



Special Post-Reunion Issue  
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## Editorial: Making a Difference

The times are trying, and that is perhaps an understatement with which to begin this editorial. Even friends who have been most optimistic in the past are shrugging their shoulders in disbelief about what is going on in the world. Yes, there has been the pandemic (slowly subsiding as I write, but not yet over!), but a new crisis has emerged in Europe, as Russia, with the flimsiest of reasons, is inflicting war on neighboring Ukraine, a war bringing the world back to 1939 (when Hitler's Germany invaded Poland and started World II). And the ensuing refugee crisis is similar to the one I experienced as a child living in a small town in North Germany. It is not easy to fathom the severity of the challenges to the world order that has existed, at least in the Western world, for more than three quarters of a century.

It is perhaps time for another confession by the editor of *Hear the Voices*. Growing up in Germany, a land of culture and, especially, of music, that had just laid waste to Europe and caused the death of tens of millions of people (by warfare and industrialized murder), I had developed a healthy skepticism about music as a force for good. Adorno's remark that, after Auschwitz, poetry could no longer be written, or Thomas Mann's fictitious composer (in the novel *Doktor Faustus*) writing a work that would "take back" Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with its idealistic message that all human beings are brothers—those readings had left their mark on my thinking.

And yet, having experienced countless moments of happiness in listening and studying the great artworks in the musical repertory, I moved into music as a profession and, for more than 30 years, have known a choral conductor who believes in music, especially choral music, as a force contributing its share to improving humankind.

One of the great compositions of my early years was Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* of 1968. The 1960s, of course, were a time of tremendous change in the Western world and, somehow, Berio was able to bring it all together: the Vietnam War, Martin Luther King, Samuel Beckett, the Paris Street Riots, Leonard Bernstein, Mahler's Resurrection Symphony, and the Swingle Singers. A jumble of seemingly unrelated topics and performers at first glance, and yet it made sense, then and in retrospective (i.e., more than half a century later) even more so: "We must believe that music can change the ocean currents; otherwise it would be quite hopeless," I remember as one of the poignant statements juxtaposed with the waltz rhythms of a Mahler scherzo, and then repeated quite often, over and over again, from Beckett's *The Unnamable*: "Keep Going!" The *Sinfonia* at the time was hailed by critics as the first major post-modernist work.

Yes, I may have to rescind my earlier skepticism and admit that music can make a difference. "Otherwise, it would be quite hopeless."

And I would like to begin with an image of the Mansfield University Concert Choir, taken just recently (still in the midst of the pandemic and also in awareness of events on the world stage): poised, beaming, ready to make their mark on their communities, local and regional, as teachers, performers, entrepreneurs. It is a picture of hope. They are students who will "keep going" and, if necessary, "change the ocean currents" (to stay with the parlance of Berio's *Sinfonia*), because "otherwise, it would be quite hopeless."



Many of them participated in leading roles, or in the chorus, of *Hello Dolly*, a most entertaining musical put together by Sheryl Monkeliën, Isaac Campbell, and Peter Davis—they all made a difference. (See the photo essay below.) Some of the students pictured ventured out to Boston in the middle of February to attend the ACDA Eastern Region Conference at the shores of the Charles River, itself an inspiring and difference-making event. (See Part 1 of the centerfold story, “Boston Resonates.”) Nobody can quite compare to the presence of André de Quadros in our midst, when it comes to his commitment to “changing the ocean currents.” (See Part 2 of Boston Resonates.) He was honored at the conference with the Helen Kemp Award for making a difference, using the arts and especially music, as a healing force.

But there is more: The Concert Choir and Mansfieldians Reunion in early April brought back to Mansfield nearly 150 alums, all of them having made a difference at their respective professional situations. And they were glad to return to the Eastern Hill (one of them from as far away as Idaho, another cancer-stricken and in a wheelchair but wanting to be there anyway), to revive memories of times past, share each other’s company, and, especially, to make music together with faculty who came after them (or former teachers) Youngsuk Kim, Sheryl Monkeliën, and Peggy Dettwiler and join, in concert, with current students. And when Rutter’s arrangement of “Ukrainian Prayer,” “Somewhere” from *West Side Story*, and the “Celtic Blessing” sounded at the end of the final event on Sunday afternoon in Straughn Auditorium, no eye remained dry. Making music together made a difference, creating community in difficult times.

J.T.

## Upcoming Events

### “Let There Be Light!”: Haydn’s *Creation* heard again in Mansfield

The Mansfield University Festival Chorus will present *The Creation* by Franz Joseph Haydn for two performances on April 23 at 7:30 pm and April 24 at 2:30 pm in Steadman Theatre.

This great oratorio was written between 1796 and 1798 after Haydn had visited England and heard the oratorios of George Frideric Handel. It shares with Handel’s *Messiah* a swift succession of recitatives, arias, and choruses along a dramatic theme. The text is based upon Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and the book of *Genesis* and tells the story of the creation with some of the most picturesque music of its time.

The performances of this uplifting work will be conducted by Peggy Dettwiler and will feature Mansfield’s voice faculty: Soprano Alissa Rose, Tenor Jordan Schreiner, and Baritone Todd Ranney with an orchestra of strings, winds, trumpet, timpani, and harpsichord. Accompanying musicians include instrumental MU faculty: John Vaida, Garet Holdren, Jeff Jacobsen, Christine Moulton, Sue Laib, and Rebecca Dodson-Webster, among other community instrumentalists.

The concerts are free and open to the public. To watch live, visit <https://youtu.be/Yv3oUgx8z4c>

### Vocal Jazz Festival featuring Vintage Vocal Quartet

The 12th annual Vocal Jazz Festival will be held on Thursday, April 28 in Steadman Theatre. The all-day festival brings high school vocal jazz ensembles from around the state to MU. Students participate in workshops and each group will perform and work with our guest artists. This year’s festival concert features the Vintage Vocal Quartet, who will also work with the attending students. In addition, the Mansfieldians will present their final concert of the academic year.

The concert is free and open to the public. To watch live, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbWv52zGeO0>

## Hello, Dolly

*What a delightful show to which we were treated at the beginning of March! A musical comedy, where men were plainly dumb and women were cast as scheming to entrap men (“It takes a woman” was the title of one of the songs), but it was all in good humor, and the tongue-in-cheek quality enhanced by the production helped audiences to cope with the mock-silly plot located somewhere between Main Street in Yonkers, New York, and 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. Act 1 was clearly more focused than its counterpart after intermission, and it was not the fault of the Mansfield professionals who put the show together. Praise should be bestowed on Sheryl Monkelien and Peter Davis, the masterminds behind it, as well as Isaac Campbell, the choreographer from Troy, PA (a special bravo is in order here). And then the cast: Where did Natalie Holsey as Dolly pick up that authentic scheming quality? (“Before the Parade passes by” seems to have been written exactly for her—as well as Ginger Rogers and Ethel Merman, to aim quite high); Emma Criswell distinguished herself through her classy presence as Irene Molley, providing a much needed relief to the slap stick of the other characters; and then there were Carson Witherite as Horace Vandergelder and Jay Falgo as Cornelius—both are ready to join the Big Apple and Broadway at a moment’s notice (when the call comes). In short, Mansfield has the singing and acting talent to feed into Broadway. Apologies to anybody I forgot to mention: You all were great! I never had a better time in a Mansfield-produced musical than in this one (even decided to see Act 1 twice). JT*



Colorful Costumes



The MU Production of *Hello Dolly!* was presented March 3-6, 2022. These wonderful photos by MU student Grace Chamberlain tell the story.

“Call On Dolly” opens the show. Dolly Levi (Natalie Holsey), a matchmaker assists Ambrose Kemper (Carl Helrich) in his quest to marry Ermengard, niece of Horace Vandergelder (left).

Barnaby Tucker (Mat Thomas), Cornelius Hackl (Jay Falgo) and Vandergelder (Carson Witherite) sing “It Takes A Woman” (with the men’s chorus in the window), discussing how a wife might make his life better (below).



Dolly plots with Ermengard (Abby Dalton) and Ambrose (above left) while Barnaby and Cornelius create a mess (above right) so they can all go to New York for an adventure. They “Put On Their Sunday Clothes” and join the chorus on the train to New York! (below and next page)





Once in New York, Dolly's plotting creates chaos for hat shop owner Irene Malloy, her assistant Minnie Fay, Cornelius, Barnaby and Horace Vandergelder. To throw Vandergelder off the scent Minnie (Hanna Worthington), Irene (Emma Criswell) and Dolly sing "I Stand For Motherhood" (below left) while Cornelius and Barnaby try to hide in the hat shop. After Vandergelder storms out, Dolly suggests that Cornelius and Barnaby take Irene and Minnie out to dinner. The only problem is the dancing. Dolly teaches both how to dance in "Dancing" (below right). New York reminds Dolly of days gone by and decides to live again "Before the Parade Passes By."



The second act begins with Irene, Minnie, Cornelius and Barnaby walking down the streets of New York in "Elegance" where they end up in front of the Harmonia Gardens Restaurant (below)



The Harmonia Gardens is known for having the fastest waiters in town as well as being the most expensive. Dolly is well known here and the staff are thrilled that she has returned. They serenade here in “Hello Dolly” (below)



Dolly’s plotting again finds everyone in the same place which results in chaos. So much, that the police is called (below left) and they end up in court (below right)



Dolly talks her way out of the situation and all go free, except for Horace Vandergelder. Dolly leaves him, and he finally discovers he wants to marry Dolly. She comes to see him and they dance as the curtain falls.



Final Bows



Cast Photo with directors Peter Davis (left) and Sheryl Monkeliën (right)

## **Boston 2022 Resonates**

### *Introductions*

It has been nearly two years ago (Year 1 of the Pandemic) that I reported to you in the pages of *Hear the Voices* about the ACDA-Eastern Conference in Rochester, NY, and four years ago (no pandemic in sight in 2018) about a similar conference in Pittsburgh, PA.

Mansfield University's choral/vocal ensembles were involved in both: the Concert Choir in Pittsburgh with a much-praised 30-minute program "From Despair to Hope" and the Mansfieldians, the vocal jazz group, with an equally stunning performance of their respective repertory in Rochester, NY. The Pittsburgh Conference's logo, taking its cue from the many bridges spanning that city's rivers, had something like Building Bridges in its motto; in Rochester the image of bridges (or of water against an urban landscape) showed up as well and continued with "Open Ears, Open Hearts."

The organizers for the Boston Conference in 2022 (Year 3 of the Pandemic) stayed away from bridges and water despite the proximity of the Charles River and Boston Harbor (remember the Boston Tea Party) and were able, in comparison with Rochester, to cut things down from four words to just one, or six syllables to three: "Resonate." Perhaps a wise choice as an umbrella to allow all kinds of interpretations.

Choral folks have been hit hard in more than two years of the pandemic. Unlike string players and keyboard artists, singers produce aerosols and thus are considered major contributors to contaminants that allow the invisible pathogen without a brain to cause havoc for members of the species called homo sapiens, the folks with the big brain. (Madame Conductor has been able to keep the choral flame alive in Mansfield despite all those obstacles.) And then American history made itself felt in the middle of the pandemic: The death of George Floyd in May of 2020, by way of a nine-minute stranglehold by a white police officer in Minneapolis, MN, engaged minds and turned many people to questioning a narrative of the United States solely based on 1776. That year is signally important for the United States and the Declaration of Independence became an ideal to aspire to in Europe, where some of those ideals had been conceived and picked up by the Founding Fathers, and then realized on this side of the Atlantic. But that year, as it turned out, was not the only one to consider in writing history. All of a sudden, Black Lives Matter shattered complacency about idealistic historical narratives: universities, music schools, choral organizations felt the need to respond. 1619 and, going even further back to 1492, figured as important dates in American history, pointing to a different perspective on what made this country both great and grate. (Madame Conductor had been programming African American composers and arrangers for a long time in her concerts and tour programs and thus was not surprised by the need to be more inclusive.)

And here we are in **Boston 2022 Resonate**. It was a good conference, full of joy about being able to sing again together and for audiences to hear choral music (albeit with KN95 masks for performers and listeners) and mindful of the need to cherish diversity and to be inclusive. The choral arts can indeed make a difference in contributing to a more just society, and the organizers of Boston 2022 (Penelope Cruz, the president of ACDA Eastern, "and her minions"—in the words of David Fryling, VP of the national ACDA) were up to the challenge.

### *The Sites*

First, the location: the Sheraton Hotel. What a great site! Just a minute from the I-90 Interstate and nestled in the downtown area of Boston, one of the great cities in the United States, the hotel allowed excursions, by foot and protected from inclement weather by overpasses, into the shops and eateries of the Prudential Center (one of them called "Eatalie" with a naming, admittedly, not quite up to the intellectual level of Harvard and MIT, well-known academic institutions just a little north across the Charles River in a town called Cambridge!). And the major performing sites were in close walking distance as well: the Old South Church and the Catholic Church of St. Cecilia (the latter being the saint of music).

### *Community Singing*

A major staple of the Boston conference, in contrast to its Rochester predecessor two years ago, was singing together. Granted, in earlier get-togethers of the Eastern Region of ACDA there always had been Nick Page serving those in need of community singing, but in Boston they brought in big guns such as Jan Taylor, a choralist's



director from Prairie View A&M University in Texas; Sandra Snow, Michigan State University; Brandon Boyd, University of Missouri; and Craig Hella Johnson, composer and conductor of “Conspirare,” a professional choral ensemble. The concerts resulting from just a few rehearsals (and with limited control over its participants) were, surprisingly, on a very high level, but perhaps lacked the final polish that additional rehearsal time and screening of singers would have provided. But then, as André de Quadros (more about him shortly) pronounced: “We should be less concerned with sounding good and more with being good.” Three students from Mansfield University were assigned solos in two of those concerts I heard: Nicole Orlando contributed her high B-flat, Natalie Holsey a soprano solo, and Jarred Viamakias his fine tenor voice (even though he is really a violin major). More about those great Mansfield students later in this review!

Singing together, in Year 3 of the Pandemic, was really important, and the organizers should be applauded for sensing the need for a singing community in putting a conference program together that served such a need. The above-mentioned Craig Hella Johnson was particularly persuasive in articulating his thoughts on such concerts. (I wish I had a tape recorder running during his inspirational talk, but I didn’t.) He found just the right words in providing a persuasive context for the need of singing together.

### *Community Reaffirmed*

“Gathering” was the title of an event, a plenary session, on Thursday night, almost a religious service affirming a secular cause, in the Grand Ballroom of the Boston Sheraton. The event had the makings of a programmatic assertion of ACDA-Eastern’s goals, and it did. After a Welcome uttered by Penelope Cruz, its current president, a Call to Choral Community by Donald Dumpson, proceeded to “Lift Every Voice and Sing” conducted by André Thomas and accompanied by Pennsylvania’s Tony Leach (a wonderful song and text that, by the way, is considered the black national anthem) and then led into a Call for Renewal by Robyn Hilger, the national Executive Director of ACDA (she replaced Tim Sharp who greeted folks in Rochester two years ago in difficult times); besides presenting some inspiring thoughts, she invited folks to show up at the national ACDA Conference in Cincinnati in 2023. There were other inspiring speeches, before Madame Conductor picked up the microphone to announce the Helen Kemp Award: André de Quadros (more about him and his vision for choral music further below). But at least a picture of a poignant moment in that gathering we need to insert here.



Natalie Holsey, third from the left in the second row (blue track, as identified by the color of her hanger), was a soloist in Jan Taylor’s conference community choir



The “grandees” of the American choral world in the Northeast (some are National) are standing up to honor André de Quadros (from left to right): Jared Berry, Donald Dumpson, xx, André de Quadros, Penelope Cruz, Peggy Dettwiler, André Thomas, Robyn Hilger, David Fryling.

And then there was an “In Memoriam” to all those notable choral folks in the Eastern Region who passed on during the last two years, and Christopher Kiver of Penn State, president-elect and in charge of the next Eastern Region conference (in Providence, RI, in 2024), conducted a spontaneous singing of “In Paradiso” from Gabriel Fauré’s *Requiem*. All that was left to complete this choral “service” was an uplifting rendition of “Shine On Me” followed by a dismissal (“Ite Missa Est”) to send off the congregation of singers and choral directors to continue their missionary work in the months and years to come. It was a moving experience.

### *Great Performances*

Did I hear any great choirs? Of course, I did. In comparison to Rochester two years ago, there were no professional groups, or at least they were not billed as such (and, if professional, they had been folded into the roster of college and high school choirs that made the cut). Very high on my list of impressive choral groups I heard are:

The program of the **Roxbury Classic Sounds Honors** (a high school choir from New Jersey, conducted by Patrick Hachey) was quite diverse. The ensemble started with a piece from the tradition of classical music: “Laudate Pueri” from Mozart’s *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, continued with “Mo-Li-Hua,” a Chinese folk song arranged by Hyo-won Woo and “I’ll Fly Away,” an American hymn by Albert Brumley. Introspection and depth came to the fore in the two works following: “To Sit and Dream” by Rosephanye Powell (after a poem by Langston Hughes) and “The Music of Stillness” by Elaine Hagenberg (after a poem by Sara Teasdale), and the pensive mood that informed the pieces was enhanced by performing them as a pair without the interruption of applause. “Ranpono” by Sydney Guillaume, a Haitian composer, was sung in Creole French with drums and choreography added, a virtuoso piece for singers and conductor. The standing ovation was immediate and heartfelt.

The **University of Southern Maine Chamber Singers** are conducted by Nicolás Alberto Dosman, who hails from Panama and as an up-and-coming star in the choral world is already entrusted with major musical events in Portland, Maine. It is quite sobering to realize that the oldest composer on the program of the Maine Chamber Singers was born when I finished my dissertation. They performed indeed a challenging series of choral works, all of them contemporary, demanding for both singers and listeners. But they brought it off with great professionalism and panache. I heard the concert twice, and thus my appreciation for the program grew and also changed, as I became more familiar with the repertory. My favorite piece was “Amanecer” (Dawn) from *Visiones del Llano* by Cristian Grases, a young Venezuelan composer now teaching at the University of Southern California, a work inspired by recalling magical moments in the Venezuelan plains, full of evocative sounds and haunting choral colors.

The presentation by the **University of Maryland Chamber Singers** had a bitter-sweet ring, because the ensemble’s long-time conductor Edward Maclary is retiring. And what a swan song it was: Billed as a “brief reflection on love, on music, and on their intersections,” the concert began with a crystal-clear rendition of “Musica Dei donum optimi” (Music is the gift of the very best God) by Orlando di Lasso (1532-94)—the last motet he composed—with the vocal lines traveling in counterpoint through the perfect acoustic space of St. Cecilia. The centerpiece of the program was a gorgeous and moving choral piece “If I Say Yes” by Dale Trumbore, a young Californian composer (female), capturing the promise and bliss of a loving relationship (the setting was based on poems of her own). “Zum Schluss” (In conclusion) from Brahms’s *Neue Liebeslieder Walzer* provided an appropriate ending to an outstanding concert. The applause was heartfelt, but, when a standing ovation did not materialize, I got up to signal my enthusiasm for the performance and soon everybody followed my lead.

In a flyer introducing the ensemble, the **St. Thomas Gospel Choir** from Philadelphia (Walthier Blocker, conductor) is described as a “music ministry that spreads the gospel and edifies Jesus Christ through music.” The choral group, consisting almost entirely of African Americans, has toured widely in the United States, giving concerts and winning awards for their spirited performances, and quite a number of CDs are available with their renditions. And boy, did they peel the paint from the walls of St. Cecilia with their singing and clapping, infecting audiences and listeners with their unbounded enthusiasm. And there were moments when I thought that, sooner rather than later, flames would rise from the heads of the singers.

I did not attend all concerts of invited choirs (and apologize if I missed something extraordinary that should have been reported). But here are those about which I heard people raving about afterwards:

J. P. Stevens High School Chamber Ensemble (Matthew Chi Lee, conductor)  
Susquehanna University Choir (Amy Voorhees, conductor)  
Lexington High School Chamber Singers (Jason Iannuzzi, conductor)

## Interest Sessions

I did not attend interest sessions, perhaps because they reminded me too much of musicology lectures. And yet, I have to report on one of them, because a Mansfield student was the presenter: Pingyi Song. She arrived at the shores of the Tioga River around 2010 as an exchange student from China (when MU had such a program with Chinese academic institutions), spent about two years in our midst, sang in the Festival Chorus and the Concert Choir, could not participate in the European Tour of the Concert Choir in 2011 (to the British Isles) because her visa did not cover that neck of the world, moved to West Virginia University for her masters, and is now close to getting a doctorate from University of North Carolina in Greensboro. Her presentation of choral music in Asia (and she focused on Japan, Korean, Mongolia, and China) was informative and incisive.



Pingyi Song and Madame Conductor caught up with each other for lunch in Boston's Prudential Center (both were "blue track," as you can see)

## The College Fair

Perhaps I should talk briefly about the College Fair scheduled for a few noon hours on Thursday in several conference rooms near a highly frequented area of the hotel: It allowed several choral programs to present themselves to prospective students as an attractive choice to continue their studies and high school choral conductors to recommend that choice to their charges.

Alas, if it were that simple. Online information has replaced printed material as the lure for younger folks, and the parents who might be impressed by glitzy brochures weren't there at the conference in the first place. Still, Madame Conductor had gathered relevant materials in an extra suitcase, a table had been rented, and at the appropriate hour the display promoting Mansfield had been set up: a gigantic Mansfield flag, a few fliers promoting the choral/voice area, a poster "Music begins with MU" (quite beautiful in showing campus, town, and hills in the distance plus a few musical ensembles), and quite a number of CDs and DVDs produced during the last few years. (See picture.)

Being not immediately identifiable as a Mansfield spy, I walked from room to room, from display table to display table, showed interest by asking questions about the program being advertised, and, in turn, picked up quite a number of brochures, fliers, and information (written and by word-of-mouth). The winners in the "glitzy brochures" category were, without doubt, the University of Massachusetts in Amherst; Peabody Conservatory (now part of Johns Hopkins University); and Fredonia School of Music (part of the SUNY system, and clearly a regional competitor for MU). Those three universities promoted their music programs without reservations (with detailed descriptions of their respective programs, imaginative photography, colorful and thus expensive brochures), and I wish that Mansfield University would sometimes recognize its strength in a similar way. The recent glitzy brochure at MU in the fall of 2021 promoted departments that "needed a boost" (in the words of an anonymous employee), and music did not fall in this category. (I am sorry to say it that bluntly: It reveals a sad state of affairs when a university is unwilling to advertise its strength!)



Natalie Holsey, PD, Jared Vamvakias, and Nicole Ann Orlando posing for a photo after completing the Mansfield display

The other tables I visited are easier to dispense with: SUNY Binghamton, Castleton University of Vermont, Ithaca College (another competitor for Mansfield), and Westminster Choir College (Rider University). The former was not quite up to the level on display during the College Fair and the latter, clobbered with bad PR about its future and some stellar choral folks leaving the institution (with rumors that China—a country with strong choral ensembles and a support system for international travel—would acquire the place). The state of affairs was encapsulated in the small print of one of its flyers: “For the latest information, go to our website.” (That is devastating for an institution that, at one time, was the standard for choral music in the Northeast of the United States with Flummerfelt of Westminster preparing choirs for Lenny Bernstein’s New York Philharmonic Orchestra.)

Thus, after walking around the display rooms and absorbing information of various kinds, I am still a fan of Mansfield University. Granted, the institution can do better with PR, in promoting the strengths of the place. But no other place showed off CDs and DVDs in Boston’s Sheraton, and, when we left, the suitcase with promotional materials I rolled out to the curb on Sunday, when we left, was definitively much lighter.

### *Mansfield Students*

I have nothing but praise for the students from Mansfield University.

Conferences can be quite daunting for beginners (and students, by definition, are beginners), but judging from the comments I picked up at various junctures, they understood perfectly the goals of the conference, its strengths and where criticism was justified. In short, I found them well prepared to benefit from an encounter with the professional world: both in music education and in the choral arts. Their curiosity and enthusiasm, their perceptive comments on what they had witnessed—expressed, when the conference was over, in conversations during dinner at the Cheesecake Factory in the Prudential Center—made me realize or, rather, confirmed that music students at Mansfield University really get a good education. May it remain that way, as curricular and administrative changes are being contemplated and enacted during the process of “Integration”—turning Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield campuses into Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania.

### *Coda*

And, thus, we left the Sheraton Hotel on a wintry Sunday morning. It snowed as we departed Boston and, for insurance reasons, only two people were authorized to drive the van (with ten students aboard) and an SUV (transporting a few other folks and luggage). There was a stop somewhere in the Catskills to savor the culinary delights of a Burger King for lunch, before we continued in a southwesterly direction and, by 5 pm, reached the Eastern Hill. It was great to be back home, as many responsibilities, not all of them choral, awaited us the next morning.

But there are memories, as we returned to our home base, memories of reconnecting with alums and friends (you already were shown a picture of Pingyi Song, masked and unmasked, above—here are a few more):



Felicia Barber (MM at MU in Music Education in 1999) and Maryellen Giese (Hochstein School of Music in Rochester, NY)

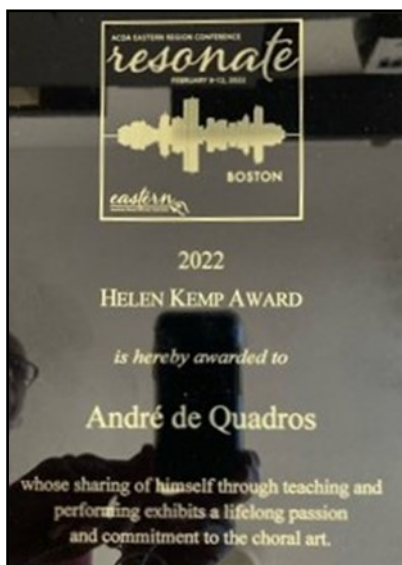


Picture of John Madas, PD, JT, Thomas Jones, Bill Cutter waiting to be served.



The blue-tagged Boston travelers: (back row from L to R) Carson Witherite, Patrick Murphy, Jennifer Andrianos, Austin Brien, Jared Vamvakias, Emma Criswell, Natalie Holsey; (front row) Nicole Orlando, Hanna Worthington, PD, Jessica Strouse, Abby Dalton.

## Boston Resonates II



*The American Choral Directors Association Eastern Region meets every other year in a conference to inspire conductors, students, singing folks and friends through its advocacy of the choral arts. The last conference in 2020 in Rochester, NY, had been organized by Mansfield's Peggy Dettwiler; as past president, she chaired the committee selecting the 2022 recipient of the Helen Kemp Award. At a plenary session described above under "Community Reaffirmed," she announced the verdict:*

In September of 2009, the Executive Board of the ACDA Eastern Region created a biennial award to honor an ACDA member who, through teaching, performing, and sharing, exhibits a lifelong passion and commitment to the choral art. The first recipient of the 2010 inaugural award was **Helen Kemp**, for whom the award is named.

Many of us who knew Helen Kemp have embraced her mantra: "Body, mind, spirit, voice – it takes the whole person to sing and rejoice!"

Ten outstanding leaders in our field of choral conducting were nominated for this year's award. Charged with the challenging task of choosing our 2022 awardee, the committee selected one person who we felt most fully embodies Helen Kemp's mantra. His nomination garnered six letters of support from music professionals around the world. Indeed, André de Quadros has taken Helen's mantra to a new level – bringing his "whole person" to enrich, inspire, and ignite communities through choral music on a global level.

If you visit his website, you will see five nouns describing Andre de Quadros' life work: conductor, ethnomusicologist, music educator, writer, and human rights activist.

As a **conductor**, he has directed and undertaken research in more than forty countries with his ensembles: the Manado State University Choir in Indonesia, the Muslim Choral Ensemble in Sri Lanka, Common Ground Voices, an Israeli-Palestinian International project in Jerusalem, Common Ground Voices / La Frontera at the Mexico-US border, and Voices21C here in Boston.

As an **ethnomusicologist** he has published nearly fifty editions of choral music from the Muslim World, Asia, and the Pacific; and has presented his research at the World Choral Symposium, the American Choral Directors Association, Europa Cantat, Deutscher Sängerbund, and Chorus America.

An avid **music educator**, André has held leadership positions at Boston University, including Director of the School of Music, Chair of Music Education, and Artistic Director of the Tanglewood Institute. Currently, he also serves as Visiting Professor at Victoria University in Australia and Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University in China.

As a **writer**, he has published five books and a staggering number of articles and book chapters on timely topics such as choral relevance, elitism, global repertoire, transgressive choral pedagogy, and the intersection of music and public health.

But the most encompassing of his descriptors, is **Human rights activist**. André is a fierce advocate for including the marginalized in community music practice. For ten years, he has facilitated a robust arts program for incarcerated individuals in Massachusetts prisons, jails, and detention centers outside of Boston, reaching a population of men, women, and youth who have had little access to the healing power of communal music making. This approach on empowering people in incarcerated settings to tell their stories through improvised music, song creation, poetry, movement and theatre is called "Empowering Song." His work is aptly described as "heartwork."

I first met Andre de Quadros in 2014 when I attended the World Choral Symposium in Seoul, Korea. I was so inspired by his mission: "Choral Music—Healing People, Saving Lives" that I invited him to present sessions at Mansfield University and then I enrolled in his course, Conducting 21C in Stockholm, Sweden. I dare say that the twelve of us participants were profoundly transformed by these days in workshop together. We led the Manado State University Choir in concerts with expressive movement wedded through prose and theatre without applause. We witnessed a moving performance by a choir of prisoners and made music with Afghan refugees. I

taught these young people “Row, row, row your boat” and then learned that they had escaped Afghanistan on a boat!

If I could summarize, his impact. It would be by this statement: we in the choral profession should focus less on “sounding good and more on being good.”

Please welcome to the stage, Dr. Andre de Quadros, the recipient of the 2022 Helen Kemp Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Peggy Dettwiler



*André de Quadros is an inspiring presence, and the picture above captures some of the magnetizing qualities of his personality and artistry. His response to the honor deflected the praise bestowed on him to encompass all those he was able to rally through the force of music to make this world a better place. The images accompanying his address are poignant and refreshingly diverse. He responded to the honor as follows:*

I am deeply humbled and grateful to [ACDA East](#) (American Choral Directors Association, Eastern) for honoring me with the Helen Kemp Lifetime Achievement Award. The ensembles and projects I’ve worked with over the last decade or so have changed my life: the [Manado State University Choir](#) (Indonesia), the [Muslim Choral Ensemble - Sri Lanka](#), [VOICES 21C](#) in Boston, [Common Ground Voices / Jerusalem](#), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Countries Youth Choir (IFCM), and the two projects that I co-direct with my wonderful colleague, [Emilie Sweet Amrein](#), [Common Ground Voices / La Frontera](#) and [The Choral Commons](#). In this time, I have had the opportunity to work with people in so many settings around the world, from hospitals and prisons to refugee shelters and psychosocial rehabilitation facilities, from post-conflict zones to war zones. But perhaps the most important and rewarding has been my work in American prisons. That is where I learned more about humanness, despair, hope, and the inestimable capacity of empowered music-making. Those who know me will know also that my work is not solo; it is always in community. Just as they say about raising children, that it takes a village, can be said of me, it has taken many partnerships and collaborations to bring me to this moment in my life, and this award is, therefore, shared by all my colleagues, friends, and partners. This award is a reminder that we have a long way to go to build a just, equitable world; choral music can be integral to this struggle, and we must pledge together to work for liberation with our open hearts and minds.

André de Quadros



Common Ground Voices La Frontera at the US-Mexican Border



Manado State University Choir, Indonesia



Empowering Prisoners



A poster announcing that the Muslim Choral Ensemble (MCE) will be performing at The Voices For Peace 2022 concert on 27th February at the Shangri La Hotel in Shri Lanka.





Common Ground Voices Jerusalem: Palestinian and Israeli singers gathered by André de Quadros join hands, singing at a choral festival in Marktoberdorf, Germany



Ambassadors of Peace



*Voices 21C* (not the full group) at the Boston Conference, posing for a photo op after their performance “Dreaming a Just and Equitable Choral Future Through Collaborative Experience”

## Three Individuals who have made a difference

### Alice Parker

*Peggy Dettwiler was recently asked to submit her memories of Alice Parker, a composer, conductor, arranger, and teacher (now in her late nineties) who had collaborated for many years with the great American choral conductor Robert Shaw, for a publication honoring Parker.*

I looked back on my connections with the wonderful Alice Parker and found quite a number of memorable things. Since we share the same birthday in December, she immediately said: “We are sisters!”. She came to Mansfield University in 2013 for a two-day residency. All of the choirs here learned at least one of her works to sing for her coaching. In advance, I noted some of her biographical information: over 500 published compositions, ranging from operas through song cycles, cantatas and choral suites to many individual anthems. The Mansfield library has 39 of these titles with multiple copies!

During her sessions, she was so inspiring with such “one-liners” as these!

Words, rhythm, and pitch - in THAT order!  
Elementary music teachers should teach the LOVE of singing.  
We are surrounded by music but robbed of song.  
The language of music gets right through all of our defenses.  
Ears are interior; eyes are exterior. When we are occupied with our eyes, we close our ears. The point of a song cannot be notated.  
Senses are there to be developed.  
Dull music-making is the ultimate sin!  
Breath is to the singer as the floor is to the dancer.

Here is a picture of her with Professors Dodson-Webster and Dettwiler in 2013 at the Wren’s Nest, then Mansfield premier eatery, and all three ladies have ordered Citrus Salmon, one of Jamie Fry’s tasty creations.



### Stacey Gibbs in Mansfield

One of the great arrangers and composers of the African American Spiritual came to town to coach the Mansfield University Concert Choir in his latest creation *Elijah*, a fiendishly difficult piece whose world premiere was entrusted to four choirs, world-wide—one of them the Mansfield ensemble. Your chronicler attended the rehearsal with Gibbs mostly working on developing a percussive sound in some of the passages and refining dynamic nuances. The composer was impressed about what he heard, especially the high d-sharp pitched perfectly by Hanna Worthington (front row, second from left in picture below) and asked Madame Conductor to send her a copy of her annotated score, as he might include some of her markings to his autograph before publishing the work.



In addition to coaching his new work, Stacey Gibbs also taught a class on music and business, passing on valuable information to students of music once released from college.

Stacey Gibbs (at the center of the back row) with his class

## Linda Grace Dix Lee (1939-2022)



Linda Lee died on April 8, 2022, in a Honesdale hospital after suffering a stroke. She was 82. She was a Mansfield graduate (class of 1961). For decades, she and her husband Lew had substantial connections to Linda's alma mater, especially the music department. Lew Lee was, for many years, on the Board of Trustees for Mansfield University, and both established the Lewis and Linda Dix Lee Music Scholarship Fund at Mansfield University (to which the family asks to direct donations in lieu of flowers). Saddened about Linda's passing, friends remember the good times spent together either in Mansfield or in their beautiful home on Coxton Lake in the Northeast corner of Pennsylvania as well as the good company of the Lees during four European Tours of the Concert Choir in 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011.

From the Obituary, slightly abridged and edited: "Brought up on a dairy farm in Pleasant Mount, PA, Linda Dix enrolled [her mother was the moving spirit here] in piano lessons with Muriel Ogden of Herrick Center. Thus began her early music studies, resulting in a lifetime career and love of music. Linda became the school and local Methodist Church accompanist. Upon graduation she enrolled at then Mansfield State Teacher's College in the Music Education curriculum. While at Mansfield she was elected to Kappa Delta Pi and Lambda Mu, both honorary sororities. As a senior she was one of nine selected for the prestigious award, 'Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities.' Graduating in 1961 from Mansfield, Linda accepted a position as music teacher with the Galeton School District where she taught for one year, thus commencing a long career spent working with children and music in an educational setting. In 1961 Linda married the love of her life, Lewis B. Lee. They soon moved to Harrisburg, PA following her husband's career. Linda made the decision to be a stay-at-home mom, raising their two children. In the meantime, putting her training to good use, she began a private piano studio in her home and accepted a volunteer position directing a children's choir at Calvary United Methodist Church. Thus began her fifty-year career as a church musician of which founding and directing the handbell program at Calvary was a highlight. In 1978 Linda accepted a position as elementary music teacher with the Central Dauphin School District where she served at Southside School until her retirement in 1999. Linda's musical groups at church and school were selected to perform at venues around the Harrisburg area. Upon retirement, Linda and her husband elected to return to northern Wayne County, building a home on Coxton Lake, fulfilling their lifelong dream of travel and becoming active volunteers in the community. There, Linda founded 'Music for Munchkins', a program for preschoolers at the Northern Wayne Community Library; directed and accompanied the Pleasant Mount Community Chorus; served as organist at Orson Church; choir and chime director for the Pleasant Mount United Methodist charge. In addition to her musical activities, Linda developed an interest in needlework as well as local and family history."



Lew and Linda Lee making their way together at Blarney Castle in Ireland, 2011. (Your chronicler is almost sure that they kissed the Blarney Stone, said to give people who do so the gift of gab/persuasion.)

## Chamber Singers Celebrate Springtime with Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is, arguably, one of the greatest composers who ever lived. He is revered the world over in churches and concert halls with concerts that are often billed as commemorative events celebrating the composer's life and work. Since Bach's birthday coincides with the spring equinox (March 21), recitals with his music have sometimes been scheduled on that day, and Mansfield University's Music Department followed this tradition in 2022 with a birthday celebration: not only of Bach and of the beginning of spring after a long winter, but also of rebirth and renewal after more than two years of an extended pandemic that finally seems to be subsiding.

Bach cantatas have been a regular staple for the Chamber Singers (in earlier times called Mansfieldians) during the last 25 years: Cantata # 5 "Christ lag in Todesbanden" (Christ lie to death in bondage), a cantata for Easter Sunday and a very early work from the composer's pen, was heard in 1995, 2008, and 2013; Cantata # 6 "Bleib bei uns" (Abide with us), a work for Easter Monday, was performed twice in the spring of 2009 and 2018, and Cantata # 187 "Es wartet alles auf dich" (Everybody is waiting for you) sounded in 2000.

This spring's Bach cantata "Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben" (Heart and mouth and how we're living) carries the number 147. It is famous because of its chorale, "Jesus, Joy of Man's Desiring," which appears twice, concluding the first and second sections of the work. (The Chamber Singers perform only Part 1 of the cantata.)

The cantata's genesis is somewhat complicated. Bach may have composed parts of it as early as 1716 as service music for Advent, but the cantata did not acquire the shape we know until 1723, when the composer, just having moved to Leipzig, had to provide music for July 2, the day at which Mary's Visitation was celebrated. Some of us may remember the story told in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke when Mary visits Elizabeth (both women are pregnant: Mary with Jesus, Elizabeth with John the Baptist) and Mary subsequently erupts in her song of praise, the Magnificat. The theme of Advent is not inappropriate for Mary's Visitation and adapted in the cantata's texts to serve a different feast in the church calendar.

The festive quality of the cantata is underscored through the sound of a trumpet (in addition to strings, oboe, and harpsichord) in the choral movements of the work, Nos. 1 and 6. The cantata's first movement is a motet for both voices and instruments in a complex fugal style. Its final movement, also for choral and instrumental forces, brings the aforementioned chorale "Jesus, Joy": "Wohl mir, dass ich Jesum habe" (I am blessed that I have Jesus). The phrases of the simple homophonic chorale setting are interrupted by instrumental ritornellos of a pastoral nature that paraphrase the chorale melody. These two choral movements are the bookends, if you wish, for four solo movements: two of them (No. 2 and No. 4) are recitatives, musical numbers that quickly get lots of text across and function to introduce arias (No. 3 and No. 5) whose texts serve as religious meditations.

Father Edward Erb, the organist at the concert, framed the cantata with *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues* for organ, ascending in their sequence through the tonal space of nearly an octave in major and minor keys: #1-4 (C-d-e-F) were heard before the cantata, #5-8 (G-g-a-Bb) sounded after the cantata had ended.



Franz Overbeck, *Mariae Heimsuchung* (1838), Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle



The Chamber Singers and a small instrumental ensemble during the performance of Bach's Cantata No. 147

## Reunion 2022

So many things have happened in the last few months, as the choral world emerged from the pandemic and approached the semblance of a former life, that your chronicler has to give this important event shorter shrift than he likes. A few years ago, when the Mansfield University Concert Choir celebrated the fiftieth year of its existence, there was a Special Reunion Issue distributed to returning students (albeit only printed in black and white to save costs) with contributions by alums walking the memory lane. This time, *HTV's* acknowledgment is more modest but no less sincere, resulting in a Special Post-Reunion Issue (the one you are reading or holding in your hand). It will hopefully convey the message that, despite the obstacle course vocal music had to overcome in the last two years, the choral flame has been kept alive and continues to be thriving.

About 140 alums arrived on the Eastern Hill for the 55<sup>th</sup> Reunion on April 1-3. (Because of the pandemic, the celebration had been postponed to the 56<sup>th</sup> year of the choir's existence.) Some came from as far away as Idaho (Michael Trowbridge) and some had reached old age (no names are mentioned in this rubric). But it was not only a Concert Choir but also a Mansfieldians Reunion. Complicating repertory to be sung and rehearsal schedules was that the Mansfieldians, currently Mansfield's Vocal Jazz Ensemble, had existed earlier as a show choir under Jack Wilcox and Youngsuk Kim; in due time, all the issues had been resolved, music had been sent to the returning students so they could practice before they arrived on campus, because, given the time table, the various concerts had to come together in 24 or 36 hours.

Attic sales, receptions, and a banquet (see picture below) lightened up the tight rehearsal schedule, and there was some time left for alums to be on their own without the directors who planned and organized the event. After all, returning students needed a space to reminisce about the "golden times" before Sheryl Monkeliën and Peggy Dettwiler arrived on campus.



Kyle Rusk, Michael Trowbridge, Roderick Nevin, Tammy Nevin, and PD at the banquet on Saturday evening.

The Mansfieldians concert on Saturday was framed by numbers of the (instrumental) Jazz Ensemble under Jeff Jacobsen before various generations of Mansfieldians, split into three groups, presented their tunes. "There's No Business, Like Show Business" and "Lonesome Road" were heard in arrangements, as well as the haunting "(My Mama was Right, There's) Blues in the Night" with which Mansfield's vocal jazz group became world champion at the World Choir Games in Graz, Austria, in 2008. And as observer of the scene for more than two decades, I was glad to hear Elizabeth Webb and Brandon Bitner, by now being professional jazz vocalists, as soloists in "Deedle's Blues" and "More" (from *Mondo Cane*), respectively.



The "first" group of Mansfieldians waiting for their conductor Youngsuk Kim to enter the stage.



In one of the next incarnations of the Mansfieldians, things have changed: singers hold microphones rather than a score.



And here are the most recent Mansfieldians “chewing” microphones

But before the last number an important transaction needed to be accomplished: Youngsuk Kim had retired without proper farewells (it was during the pandemic) and Sheryl Monkelién (who is retiring at the end of the academic year) should not suffer the same fate: Madame Conductor used the opportunity to bestow hugs and a plaque on both colleagues and expressed her appreciation for decades-long collaboration in making good music.



Youngsuk Kim receiving a plaque



Sheryl Monkelién receiving a plaque

And then Sheryl Monkelién poignantly said farewell with an arrangement of her teacher Phil Mattson “I’ll Be Seeing You.” Rousing applause and a standing ovation came at the end of a concert that was as much about music as it was about memories.

The Sunday afternoon concert with Concert Choir and a chorus of former students was similarly rich in memories. The current students gave solid performances of “Sogno di Volare” (The Dream of Flying), “Threads of Joy,” “Clap Praise,” and other numbers with which they had shown off their choral artistry in earlier incarnations in Steadman Theatre. Deeply moving and exceptionally artistic were the renditions of the “Reunion Choir” (within a short time, the ensemble sounded as if they had rehearsed for an entire semester): Mendelssohn’s “Richte mich Gott” was close to recording level; Joe Murphy (saxophone) and Roderick Nevin (bagpipes) provided instrumental color in “Johnny Has Gone” and “Amazing Grace,” respectively; “Abide with Me” (in an arrangement of MU alum Bill Cutter, class of 1978) was an oasis of meditation, before “Walk together Children” sounded as rousing finale.

And then the conclusion—and no eye remained dry: “Somewhere” from Bernstein’s *West Side Story* sung by the Reunion Choir on stage and the current Concert Choir in the outer aisles (to create a surround sound effect and embrace the audience). And yes, even this was not the conclusion, as the “Celtic Blessing” needed to be heard, creating community in song over decades, and I believe some sorority sisters pitched in as well, as everyone was leaving Straughn Auditorium, alums to get back home and current students back to their dorms or Manser Dining facilities.



The Reunion Choir in rehearsal

Some Appreciative Letters should go here rather than in the Fan Mail corner of the issue:

Thank you so much for such a wonderful weekend! It was a joy to sing in a choir again and reconnect with Carol and Alan Shumway after almost 50 years! Loved the music, the students, and your energy in leading us! Words are inadequate . . . . but it was an experience I will treasure always. Thank you so much!

Cher Niedermaier (class of 1973)

My experience participating in this weekend's alumni choir reunion has been so very uplifting, so very healing! (Many endorphins have been flowing within me, which have thus far carried me through all rehearsals.... I will probably sleep through much of Monday and Tuesday, though! Lol!) There is nothing quite like creating beautiful music with well-trained musicians, being led by an extremely gifted conductor, such as yourself.

Prayers have spared my life so many times since half of my left lung was removed in 2016, followed by two brain cancer removal surgeries and two abdominal surgeries. Additional prayers were and are still so welcomed, because, despite being on Alecensa cancer medication (which crosses the blood brain barrier), some cancerous spots still remain in the middle section of my lungs.

May God bless you at least as much you have blessed (and will continue to bless) me and others.

Gratefully, Shelley Eberhart (class of 1977)

## PMEA in the Poconos

In years past, I have attended musicological conferences and choral gatherings (and I have made my preferences known in the pages of *Hear the Voices*). Not sure when I visited an all-out music-education jamboree; if I did, I had forgotten how colorful it can be: with shiny brass instruments and flashy uniforms to dress up the band, and, yes, a silvery flute and some golden-brown string instruments were present the last time I was asked to accompany the Mansfield University Concert Choir to such a gathering. And memories came back: I had seen this before. It was a *déjà vu*.

It began on the Eastern Hill with Benedict's Bus waiting to load equipment and people onto the vehicle. Ted (Theodore) Perry was the bus driver responsible from getting us from Mansfield to the Poconos, and we reminisced about the last time he steered us from A to B, and it soon became clear that it was 3 years ago in January when the Concert Choir sang in Carnegie Hall or may be even 4 years ago when the Choir was invited to sing in a gala performance of Bernstein's *Candide*, also in Carnegie Hall. The pandemic put quite a hiatus between then and now, but Ted remembered the last time and was elated to get the award-winning choir wherever it needed to go.

And he did. The weather was not conducive to traveling by bus, and he had to take a detour to avoid an accident site on I-80. After a restaurant stop at the Poconos Brewery (expensive, slow, and not good—to be avoided at all costs), the Choir checked into the Kalahari Resort.



Part of the bass and tenor section of the Concert Choir cheerfully waiting to be served at Poconos Brewery.



Madame Conductor finally receiving her order (she is surprised about its gargantuan size)



And we were glad that the staff, albeit reluctantly, located the documents necessary to accept us and hand out “keys” in form of tags to be attached to one’s wrists and then held against a certain spot near the door of residence. (If you were lucky, it worked.)

Kalahari is a desert in today’s Namibia and Botswana, two African countries south of the equator. But somehow a Marrakesh Market made it into the premises (that’s also in Africa, but way up north of the equator in Morocco) and a Mexican eatery as well (that’s across the Atlantic and a challenge to anybody’s sense of African geography). But, in so many other ways, the place tried to be “authentic” (if that is the right term in the midst of Las-Vegas style artificiality). In the reception area, you stepped on mosaic stones depicting lions and giraffes. A giraffe greeted us as we entered our room, and the hand towels in the bathroom area had been folded in such a way that they resembled, albeit faintly, the front and trunk of an elephant (see images below).



After spending the night with those exotic creatures watching over us, it was thus heartening on the next morning that we encountered a few familiar faces from the Eastern Hill: Sheryl Monkeliem and Nathan Rinnert, manning the booth that had been set up for Mansfield Music (and paid for) and answering questions about a really good music program in the hills of Pennsylvania. Mansfield Means Music (the old slogan) had been turned into MUSIC begins with MU—I can live with that change.



And then things picked up on Thursday, April 7, and it was awe-inspiring. But first, Nathan Rinnert introduced the Concert Choir, and he used the occasion to also announce the winners of various honors bestowed on Mansfield students in the last few days (and he noted that 3 of the 4 being honored had been travelling by bus to the Poconos to attend the conference): Sophomore Jared Vamvakias, Junior Patrick Murphy, and Senior Jessica Nistad. Here is his Introduction:

Good afternoon! I am Nathan Rinnert, chair of the music department at Mansfield University – a school that will soon be integrated with programs and operations at Bloomsburg and Lock Haven Universities, where I will assume the chair position in the Department of Music, Theater, & Dance.

Because of my 19-year background at Mansfield, I may be perceived as biased but, in this case, I am not afraid of introducing the Mansfield University Concert Choir under the direction of Peggy Dettwiler with the well-deserved and thus necessary accolades.

The Concert Choir’s impressive credentials are listed on the printed program handed out to you at the door, and I do not need to repeat them here in detail. It is a distinguished list of Gold Medals, Gold Certificates, and top rankings they received in international choral competitions in Europe and in the USA. The Choir has performed at ACDA, MENC, NCCA, PMEA and other “capital letters” conferences, both national and regional; and they have sung repeatedly in New York’s Carnegie Hall, the last time as the chorus in a gala performance of Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*, for which the group was praised in *The New York Times*.

Dr. Dettwiler’s credentials are no less impressive. She has been the Director of Choral Activities at Mansfield University for 32 years and, through her dedication and hard work, has brought our choral ensembles to an amazing level of artistry and perfection. Without ignoring the ongoing contributions of the outstanding music faculty at Mansfield, the many honors bestowed on the Concert Choir can, and must, also be attributed to Peggy. She is particularly proud of having received the Elaine Brown Award by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the ACDA and of having been recognized, in 2016, as an “Honored Artist of the American Prize.” And yes, she has been President of ACDA Eastern Region and organized the Region’s Rochester Conference in 2020 and brought it to a successful conclusion—a few days before the pandemic hit and choral activities came to a standstill because of the lockdown. Granted, choral activities were continued during the last two years, but under tight regulations not always conducive to singing. It is thus a pleasure to see ensembles travel again, and this is the first time this group has been heard outside of its home territory.

The first four pieces will be performed as a “set” with brief recitations from choir members as transitions. Dr. Dettwiler would like for me to ask you to refrain from applause until after the fourth selection, *Elijah!*, when she will make it clear that the set of pieces has concluded.

Please join me in welcoming the Mansfield University Concert Choir under the direction of Peggy Dettwiler.

And then they sang their hearts out.





Madame Conductor even walked away from her control center (see the stand with score vacated and Peggy Dettwiler somewhere to the left). In other words, she could entrust the end of the finale to the students. The standing ovation was spontaneous.

One of the landmarks of the Kalahari Resort in Pennsylvania (besides giraffes, rhinos, lions, and other creatures) is a sculpture of a gorilla, strategically placed near one of the elevator areas in the building. Rumor has it that Madame Conductor fell for the photo op (in a former life she was riding horses), but, despite strenuous efforts, your editor has not been able to locate the image. Instead, let's show an image I picked up on Facebook of five students having fun riding the "beast."

I left by bus a few minutes after the history-making performance in the Poconos. (Others stayed behind to attend other events.) Before the bus departed the Kalahari Resort in the midst of rain and fog, leaving elephants and giraffes behind, Ted Perry, our bus driver, grabbed the microphone and said (and I am quoting here from an email Carson Witherite sent out immediately after): "As your bus driver I can't read music notes, but [and here his voice broke up, but he continued] clapping will never be the same." The Mansfield University Concert Choir made a difference. And the ensemble is looking forward to be chauffeured again by such an appreciative bus driver.



Jenny Andrianos, Hanna Worthington, Rachael Karwowski, Nicole Orlando, and Emma Criswell



**Fan Mail**

A beautiful message reached Peggy Dettwiler from **Elizabeth Nance-Coker**, a former friend in San Antonio: "I remember fondly our days at University of Texas in San Antonio and wanted to reach out to share how much I enjoy listening to your Mansfield University choral recordings. I am a pastor now, and each week I listen to your albums while writing sermons. It anchors mt to be surrounded by choral music I love, performed with such beauty, led by one I remember so fondly. Thank you for making beautiful music!"

And another one with a subject heading "Mansfield in Good Hands" from **Ron Sprunger** (taught at MU in the 1970's): I was overwhelmed by the newsletter attached to your email. Through your leadership at Mansfield a higher level of excellence is being reached. -- While some might still speak of the "good old days" you're working to create the "good new days." Congratulations to the editor of the newsletter. -- Several years ago, I contacted someone at Mansfield saying that it would be nice to hear about what's happening at the school where I taught for seven years. As a result, I'm receiving news about the school. -- I lost my position during the retrenchment back in the 70's. When one door closes, another opens. My focus has shifted from music to ministry through music. I earned a Doctor of Music Ministry degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, studying conducting with Dr. John Dickson and organ with Dr. Boe Jones. I then had the privilege of teaching at Ashland Theological Seminary for 15 plus years. Incidentally, Dr. Dickson was convinced of the value of eurhythmics. Robert Fountain, our choral conductor at Oberlin was convinced of the value of eurhythmics as he observed the work of Inda Howland, a dynamic teacher, Dr. Roland Blackly, choral person at Ashland University is also an advocate. He and I both studied at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh where we received level one certification."

## Administrative News

Dear MU Family,

From the beginning of the integration process, we have committed to retaining each university's historic name and identity. Earlier today, the PASSHE Board of Governors approved the name Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania to represent the integrated entity for Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield Universities.

The use of Commonwealth University will be used exclusively for accreditation and contractual purposes only. Our new combined entity name will not be public-facing. It will enable us to legally and compliantly become one entity while maintaining our strong public-facing brands in our regions and beyond. The integrated university name was developed through research and with input from students, alumni, faculty, staff, trustees, the community, and prospective students and their families.

Each campus will continue to use its respective location name – Bloomsburg University, Lock Haven University, and Mansfield University – maintaining the use of the word University, our logos, colors, mascots, and athletic representations of Huskies, Bald Eagles, and Mounties. Diplomas will prominently display either Bloomsburg University, Lock Haven University, or Mansfield University at the top of the document according to each graduate's location of choice.

Together, Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield invoke the power of three, which will create a higher education experience, the likes of which, is not possible without integration. We will preserve the founding principles of each institution and continue to provide vibrant, on-campus student experiences while serving as pillars of our three communities. This is a bold investment in the people and communities of Pennsylvania. We are positioning ourselves for growth, increasing access to students across the commonwealth, and meeting the economic and workforce needs across our regions, the state and beyond.

Each campus will continue to retain a full complement of athletic programs and leadership is working with the NCAA to confirm this path in the spring. Athletic logos, colors, mascots, and traditions will not change.

Existing alumni associations and foundations will remain separate and continue to support their respective campuses. Donors can continue to designate funds to support programs or a campus of their choosing.

Thank you to all of our colleagues and supporters from BU, LHU, and MU who have worked tirelessly to get us to this point and will continue to endeavor to launch one university. You are owed a debt of gratitude for your tireless contributions in service to our campus communities, and most importantly our students.

For more information about the integration process, please visit our university integration page at [mansfield.edu/integration](https://mansfield.edu/integration).

**Bashar W. Hanna, Ph.D.**

*Interim President*

Mansfield University

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Dear Music Students,

I am writing to quell some rumors that seem to be floating around.

All music courses and ensembles that are listed in the online registration system – music courses that are offered on an annual (or regular) basis – will continue to be offered for the 2022-23 school year. We do have three music faculty who are retiring at the end of this semester – Drs. Monkeliën, Murphy, and Jacobsen. **We are working to fill their positions and all of their teaching load.** It is likely that the new faculty members will have different assignments than the retiring faculty, as my some of the current music faculty. It is difficult to find, for example, someone to hire who has specific specialties in orchestra, jazz band, string bass, and music education, as Dr. Jacobsen does. But all courses and ensembles will be covered. You will see new faces (or, old faces) in some settings – Dr. J won't conduct the orchestra or jazz band, Dr. Monkeliën won't work with the Mansfieldians or musical theater production, Dr. Murphy won't teach clarinet/saxophone. New folks, or faculty you already know, will be in those positions.

We expect that this will hold true for 2023-24 (and beyond) as well. Fall 2023 will probably see the implementation of our “new” music curriculum for the integrated institution (with Bloomsburg and Lock Haven). Some courses will change slightly (for the better), but all will be offered. We also expect that all ensembles will continue to be offered.

Our music faculty has remained consistent for many years – we have not had a lot of retirements nor new hires for quite a while. Three full-time faculty retiring at once is a lot, but it has happened before (most recently, 2013). Change is inevitable. Change is necessary. Change can be seen as an opportunity for progress.

The faculty hiring process is a long process. Candidates for the Music Education Coordinator position are going through phone interviews with the search team this week. We expect to have candidates on campus within the next few weeks for live interviews (and opportunities for you to meet them). The same will hold true for other positions we are working to fill.

Rest assured that the MU Music Department is working hard to secure your education opportunities.

Let me know if you have questions.

Best,  
**Nathan D Rinnert, PhD**  
Professor of Music  
Music Department Chair  
(570) 662-4739

## News from Students and Alums

In a concert entitled “Greetings from Japan,” **Michael Deshield** (class of 2020) recently sang the role of Pinkerton in Act 3 of Puccini’s *Madame Butterfly* in a concert by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra (other students from Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music, where he studies, participated as well). Congratulations are in order because this has been a great opportunity.

News reached us that **Michael Randall** (class of 2001) got married in a private ceremony in Charleston, South Carolina. We know that his husband’s first name is Ridmal and that he is from Sri Lanka. A visit to Michael’s home area is planned, and we are eager to hear more about the happy couple pictured right. For the time being, verbal congratulations and well wishes are in order.



The pictures below show **Cassie Zinkan** (class of 2020) in the Eastman School’s Kilbourn Hall in Rochester, NY, giving her recital for the MM degree in Performance and Literature. It was a captivating performance, with a repertory that stretched from the Baroque (notice the harpsichord in the first image) to anything later on (notice the piano in the second picture). About the same time, she also performed in an Eastman Opera production of Cavalli’s *La Calisto* (a Baroque opera, c. 1650). Madame Conductor and yours were committed to go to Rochester but inclement weather (and ecological considerations) prevailed to give modern technology a chance and observe both recital and opera on Zoom. Clearly, Cassie Zinkan is on a roll. Her voice is expanding beyond what she delivered in Mansfield with Sarah Polinski. (We certainly still remember Eriks Ešēnvalds’s captivating duet for two sopranos that awed audiences.)



## Faculty News

**Peggy Dettwiler** (at MU since 1990) recently conducted a regional chorus festival in Pennsylvania’s Northeast corner that was given ample coverage in the press in the Scranton area. These PMEA festival—this one being organized by Gina Pascolini (MA in Choral Conducting, 2006 or 2007)—are always a great opportunity to connect with music teachers and some of the best budding musical talents among high school students. The picture shows Dettwiler in one of the rehearsals during the festival. In a letter to the singers, she reminisces about the days of music making at Valley View High School:



Dear Region IV Singers,

A week ago, we gathered at Valley View High School to rehearse and perform a concert together. I want you to know how much I enjoyed working with you and how thrilled I was with your performance! There were many “wow” moments (aesthetic experiences!), a term we discussed during those two days. I also want to acknowledge our two piano accompanists, Nathaniel Worrell and Andrew Nicholls! Their passion, technique, accuracy, and attention to details were truly exceptional and contributed to your outstanding performances of “Swell the Full Chorus,” “Music Down in My Soul,” and “The Awakening!”

These PMEA festivals are huge undertakings, and, of course, are beyond the scope of a regular teacher’s curricular assignment. My deepest thanks to your teachers and to Mrs. Pascolini and her staff for their preparation and hard work!

I hope you remember this festival as you continue your journey with music in your life. We at Mansfield University are available to help you sustain this passion through our music offerings including our summer camps. Note the links below.

All good wishes for many more “aesthetic experiences!”  
Peggy Dettwiler



That must be Youngsuk Kim in the rain in Spain.

**Youngsuk Kim** (Professor Emeritus at Mansfield University) seems to enjoy his retirement, even though it left him standing in the rain in Spain. He wrote: “Hello, we arrived in Aranjuez, Spain. Joaquin Rodrigo loved this city and is buried here. I had chance to visit his resting place at Cemetery of San Isabel, Aranjuez. We will leave for Andalusia tomorrow. Stay safe & healthy!” But a few weeks later, he was sighted in Mansfield conducting the Mansfieldians during the Reunion and receiving a plaque honoring him for his work at Mansfield University. (See the report above on the Reunion in early April.) It seems that the world traveler still has strong ties to colleagues and students, current and former, on the Eastern Hill.

(see report above), concluding with Phil Mattson’s arrangement of “I’ll be Seeing You,” are evidence of her continuing commitment to musical theatre and vocal jazz at Mansfield. And yes, she received a plaque during the Reunion as well. The next issue of *Hear the Voices* will have a centerfold story recognizing her contributions to the well-being of music at Mansfield University and the region.

**Sheryl Monkeliën** (at MU since 2001) is retiring at the end of the academic year, but she shows no signs of slowing down in her last semester at Mansfield University. A spectacular production of *Hello Dolly* she put together with Peter Davis and others earlier in the semester (see photo spread above) and preparing several Mansfieldians Reunion ensembles for a concert during the Reunion early in April

**Todd Ranney** (at MU since 2010) gave a voice recital in Steadman Theatre on February 21 with Bob Mollard at the piano (the Mollard of Mollard’s conducting batons, who also played the Möller Organ in an afternoon recital the day before featuring mostly French organ music). Invisible to the Mansfield community, Ranney directed an opera in Ohio at the end of March and early April.



**Alissa Rose** (at MU since 2009) was seen on March 27 in a Steadman Theatre concert with her colleague Christine Moulton (flute) and the Manhattan Contemporary Chamber Ensemble (Urara Mogi, violin; Scott Gerhardt, clarinet; Richard Auldon Clark, viola and the mastermind of the group; Gary Schultheis, bassoon). The program featured unusual vocal and instrumental combinations in works by Hoffmeister, Daniel Dorff, and Richard Auldon Clark.

# A Gift from Ron Sprunger to Alums Returning for the Reunion

## Making Memories that Last

People and places and things of the past  
Linger as mem'ries, connections that last  
As we pass them along through story and song,  
Lifting our hearts as we travel along.

Mem'ries are made as we take time to savor  
Friendships and kindness, fine foods and their flavor;  
These moments we cherish can be a real treasure,  
And words can't express the worth of such pleasure.

Let's seize the moments at hand,  
Live, love, and learn while we can.  
We're never too old new mem'ries to make;  
Sometimes we'll give, sometimes we'll take.

We'll look to the future, remember the past,  
But live in the present, making mem'ries that last.  
May these moments that linger with fam'ly and friends  
Inspire them to love, inspire them to learn,

Inspire them to live till their journeys end.

Ron Sprunger 2009

## Across the Years

As we gaze across the years that have passed,  
We tend to remember the things that last,  
Like mem'ries of people who took time to share  
Their love with us, showing they care.

Our Christmas tree reminds us of friends  
Through symbols of love that knows no end:  
Mem'ries of caring and sharing and song,  
Sometimes through tears when things had gone wrong.

Love is the gift that will never end,  
Not the amount of the money we spend.  
Let's focus on lives, investing in them.  
Then, as they look back through years that have passed,  
They will savor the mem'ries of moments that last.

Ron Sprunger 2014