



VOICEMAIL

May 2012

Two Worlds— One Choir

Describing the Tap Room concert in February as “a barrel of fun”, Sarah Bryan Miller recognized *The Ale Songbook* by British composer **Robert Walker** as the highlight of the performance. This five-song cycle was newly commissioned for the Chamber Chorus by **Stacey Albin-Wilson** and **Jon Wilson**. The theme of the concert, *A Chorus Carouse*, was an ode to ale, wine and the art of drinking, all of which were encouraged during and after the performance.



Philip Barnes, Robert Walker, Stacey Albin-Wilson, Jon Wilson

Robert Walker, who traveled from England for the concert, brought his Old World charm and quirky sense of humor to the occasion and mingled with the audience afterwards.

The April concert, *A Traveler’s Tale*, featured the world premiere of *Le Dernier Voyage* by **Sydney Guillaume** commissioned by **Gailya** and **John Barker**. This impressive young Haitian-American composer from the New World wrote his moving and powerful composition collaborating with his father, poet **Gabriel T. Guillaume**. Sarah Bryan Miller said the music “builds with a complexity like that of life itself, moving from peace to urgency and back for a calm ending.”



John Barker, Gailya Barker, Sydney Guillaume, Philip Barnes

The poem was written expressly for this commission and stands alone with its deeply moving lyrics, but the combined genius of their collaboration was emotional and electric. The younger Guillaume flew in from his home on the west coast for the performance and met Chorus members and subscribers afterwards at a small reception.

Gill Waltman

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Next Season

Plans are now laid for an extraordinary series of concerts, commencing in the fall, which will explore distinctly American utterances from artists as diverse as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Quentin Tarantino! 'Home-grown' music will therefore feature prominently, in preparation for a new recording of American repertoire that we will record for the Regent label early next year. Expect to hear iconic works by Barber, Copland, Roy Harris and William Schuman, to name but a few. We won't stray too far from the 'choral canon,' however, with Victoria's *Christmas Night* mass providing a haunting framework for our festive program on December 23, and masterworks by Bach, Kodály, and Vaughan Williams being heard at various points through the season. As ever, you'll be struck by our choice of venues; who else will take you from a cathedral to a wrestling club? Some settings will seem obvious, others less so, but all have been selected to complement the music and provoke fresh responses from singers and listeners alike.

Philip Barnes

Upcoming Auditions

Auditions for next season will be held on the evenings of May 28, 29, 30 and June 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13 at Holy Communion Episcopal Church. The church is located at 7401 Delmar Blvd. in University City. For more information and to schedule an audition, call the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus office at 636-458-4343.

Message from the President

Welcome to today's concert, *A Leader's Lament*, the final concert of the 56th season of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus. Artistic Director **Philip Barnes'** programs this season have been marvelously diverse, in terms of both music and venue (consider *A King's Christmas* concert of Lessons and Carols at the St. Vincent de Paul Chapel followed by *A Chorus Carouse* at the Tap Room), and we promise more of the same in the upcoming 57th season. Three of our concerts this season were sold out, so please be sure to purchase your subscription or individual tickets early so you are assured of a seat for every performance.

It is a pleasure for us to return to Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church for this performance. Several of our compact discs have been recorded here as well and we are grateful to the clergy and staff for their hospitality and support.

I would like to recognize and extend thanks to some of the many people whose efforts throughout the year help make the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus a premier *a cappella* choir. The members of the Board of Directors contribute their time and efforts in a variety of ways, and in particular I want to thank retir-

ing members **Dave Bowers** and **Dan Ellis** for their service. On behalf of the board, I express our gratitude to Artistic Director **Philip Barnes**, Executive Director **Linda Ryder**, Assistant Directors **Mary Chapman** and **Orin Johnson**, and Rehearsal Accompanist **Martha Shaffer**. Above all, thanks are due to the dedicated members of the chorus whose talent, artistry and hard work have made the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus an outstanding performing ensemble and, according to critics, one of the best *a cappella* choirs in the country.

I encourage you to visit our website, www.chamberchorus.org, where you may purchase tickets and compact discs and find a wealth of information about the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus. We're also happy to send you concert reminders by email—just give your email address to one of the personnel in the lobby.

Thank you for being with us today and I hope to see you on September 30 at Second Baptist Church for the first concert of our 57th season.

Barbara Uhlemann
SLCC President

Meet the Singers — Jennifer Brauer

Jen Brauer was born in Detroit, Mich., the daughter of a church musician, and cannot remember a time when there was not music in her life. She says she was privileged to grow up in the Lutheran church with its wealth of quality music and strong choral tradition. Every year was filled with the music of brass and choir at Easter and Christmas. This was prominent in her small high school of just under 300 students, where over 150 of them were involved in the choir program. They routinely sang *a cappella* hymns in chapel in four parts.

Jen says that she always loved to sing. She has an older sister who graduated from high school the year she was born and worked at a local elderly care center. The employees put on a talent show for the residents and Jen's first solo was at the age of 4! Her sister walked her onstage and sat her on the piano. Her father accompanied them while Jen and her sister took turns singing phrases from *My Favorite Things* from *The Sound of Music*. She has been enamored with singing ever since.



Jen Brauer

In college, Jen became fully involved in studying voice at Concordia University in Ann Arbor. She says her teacher, **Wendy Bloom**, really opened her eyes to the wonders of the voice and helped her develop good technique. In college she developed a strong interest in vocal pedagogy (the study of teaching singing) and attended the Vocal Performance Institute at Oberlin College where she learned from **Richard Miller**.

Jen also has a master's degree in Music Education from the University of Missouri St. Louis. She says she was mentored by amazing teachers, including **Dr. Fred Willman** and **Dr. Jim Henry**.

After moving to St. Louis, Jen joined Immanuel Lutheran Church in Saint Charles, joined the church choir and met **Dick Deitte**! She says "Dick bugged me for years to try out for Chamber Chorus. When the chorus sang at Immanuel a few years ago, I knew it was time to try. I was moved by their music and knew it was something special that I needed to be involved in."

Next came the audition. "When I first auditioned for Philip, he told me that the greatest thing about the Chamber Chorus was the opportunity to sing music I'd only read about in music history books. That has proven to be very true and I look forward to rehearsal every week, wondering what new thing I will learn about a composer, style, or time period. And with Philip's vast knowledge, I am never disappointed."

Jen is a teacher at Lutheran High School of Saint Charles County, a school with just under 300 students. She teaches two choirs, one auditioned and one open to all, and the band. Over 25 percent of students at the school are involved in the music program and she continually strives to get half of them in choir and to sing hymns in chapel in four parts, *a cappella*. Jen is also certified to teach mathematics and is responsible for three classes of geometry. To add to her busy schedule, she teaches private voice lessons to high school and grade school students and loves every minute of it.

She is still taking lessons of her own, currently studying with **Kathy Lawton Brown**. In 2002-2003, she participated in Wintergreen Performance Academy studying with **Tom Barrett** and **Angela Home**. She has been accepted at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville for a master's degree in performance with certificate in vocal pedagogy. She hopes to begin her studies in the fall. Following completion of that degree, she wants to continue teaching and to include applied voice at a community or small college.

When she is not singing, Jen loves to bake, especially cookies. Her specialties are gingerbread and an amazing bittersweet chocolate chunk. She is an avid paper crafter, specializing in cards and scrapbooks. She is also dedicated to personal fitness (perhaps to offset the baking!) and works out at 5 am with kettle bells at least 4 days a week. Her two favorite sports teams are the Detroit Red Wings and the Saint Louis Cardinals. She also loves basketball, and has played and coached for many years. During March Madness, it is hard to drag her away from the TV and she always roots for the underdog!

Noteworthy Notes

Audition Q&A

- Q. What sort of person sings with the Chamber Chorus?
- A. An experienced singer who relishes the challenge of unfamiliar music but who is happy to explore the mainstream repertoire.
- Q. What does 'experience' mean in this context?
- A. Those who enjoy this type of singing have sung in excellent high school and/or college programs, and are now eager for a context that—being 'Chamber'—is inevitably more intimate than a large choral society.
- Q. Are there particular qualities that a successful singer should demonstrate?
- A. SLCC members have well developed voices, they can read music competently, and they're 'fast learners'—50 or 60 pieces in any given season means rehearsal time is at a premium.
- Q. When is the best time to try out for the choir?
- A. Now! We are scheduling our annual auditions this month and next, and encourage anyone interested in either full or alternate (substitute) membership to contact us without delay.

Philip Barnes

Our Legacy

A particular pleasure in commissioning new music for the Chorus is to follow the fortunes of 'our' commissions and composers. So we're happy to report that **Howard Helvey's** *Evening Song*, written for **Mary** and **Matt Chapman**, is soon to be published by E. C. Schirmer. Howard's earlier SLCC commission, *Three Teasdale Madrigals*, is already in the catalog of Oxford University Press. On the other side of the pond, **Francis Pott** and **Sasha Johnson Manning** are enjoying ever-greater coverage in the British media. A disc entirely devoted to Francis's music has been released on the NAXOS label, which also plans to release his *When David Heard* in the fall. Meanwhile, Sasha received a major commission from the BBC to write incidental music for several plays, culminating in a mass setting, which was performed and broadcast by choirs around the globe on Easter morning.

Chorus Sings on Soundtrack

Famed filmmakers **Ridley** and **Tony Scott** are producing a TV mini-series, *Labyrinth*, that dramatizes *Labyrinth*, a New York Times's bestseller novel by British author, **Kate Mosse**. Writing the soundtrack is Oscar-winner, **Trevor Jones**, who was so impressed by the Chamber Chorus's recent CDs that he asked the choir to record some of the new score. The schedule for the TV broadcast has yet to be set, but the Chamber Chorus will give the world premiere of Trevor's music—a Latin setting of Psalm 23—at its 'movie program' in February 2013.

Philip Barnes

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concerts, tickets or auditions:

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