



VOICEMAIL

November 2014

Message from the New President

Welcome to the 59th Season of the St. Louis Chamber Chorus. The Chorus is a St. Louis music institution, moving toward its 60th Season next year. It continues to pay a vital role in the St. Louis, national and international music community thanks to a wide range of people. Philip and the singers provide the inspiration, the talent and the music. The staff and Board of Directors support Philip and the singers. Donors and sponsors provide cash to keep the enterprise financially strong.



New SLCC Board President,
Richard Brickson

And you, the people who attend our concerts, give Philip and the singers the key element that no one else can—an appreciative, educated, sophisticated audience. You recognize the talent of the Chorus. You appreciate the fact that the Chorus commissions new music each year for you and for the music community in general. And you listen carefully. You may like some portions of the music better than others, but every concert offers you something you did not expect, something you have not heard and something that engages you and touches you with a feeling that only music can offer.

I am delighted to serve as the Chairman of the Board. If I can do anything to help make your relationship with the Chorus better, please let me know.

Dick Brickson

SLCC Board Welcome

Congratulations to **Dick Brickson**, outgoing vice president, as he assumes his elected position as the new president of the SLCC Board. Also elected were **Gill Waltman** as vice president and **Barbara Uhlemann** as the incoming Treasurer. **Suzanne Lagomarcino** continues in her role as Secretary. Thanks to Barbara for her long service on the board, most recently as president. Thanks also to **Deane Thompson** for his diligence as treasurer. The board welcomes **Mark Poe** as its newest member.

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The Saint Louis Chamber Chorus

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Gubanov Finale at May Concert



From Left: Yakov Gubanov, Philip Barnes and Bob Eilers at the May concert.

Yakov Gubanov contributed a richly atmospheric piece for the finale to our 58th season. His *Raduysja Devo* conjured a sound image of two choirs of monks in separate, underground caverns near his native Kiev, solemnly chanting as they walk towards the light (which the choir literally did!).

The piece was commissioned by **Mr. Robert J. Eilers** in honor of St. Stanilaus Kostka Church. This union of generosity and creativity resulted in a triumphant and majestic chord of praise; truly a fitting end to another successful season, and to his time as our Composer-in-Residence. Our gratitude to both Yakov and Bob for making this wonderful commission possible.

Philip Barnes

Meet the Singers — Kelly Daniel-Decker

Kelly has been a singer her whole life, initially in church and school. Her family is musical; her father played guitar, her mother sang and played piano and was also her high school choir director. Kelly attended college in Fresno, California where she studied voice and literature. She sang in choirs and did opera workshop. This is where she met her husband **Todd Decker**, who was studying intellectual history. Following graduation, Kelly taught at a high school in Napa and co-directed a theatre program.



Kelly Daniel-Decker

ton University, is a pianist and harpsichordist. He has been Kelly's accompanist for almost thirty years, performing all kinds of music together: Bach and Handel cantatas with period instruments, all kinds of classical art songs and opera arias, and classic American popular songs and jazz standards. Most recently, they have been doing cabaret shows of songs from Broadway and Hollywood musicals. Their programs include salutes to Johnny Mercer, George and Ira Gershwin, and Stephen Sondheim.

After eight years they moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan where Kelly, then in her thirties, earned a masters degree in voice at the University of Michigan School of Music. Her voice teacher was **George Shirley**, the first African American tenor to have a contract at the Metropolitan Opera. At Michigan, Kelly appeared as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, the Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Sister Genevieve in *Suor Angelica* and also sang with Michigan Opera Theater, the opera company in Detroit. She also played Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Laurie in *Oklahoma!*, and Marian Paroo in *The Music Man*. Kelly says she loves the challenge of playing dramatic roles in opera and musical theatre.

In 2007, Kelly and Todd moved to St. Louis with their two sons. Todd, a musicologist on faculty at Washing-

Their sons—now aged fourteen and eight—are both violinists. Last summer, the oldest joined Kelly and Todd for a short concert of classical music at First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood. It was a thrill to perform music by Mozart and Bach together as a trio. Their younger son just started studying piano and Kelly practices with him every morning before school.

This is Kelly's third season singing in the Chorus. She says, "I truly enjoy the challenge of being in this terrific group. Having never sung second soprano, I am growing as a musician, which is exciting. The people I sit with and sing with are great and Phillip is an inspiring conductor!"

Gill Waltman

Meet the Singers — Bruce Ryder

Bruce Ryder has one of the most familiar faces in the Chorus having sung tenor since 1991! Bruce grew up in the Kansas City area but when he was ten his father's job took the family to Europe. He lived in London and Paris for over two years. In London, he spent a year at the prestigious Merchant Taylors' School. Singing treble in the school choir was his first encounter with choral music. This was followed by an equally exciting year in Paris.



Bruce Ryder

After this they moved back to the Kansas City area where Bruce attended Shawnee Mission East High School. The choir director, **Dan Zollars**, was an inspirational teacher and instilled in Bruce a lifelong love of choral music. Bruce also performed musical theatre, both at school and in amateur productions.

Bruce attended the University of Kansas, majoring in French and history. He sang in the university choirs and continued to perform musical theatre. Although not a music major, he was permitted to take voice lessons from the music faculty.

After college, Bruce attended Harvard Law School. He was a member of the law school Drama Society, which presents an original musical parody every year, using themes like Sherlock Holmes or the Arthurian legends as a vehicle to lampoon life at the law school and the legal profession. After graduating from law school in 1979, Bruce moved to St. Louis and joined the law firm now known as Thompson Coburn LLP. He has remained with the firm for his entire career.

When he came to St. Louis, Bruce joined the Bach Society under then music director **Ronald Arnatt** who also invited him to join the Christ Church Cathedral Choir where he was organist and choirmaster. He sang with the Bach Society until 1985. His first encounter with the St. Louis Chamber Chorus (and Orchestra) under **Allen Carl Larson** was in 1979 when he sang in the Christmas concert, but work commitments prevented him from continuing at that time.

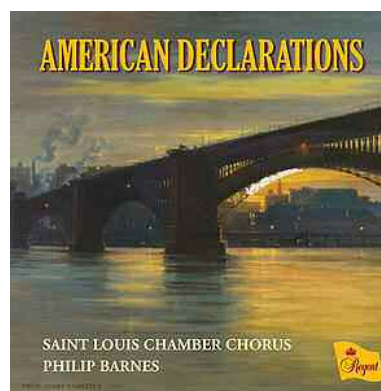
In October 1984 Bruce met a young CPA named **Linda Kinnard** on a blind date! They were married a year later. Linda and Bruce sang with the Christ Church Cathedral Choir until 1990. While there, they got to know a young Englishman who had recently moved to St. Louis, **Philip Barnes**. Bruce re-auditioned for the Chamber Chorus in 1991 and has sung with the choir since then. Linda, of course, has served as Executive Director of the Chamber Chorus since 1997.

When not working or singing, Bruce enjoys travel, reading (primarily American and European history), rooting for the Cardinals, and doing genealogical research. They have two children. Jennifer is a librarian in Portland, Oregon. Paul lives in Chicago and is supporting himself while exploring the possibilities of choral composition.

Gill Waltman

New CD Receives Rave Reviews

Our latest CD, *American Declarations*, has continued to garner lavish praise in print and online. In recent months it received five stars (the highest rating) from the *BBC Music* magazine, plaudits galore from *Gramophone*, *International Record Review* and even *Organists' Review*—remarkable for a choir that sings without accompaniment! Details of these reviews and more may be read at our website, www.chamberchorus.org.



Noteworthy Notes

Long Time Members Retire



Philip says farewell to Alice at the end of the season.

The end of each season is a time for joy and satisfaction, but it is often tinged with regret as we bid adieu to some members who have decided to retire from the choir. Two of our most stalwart and long-serving members called our 58th season their last, and we thank them both for all they have brought to our organization.

Bass **Mark Poe** bowed out at our April program, but we are delighted to welcome him as our newest board member. Then, in May, one of our most experienced and skilled sopranos, **Alice Sherwood**, decided to reclaim her Monday nights; neither our weekly rehearsals nor our performances are the quite the same without her, but after nearly two decades with the choir she surely has earned some time off, along with our sincere thanks. Alice and her husband Rob have welcomed to their home many of our visiting composers and guests, and we could not have wished for finer ambassadors of our choir. Both Alice and Mark epitomize the best of the Chamber Chorus.

Kudos to New Website

Many thanks to **Amanda Verbeck** for the revamping of our website. Now you can search for composers, music titles, personnel lists, and even back issues of VoiceMail. You'll find our complete season calendar and more at www.chamberchorus.org.

Annual SLCC Picnic

On Saturday, September 6, SLCC members and their families gathered at the Ryan Hummert Memorial Shelter in Maplewood for the annual picnic. Rain ceased just in time for the celebration and gave way to cloudy skies, but the spirit of friendship and community wasn't dampened a bit. The shelter offered the perfect space to enjoy the potluck spread of wonderful homemade side dishes and desserts brought by choir members while grillmaster **John Clayton** skillfully cooked burgers and chicken. The event ran smoothly thanks to Assistant Conductor **Mary Chapman's** efforts.



SLCC picnic

As a new choir member this season, it was a treat to be able to chat with members, their spouses and families, and learn what a stellar group of people share this choral experience each year under **Philip Barnes'** impeccable direction. With the variety of ages, backgrounds, and duration as a choir member, it felt somewhat like attending an annual family reunion. The camaraderie and mutual respect is very evident, whether doing the hard work of rehearsing or at a social setting like this picnic.

As Philip had explained during auditions, these talented singers "leave egos at the door," and instead work together as a positive, supportive team, with the shared goal of honoring composers and their music by giving the very best efforts during rehearsals and concerts. It is rewarding to experience the sincere joy of singing choral repertoire with others who wholeheartedly share this enthusiasm.

Rebecca Drury

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