

CONDUCTING. SMI 2018

Introductory Session

Wednesday, July 11: 3:00-5:00, Silver Maple (7)

Dr. Zhanna Lehmann
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The discussion will involve the following topics:

1. Roles and responsibilities of the choir director. The statement of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians that will be handed out to participants, articulates clearly the expectations set for a church choir director. However, the reality may present difficulties to perform these expected responsibilities. The discussion will be based on possible issues and situations that directors may face with the church choirs, and how to approach them.
2. Roles and responsibilities of the choir members. This will be also based on a well-stated document issued by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. The similar discussion on productive approaches for resolution of issues connected with choir members will take place.
3. Rehearsal strategies for the choir director:
 - a. What is the best approach in scheduling rehearsals.
 - b. An efficient method for a score study and analysis. How to create a rehearsal plan that anticipates musical issues – what to look in the score and how to work it out during a rehearsal. During the session an examination of a few new scores of music presented during the SMI will be offered as an example of score study.
 - c. How to adjust a score for your choir (transposition and arrangement techniques).
4. Vocal techniques in the choir: a few ideas that make a big impact.

Conducting I

Thursday, July 12: 10:00-12:00, Silver Maple (7)

Friday, July 13: 11:00-1:00, Silver Maple (7)

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These conducting sessions are designed to meet the needs of participants who would like to develop basic conducting techniques. The following fundamental elements will be practiced during the session:

1. Body posture and coordination, arms and hands position, conducting planes. Why do conductors need to practice it on a regular basis and how it is connected with breathing and singing.
2. Elementary patterns (2/4, 3/4, 4/4) and their utilization for conducting articulation (legato and staccato).
3. Types of gestures:
 - a. preparatory gestures – are there really many or just one? Which to use and why, how it affects a choir to sing.
 - b. Effects of horizontal and vertical gestures.
 - c. Cutoffs: the final and internal. Methods of cutoffs and their utilization. Which would work the best?
4. Tempo and dynamic issues.
5. Non-verbal communication:
 - a. Back to the posture discussion: what does your posture communicate to your singers?
 - b. Eye contact.

- c. Cues and signs: develop your own or use standard ones (there will be given the examples for such commands as “watch me,” “listen each other,” “tune,” “no breath - make a long phrase,” “breath support,” and etc.);
6. Typical mistakes in conducting: cause and affect (ictus and rebound issues; arm or wrist motion; confusion of planes, and others).

Conducting II

Thursday, July 12: 2:00-4:00, Silver Maple (7)
Saturday, July 14: 10:00-12:00, Silver Maple (7)

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At the next stage participants will refine their conducting skills, focusing on areas such as interpretation and style.

- Tuning in the beginning of a piece
- Phrasing and breathing
- Intonation issues – what to watch and anticipate
- Choral blend and ensemble
- Diction and articulation
- How to conducting reciting elements in choral pieces

Part of this session will focus on the new music pieces presented during the SMI. This will provide conductors with necessary knowledge of how to introduce this music to their choirs and how to conduct it. An introduction of the new music from a conducting perspective will include:

1. Practical recommendation for score study and analysis of possible musical issues;
2. Conducting these pieces during the session.
3. How to make any efficient musical arrangement of these pieces for the particular choir's needs and how it may help for a better choir sound (such arrangements as transposition, re-voicing, and reducing parts – which one to choose).

There will be practical opportunities for all participants to conduct, ask and get consultation with their individual needs.