

NOTEWORTHY NOTES

SLCC PREMIERED NEW WORK

At our Christmas concert in 2017 we premiered a new work by the German composer, Wolfram Buchenberg. It has been wonderful to see this piece taken up by other choirs, and it has now been chosen as the title track for a new CD from Cantabile Regensburg, titled *Dum Medium Silentium*. It's available as both a disc (CARUS 83.504/00) and as a download.

FORTHCOMING COMMISSIONS

As supporters of the Chamber Chorus will know, our mission includes the promotion of new music, keeping this genre of music vibrant and relevant. And in support of this we particularly advocate for women composers, whose creativity is woefully under-, or even un-represented by our major musical ensembles. So, it is with great pleasure that we announce two new large-scale commissions that have been issued for next season.

We will begin the year with a new cycle of songs by **Melissa Dunphy**, whose haunting *Waves of Gallipoli* we premiered last month, while the climax of the concert series will be a new setting of the *Missa Brevis* by the Anglo-Bulgarian composer, **Dobrinka Tabakova**. Both these women are garnering the support and recognition that is their due, with Melissa's recent work already under contract to E. C. Schirmer/MorningStar Publishing, and Dobrinka enjoying numerous performances of the orchestral music commissioned from her by the BBC. In addition, Regent Records (to whom the SLCC is also under contract), has just released a CD entirely devoted to her choral music: you can now purchase this online, using the catalog number REGCD 530.

Philip Barnes



IN MEMORY OF LIBBY WEINMAN

We are sad to announce the passing of Libby Weinman, friend of the Chorus and former member of the Chamber Chorus' Board of Directors. Libby loved music - in fact, it was both her vocation *and* avocation. Libby graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in music.

She dedicated her professional life to teaching music, and directed school and church choirs in Pennsylvania and Missouri. Her home housed two side-by-side pianos to accommodate regular duets with a friend and piano partner. Also notable was Libby's dedication to enriching the community in St. Louis through her service to the Radio Arts Foundation, now Classic 107.3, and St. Peter's Episcopal Church and the ministries served by St. Peter's.

Libby was the dedicated mother of three boys. She was an active outdoor enthusiast, skiing well into her eighties. In 2018 she joined the board of the Chamber Chorus. Her term was sadly cut short by illness, but we are grateful for her service and enthusiastic support for the Chamber Chorus and all choral music.

AUDITIONS

Each spring the Chorus auditions one or more of its voice parts (this year was the turn of the sopranos), to keep the choir fresh and ensure that singers were being assigned the correct parts. At that time also we interviewed and heard new applicants in all voices. But not everyone's schedule works with this timetable: if you move to St. Louis over the summer, do you really have to wait until the following May to be considered for the Chamber Chorus? No, to accommodate prospective singers, especially when we have an opportunity at a particular program, we audition applicants at various points throughout the year. We'll be doing this again early in the New Year, so if you, or someone you know, would be interested in finding out more, please consult the website and call Executive Director, Laura Frank.

www.chamberchorus.org/auditioning

For more information about concerts, tickets or auditions:

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IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President

Meet the Singers
Kris Suntrup
Dereck Basinger

Haunting Composition by Dunphy

Noteworthy Notes

THE
SAINT LOUIS
CHAMBER
CHORUS

SEASON'S FINAL CONCERT ENDED WITH HOPE



Mårten Jansson (right) and Tony Silvestri

Our 63rd season that explored *States of Being* ended on an optimistic note with a program exploring hope. And *Hope* was the title of the first piece written for us by our new Composer-in-Residence, **Mårten Jansson**.

Funding from the E. Reuben and Gladys Flora Grant Foundation has made possible this relationship between composer and chorus, and it enabled us to bring Mårten here from his home in Sweden. He was able to hear his new work for the first time and to meet once again his librettist, **Charles Anthony Silvestri**, who lives in Kansas. Welcoming these two artists to our dress rehearsal was particularly helpful in focusing and honing our preparation of this exquisite new work.

The concert was held on May 26 in the beautiful sanctuary at Shaare Emeth.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to “The Year of the Pig”, the second concert of our 64th Concert Season.

If you already subscribe for season tickets, thank you - very much. If you have not yet decided to subscribe for the balance of the season, please consider becoming a subscriber today.

Why? There are some specific benefits, such as special seating, exchange rights for your tickets and extra, complimentary tickets to offer your friends. However, looked at more broadly, subscriptions say that you believe that what we do, and why we do it, is important.

Our mission is to present the finest *a cappella* choral works in the region’s most distinctive buildings, seeking not merely to entertain, but also to educate and inspire. We believe that we enhance the lives of our St. Louis community and of the community of music lovers

around the world who hear our music, who enjoy the music we help commission and who recognize the value and quality that good music can bring to their lives.

So, again, thanks to our current season subscribers, and, if you have not yet bought your season tickets, please consider doing so now... the feeling you get by supporting our efforts is priceless.

To complete the Year of the Pig concert-going experience, audience members are invited to sample pork-inspired snacks during the intermission. All are encouraged to enjoy this rare marriage between pig and music!

Dick Brickson

MEET THE SINGERS - KRIS SUNTRUP



Kris grew up in Blue Springs, Missouri just outside Kansas City. She didn’t come from a musical family, so her introduction to singing came about in an unexpected way. After seeing “A Coal Miner’s Daughter” and hearing Loretta Lynn’s life story played out in song, she knew she wanted to be a singer. She joined her first choir in 8th grade and began taking voice lessons her freshman year.

In high school Kris became a self-described choir nerd joining every choir available to her, even going to choir camps in the summer. She performed lead roles in musicals and plays in high school and eventually earned a music scholarship to the University of Missouri - Columbia where she was a member of The University Singers under the direction of **Dr. Duncan Couch**. She took voice lessons from **Harry Morrison** and piano lessons from **Ray Herbert**. While she was active in the music program at Mizzou, she earned her degree in Journalism with a minor in Linguistics.

Fun fact - while at Mizzou, Kris performed in several musical skits and in 1986 won Best Actress for her role as Olive Oyl in a “Popeye” production while someone else you may have heard of, **Brad Pitt**, won Best Actor for his role in a ScoobyDoo skit.

In college Kris met her husband Craig, a former football player for the Mizzou Tigers. Upon graduation, she moved to St. Louis and she and Craig married in 1991. Soon afterward Kris had the privilege of singing in the Cathedral Choir under the direction of **John Romeri** from 1991-2001. Kris was selected as one of six cantors for the papal visit of Pope John Paul II in January 1999.

She also began singing the National Anthem for the St. Louis Blues in 1999 and alternated games with the great **Charles Glen** until he took over the position full time in 2000. She was invited to sing the anthem again last year and has another game scheduled in January 2020.

By 2002, Kris and Craig had five children so she focused her priorities on raising their family. But as the kids got older, she wanted to get back into choral singing and her goal was to be in the Chamber Chorus. “I had seen them perform and knew this was the most prestigious choir in the region, and I really wanted to be part of it because the level of talent was so great and Philip’s commitment to making great music was unmatched. I felt if I made it into the Chamber Chorus, I would be validated as a musician.”

After studying voice again for a year with **Kathryn Haggans**, Kris first made the choir as an alternate, becoming a full member of the chorus as a soprano II in 2013. She currently studies voice with **Rosemarie Cereghino**.

“The talent in this choir is incredible. Everyone is an accomplished musician and loves making beautiful music together. It’s such an honor to be a part of this amazing group. There is a mutual respect between Philip and the singers which makes Monday night rehearsals productive and thoroughly enjoyable. Philip’s quips, back stories and anecdotes about the pieces we perform are fascinating and sometimes very humorous...especially with this concert!”

Kris also loves to golf and spend time at the farm property where she and Craig love to entertain family and friends. They keep a dozen chickens, a couple of horses, three dogs and last year planted a vineyard with hopes to produce some fine Missouri wine in the near future.

MEET THE SINGERS - DERECK BASINGER



Dereck first began singing at age four when, at his mother’s behest, he attended children’s choir rehearsals at the First Mennonite Church of Richmond, VA. While four-year-old Dereck would never admit his gratitude, his mother’s persistence eventually unlocked a life-long passion.

During grade school in the suburbs of Richmond, Dereck continued to sing and play piano, but it wasn’t until

attending the College of William and Mary that he began taking music courses and studying voice. Under baritone **Ryan Fletcher**, Dereck performed regularly in opera workshops and in William and Mary’s student-run Sinfonicon Light Opera Company; his favorite roles included Major General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance* and General Harrison Howell in *Kiss Me Kate*. On Sundays, Dereck sang in church in the heart of Colonial Williamsburg. He also performed with the Christopher Wren Singers, a student-directed chamber ensemble, and as a member of the Choir of the College of William and Mary under **Dr. James Armstrong**.

Dereck had the opportunity to travel internationally as the Choir gave concerts across Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland. He was awed by the medieval cities of Riga, Latvia and Tallinn, Estonia and recommends the Baltic states to anyone looking for international travel adventures. A favorite memory is singing the Choir’s 2014 commission of a beautiful, double-choir arrangement of *Salve Regina* by Estonian composer **Piret Rips-Laul** from the opposing choir lofts of the Helsinki Cathedral.

Academically, Dereck credits his BA in Classics to a particularly fascinating freshman seminar, Architecture

and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece, taught by **Dr. Jess Paga**. He began studying Latin and ancient Greek and was inspired by the field’s multifaceted approach to ancient Greece and Rome. Between ancient philosophy and history, literature and linguistics, Dereck’s courses never stopped sparking his curiosity. Thanks to the encouragement of his professors, Dereck presented his own research at several conferences, including the Mid-Atlantic Undergraduate Classics Conference and the Classics Association of the Middle West and South. Dereck eventually combined his passions for music and ancient literature and designed an honors thesis which investigated Plato’s discussion of music in his dialogues with an eye towards the nature of music in Homer’s epics, all under the supervision of **Dr. Georgia Irby**.

Dereck moved to St. Louis during the summer of 2016 to attend graduate school at Washington University where he pursued an MA in Classics. Again, he sought to merge his passions and worked with **Dr. Timothy Moore** to study ancient music and its performance as part of ancient Greek and Roman drama. He went on to present his research at the 11th Annual Graduate Student Conference in Classics at CUNY entitled: *Sing, Muse—Literary, Theoretical, and Historical Approaches to Music in Classical Antiquity*. In addition to his graduate coursework, Dereck performed in the Washington University Chamber Chorus under **Dr. Nicole Aldrich**.

After receiving his MA in 2018, Dereck decided to explore the legal profession. Since last autumn, he has worked as a member of the litigation paralegal staff at the law firm of Capes Sokol where he has gained invaluable perspective and experience as he prepares to attend law school in the future. In addition to the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, Dereck sings tenor in the St. Louis Symphony Chorus and as a staff singer at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Ladue. When he’s not in the office or in rehearsal, you can find Dereck enjoying a good novel in one of St. Louis’ many coffee shops.

Haunting Composition by Dunphy

At our season opener we welcomed back our former Composer-in-Residence, **Melissa Dunphy** for the world premiere of *Waves of Gallipoli*, a haunting piece lamenting the loss of a generation on this First World War battlefield. For both singers and audience this piece proved a moving experience and demonstrated once more Melissa’s deep understanding of the Chamber Chorus, and how to write music that is perfectly suited to our ‘sound’. Plans are already underway to publish this new work, so that other choirs can perform her music. We are most grateful to Melissa, and to **Dorsey** and **Sondra Ellis** for their generosity in commissioning this piece for the Chamber Chorus.



PHILIP AND MELISSA WITH COMMISSIONERS DAN AND SONDRA ELLIS.