



VOICEMAIL

CELEBRATIONS AND MEMORIALS



Our final presentation of the 66th season was held May 29 at First Presbyterian Church in Kirkwood. With Covid restrictions eased (although audience and singers were still masked) there was a large in-person attendance. The concept **Philip Barnes** created for this season, after a long hiatus without live performances, was for the choir to collaborate with various local instrumentalists. This was in part to ease the singers back into full voice, but also to provide an opportunity to include new repertoire that was not strictly *a cappella*.

The first half of the program opened with a choral fanfare by contemporary composer John Rutter, followed by seasonal pieces appropriate to the month of May, together with a few tributes in memory of others – a fitting sentiment for the Memorial Day observances. Examples from the Renaissance were “Now is the Month of Maying” by Thomas Morley, followed by “Death Hath Deprived Me” written as a posthumous tribute to Morley himself by Thomas Weelkes. William Byrd’s “This Merry Month of May” concluded that section. Three pieces were notable for being written by living composers-in-residence to the Chamber Chorus, one past, one present and one future. These were **Clare Maclean’s** ‘Welcome the Summer’, **Mårten Jansson’s** SLCC commission “Luciasvit”, and **Kerensa Briggs’** “Media Vita.” They were conducted respectively, by assistant conductors Orin Johnson, Andy Jensen and then Philip Barnes.

It was most exciting to welcome back Jansson in person. Several previous visits during his term as our Composer-in-Residence had been planned and then thwarted by Covid interference. His final commission “Luciasvit” or “Lucia’s Song” is based on four Swedish folksongs traditionally sung on St. Lucia’s Day. It was performed at the Christmas concert with Jansson absent and was reprised at this concert so he could experience his composition with the full choir in live performance. Jansson was highly complimentary, requesting the opportunity to join the choir after the concert in some formal (briefly unmasked) photographs.

The second half of the concert was devoted to the “Missa Brevis” by Zoltan Kodály. This masterpiece showcased not only the choir, but also First Presbyterian Church’s pipe organ which accompanied the procession of singers. Once the choir started to sing, organist **Bill Stein** accompanied them with just the right balance to be heard but not to overwhelm. Afterwards Barnes called his performance flawless. The impressive organ featured pipes extending from the normal vertical position like a row of fanfare trumpets. Called *trompettes en chamade*, Stein explained that these were too overpowering to use with the Chorus in this particular work. This supposedly “brief” mass brought forth a comment from Barnes wondering what an *unabbreviated* one would resemble! It was a marvelous way to end the concert and the series, and we look forward to more excellent programming and singing next season.

Gill Waltman

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THE
SAINT LOUIS
CHAMBER
CHORUS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Subscribers and Friends - with your help, we have just completed our 66th season. For two consecutive seasons we presented unique programs, both driven by Covid.

In our 65th season, we presented live discussions with **Philip Barnes** and others closely involved with the Chorus. We included recorded music from our concerts over the last 30 years, and art and other images to complement the music. These also were streamed for those preferring to participate from home.

In our 66th season, we returned to live concerts sung *a cappella*. In keeping with the theme of collaboration, at most concerts we added music accompanied by a range of instruments, including a harpsichord, a

classical guitar group, a string quartet, a pair of pianos and the magnificent organ of Third Baptist Church. Being able to present live music again was great for Philip, for the singers, and for our audiences.

We were delighted that Swedish composer **Mårten Jansson**, completing his term as our most recent Composer-in-Residence, was able to join us in person travelling from his home in Uppsala, Sweden, for the last concert of our 66th season. Thank you, Mårten, for your music, for your support and for your association with the Chorus.

As we change our focus from past seasons to the next, I look forward to seeing all of you again at our 67th season concerts.

Dick Brickson

HEIDI DEAN - NEW BOARD MEMBER



Newest board member **Heidi Dean** was born in Detroit. Her family moved when she was two finally settling in St. Louis, where she stayed through high school. (And yes since you'll want to know - Crossroads College Prep!) She enjoyed the school's academic challenges, and participated

in plays and musicals, which led her to begin voice lessons at CASA. "I had a great teacher who knew how to balance firmness and encouragement and taught me the value of working through tedious techniques."

Heidi returned to Michigan, entering the University of Michigan's college of Literature, Science and the Arts. It was a daunting transition. Not the academics, but that her dorm alone had five times the number of kids as her entire high school. She began taking voice lessons with a dormmate's professor and later auditioning for the School of Music (she passed). Heidi thrived in the smaller environment that allowed her to dig deeper into all aspects of music. Her professor suggested she apply for a newish degree, a Bachelor of Musical Arts - a hybrid liberal arts/music approach that would allow her to put her existing credits to use. She chose French for her minor subject and graduated happy, if not on time.

She began performing in bands in college. "A flute player I knew asked if I'd be interested in singing backup, so I went to meet the guys." Soon she was singing regularly with Captain Dave and the Psychedelic Loungecats. "It was a jam band, they had a smoke machine I hated, but quite a big following, which was nice." She enjoyed the

camaraderie of rehearsing and performing with a small group and sang with them until graduation.

Following college, she went to Europe with her older brother, staying with friends in Hamburg, London and Paris before catching the Trans-Siberian Express bound for Beijing. "We got stuck in Ulan Bator since we were traveling on black market tickets but ended up being able to get money wired from home." After a few weeks in China, they headed to Tokyo, where they taught English. "I ended up staying for nearly three years and spent a year in a small fishing and mining town on Hokkaido."

After moving back to St. Louis, Heidi worked in various roles before landing at the Arts and Education Council, first as the receptionist, then running events and writing the newsletter. She enjoyed the people there and it exposed her to the rich arts landscape in St. Louis. She later took an ad agency proofreading job, which expanded her writing experience.

When her son was born, she freelanced with Feast and for agency friends for five years to keep up her skills and make it easier to get back in the game later.

Heidi is currently a senior copywriter at HLK, developing websites, ads and emails for clients including Bayer, Centene and the Steel Tubing Institute. "The variety is great, the creative challenges are satisfying, and I get to learn a lot - agriculture is a fascinating universe to explore right now." Work aside, she's happy to have the opportunity to join the SLCC Board, "I've been attending the concerts for years, so I know the caliber of the organization. I'm excited to contribute in whatever way I can." Heidi adds that she lives in St. Louis with her husband, son, and about 20 fish.

BRIAN REEVES – MUSICIAN AND BOARD MEMBER



Brian was born in Des Moines. When he was five years old the family moved to the Lake of the Ozarks for his father to take a job as a comedian. Brian recalls that the Lake was a wonderful place to grow up with tons of summer jobs and a never ending influx of interesting people to meet.

Everyone in the family played and sang. Country/Bluegrass music was ubiquitous - at their home, at family gatherings, at church. Brian's parents were self-taught musicians but insisted on providing formal training for him and his sister. His mother paid for piano lessons by cleaning the home of a local piano teacher.

As a teenager, seeing "Amadeus" inspired a lifelong love of composition for Brian. During his senior year of high school, he won a university composition competition which took him to Missouri State University. "My choral director there, **Guy Webb**, was phenomenal, a man of exquisite taste." After college Brian moved to Odessa, Mo., to teach junior high and high school choir. While there he sang with the Kansas City Symphony Chorus and Chorale Francis Poulenc, a summer ensemble.

Brian was introduced to the St. Louis Chamber Chorus in 1996, not long after moving here to teach high school choir at Parkway North. "The idea of a professional choir with a rigorous schedule and a British influence was intriguing." After a few years of singing with SLCC, Brian took on an additional role as assistant conductor before going back to singing for several more years.

After a year away from teaching, Brian looks forward to starting this fall as the choral director at St. Louis University High School. He says that he's been fortunate through the years to serve music locally and at the state level as president of both the Missouri Choral Directors Association and the Missouri Music Educators Association.

In terms of hobbies, Brian declares that nobody who is as bad at golf as he is continues to play as much as he does! He also loves to travel and enjoys public policy. Stacy, his wife of 22 years, is an Adaptive P.E. teacher for Special School District. Their daughter Molly will be a freshman this fall at Missouri State University and son Henry will be a junior at Parkway North.

Brian has long admired SLCC's uncompromising standards of performance and its commitment to moving the choral art forward through commissions. "It is an honor to serve on this Board".

FELLOWSHIP IN ITALY

This spring, artistic director **Philip Barnes** enjoyed a fellowship at the Bogliasco Foundation in Genoa, where he crafted translations from Sophocles' tragedy, *Antigone*. For our 50th anniversary he had translated "Ode to Man" that was then put to music by **Ned Rorem**. Several years later came "Ode to Love" which **Sasha Johnson Manning** set. The new opportunity allowed Philip to work on the remaining four choruses from the play and render them into verse more inviting to composers than many of the current, prosaic translations. Like his first two Odes, Philip noted that each new chorus is characterized by a 'sting in the tale'; for example, 'Ode to Hope' starts out optimistically, but at the end warns that sometimes we hope for the wrong thing! Such nuance should encourage a composer to explore multiple layers of musical response. We look forward to hearing how different artists react to these provocative verses!

The setting for Philip's sabbatical was the Villa of the Pines, located on a cliff overlooking the Mediterranean. He was one of eight fellows selected from around the world whose specialties ranged from poetry and composition to the visual arts and videography. Each evening culminated with an opportunity to discuss their work with one another, while the days were spent in



their various studios. Philip also took the opportunity to visit the historic city of Genoa on several occasions, and he attended various choral performances by choirs associated with the city's opera company. On many levels, then, he says this sabbatical provided an unparalleled opportunity to write, reflect and recharge the batteries!

Philip Barnes

NOTEWORTHY NOTES

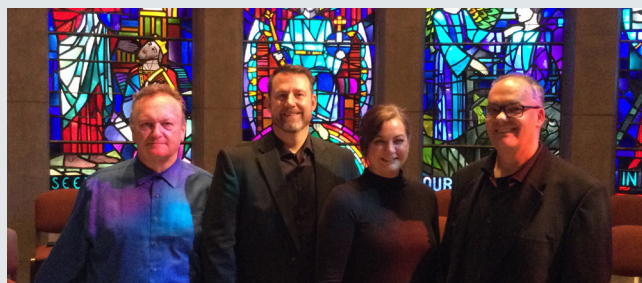
EASTER VISIT WITH YAKOV GUBANOV

During his sabbatical in Italy, Philip spent Easter with former Composer-in-Residence, **Yakov Gubanov**, who now lives in Umbria. Born in Kyiv, Yakov has recently been hosting some Ukrainian relatives who escaped the fighting, and whom Philip met during his visit to Citta della Pieve. Meeting those directly affected by the Russian invasion was especially poignant as Philip discussed with Yakov his revised version of the cantata he wrote for us, "... and lead them to Paradise." This will be premiered by the Chorus in April 2023, when we will welcome Yakov and his wife Enrica back to St. Louis.



Caption: Philip and Yakov looking through a score.

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR NEWS



At our final concert of the 66th season, we recognized the great contribution that assistant conductor **Andy Jensen** had made to the SLCC over several years. Long-standing supporters of the choir will fondly recall his inspired direction of two Russian masterpieces, the "All-Night Vigils" by Tchaikovsky and Maximilian Steinberg. Succeeding Andy will be a longtime member of the choir, **Caroline Ibnabdeljalil**, whose 'day job' is to direct the choirs at University City High School. We are so fortunate to have such a gifted musician, already with a deep understanding for the Chamber Chorus, to join our other assistant conductor, **Orin Johnson**. Together they will work with **Philip Barnes** to maintain the choir's reputation for excellent performances. This practice of sharing the directing responsibilities has long ensured that the Chorus and its audiences can enjoy the talents of a number of conductors, each with their own distinctive style and strengths.

Subscriptions are on sale now for our 67th season, *Progressions*. Join us as we explore transitions in time, space, emotion and even element. We reaffirm our commitment to unaccompanied singing by performing *a cappella* works from beloved composers as well newer pieces sure to garner a place in the unaccompanied pantheon. Our audiences know us for stretching ourselves artistically, and we fulfill that mission with new music from **Kerensa Briggs**, **Yakov Gubanov**, and **Dobrinka Tabakova**, all of whom will fly here for the premieres. We also revisit our past commissions with fresh eyes. Highlights of the season include music by women composers featured at every concert. Join us for this unique musical journey.

For concert dates and locations, and to purchase subscriptions, visit chamberchorus.org/subscriptions

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