



# VOICEMAIL

February 2014

## Collaborations: Choirs, Artists and Lecturers

Throughout its history, the SLCC has collaborated with artists from within and outside St. Louis. Many years ago the group worked with the St. Louis Symphony before it formed its own chorus, and on one notable occasion the choir performed with Dave Brubeck's jazz ensemble. More recently, it shared the stage with an English cathedral choir and the St. Louis Children's Choirs, as well a dancer for Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*.



Philip Barnes at the November concert with Dr. Nicole Aldrich, director of the Washington University Concert Choirs.

**Artistic Director Philip Barnes** believes that it is especially important to work with some of the area's finest high school and collegiate choirs, as their members may well become members of the SLCC in the future. At the November concert, the program was shared with singers from Washington University, and young choristers from Parkway North High School sang with the Chorus at the Christmas performance.



Professor Stephen Sieck, an expert on Britten's cantata from Lawrence University in Wisconsin, participated in a pre-concert discussion with Philip Barnes at the December concert.

An enjoyable addition to the choral performances throughout the past couple of seasons has been the introduction of pre-concert discussions with experts in our concert themes and repertoire. And away from the public eye, Philip has taken chorus rehearsals to various educational institutions to encourage their students to "keep at it," most recently visiting some students at the University of Missouri – St. Louis. He likes to think of all this activity as fulfilling our mission, "not only to entertain, but to educate and inspire."

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## Message from the President

Welcome to today's concert which continues this season's theme of ancient texts set for a *cappella* choir by an extraordinary array of composers. Having already visited, so to speak, Ancient Greek, Hebrew and Old English themes, today's concert, the fourth of six in the 58th season of the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, focuses on Latin texts. As usual, **Artistic Director Philip Barnes** has put together a marvelous program including many works not often heard in performance as well as a newly-commissioned work from the Latvian composer **Ugis Praulins** whose beautiful *Missa Rigensis* we enjoyed several seasons ago.

If you have not attended one of our concerts before, we are very glad to welcome you and hope that you will be with us for future concerts. Where else might one hear a performance of choral repertoire based on texts from ancient Egypt? Strange as that might seem, we can promise you another afternoon of fine performances of beautiful music at our next concert, on April 13 at the new school theater at John Burroughs School. Our final concert of the season will take place on May 25 in the beautiful sanctuary of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church where the theme will be Old Church Slavonic. I hope you will join us.

*Barbara Uhlemann*

## Meet the Singers — Joseph Drexelius

Joseph Drexelius was encouraged toward music from a young age. He sang in his local youth church choir in Edwardsville, Ill., and began playing the violin and flute years later. Music continued to be an integral part of his young life, and eventually grew into his desired career path.

Joe spent his college career studying music performance, voice, and music business at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. He studied voice from the late **Sandra Bouman**.

He was very active in the Music Department of SIUE, singing in multiple choral groups and performing in the Symphony Band and Orchestra. In his spare time during college, he started singing with the Bach Society of St. Louis, as well as becoming a cantor at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows. After a few years of singing with the Bach Society, Joe decided to look for other choral options in the St. Louis area. In the fall of 2007, he auditioned as a bass for the St. Louis Chamber Chorus. The experience has been extremely rewarding and satisfying.

Joe says that the leadership in the Chorus is outstanding, and could easily be taken for granted.



Joseph Drexelius

“**Philip Barnes** consistently challenges each of the singers to be accountable for both choral and solo singing. Having an accompanist like **Martha Shaffer** is like having a second director in front of the group at all times. The level of the talent in the group is exceptional, and the wall of sound we can produce as a group is as powerful as an audience can experience.” Joe says that the “sheer amount of emphasis the group focuses on new choral premiers is a service to modern day classical music and one of which he is proud to be a part.”

For the last six years, Joe has worked at the St. Louis Symphony as a sales associate and in VIP Services taking care of high level donors. He is also the Symphony liaison for the Saint Louis Speakers Series. Other than music, he loves classic and new movies and most sports—baseball, football, hockey, and anything involving the U.S. soccer teams! He currently lives in Saint Louis with his wife Anna, their new born son Siegfried, and their loyal English Shepherd Guster.

*Gill Waltman*

## Meet the Singers — Brook Davis

Brook Davis was raised in St. Louis by parents who had a deep respect and love for the arts. Together they introduced their children to musicals at the Muny and Fox, operas at Opera St. Louis and jazz at the Sheldon and the Bistro. Brook began piano lessons at the age of 7 with **Phyllis Hyken** who challenged her to play anywhere she got a chance. By the end of high school Brook was playing for the theatre and choral department of Ladue High School as well as accompanying for other teachers' private studios. She also took voice lessons for several years and in her last year of high school worked with **John Stewart** at Washington University.



Brook Davis

Brook received her Bachelor's of Music Education from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2010 where her choral education received a sound foundation from **Scott Ferguson** and the Collegiate Choir. Brook continued to play piano through college working in every genre, including playing in a jazz band where she met her future husband who told her she was "too square" for that kind of music. She continued her education at Illinois State University where she studied

Collaborative Piano with **Dr. Tuyen Tonnu** and **Dr. Joshua Russell**. To help support her graduate work, Brook took advantage of several opportunities, playing for the First National Tour of *Wicked*, working as an accompanist and vocal coach at Illinois Wesleyan University, as well as for the opera and theatre department at Illinois State University.

Brook returned to St. Louis last year and now works as an accompanist at various schools and also teaches at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in St. Charles. One of the most rewarding parts of coming home was the chance to be a part of the St. Louis Chamber Chorus. Brook says, "There is still so much to be learned but one cannot remain a student in school forever. **Philip Barnes** and the chorus satisfy that hunger while also providing an amazing musical experience. The chorus sings an incredibly diverse range of repertoire and Philip's knowledge seems to be unending." Brook, an alto, says she is looking forward to mooching off Philip and the Chorus, hopefully for many years to come.

Gill Waltman

## Chorus Champions New Works

A particularly gratifying aspect of our championing of new works is to see them gain popularity among other choirs around the world. A recent example is *Before the Ice* that British composer **Bob Chilcott** wrote for our 2012 Christmas program; it was recently included in a disc devoted to his music by Commotio, a highly regarded chamber choir based in Oxford (UK). They record for the Naxos label, which also released a disc by the Vasari Singers that featured **Francis Pott's** *When David Heard*, written for us back in 2008, as well as a disc entirely devoted to the music of **Sasha Johnson Manning**, our first 'Composer-in-Residence.' Her successor, **Clare Maclean**, wrote several pieces for us that have subsequently appeared on discs by other groups: both *Os Antos Chortou* and *Vive in Deo!* are included in a CD by the Sydney Chamber Choir. Finally, our stalwart and talented accompanist **Martha Shaffer** is represented by *If Ye Would Hear the Angels Sing* on a Christmas disc from Canada, performed by the choir of Christ Church Deer Park, in Toronto.



Philip Barnes

# Noteworthy Notes

## After-Concert Events Benefit the Chorus

The SLCC is grateful to restaurant owners who have offered to participate in after-concert events to benefit the organization. Many thanks to tenor **David Miller** who welcomed audience members to Dave and Tony's following the November concert at United Hebrew Congregation in Chesterfield and also to Sam Kacar of Pan D'Olive for his hospitality in December after the Christmas concert at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Richmond Heights.

Any members of the audience, board or chorus who dine at the designated restaurant after a concert are welcomed and a percentage of the cost of their meals is donated to the SLCC. These proceeds are used for future expenses for refreshments for chorus members and receptions for visiting composers.

Audience members should mention their affiliation with the Chorus before the bill is paid, perhaps producing a ticket stub or program as proof of attendance at the concert.

See to the right for the venue for the February concert.

*Gill Waltman*

## Consider SLCC Octet for Private Occasions

Did you know that the Chorus is available to perform at private occasions? If you want to add some class and clout to a special occasion, we are open to invitation! We offer octets, double octets, and even the full choir, so call our office for availability and cost.

## Fitz's in February

Join us after the February concert for dinner at Fitz's. Be sure to mention that you are with the SLCC, and the Chorus will receive a 10% donation.

6605 Delmar Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63130  
(314) 726-9555  
[www.fitzsrootbeer.com](http://www.fitzsrootbeer.com)



## Chorus performs at Touhill and the VP Ball

In addition to its concert series, the choir has been busy of late. We participated in celebrations for the 250th anniversary of the City of St. Louis, being one of only six invited choirs to perform at the Touhill Theater at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. And just prior to our Christmas concert we were the (surprise) guest performers at the annual Veiled Prophet Ball, singing excerpts from Verdi's *Aida* for the Veiled Prophet himself!

*Philip Barnes*

## SLCC CDs

Have you added the latest Chamber Chorus CD to your collection? If not, you can purchase one today, along with many other great titles from the Chorus. Be sure to pick yours up in the lobby!

For more information about  
concerts, tickets or auditions:

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