



EDITORIAL

Choral Singing: A Matter of Relationships

Choral singing, at heart, is about relationships. Such relationships occur among the sounds that singers jointly create in partnership both with specific venues and with particular kinds of scored or improvised choral literature. Perhaps more importantly, choral singing engenders relationships among the people who participate in its various phenomena, whether as singers, conductors, or listeners. This inaugural issue of the *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing (IJRCS)* celebrates the uniquely relational character of choral singing by publishing research that contributes to our understanding of choral ensemble practice and pedagogy.

Sten Ternström, in our first *IJRCS Forum Spotlight* piece, provides a thoughtful overview and evaluation of research related to choir acoustics. Ternström's 1989 dissertation arguably established this field as a recognized area of inquiry. His subsequent investigations as a faculty member in the Music Acoustics Research Group at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, have continued to expand and refine it. Ternström's analysis will be required reading for graduate students and others who seek an orientation to this branch of choral singing research prior to engaging in their own quests for bibliographic control and research design.

The articles in this issue evidence a variety of research topics and methodologies. In her pilot exploration of the effect of certain conducting gestures on perceptions of vocal tension among choral singers, Rhonda Fuelberth empirically pursues a matter perhaps too long relegated to the realm of conjecture and custom. J. Kevin Ford likewise tackles as a research problem one aspect of a historied debate among choir directors and voice teachers about desirable choral tone quality. James W. Tipps examines motivations, conflicts, and perceptions associated with the recruitment and retention of choir singers. My own contribution

continues a line of investigation into the effects of choir spacing and singer placement on the preferences of singers and listeners. Anita P. Davis compares aesthetic responses to choral literature by those who have performed the literature and those who have not performed it.

IJRCS is a refereed journal. All articles, including those authored by Editorial Board members, undergo the same blind review process. Members of our Editorial Board take considerable time from their busy schedules to review manuscript submissions and to formulate journal policy. They do so as a service to the profession.

Several board members have recently authored books or book chapters that you will very likely find insightful and helpful: Colin Durrant (2003) *Choral Conducting: Philosophy and Practice* (Routledge); Steve Demorest (2002) *Building Choral Excellence: Teaching Sightsinging in the Choral Rehearsal* (Oxford); Sten Ternström with Duane Karna (2002) "Choir Singing," in R. Parncutt & G. McPherson (Eds) *The Science and Psychology of Music Performance: Creative Strategies for Teaching and Learning* (Oxford); and Leon Thurman and Graham Welch (2001) (Eds) *Bodymind and Voice: Foundations of Voice Education*, New Revised Edition, National Center for Voice and Speech.

IJRCS is an online journal. You, like I, may look back fondly on that time when all scholarly work was in a form that could be held, felt, perhaps even smelled, and filed in a cabinet or placed on a shelf. Such experiences are still possible with an online format, just less immediately so. Readers must print their own hard copies if they desire them. Such a trade-off, however, does confer some advantages.

In this issue, for example, you will find movie clips, sound files, and full color spectrographs. Length of articles is not determined by space

limitations. Future articles, moreover, will be available as soon as they pass the review process, rather than awaiting arbitrary publishing dates. Best of all, perhaps, *IJRCS* is available to you without the cost of a subscription.

Sometimes there is confusion about how to cite materials retrieved online. This editor's position is that *IJRCS* is no different from any scholarly print journal in this respect.

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from a library or the exact library shelf from which they retrieved such materials, they should not have to do so with articles from *IJRCS*. Citing this journal as one would any other, without the burden of adding a URL and/or access date, will be just fine. Each article in this issue has on its access page an example of how to cite it in APA format.

We hope you both enjoy this inaugural issue of the journal and join with us in seeing its potential. All associated with *IJRCS* look forward to nurturing relationships with our readers, and in turn being nurtured by your support as we seek to grow in our understandings and practices of choral singing.

JAMES F. DAUGHERTY