



VOICEMAIL

May 2016

In Memoriam: Two Outstanding Composers

Among our recent commissions are two of America's outstanding composers who have since left us too soon: **Stephen Paulus** died in the fall of 2014, and **Steven Stucky** succumbed to brain cancer this past February. As their music for the Chamber Chorus testifies, their passing represents a major loss to the cause of contemporary music in the USA, for they died at the height of their powers.



Stephen Paulus

Stephen was a genial character, full of energy and wit, and with a soft spot for St. Louis, as his early success with Opera Theatre had set him firmly on the map. It was a pleasure to collaborate on the superb *Stabat Mater* he wrote for us, and meeting him was a joy as he was a charming companion and brilliant raconteur. His conversation was always informative, and leavened with insight and earthy humor; it's little wonder he left behind such a store of goodwill in the music community.



Steven Stucky

We're still evaluating Steve Stucky, but clearly he too touched the lives of numerous musicians as they began their careers. The respect and reverence felt by his many students was apparent in the tributes that poured in following his death on Valentine's Day. Sad to say, I never met him in person; our premiere on April 10 was to be the first time we would get together. However, from the tone of our correspondence, which was always friendly and constructive, I was sure we would enjoy one another's company.

Like Paulus, his career was studded with awards and plaudits, the most distinguished being the Pulitzer Prize in 2005. His piece for us, *The Music of Light*, showed an ease and sympathy for voices that makes me regret we could not draw more choral music from his pen. He wrote relatively little for choir, but what he did is beautifully crafted and inspired.

Both men were superb musicians, true artists, and generous souls. We are truly blessed to have had the opportunity to bring their music to life, and even as they now pass from among us, we will endeavor to keep their music alive through performances and recordings.

Philip Barnes

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The Saint Louis Chamber Chorus

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Message from the President

This season featured so many unique new events and opportunities—we will remember this one for years! *Some we expected:* Artistic director **Philip Barnes** presented new music commissioned by members of our audience at each concert this season. The singers performed the often challenging music beautifully. *Some were complete surprises:* This included a rare opportunity to sing with **Barry Manilow** here in St. Louis on his 2016 Tour!

Some we planned as special events for the season: We enjoyed a spirited 60th anniversary season-opening celebration that included special performances by many of our singers and also by our new composer-in-residence **Melissa Dunphy**, who captivated us with her spirit (and a unique rendition of Bach that she played upside down!). The singers traveled out of town (to Kansas City) for the first time in years, sharing their music with new audiences and enjoying the opportunity. Audience members and subscribers supported the group by contributing generously to our unique, one-time “Sixty for Sixty” campaign to get sixty new donors in our 60th Anniversary season.

Following this last concert, we are ready to close the season with a wonderful 60th Anniversary Season celebration giving us the chance to mingle with the singers and thank them in person for their amazing energy, commitment and love. Former composer-in-residence **Sasha Johnson Manning** will also be there in person!

We will not forget this season. And we were delighted to be able to share it with you, our audiences. You make what we do possible, and we appreciate each of you. There are still some tickets available to join us at our closing celebration after today’s concert. We would love to see you at the Women’s Center on the Washington University campus. If you need tickets (\$75 per person) or directions, please see us at the front desk.

Dick Brickson

Meet the Singers — Nick Calza

Nick grew up just across the river in Collinsville, Illinois. Music was always around him growing up, but he says it was never forced upon him. His mom and grandma both sang in the choir at church, so when he was old enough, he began singing in the children’s choir. He started piano lessons when he was eight, and began learning the trumpet in 5th grade. The trumpet led him to his passion for music. He didn’t stick with church choir much past junior high, so after that he says he could only be found singing in his car!



Nick Calza

Nick tried on several majors at school before realizing that music was what he really wanted to do all along. He studied music education at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. He continued trumpet under **Dr. John Korak** whose teaching, he says, continues to influence the way he interacts with his students.

After leaving SIUE, Nick found himself teaching music back in his hometown of Collinsville; in fact, teaching band in the same room where he learned to play the trumpet. He met his wife, **Linsey** during music classes in college. She is also a music teacher, and has performed with the Chorus in the past.

Nick first encountered the Chamber Chorus through Linsey’s brother-in-law and bass, **Jay Harkey**. (Jay is

married to Linsey’s sister **Jenni**, who has also sung with the Chorus. **Elise Ibbendahl**, another sister, is a current alto in the choir!) Jay invited Nick to the May concert of the 57th season in 2013. Nick says “I was absolutely stunned by what I heard. I’d not listened to many choirs, but I knew that I was hearing a supremely talented group of singers.” Jay mentioned the choir was in need of basses and that Nick should audition. After a few voice lessons, and despite never having sung in a formal choir, **Philip Barnes** agreed to hear him. A few months later he sang in

his first ever choir concert. “Being surrounded by these incredible musicians, and being guided by Philip, has been an amazing experience. Philip’s knowledge of the choral repertoire is unmatched and he is a teacher to the core. When going through the music, we learn not only how he’d like us to perform it (tempos, dynamics, phrasing, etc.) but he will also give us some historical context of the piece, the person it was written for, why it was written, how it fits with other music of the time.”

Nick and Linsey currently live in South City and love exploring Tower Grove Park with Dunham, their Great Pyrenees mix (named for the music building at SIUE), and trying out new restaurants along South Grand.

Gill Waltman

Meet the Singers — Lisa Gines

Lisa is just completing her second season with the Chorus. Her musical journey began before she could speak with the strong musical influence of her parents, **Ron and Tracy Gines**. Her mother was a mezzo-soprano vocalist while her father made sure she was “roundly cultured”, introducing her to everything from Queen and Rush to Maynard Ferguson and the Empire Brass. Lisa grew up performing in numerous programs and recitals at church and school, and finally picked up trombone her sophomore year of high school, playing well into college.



Lisa Gines

She enrolled in Greenville College in Greenville, Illinois in 2007, and her hobby evolved into a life-long passion. Lisa sang for four years with the Greenville College Choir under the tutelage of **Dr. Jeffrey Wilson**, serving as Choir Chaplain, Choir President and spending three years as Dr. Wilson's assistant. During her time there, she performed in a number of cantatas and oratorios and solidified her love for choral music and performance.

After graduating in 2011 with a degree in English, a minor in Music and extensive coursework in International/Cross-Cultural Studies, Lisa moved to Rock Island, Illinois before returning to St. Louis in the spring of 2012, where she quickly entrenched herself in the choral music scene. She sang for two years with the American Kantorei at Concordia Seminary. In 2013, she had the privilege of singing with the St. Louis Symphony Chorus and performing *Peter Grimes* at Carnegie Hall in New York, as well as *Carmina Burana*

under **Carlos Izcaray** and Verdi's *Requiem* under the late **Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos**.

Lisa was looking for an *a cappella* group with a more eclectic repertoire. She first heard about the Chorus when she sang one season in the Symphony Chorus with **Rebecca Hatelid**. She attended a SLCC concert and was hooked. Her biggest challenge was pushing the college choir sound out of her head and adjusting her voice to a slightly bigger, more mature sound. Lisa is a huge fan of architecture and loves

singing in the different venues and wonderful acoustic hotspots around St. Louis.

Lisa says no matter what stresses occur throughout her week, they are quickly forgotten once she is in a rehearsal or performance. “**Philip** is wonderful to work with, his English cynicism only adds to his charm. His historical anecdotes about the pieces and the composers we work with are often the highlight of rehearsals for me. He can give great flavor to stories that have been lost over time.”

Lisa enjoys singing with various church choirs, traveling, spending time with her family, and pretending to know how to play the didgeridoo by her dresser. She currently works in the development department for Nurses for Newborns, a non-profit organization that has provided free in-home care for fragile families to promote healthy babies in the St. Louis area since 1991.

Gill Waltman

SLCC: Open to All Faiths – And None!

Our April concert, titled *All Manner of Gods*, allowed us to prove that unlike so many choirs, we are not bound by a particular creed or tradition, but are instead open to the music of all faiths and none! Selecting the repertoire was oddly challenging since the difficulty came not from the selection of Hindu or Moslem texts, nor from the various Greco-Roman verse settings that were already in our library, but instead it was the choice of Judeo-Christian pieces. An embarrassment of riches, indeed!

However, since the sun seemed a common feature to several religions—hymns to Apollo, to Aten, the Egyptian sun god, and Kabir the Sufi mystic's reverence for light—I settled on *Holy Is the True Light*, a prayer of assured faith set to music by Sir William Harris. Serving as the encore, it contrasted well with the preceding rich *Ave Maria* by the agnostic Gustav Holst and the confident salute to Jehovah the all-powerful by Salamone Rossi, a Jewish musician active in 17th century Mantua. So many religions have employed music in their affirmation of faith, and this April concert allowed us to see what they shared and how they differed; a rare but valuable opportunity.

Philip Barnes

Noteworthy Notes

Steven Stucky West Coast-Premiere

A major concert of remembrance and celebration for the life of Steven Stucky was held on Wednesday, April 20, in Los Angeles. His composition *The Music of Light*, commissioned for SLCC and which premiered in St. Louis on Sunday April 10th, was given its West Coast premiere at this time.

Post-Dispatch GO Awards



The Chamber Chorus was named BEST CLASSICAL ENSEMBLE at the recent Post-Dispatch GO Awards ceremony April 21. The following was the citation:

"The region has one big classical fish—the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, one of the world's best—and a lot of smaller fry. The St. Louis Chamber Chorus is consistently interesting and excellent, expanding the repertoire with new works, exploring the canon, performing in a host of sometimes-surprising venues and making superb recordings."

Congratulations also are due to SLCC tenor **Jon Garrett**, who was named as Best St. Louis Classical Singer.

Directions to the 60th Celebration Event

For those of you attending today's 60th end-of-season event at Washington University, here are some simplified directions:

The event is being held at the Women's Building Lounge at Washington University. The nearest cross streets are Forest Park Parkway and Throop, just west of Skinker. Turn onto Throop from the Parkway. Turn left (east) into the garage and drive to the far end. When you park you will be below the building and can access it by an outdoor staircase. There will be signs to an elevator in an adjacent building. (Detailed street-by-street directions are also available at the concert.)

SLCC CDs

Have you added the latest Chamber Chorus CD to your collection? If not, you can purchase one today, along with many other great titles from the Chorus. Be sure to pick yours up in the lobby!



For more information about concerts, tickets or auditions:

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Cover Photo, William A. Bascom

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