



Dear PMEA All-State Member,

Congratulations on being selected for the 2026 PMEA All-State Chorus! This is a tremendous achievement and a testament to your hard work, dedication, and musicianship. You are among the finest musicians in Pennsylvania, and I am honored to serve as your conductor through this part of your journey. During our time together, we will explore the vast capabilities of the voice to perform diverse repertoire authentically and expressively.

About Me:

A native of Pennsylvania, I am currently the Director of Choral Studies at Western Illinois University and the Artistic Director and founder of the professional ensemble *withonevoice*. Previously, I taught middle school and high school for seven years in PA and NJ. My work over the last two decades has been focused on bridging the gap between voice science and choral artistry. I believe that everyone has a beautiful voice and that my role is to help you discover the full breadth of yours, from traditional classical to contemporary and musical theatre styles. My goal is for you to leave this festival not just as better ensemble singers, but as more informed and capable vocal athletes!

Preparedness:

We have a shortened time together during this festival, so it is of the utmost importance that you are prepared thoroughly in advance and at least 90% memorized before the festival. As you will see, much of this program has to be performed from memory. This will ensure we can spend time exploring together to create a truly expressive and meaningful process and performance for you and the audience.

Theme: “Our Time Together”

The repertoire I have selected explores shared human experiences and dreams along with the power of human connection. It celebrates diverse composers of various cultures, races, sexual orientations, genders, and time periods, unified by a program that challenges your vocal flexibility.

Program Order and Notes:

1. Father Thunder (Pērkontēvs) – Laura Jēkabsone

School of Music

College of Fine Arts and Communication, Browne Hall 122, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390

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- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)
- **About the Piece:** This is a Latvian folk song setting where the composer uses the choir to create sounds of storms and thunder. Pērkontēvs is the Baltic god of thunder.
- **Composer Info:** Laura Jēkabsone is a Latvian composer, singer, and artistic director of the vocal group Latvian Voices.
- **Translation:** "Flashes. The sun has been crying for three years, gathering golden branches. Father Thunder has nine sons."
- **IPA Transliteration:**
 - *nin* [nin], close to the "n" right away
 - *Ā* [a], *Ē* [e], *o* [o], roll "r", "n, t, d, s, z" are all dental
 - *Zibināja* [zibinaja]
 - *Trīs grašiņi saule raud.* [tri:s grašiņi saule raud]
 - *zelta zarus lasīdam'.* [zelta zarus lasidam]
 - *Pērkona tēvam deviņi dēli:* [pæ:rkona tæ:vam dæviņi dæ:li]
- **Specific Notes:** Read all composer notes in the piece and follow the recording for voice quality and body percussion as closely as possible. When looking at the TB line when it is combined on one staff, follow the stems for part assignments. Tenors stems up, and baritone/bass stems down. **Must perform from memory.**
- **Voice Quality:** We will explore the brightness that we will call twang in this piece. There are some speech/holler/belt sounds as well. Don't be afraid to explore these along with the recording. There is also various lip popping, breathy whispers, and laughs.

2. Swifter than Flame – Elaine Hagenberg

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)
- **About the Piece:** Hagenberg's setting of Carl John Bostelmann's poetry is an exploration and discovery of the unknown. It captures the energy of moving from the "upward into the night."
- **Composer Info:** Elaine Hagenberg is an incredible American composer known for her exquisite writing for the voice.
- **Specific Notes:** You will have to move through the "sw" consonants quickly and before the beat to keep the rhythmic momentum of the piece steady. The final page has an "optional soprano solo" at m. 66 and 71. This will be all soprano 1 unless we need to rebalance in rehearsal. Soprano 1s, please also know the soprano 2 note "F" just in case.
- **Voice Quality:** Listen to the recording and try to match the quality and expression you hear.

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3. Ubi Caritas – Maurice Duruflé

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)
- **About the Piece:** Based on Gregorian chant, this motet is a masterpiece and staple of 20th-century French sacred music. It speaks to the unity found in charity and love.
- **Composer Info:** Duruflé was a French composer and organist whose work is famous for its connection to ancient plainchant.
- **Text & Translation:**

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
(Where charity and love are, God is there.)
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
(Christ's love has gathered us into one.)
- **IPA Transliteration:**

[ˈubi ˈkaritas et ˈamɔr ˈdeus ˈibi est]
[kɔŋgreˈgavit nɔs in ˈunum ˈkristi ˈamɔr]
[tɪmɛˈamus et aˈmɛmus ˈdeum ˈvivum]
[ɛxulˈtemus et in ˈipsɔ jukunˈdemur]
[et ex ˈkɔrde diliˈgamus nɔs sinˈtʃɛrɔ]
- **Specific Notes:** Pay attention to text stress when learning this piece. Use the stress markers in the IPA transliteration above to help you. We will push and pull tempo (rubato) throughout. **Must perform from Memory.**
 - Breath marks
 - m. 4, breath after “est”
 - m. 8, breath after “est”
 - m. 11, breath after “amor”
 - m. 14, breath after “amor”
 - m. 18, breath after “mur”
 - m. 21, breath after “vivum”
 - m. 24, breath after “cero”
 - m. 27, breath after “cero”
 - m. 28, breath after “cero”
 - m. 32, breath after “est”
- **Voice Quality:** This will be sung in what I call a choral-cry recipe with slimmer vibrato. Try to match the warmth and “cry” you hear in the recording.

4. Look Back on Time – Matthew Lyon Hazzard

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)

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- **About the Piece:** Weaving two Emily Dickinson poems together, Hazzard composes reflecting on the passage of time in life and how “our actions shape the future.”
- **Composer Info:** Matthew Lyon Hazzard is an LGBTQ composer who bridges popular styles with classical choral writing through storytelling.
- **Specific Notes:** This is by far the most challenging, and yet rewarding, piece on the program, and the text is profound. I challenge you to be memorized on this piece before we meet so that we can work on expression and tuning. Sopranos, we will assign a few of you to the high “C” on page 9. We will only need a few voices on that note. Be sure to practice placing the internal and ending consonants on the next note or rest. Also, take note of the dotted rhythms and be rhythmically accurate with those in your practice.
- **Voice Quality:** Overall, this piece will need similar choral-cry as the previous pieces but attention to smooth onsets forward-momentum.

5. Deep River – Moses Hogan

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)
 - There is not a wonderful recording of this on YouTube. You can use the above link for reference of the piece, but you can use [this link](#) for reference on the voice quality and style.
- **About the Piece:** This is a contemporary setting of a classic spiritual that explores themes of longing and transition.
- **Composer Info:** Moses Hogan was a world-renowned African American composer and arranger best known for his revitalized settings of concerted spirituals.
- **Specific Notes:** We will spend time on tuning these “jazzy” chords and working on the overall voice quality in this piece. In the three-part splits as seen throughout, lower voices will split the bottom two notes. So, A1 will take the middle note and A2 the bottom. All sopranos on the top. Similar for TBs, the Baritones will take the middle note, bass bottom, and all tenors on top. However, at m. 28, beat one, S1 will be on top note, S2 will be on middle note “C” and all altos will be on lower note. Then beat 3 is a four-part split, and beat 1 of m. 29 is again SSA.
- **Voice Quality:** We will use a full opera recipe in this piece as heard in the recording above.

6. Flight – Craig Carnelia, arr. Ryan Murphy

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)

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- **About the Piece:** Originally composed as a vocal solo and then arranged for Treble choir, this piece is finally arranged for SATB! It describes the metaphor of flight as finding one's path and dreams.

- **Composer Info:** American Musical Theatre songwriter Craig Carnelia's work arranged by Ryan Murphy.
- **Specific Notes:** This piece is all about the text and text painting with the melody and expressive nuance. Be ready for a lot of play with rubato. **Must be memorized.**
- **Voice Quality:** We will explore a musical theatre mix, cry, speech voice quality.

7. Hope – Zachary J. Moore

- **Recording:** [YouTube Link](#)
- **About the Piece:** Inspired by the relief of hearing a child's heartbeat during an ultrasound after a previous miscarriage, this piece captures excitement, tension, and hopeful relief.
- **Composer Info:** Zachary J. Moore is an American composer and conductor currently serving as an editor for Hal Leonard.
- **Specific Notes:** This up-tempo piece includes shaker and djembe accompaniment and can easily “rush.” Try to practice this piece with a metronome that keeps your pulse the same in the faster sections. This is especially true of the clapping/stomping sections. Sopranos, we will again assign a couple rows of soprano 1s to sing the optional solo/duo parts on pp. 9-10 like in the previous piece. This will not be a solo/duo. **Must be memorized.**
- **Voice Quality:** We will use a traditional classical choral quality throughout with emphasis on rhythmic energy and text.

Please spend time with these recordings and prepared notes and be as memorized as possible. Our time together is short, but I know it will be extremely meaningful. I cannot wait to see you all in our shared zoom meeting and rehearsal room, and I can't wait to be back home in PA!

Best,
Dr. Brian J. Winnie
Conductor, PMEA All-State Chorus
Director of Choral Studies, WIU

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