News of Asbury College Choral & Vocal Activities – Summer 2007

The newsletter is available either by US mail in black-and-white or in a full-color pdf file on the Music Department website. Twice yearly editions will be available in January and July. Please notify both us and the Alumni Office to regularly update e-mail or other address changes so we can keep you posted!

Concert Choir - Spring Tour & Stravinsky Festival

The 46-member Asbury College Concert Choir and its new director, Dr. Beatrice Holz, completed a six-state biennial Spring Break Tour, concluding at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C., where the group presented a 30-minute choral prelude to the Eucharist Service on March 25th. Great thanks are due our fine hosts in Chicago-land (David Valkema ‘88), Naperville IL (Pastor Scott Field), Des Plaines IL (Major Andrew Miller ’75), St. Joseph MI (James Kraus ’81), Smithville OH (Pastor Allan Bevere), Marietta OH (Pastor Charles Martindell), Mountain Lake Park MD (Pastor Dave Martin), Harrisburg PA (Jeannette Munoz Keezel ’87) and Alexandria VA (Major Mary Madison).

Just after their return from the spring tour, the Concert Choir also collaborated with the choirs of Berea College, Centre College, and Transylvania University in a festival commemorating the 125th anniversary of the birth of Igor Stravinsky. In the first half of the festival, each choir presented works by composers who either influenced Stravinsky or were influenced by the composer, with Asbury performing from Ravel’s Trois Chansons. In the second half of the concert, the combined choirs performed Stravinsky’s Symphony of Psalms with orchestra. The festival concerts were presented in both Danville & Lexington.
Collegium Musicum Vocal Ensemble Returns from Tour of Italy

The Vocal Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Vicki Bell, completed its first international tour in May of this year. A group of 32 singers (15 students and 17 alumni plus 7 support staff) traveled to Italy on May 16th and returned on May 28th.

The first stop on the trip was Palestrina, birthplace of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. While there, the group enjoyed a free visit to Pierluigi’s childhood home. The Asbury singers performed a joint concert with the Palestrina Voices under the direction of Maestro Renzo Cilia, faculty member at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome. The concert took place in the Cathedral of St. Agapito, the church where Pierluigi grew up.

The high point of the Vocal Ensemble’s portion of the program was the performance of the Kyrie and Agnus Dei I from Pierluigi’s Pope Marcellus Mass. Following the concert, a series of appreciative speeches was given on behalf of the Palestrina community, and a large plaque and a medallion embossed with the bust of Giovanni Pierluigi were presented to Dr. Bell, along with a large bouquet of flowers. The evening ended with an invitation to return and sing the entire Pope Marcellus Mass!

Rome was the next stop on the tour. Two of the group’s organists, Nathan Davy (’07) and Lisa Hall (’07), performed an organ recital to a full house in St. Paul’s Church. Later in the week, the Vocal Ensemble provided anthems for Masses in the Basilicas of St. Peter and Santa Maria Maggiore, and presented an hour-long concert in St. Ignatius Church.

The singers then traveled to Florence, where they provided anthems for a Mass in the Duomo (Santa Maria del Fiore), and presented an hour-long concert in the Church of San Gaetano. For both the Rome and Florence concerts, the choir received standing ovations, and happily sang an encore! Most importantly, all 39 travelers remained healthy and cheerful throughout the trip, and returned safely to the USA. Thanks be to God!
Asbury College Men’s Glee Club – Musical Men with a Mission

The Men’s Glee Club had an exciting year of rehearsing, ministering, performing, and enjoying the camaraderie of being together. The ensemble had 22 members in the Fall Semester and 24 members in the Spring Semester and was privileged to have Emma Swayne serve as their fine piano accompanist, as well as the only female member!

The Glee Club had the opportunity to minister in Chapel five times during the year, including a service featuring the music of Charles Wesley and a Christmas Chapel with the Concert Band and Women’s Choir. In addition to three other campus concerts, they also enjoyed performing in three off-campus venues. The group was asked to sing for the Scholarship Banquet at the Radisson Hotel in Lexington. (Having those guys show up for the dinner in tuxedos was a smart marketing idea by the Admissions Department!) They also joyfully ministered to the residents of Wesley Village, a retirement community in Wilmore, and to the members of several area churches who gathered for a concert at Southland Evangelical Methodist Church in Lexington.

The group concluded their year on an energetic note with their now infamous version of “Manly Men” by Kurk Knecht and a rousing rendition of “I Bought Me a Cat” by Aaron Copland. The Asbury College Men’s Glee Club continues to be a wonderful ensemble for men to share in each other’s lives and spread their joy of the Lord to others through song!

News from the Vocal Coordinator

Vocal students at Asbury College have been very busy this year, including five solo recitals and twenty-seven vocal soloists in performance. Six voice students – Hannah Ahn, Laura Hogue, Russell Aldridge, Megan Parker, Kristen Reynolds, and Jacob Granados – competed in April at the Mid-South NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) Regional Student Auditions at the University of Kentucky. Jacob Granados from Lubbock, TX, student of Virginia Bowles, won first place in the final round of competition for Senior Men. It was a proud moment for all Asburians!

We wish Jacob well not only in future musical endeavors but in his future ministry at the Salvation Army’s Southern Territorial College for Officer Training (Atlanta).

The Music Department’s Vocal Faculty also heard twenty-nine vocal auditions for the upcoming school year of 2007-2008 with nine scholarships offered to the most outstanding vocalists. As of this writing, ten of the vocal students have already committed to enrolling at Asbury College next fall. Please keep these fine prospective students in your prayers.

News of the Women’s Choir for the spring semester included two formal concerts on campus in addition to a well-received afternoon concert at the Thomson-Hood Veteran’s Administration Residence in Wilmore. The wide-ranging repertoire for the year included works by Mendelssohn, Schütz, (performed in German with cello accompaniment,) Copland, Eric Whitaker (Hebrew Songs with violin), an excerpt from the Fauré ‘Requiem’ performed with the Collegium Musicum Vocal Ensemble, and the premier of a new selection for women’s choir by Anna Sperger ’08, a music composition major.
Alumni & Friends...

- Jeanette (Miller) Turner ’94 was married last year and now calls herself “an Army wife”. She and her husband moved to GA and back to OH within the span of 7 months this past year (to which she says, “Ugh!”) Jeanette is in her 8th year of teaching music. After 5 years teaching K-5 music, she is currently in her 3rd year teaching 7th-8th grade choir and general music in Pickerington OH and plans to begin her Master’s degree this fall.

- Beth (Hagie) Hoovler ’00 lives with her husband, Chris, in Fredericksburg, VA, where they have just welcomed their first child, Julia Lee Hoovler, born on June 14, 2007. You can contact Beth by e-mail at bhoovler@mac.com.

- Crystal Schlieker ’02 will begin a new job this fall teaching elementary vocal music, grades 2-4, at the University of Chicago’s Laboratory School. Crystal’s e-mail is cschlieker@hotmail.com.

- Dr. Shawn Okpehoho ’03 has just been awarded the Doctor of Music Arts in Composition from the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati. (He is also looking forward to being married on August 4, 2007!)

Shawn’s e-mail address continues to be: symphonywriter@aol.com.

- Emily (Adkison) Fry ’04 has been teaching at Freeman Elementary in Irving, Texas, where she was awarded a $1000 educational grant and featured in a district television broadcast this past year. Along with her husband Jesse ’03, Emily is spending the months of June & July in ministry in South America. The Frys will be living & ministering in a children’s home in Argentina on weekdays; on weekends they will be teaching music at various Salvation Army corps throughout Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Jesse will begin a Master’s degree in Piano Pedagogy at SMU in the fall and Emily will be taking a new position as Choir Director at Perry Middle School in her current school district. Emily’s e-mail address is frye@cfisd.edu.

- Have you missed an issue of the Vocal Arts Newsletter? Past issues available: http://www.asbury.edu/majors/music/

- The events calendar is updated regularly at: http://www.asbury.edu/calendar. [Default screen opens to the current day’s events, but you can navigate on the screen’s right side to see future events.]

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Asbury Choristers to sing Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony

Combined Concert Choir, Collegium Musicum Vocal Ensemble, Music Faculty & Alumni

Sunday, November 4, 2007, 3:00 pm - Singletary Center for the Arts, Lexington

Those of you who are alumni of our Concert Choir and/or Collegium Musicum Vocal Ensemble are cordially invited to be part of a historic event.... On the first Sunday of November, the Concert Choir and Collegium Musicum Vocal Ensemble will combine with interested alumni of both choirs, as well as interested present and former music faculty, to perform Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with the Lexington Community Orchestra. Choirs will be rehearsed by Dr. Vicki Bell & Dr. Beatrice Holz, and the symphony will be conducted by Dr. Jon Roller ’83, director of the Lexington Community Orchestra.

For those of you who can participate, there are two options for rehearsals. Those who can be on campus Friday afternoons may prefer to rehearse with the Concert Choir during regular rehearsal times on these Fridays: 9/7, 9/21, 10/12, and 11/2. The “option one rehearsals” will be held from 3:355 in Hughes. It is expected, however, that most alumni will prefer to choose “option two”, attending two Saturday rehearsals spaced approximately one month apart: 9/8 and 10/6. Saturday rehearsals will be held from 1 - 4 pm, beginning in Hughes and perhaps moving to sectionals, with a mid-rehearsal break for refreshments and fellowship.

There will also be a final rehearsal for all participants, with the orchestra, on Saturday morning 11/3 from 9am-noon. The final rehearsal and the concert will both be held at the Singletary Center for the Arts in Lexington KY (corner of Rose Street and Euclid Avenue). The Sunday afternoon concert at 3 pm is open to the public. All are cordially invited to attend!