after deciding against pursuing a major in

music education for a number of reasons, not least because his two other passions were politics and law. However, Scott knew that he had to keep music in his life, so he joined Webster's Chamber Choir. This allowed him to enjoy music for diversion and relaxation and not out of academic obligation.

After graduating with a law degree from the University of Missouri, he joined a private law firm in St. Louis. He is currently in his third year as a civil defense lawyer, focusing primarily on defending against personal injury and premises liability suits.

Before joining the SLCC, Scott was already singing as a section leader in the choir at Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion under the direction of SLCC member **Mary Chapman**. Mary had encouraged him for years to join the Chorus. She convinced him to participate in the SLCC recording session in January 2023, along with boyfriend **Ethan Forte**. They both joined the choir for the remaining 2022-2023 season concerts and are now in their second full year with the Chamber Chorus. As mentioned, Scott (Bass 1) and Ethan (Tenor 1) met before joining the Chorus and will be married in April at Christ Church Cathedral.

Read Scott's eloquent thoughts about his new role on page 4.

**Gill Waltman**



# NOTEWORTHY NOTES

## The Role of the Singer Representatives to the SLCC Board

While the Board of Directors works diligently to ensure the continued success and strategic drive of the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, two Board Members also maintain an additional role: Singer Representative. These Board Members are current full-time members of the Chamber Chorus and are tasked with not only serving as full Board Members but also representing the greatest asset of the Chamber Chorus: our talented singers. The Singer Representatives are the conduit for suggestions and concerns of the singers to the Board as a whole. Chorus members' thoughts are communicated to us, often during the breaks at rehearsals, and it is our duty to bring them to the Board. Further, we are often in a better position to explain the inner workings and decisions of the Board to our peers, given our knowledge of the decision-making process and parallel understanding of their impacts on the singers.

During Board meetings, it is always our role to be thinking, "how does this affect the singers" or "what would a Chorus member think about this?" Like any representative of a large group, we will never be able to perfectly encapsulate the exact views of all our constituents, but the fact that this role is incorporated into the intrinsic framework of the Chamber Chorus makes the way the organization is managed all the better. It is a true honor to be an advocate for such a remarkable group of musicians.

**Scott Lunte**

## Board Members Come in all Shapes and Sizes!

So what do they have in common? It's not musical training: we already enjoy that via our conductors and singers. What all our board members have in common is their recognition of the Chamber Chorus as one of St. Louis's cultural jewels, one worth maintaining and indeed fostering. If the choir is to last another seventy years, it will be in no small part because of the collective wisdom and active guidance of our board members.

## It's not too late to become a Season Subscriber!

Did you buy an individual ticket for today's concert? You can convert this into a season subscription. Talk to the SLCC staff at the desk in the intermission.

When you become a subscriber, your benefits include:

**Ticket Trade-In:** Can't make a concert? You may trade your unused ticket for an additional ticket to bring a friend or family member to a concert you can attend.

**Reserved Seating:** Enjoy seating in the Subscriber Only section, which guarantees you the best acoustic and vantage point at each unique concert venue.

**Tax Benefit:** Collect a tax letter for the value of any unused concert tickets.

**Pre-Concert Letter:** Receive the pre-performance letter from Artistic Director Philip Barnes that gives you the inside track on each venue and its facilities.

Want to learn more? Contact Nancy Burstein at [info@chamberchorus.org](mailto:info@chamberchorus.org) or 636-458-4343

## Plush Commemorative Cushions Still Available!

Not all our concert venues have comfortable seating! What better way to enjoy the region's best *a cappella* chorus than with a **commemorative 70th anniversary seat cushion**. We are pleased to offer our audience members and friends these plush, memory foam cushions monogrammed with the SLCC logo. Bring yours to each venue, especially those less likely to enhance your seating pleasure.

Patrons who would like to pre-order seat cushions may purchase them online at [chamberchorus.org](http://chamberchorus.org) through **Pay PAL**, and pick up at our second concert on November 16 at Lutheran Church of the Atonement in Florissant. **Philip Barnes** forewarns that a bit of extra padding might be appreciated for this venue!

Cushions will also be available for purchase at the concert for \$20 each. Donors at the Sponsor level (\$1,000 or more) are eligible to receive a gift of two cushions.



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