



VOICEMAIL

November 2013

Composers-in-Residence

Last season saw visits from 'composers-in-residence' past and present. These are always rewarding occasions for singers, composers and audience members to experience never-before-heard performances of new works. British musician **Sasha Johnson Manning**, who inaugurated this program in the late 1990s, returned in April for the premiere of her wrestling cantata *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere*, performed at the South Broadway Athletic Club. This commissioned work was underwritten by the generosity of **Dr. Stacey Albin-Wilson**.

In May, the incumbent, **Yakov Gubanov**, traveled from New York City battling bad weather and canceled flights to attend the first performance of his piece ... *and lead them to Paradise*, sung at the oratory church of St. Francis de Sales. Gubanov is currently writing a new piece for the Chorus, commissioned for Concert VI this season.

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Yakov Gubanov and Philip Barnes

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Message from the President

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the second concert of the 58th season of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus. This season's theme, *The Ancients Speak*, brings to our attention ways in which writers and languages of the past have inspired composers over the centuries as presented in six concerts given in venues chosen to complement each concert's unique theme. This kind of pairing, for which the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus is so justly celebrated, sets this choir apart from all others in the region. *The Ancients Speak: Greek*, our opening concert held in early October, included settings of ancient Greek texts in works from composers dating from the 18th century to the present. This second concert of the season, *The Ancients Speak: Hebrew*, continues the theme and features works from the late Renaissance to the present day. Subsequent concerts this season include compositions inspired by Old English, Latin, Egyptian and Old Church Slavonic texts. I'm

sure you will agree with me that **Artistic Director Philip Barnes** has been called "Mr. Creativity" for good reason!

We are grateful for the support of our season subscribers and urge those of you who have not purchased a subscription to do so now. We will gladly credit the cost of your ticket today toward a subscription. Subscribers receive significant savings over the price of individual tickets in addition to reserved seating, informative pre-concert letters from the Artistic Director and ticket exchange privileges. Like other arts organizations, ticket sales do not cover all of our costs so if you are in a position to make a gift to the SLCC beyond the cost of your ticket it will be most appreciated.

Thank you for coming to today's concert and we look forward to seeing you at our next concert, *The Ancients Speak: Old English*, to be performed on December 22 at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church in Richmond Heights.

Meet the Singers — Kathleen Mead

Jonathan's musical journey began at a young age because his mom is a musician. He started singing in the church choir and took piano lessons as a boy. He was always more interested in playing outside than practicing, so was allowed to stop taking piano lessons if he promised to play an instrument when he got to sixth grade. As a result, he says he is not the best pianist. He attended Truman State University to pursue a major in Trumpet Performance and Communications. After his first semester, he changed his major to Vocal Performance and minored in Communications. While at Truman, he co-founded and sang with *True Men*, a men's *a cappella* group, and sang in *Cantoria*, the university's *a cappella* chorus. Both groups were instrumental in developing his love of *a cappella* singing.



Kathleen Mead

After college, Jonathan wound up in the "music business" and worked first at Opera Theater, and later, the St. Louis Symphony. He also wrote and performed music and in 2002, recorded a pop rock album of original songs in Nashville with the help of a friend who was working at a major recording studio there. He promoted the album by playing shows in town and around the country with the help of many friends.

Jonathan also performed with the Bach Society as Principal Baritone. During the '02-'03 season, he heard

Philip Barnes on KWMU and sought out the Chamber Chorus. He auditioned and became an alternate for the '03-'04 season. He has been a full-time member of the Chorus since the '04-'05 season. In addition to continuing to write and perform rock/pop music, Jonathan has performed in a number of operas with Union Avenue Opera, including the critically acclaimed, *Dead Man Walking*, in 2011.

Beyond his music interests, Jonathan enjoys numerous outdoor activities such as road and mountain biking, camping and hiking. In the fall of 2011, he became a proud part-owner of a racehorse and has since expanded the "stable" to include three thoroughbreds. Their full-time home is Churchill Downs where they are trained by Tim Glyshaw. At the recent Pan Zaretta Stakes in New Orleans, his horse, My My My Maria, won! Jonathan finances his musical and equine exploits by managing all aspects of a national lecture series that takes place in five cities around the country. This includes the St. Louis Speakers Series presented by Maryville University. He says that the glamorous part of his job is socializing with celebrities and politicians, but most of the time he is in his office, working hard on planning the next event.

Gill Waltman

Meet the Singers — Andy Jensen

Elise grew up in the village of DuBois, Ill., a place about an hour east of St. Louis with a very strong Polish heritage. When she was five, her mother encouraged her to take piano lessons. Seventeen years later, she graduated with a minor in Piano and Voice Performance from Christian Brothers University in Memphis. Three sisters, including former SLCC soprano, **Jen Harkey**, also play piano and sing and love to make music together. Brother-in-law **Jay Harkey** sings bass with the Chorus. Elise learned to play the organ in grade school and played her first wedding in 8th grade for a brave cousin! She took up the French horn in high school and continued playing through college in the Rhodes College orchestra.

Elise always loved math and science, and comes from a long line of engineers and technical tinkerers. She was torn between choosing a future in engineering or music. After making a list of the pros and cons of each, she realized the elaborate list itself was a pretty clear indicator that she was destined for an engineering career. She graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering from CBU in 1997 where her piano teacher, **Dr. Brian Ray**, broadened her horizons beyond engineer-favorites Mozart and Bach and gave her a love for French piano music that she will always cherish. Paradoxically, to her voice teacher's great dismay, she refused to sing anything in French. Elise was the head accompanist for all the university's choirs, and played for many campus liturgies.



Andy Jensen

Professionally, Elise is the Global Technology Lead for Floodplain Management for CH2M HILL, a large international engineering company, and the recent past president of the St. Louis Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers. She solves flooding problems, designs green infrastructure, and builds hydraulic models of sewers —and loves her job. She says, "if you've enjoyed the new river through Forest Park, you've enjoyed the fruits of about five years of my life's work—it was a great privilege, incredibly fun and rewarding to help bring one of

my favorite spaces back to life." Her two worlds collided a couple of years ago when she sang the National Anthem at a Society of American Military Engineers/Levee Conference!

After hours, Elise turns into super-mom of daughter Keaton (10), son Chapin (8) and daughter Regan Rose (6). All three are studying violin, and Keaton also sings and plays piano, among a million other busy activities. She and husband Stephen were high school sweethearts. He is a landscape architect who is wonderfully supportive of her many talents.

This is her fifteenth year affiliated with SLCC, interspersed some seasons as an alternate while having babies and leading the St. Louis community of Civil Engineers. Elise is happy to be back as a full member this season!

Gill Waltman

New Chorus CD Released

Our latest CD, titled *American Declarations*, will be released in November 2013 by the British label, **Regent Records**. This will be our fourth collaboration with this innovative niche company, and represents the talents of our wonderful singers, staff, engineer **Daniel Ruder** and producer **Gary Cole**.

The repertoire ranges from the stirring to the enthralling, and covers different traditions of American chamber choirs, from the art song to the spiritual, and from a modern madrigal to a choral symphony. Recorded in the warm acoustic of Second Presbyterian Church in the Central West End earlier this year, the new disc makes an ideal addition to the winter season of gift giving. Our last disc for Regent is already nearly sold out, so don't delay buying copies of the new disc; many of the pieces on it receive their first recording on this CD, so it's truly a one-of-a-kind keepsake of this unique choir.

Philip Barnes

Noteworthy Notes

Christmas from Saint Louis Reviewed

Just a few copies of our recent Christmas disc on Regent Records remain on sale. The wide variety of pieces and the expert singing has made it a 'must-have' CD for the season, and it has attracted much critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Here is one of the latest reviews, taken from the Royal School of Church Music's website:

Under their British-born conductor, **Philip Barnes**, the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus makes a deliciously homogenous sound, the members singing as if with one voice. Their *a cappella* programme features several pieces by American composers (including *It came upon the midnight clear* to its original tune and *We three kings of Orient are*), and is built around music by Virgil Thomson. There are several pieces on the disc that were written for the Chorus, including **Martha Shaffer's** charming *If ye would hear the angels sing*, New Zealander **Clare Maclean's** intricate *Susannine*, **Yakov Gubanov's** *The garden of roses*, **Sasha Johnson Manning's** *Two Tree Carols*, and **David Bednall's** *From heaven above to earth I come*, a work that explores a variety of moods in its eight minutes. If you want a Christmas disc that offers something rather different from the usual repertoire, this is ideal.

Imperfect Harmony

SLCC supporters might enjoy a new book written by **Stacy Horn** that really goes to the heart of choral singing. Her *Imperfect Harmony* (published by Algonquin Books) offers a rare insight into why some sing, and others listen. It's an easy, anecdotal read, but one worth tracking down on Amazon or through your library.

Philip Barnes

Re-Choired Listening

A new hour-long program devoted to choral music hit the airwaves this past summer, and is something SLCC supporters might like to add to their listening habits. Our own **Philip Barnes** is the producer and presenter of *Re-Choired Listening*, broadcast at 7 pm every Wednesday on the Radio Arts Foundation of St. Louis. Tune into 107.3 FM, or listen online at rafstl.org.

Annual Picnic Well Attended



The Annual Picnic has evolved into one of the organization's favorite events, where we can informally welcome new singers and board members (and their families), as well as renew friendships with current members after our summer hiatus. This year the picnic was held at Faust Park on August 23rd, and was the best-attended picnic so far. The picnic site was located next to a playground, had a large field for lawn games, and was a short walk away from the Butterfly House and the Carousel. Grillmaster **John Clayton** (husband of soprano Jill) kept us well-supplied with delicious burgers, hot dogs, and chicken breasts and we all enjoyed sampling the side dishes and desserts brought by the singers and board members. After such a successful picnic, we can't wait for next year!

Mary Chapman

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