



# VOICEMAIL

November 2017

## Klasskins Celebrate Fiftieth Anniversary with Commission

Over the years, we have become big fans of choral music and the Chamber Chorus. We aren't musicians, but love listening to the beautiful, interesting, sometimes unusual sounds human voices can make together. When we first heard **Philip Barnes** suggest that audience members might consider commissioning a piece, it certainly didn't occur to us that we ever would. Yet as our fiftieth wedding anniversary approached, and we talked about various ways of celebrating, one day, almost in unison, we each said let's commission a piece for the Chamber Chorus.

As Philip took us through the process, we were interested in how it worked. First, he told us that **Mårten Jansson** had agreed to compose a piece, and then we learned that **Tony Silvestri** would write original words. When we received Tony's poem we felt how lovely it would be set to music, and that is certainly the case. Listening to the Chorus's beautiful, emotional performance, we thought how well the lyrics and the music capture not only the beauty of a long and lasting relationship, but also the bittersweet realization that the end of its time in this world is inevitable.

The opportunity to meet and to talk with Mårten and Tony before and after the performance was a real pleasure. They are so approachable, thoughtful, and interesting that we forgot our awe of artists and just enjoyed being with them. We feel so privileged to have been a small part of their creation.

*Randi and Phil Klasskin*



Randi and Phil Klasskin (front) with composer Mårten Jansson (back left), Tony Silvestri (back right) and Philip Barnes after the first concert—photo by Tom Prasz

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# Message from the President

by Dick Brickson

Welcome to our 62nd Season! We are excited to bring you some very special concerts this year, collaborating with different artists and art forms in each concert. Once again, we will sing new music, commissioned by extraordinary male and female composers throughout the year.

**Laura Frank**, our new Executive Director, will be at each of our concerts and will work tirelessly in between concerts, making sure things run smoothly. When you get the chance, please say “hi” to Laura and welcome her. Last year, we were very pleasantly surprised that so many talented and skilled people applied for the Executive Director position. We were thrilled that Laura applied for the position and accepted our offer. She worked all last spring with her predecessor, **Linda Ryder**, and has hit the ground running this Season. Welcome, Laura.

Laura says “It is a great joy and privilege to assume this new role with the Chamber Chorus. The transition has certainly been made easier because of Linda Ryder’s legacy—the organization is healthy and thriving! Philip and the singers are dedicated to world-class musicianship and programming.



Laura Leith Frank

My job is to expand the choir’s reach and supporter base in our own community and beyond, further establishing the Chamber Chorus as an innovator and leader in the choral arts. I am passionate about singing and this choir. Working with other organizations, I feel the arts can inspire a sense of community and kinship in our region.”

## Meet the Singers — Lori Davis

Lori grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in a highly musical family. Her father is an organist, her mother a harpist, her older brother a violinist, and all three also play the piano. Naturally, she was eager to get started herself, which her parents finally allowed when she was three. They taught her piano and signed her up for private violin lessons. Lori continued to study both instruments all the way through high school and played in the Albuquerque Junior Symphony and Albuquerque Youth Symphony from sixth through twelfth grade.



Lori Davis

In her senior year of high school, Lori decided to take voice lessons. After a single semester, she concluded that singing was not for her as she preferred instrumental music, and she dropped the voice lessons.

After arriving at Brigham Young University, Lori made friends with students who were excited about choir. She sang so she could hang out with them and quickly changed her mind about vocal music. She signed up for voice lessons, ultimately studying with

**Elizabeth Pike, Dr. Ruth Christensen, and David Poole**. Lori, a soprano, also spent three years singing in the BYU Singers under the direction of **Dr. Ronald Staheli**. During that time, they toured in Italy, West Africa, and Hawaii. They also recorded two albums for Tantara Records, one of African-American spirituals and one of the choral works of **Eric Whitacre**.

Lori graduated in History, with minors in Music and Linguistics, and began working as a legal editor for LexisNexis. She has continued in that job off and on ever since, even through various moves to Connecticut, Germany, Scotland, and now here to St. Louis, where she arrived with her husband and daughter three years ago. Along the way Lori has sung in the Yale Camerata under **Marguerite L. Brooks** and the Scottish National Orchestra Chorus under **Gregory Batsleer**. She has given recitals in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and more locally at the St. Louis Abbey. She regularly performs for churches and schools, and maintains a small piano studio on the side. This is Lori’s third season with the St. Louis Chamber Chorus.

## Meet the Singers — Bill Larson

Bill Larson has been an active singer in the St. Louis community for the past 30 years with his particular passion being for choral music. "I am proud to say I have been a huge fan of the SLCC since the early 1990's and am thrilled to be singing with them this season." Bill studied voice at Indiana University in Bloomington and when he returned to St. Louis, got his first church job as section leader at St. Michael and St. George Church in Clayton. He also joined the St. Louis Symphony Chorus as one of the tenor section leaders and sang with them for 17 seasons. In 1997 he joined the St. Louis Cathedral Choir as a cantor and section leader and in 1999 was selected as one of the soloists for the St. Louis papal visit of Pope John Paul II ("definitely a highlight among my singing experiences"). Bill has sung in some very fine early music ensembles including the Washington University Early Music Ensemble for two seasons and the more recently formed Pro Arte Singers under the direction of **Horst Buchholz**. In 2004 under the direction of **Robert Bergt**, Bill joined the American Kantorei Choir dedicated to singing the great choral works of J. S. Bach.

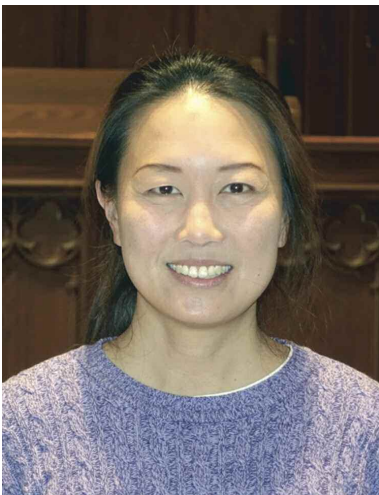


Bill Larson

When Bill is not making music, he can be found during the day (and many weekends) at Washington University overseeing the operations of Edison Theatre and the 560 Music Center. "For the past 14 years I have enjoyed working with the Performing Arts Department, Department of Music, student groups and St. Louis arts organizations in preparing for their productions on campus. It is extremely fulfilling to be able to promote the arts in St. Louis not only as a singer but as an arts administrator. Plus who doesn't love to see shows for FREE!"

St. Louis has always been Bill's home and after college he found a fixer upper in the Shaw neighborhood and undertook his first rehab project. He says that with a library of Time Life books and a lot of dust, sweat equity (as well as tears) the house has been restored to its former glory. Bill enjoys working out, golden retrievers, taking cross country road trips to national parks, amusement parks—especially the Disney variety, indulging in his guilty pleasures of watching Will & Grace, British history dramas, and anything on HGTV.

## SLCC Welcomes New Accompanist: Lansin Lin Kimler



Lansin Lin Kimler

Lansin Lim Kimler studied at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville (SIUE), earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music, following study with **Ruth Slenczynska** and **Linda Perry**. She has taught and accompanied previously at McKendree University, Community Music School at Webster University and now teaches and accompanies at East Central College, Union, and the University of Missouri – St. Louis. She also serves as accompanist for Third Baptist Church (Grand Center), Suzuki String Program at SIUE and the Parkway School District.

She has given numerous solo recitals, and in the past has played and recorded with the St. Louis Ocarina Trio. Among her notable affiliations is the Ladies' Friday Musical Club, one of St. Louis's most storied institutions. Lansin is very excited to work with Philip and the Chamber Chorus, and is brushing up her aural skills by watching Downton Abbey.

# Noteworthy Notes

## Linda's Farewell

Linda Ryder said in her parting speech that she had two goals when she started working for SLCC in June 1997. (Philip asked her to try it for a year!) These were first, to increase the visibility of the choir by improving the quality of the marketing materials and second, to maximize funding through granting organizations. Linda did all this and more, leaving a stable and vibrant organization for Laura to take over. We are all grateful for her many years of service and what she accomplished.



Graphic artist Beth Tuttle (left) at Linda Ryder's retirement party with Linda and Philip



Martha Shaffer with Philip Barnes

## Chorus Records Movie Soundtrack

Oscar-winning movie composer **Trevor Jones** has again called upon the Chamber Chorus to sing on another soundtrack, this time a movie, *To Tokyo*. Look for more news about this independent feature when it's released next year.

## #whatiloveabout thechamberchorus

A remarkable choir, a generous and adventurous audience, a city of beautiful concert venues—some of the many reasons why we love Chamber Chorus. Why do YOU love the Chamber Chorus? We are asking that question in a purposeful way, and the fruits of our first inquiry can now be seen on a short video vignette on the homepage of our website [chamberchorus.org](http://chamberchorus.org).

We invite your feedback on why you love the Chamber Chorus—submit your comments at [chamberchorus.org](http://chamberchorus.org) by clicking on the link, or join the Facebook discussion by posting your experiences with the Chamber Chorus at the hashtag above.

*Laura Frank*

## Martha Shaffer Retires

Martha has retired after 26 seasons working with the Chamber Chorus. She was the accompanist for all the rehearsals and auditions, playing both piano and organ as needed. She is also an accomplished composer and producer. She wrote six pieces for the Chorus, three of which have been recorded on SLCC CDs. She was assistant producer on all of the Chamber Chorus recordings, and produced the retrospective Christmas CD, *Rejoicing in His Birth*.

Many thanks to Martha for her expertise and long service to the Chorus. Martha says she is looking forward to the pleasant task of just sitting in the audience!

For more information about  
concerts, tickets or auditions:

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