

Junior High/Middle School Choirs

Incorporating Masterworks into the Middle School Choral Setting

Incorporating masterworks into middle school choral repertoire may seem a daunting task; however, with proper planning, wonderful benefits may be achieved. Programming a masterwork affords the conductor numerous opportunities to expand the choir's repertoire, integrate other subject areas,

introduce new languages, and address six of the nine National Standards for Music Education with a single piece of music.

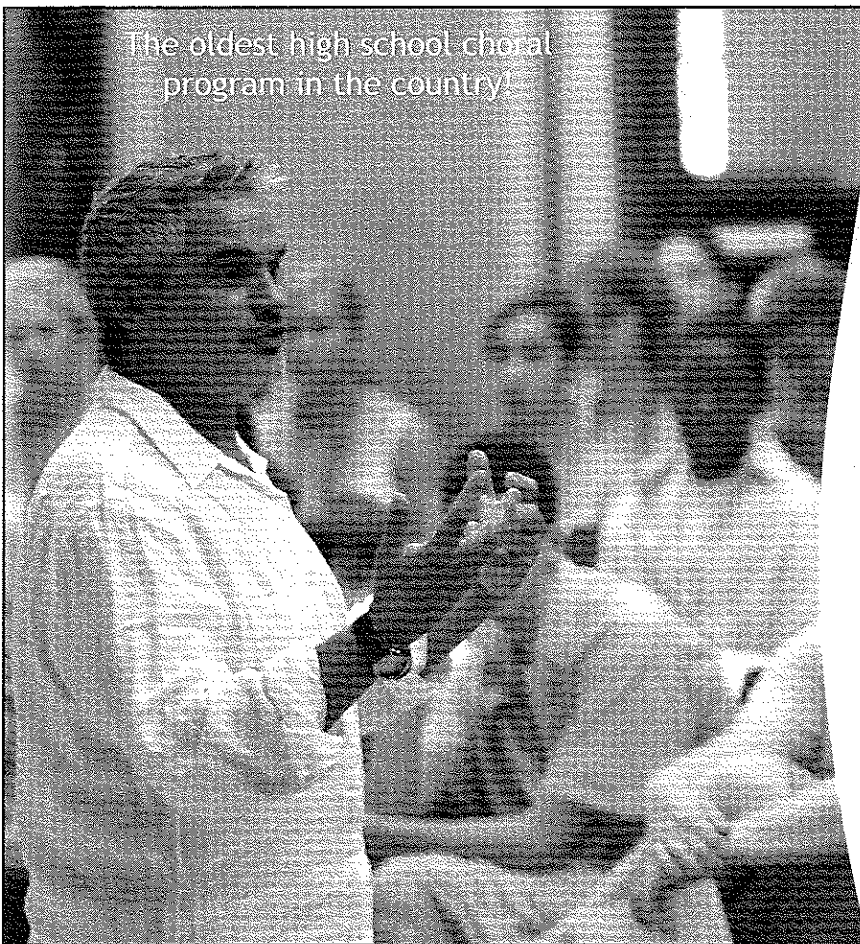
The selection of music is a crucial step. Considerations must be made for the following:

- **Range:** Does the music fit the voicing of your choir? Is the alto part singable, or does it stay within a limited range (common in three-part mixed music)? Is the baritone part accessible for your male singers?
- Most masterwork pieces accessible for middle school will be arrangements. Does the arrangement maintain the integrity of the original composition?

- Is the music appealing to the singers? Will it keep their interest?
- Is the piece in a foreign language?
- Is the text appropriate for middle school students? Can singers relate to the text?

Several Handel arrangements/editions are accessible for middle school choirs. Using a Handel composition provides the conductor with multiple opportunities to integrate other disciplines. For example, various activities may be incorporated with "Art Thou Troubled" (unison, Hinshaw HMC-1431; with optional strings) to enhance singers' musical knowledge and interpretation. Possible activities include:

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Vocal Institute

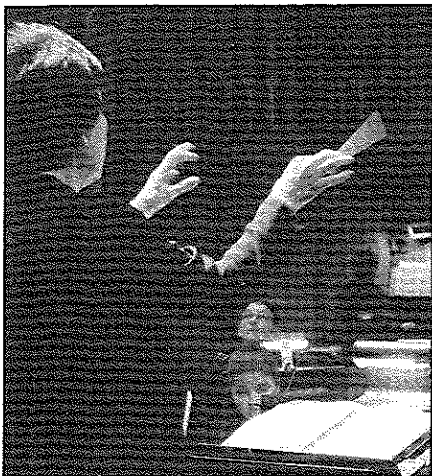
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WEEK ONE June 2-6

Children's Choirs, 1:00-3:30 p.m.
Sandra Mathias, Professor of Music, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio

Building Parish Music Programs,
1:00-4:30 p.m.

May Schwarz, Director M.A. in Church Music Program and Professor of Church Music, Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Robert Hobby, Director of Music, Trinity English Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana (June 3)

WEEK TWO June 9-13

Perspectives in Choral Conducting,
1:00-3:30 p.m.

Hilary Apfelstadt, National President of American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities, The Ohio State University

The History of African-American Gospel Music, 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Raymond Wise, Affiliated Professor of Church Music, Trinity Lutheran Seminary

WEEK THREE June 16-20

Hymns Old and New, 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Robin Knowles Wallace, Professor of Worship and Music, Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Music Technology for Church Musicians,
1:00-3:30 p.m.

Justin Riley, Adjunct Associate, Music Software, Capital University

Liturgical Choir, June 2-20

Students participate in daily summer chapel services

Courses are for graduate credit or audit.

For further information contact:

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Columbus, Ohio 43209
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www.TrinityLutheranSeminary.edu
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Repertoire & Standards

- **Language Arts** "Art Thou Troubled" is an aria from *Rodelinda*. Have singers read a short biography of Handel as well as a synopsis of the opera. What is the opera's plot? Which character sings "Art Thou Troubled?" What is happening in the opera when the song is performed? What circumstances surrounded the creation and/or performance of the opera?
- **Opera** Discuss the opera genre, and how opera is a culmination of music, drama, art, and dance. (National Standard 8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts)
- **Evaluation** Create a short quiz in the "End of Grade" format. This allows students another experience with this form of testing. In any school, all teachers work to improve testing skills for all students, regardless of the subject area.
- **Social Studies** Handel was a world traveler. Create a timeline of his travels. On a world map, locate the places he visited and lived. Correlate this information with "Art Thou Troubled?." Where was Handel when he composed *Rodelinda*? (National Standard 9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture)
- **Comprehension** Discuss the lyrics of "Art Thou Troubled?." What visual pictures do the singers create in their minds? What past experiences can each individual student relate to the text? How can this be used in their personal interpretation? What emotion should the singers convey to the audience?

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Activities such as these can be applied to various classical pieces. Many conductors barely find time during the school day to prepare music, much less incorporate these activities; however, many of these activities could be left for a substitute. Since substitute teachers may not be able to rehearse repertoire, these activities would provide a quality lesson and connect directly to the singers' repertoire.

Psallite (Praetorius/Leavitt; three-part mixed; Alfred SV9429; with optional glockenspiel and triangle) is another piece offering curricular connections. Have the singers listen to a recording of *Psallite* and determine the language (The original is in Latin and German.) What are the similarities/differences between the recording and the singers' edition? (National Standard 6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music)

Music that tells a story is enticing to young singers. Programming *Heidenroslein* (Schubert/Porter; Phantom Publications PPI 201; SAB; in German) offers the opportunity to expose students to the mu-

sic of Franz Schubert and the poetry of Goethe. The singers also experience singing in German. Have the singers read the poem and discuss how they will interpret the lyrics for the audience members. Even though the audience will not be German speakers, the interpretation of the music and text should provide listeners the essence of the piece.

The chanson *Je le vous dirai!!* (Certon/ed. Hirt; SATB; Hinshaw Music 519; unaccompanied in French) offers additional teaching opportunities. Middle school singers enjoy interpreting the comical storyline, and the piece provides an excellent introduction to singing in French. The SATB version fits middle school voices well. If the choir is not ready to perform SATB repertoire, a three-part mixed version

is available (Certon/Porterfield; Heritage Music Press 15/1615H; with optional accompaniment).

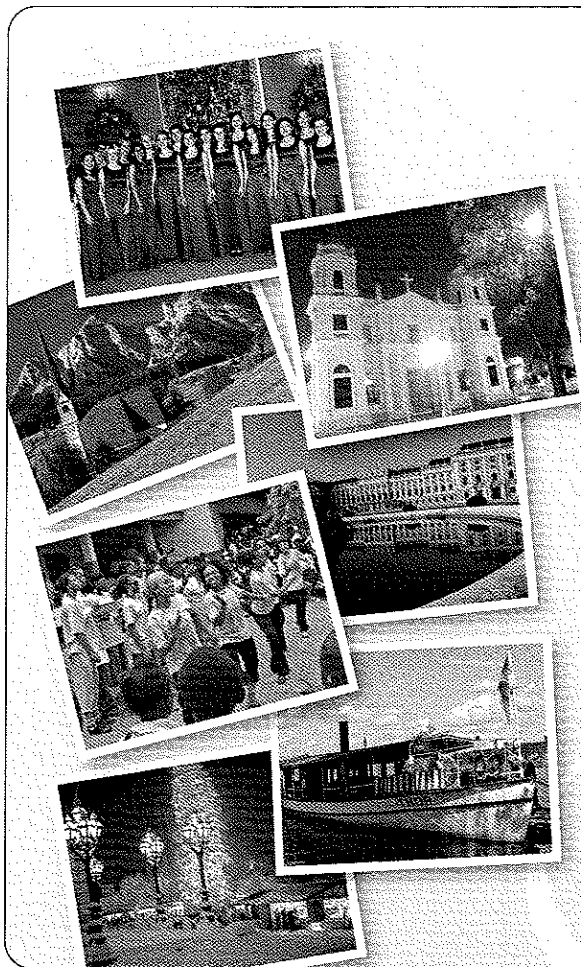
The conductor and choir will musically grow from the experience of programming at least one or two classical pieces during the course of the school year.

Submitted by:
Tom Shelton,
National R&S Chair for
Junior High/Middle School Choirs

Community Choirs

Repertoire Suggestions for Community Choirs

All too often, community choirs turn to the "tried and true" for programming. This has resulted in numerous performances of masses, requiems, and other works by European composers. Audiences attend performances of those works, perhaps because it is a piece of music that is familiar and the musical equivalent of comfort food. But comfort music, even though it may be an icon of the choral repertoire, can become too



Music Contact International

ANNUAL FESTIVALS & CHORAL EXCHANGES

February	Germany <i>Happy Birthday Händel International Choral Festival, Halle</i> USA <i>New York City Choral Exchange, New York City</i>
March	Holland <i>Cantate Amsterdam</i> Germany <i>Cantate Bavaria, Munich</i>
April	Italy <i>Days of International Choir Music in Verona</i>
May	Italy <i>Cantate Adriatica, San Marino</i>
June	USA <i>Vermont International Choral Festival, Stowe, VT</i> Sweden <i>Cantate Småland, Växjö</i> Italy <i>International Choral Festival in Tuscany</i> Austria <i>International Music Festival, Salzburg</i> Czech Republic <i>Cantate Budweis</i>
July	Belgium <i>Summer Singing in Ghent</i>
October	Spain <i>Cantate Barcelona</i>
November	Puerto Rico <i>Discover Puerto Rico Choral Festival, Ponce</i> Africa <i>West Africa Choral and Performing Arts Festival, Ghana</i>
Nov & Dec	Weekends of Thanksgiving & Advent Austria <i>Advent Sing in Vienna</i> Czech Republic <i>Advent Choral Festival, Prague</i>



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