

Rehearsal Notes
2018 ACDA 7 - 8 SSA Honor Choir
November 17th, 2018

Hello! First of all, congratulations on being selected for this year's 7 - 8 SSA Honor Choir! What an amazing opportunity! I want to tell you that I feel the same way. To have the opportunity to work with some of the best 7th and 8th grade singers from all over the state of Minnesota is exciting and overwhelming all at the same time. I promise you I will do everything I possibly can to see that you have the mountain top experience that singing in an honor choir should be. I ask that you do the same.

In the paragraphs below, I have written a little something for you to think about as you are rehearsing our music. I believe in all of this music. They are quality pieces, and they each have moments of magic.

"Bonse Aba" - Multi-Cultural

"All who sing with the spirit have a right to be called the children of God". Folk song from Zambia, Africa - look it up and find out where it is! As I am sure you have experienced by this point in your singing career, singing a song in another language adds the extra challenge of mastering the text. This edition has a great phonetic pronunciation guide on pg. 2 - spend some time on it. No worries! - the words are very singable! In the spirit of the "call and response" tradition, the opening call should be a solo or a small group. We will finalize that decision on the 17th, but if you are a soloist, be prepared to go for it! After the opening (through m. 28) every section has a chance to be the caller or leader - S II in m. 29, S I in m. 37 and Alto in m. 61. When it's your turn to lead be ready! The last 3 "Mu-ya-ya-ya" (starting in m. 69) should build in intensity (*mezzo forte* to *forte* to *fortissimo*) with a *subito piano* in m. 81 and a quick *crescendo* to a *fortissimo* ending.

"I Will Sing" - Classical Style

If I can make it through this song without crying, we will be lucky. I cry just about every time I rehearse it. The power and beauty of these lyrics combined with the exquisite melodic lines and harmonies touch my soul. I hope you will feel the power of them also. Think through your own personal experiences with music and come able to share some of them with us. The melodic line winds it's way through the three sections of the choir - make sure you know when you have the melody and bring it out. I would like to add a *rallentando* on the bottom of pg. 11 and a *fermata* to the third "sing" in m. 59. This piece will be exquisite!

"Bring Me Little Water, Sylvie" - Folk Song

Get ready to have fun with this one! Please read the Performance Notes on the last page of the octavo and learn a bit about Huddie William Ledbetter. We will be using the diction alterations mentioned in the performance notes. We will also be using a clapping pattern that can be found on youtube at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTC_zb2LriA

Composer Moira Smiley takes you through the pattern that we will be adding. Please come on the 17th being able to perform the pattern while singing. We will be using the solos on pg. 7 and 8 if we find someone in the choir to be willing and able!

"My Favorite Things" - Musical Theater

From the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, *The Sound Of Music*. Julie Andrews, who played Maria in the Academy Award winning film version of the musical said of this song, "I think, personally 'My Favorite Things' was the song I loved to sing the most. The lyrics were so great and it was so evocative. Everything one sang one could see the picture - brown paper packages, raindrops on roses and things like that." My favorite part of the song is the canon that enters on pg. 8 (thank you arranger Mac Huff!) One change to the octavo - we are going to keep the canon on "Bright copper kettles", so Sop. 1 do not sing in measures 91 and 92 - come in at m. 93. Same treatment for "Doorbells and sleigh bells" on pg. 11, Sop. 1 do not sing at 113 or 114, come in at 115.

"I'm Goin' Up A Yonder" - Gospel

The composer of this piece, Walter Hawkins (1949-2010) was an American gospel singer and pastor. He started singing with his brother in a youth chorale and ended up as a Grammy and Dove award winner for his own compositions and the recordings of his church's choir. "Yonder" is a powerful piece of music that starts very simply and is a long, continuous crescendo to a dramatic finish. Things to watch for are maintaining pure vowel shapes through the sustained pitches and stretching the triplets to their full duration. We will start this piece in two equal sections, divide into four sections at m. 40, and move to our original SSA sections at m. 58.

