



Artistic Director's Report

Summary

Our latest concert season had many highlights, including our dances with Bach in December and Whitacre in April. We collaborated with a string quartet and made a new partnership in the EO Smith Chamber Singers.

I am so very proud to be a part of this vibrant and growing chorus. Our dedication to our art has always been of high caliber, and it has been on the rise in recent years. As Artistic Director, I have been happily pushed to re-examine where to set the bar for the Chorale, and have done so on an ever-higher trajectory! We continue to reach new musical and artistic heights.

I would like to offer my sincere and continued thanks to our Board of Directors. Their dedication and hard work give us the ability to do what we do every single day. They make me better at my job, and enable all of us to do our best. We owe them a debt of gratitude!

What follows is a more in-depth look at where we've been and where we're going.

2012-2013 Season Recap

December 2012: "What Sweeter Music"

Our December concert, "What Sweeter Music," brought us back to a more traditional style of holiday concert, and returned us to our traditional home base of the First Congregational Church of Vernon. We added a string quartet to our ensemble and performed a mixture of traditional carols, works appropriate to the season, and some new works by Ola Gjeilo and Dan Forrest. The centerpieces of the concert were Bach's *Lobet den Herrn* and Whitacre's *Sleep*. The Whitacre also served a dual purpose of refreshing his tonal language in us in preparation for Leonardo in the spring!

April 2013: "Contemporary Choral Classics"

This concert, which was originally titled to myself as "Awesome Choral Music," took on an additional layer with our eleventh-hour decision to invite the EO Smith Chamber Singers to join us. It was one of those serendipitous moments that I just couldn't ignore - and I'm so glad that we included them to raise up the next generation of choral musicians.

Our tour de force here was undoubtedly the Whitacre *Leonardo Dreams of his Flying Machine*. We summoned all our powers and took flight along with Leonardo - not just for this piece, but for the entire concert. We added the rich texture of a second pianist for Brahms' *Liebesieder Waltzes*, and stopped time with Barber's *Agnus Dei*.

This program was focused on music by living composers, and we surveyed many different styles as we sampled music by Jason McCoy, Colin Britt, Arvo Pärt, Kristina Vasiliauskaite, Z. Randall Stroope, James Mulholland, and the legendary Alice Parker.

June 2013: "A Vocal Tapestry"

Chris Wasko is making his first solo appearance at the helm of the Vernon Chorale in this year's June concert. Chris is the most eager learner I have ever had as an assistant and I am continually impressed with his attention to detail and receptiveness to suggestions. We are privileged to have him in our midst as he begins his career and we hope to have him back again next year!

2013-2014 Season Plans

December 2013

Saturday, December 7 (St. Bernard's Church)

Repertoire to include:

- Ignacio de Jerusalem: Polychoral Mass in D (for choir and chamber orchestra, 20 minutes)
- Morten Lauridsen: Mid-Winter Songs (for choir and piano, 16 minutes)
- Jan Sandström: Es ist ein ros entsprungen

- Annual Carol Sing

February 2014: Black History Month

Saturday, February 15 and Sunday, February 16

Repertoire TBD

April 2014: "American Voices"

Saturday, April 5 (venue tbd)

Potential Repertoire to include:

- Morton Lauridsen: Les chansons des roses (for choir and piano, 16 minutes)
- Ola Gjeilo: Across the vast, eternal sky (for choir and piano, 6 minutes)
- David Dickau: There will be rest (for choir and piano, 5 minutes)
- Stephen Foster, arr. Jack Halloran: Nelly Bly (for a cappella choir, 4 minutes)
- Paul Halley: Untraveled Worlds (for choir, piano, bass, percussion and violin, 7 minutes)
- Aaron Copland: In the beginning (for a cappella choir and mezzo-soprano solo, 16 minutes)
- Alice Parker, Robert Shaw

June 2014: "A Vocal Tapestry"

Saturday, June 7 (First Congregational Church of Vernon)

Choral selections, solos and small ensembles

Respectfully submitted,

Ehren Brown

May 10, 2013