

MIDSUMMER NEWS



Fall 2014

The MMR Jazz Combo Experiment

This last summer we offered Jazz Combos as coached classes at MMR. The combos were small groups using multiple horns with piano, string bass, and drum rhythm section. Those participating generally gave the whole experience a big thumbs up; and those listening to Fermata Bar performances were enthusiastic. These groups were formed by Dan Williams (Brass, Wind and Percussion Coordinator) based on player request; none were pre-formed by the campers themselves. All in all, it was a great success.

For 2015, we will definitely offer campers the opportunity to schedule coached jazz combos in the afternoon sessions. We encourage interested campers to form groups prior to camp. Set your personnel, pick repertoire if possible, and meet if you can before camp. MMR has a large library of jazz combo music that includes trumpet, saxophone, and trombone parts with Piano, Bass and Drums. Titles and scanned copies of parts can be made available to pre-formed groups. Time to start planning ahead, and looking for the groove.



New Faculty

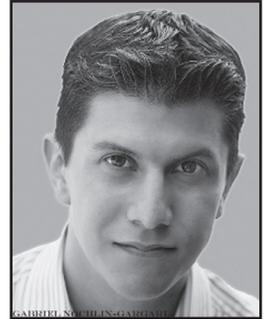
Laurel Wells is known for her work on both baroque and modern viola and violin. She has enjoyed an extensive



and eclectic musical life, performing in Hong Kong, Norway, Canada, and throughout the United States. For twenty years she played violin with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, between seasons earning Master's degrees in violin and viola from Indiana University. She studied chamber music at the Banff Centre in Canada and performed extensively under the guidance of the Vermeer Quartet. Laurel was a member of the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, holding the position of principal viola. She is currently a member of the Pacific Northwest Ballet orchestra and performs often with the Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera, and at the 5th Avenue Theater. In the early music world, Laurel plays with the Seattle Baroque Orchestra, the Pacific MusicWorks, and with her quartet, Opus 20, in the Gallery Concert Series. She has also participated in the Whidbey Island Music Festival, and the EMG's Early Music Fridays. Laurel has recorded with Seattle Baroque, for NPR, and the Wild Boar and Centaur labels.

Gabriel Gargari

loves being a part of the MMR faculty! It truly brings a sense of warmth and fun to his life. His mentor and teacher is Anthony Laciura, famed character tenor at the MET for 27 years, and star of HBO's "Boardwalk Empire" for 4 years. He currently studies with Dr. Kari Ragan and coaches with Dean Williamson. Gabe graduated from Western Washington University and the Manhattan School of Music. He joined the Seattle Opera Chorus in their productions of *Götterdämmerung*, *Rigoletto* and *The Tales of Hoffman*. Gabriel is the official tenor cover for Seattle Opera's educational outreach show *Our Earth – a cycle of three operas*. In February 2013, he made his Houston Grand Opera debut in a world premiere called *Past The Checkpoint* by David Hanlon, singing the lead role, and reprised it in September 2014. He has sung with Opera Omaha, Opera Iowa, Des Moines Metro Opera, Sarasota Opera, and Skagit Opera to name a few. Gabriel has worked with distinguished conductors such as Asher Fisch, Yves Able, David Neely, Victor DeRenzi, Tom Muraco, Laurent Pillot, and Dan Saunders from the MET.



Susan Hess, Bassoon, will re-join MMR 2015 after a year building a new house. Welcome Back, Susan.



On-Line Registration for MMR 2015 opens January 1, 2015 at www.musicalretreat.org

BOB SCANDRETT, THE MYSTICAL MASTER



I sat at the feet of Dr. Robert Scandrett, trying to discover the secret to his ability to mold any group of singers into a beautiful-sounding choir. I listened to the instructions he gave to his singers in rehearsal; I made copious notes about his spoken thoughts on music and musicality; I memorized the 'choral sound' he produced, using all of my knowledge to reproduce it with my own ensembles. I could not do it. The mystery of Scandrett's choral ideas can not be put into words - neither his words nor anyone else's words. His communication about vocal tone was imparted from his cells to the singers' cells. You could not 'catch the magic' unless you were in his presence.

Bob's rehearsals were generously peppered with information about the composer of the work in progress, the

intent of the music and the source of the musical ideas. Being in a rehearsal with Bob was a complete immersion in musical concepts and a goal of musical beauty. If you sang under Bob's leadership, you best be on your toes with all brain activity firing, because there was a lot to learn and absorb, and then produce. He was a no-nonsense conductor, but knew when to insert humor and moments of ease to relieve the intense hours of practice. He was a master at producing the most perfect choral sound I have ever experienced. His charismatic personality was magnetic but still demanding. His knowledge about music was only second to his energy and complete devotion to his art, never really retiring himself from learning and being productive.

We grieve his passing on Sunday, November 30th, 2014. I will always regard him as one of the world's great choral music masters. I cherish every moment I spent with him. He was my friend, my colleague, and my mentor. Midsummer was so fortunate to have him as principal conductor of our choral program for so many years. We grieve along with his wife Sandy as we remember a truly great man.

Just in case you think I'm exaggerating my comments about Dr. Scandrett,

here are some, just some, of his accomplishments:

He served as Director of Choral Activities at Western Washington University, Professor of Music, from 1967-1990. He conducted and prepared the Seattle Symphony Chorale from 1976-1989. He led the New Whatcom Choral Society in Bellingham for twelve years. He served as Minister of Music at the University Presbyterian Church from 1957 to 1967, regularly performing major works as well as preparing music for weekly services. He was associated with the German publishing house, Carus Verlag, as editor and consultant since 1985. He earned a Ph.D in musicology from the University of Washington and was a talented pianist, composer and arranger as well as an undisputed master conductor of choral ensembles. After retiring from Western, he became Music Director at University Congregational Church in Seattle, and planned many European tours with the choir in addition to all other musical activities at the church. He lived in Seattle but escaped to Whidbey Island for rest and relaxation when he and Sandy had time. I hope to be a chorister in his heavenly choir when my time comes to greet him once more.

~Jo-Ann Christen, MMR Founding Director and Conductor

BOB SCANDRETT, MUSICIAN, MENTOR, FRIEND

Earlier this week, I got the sad news that Dr. Robert (Bob) Scandrett had died. Ever since I have known Bob, he has seemed ageless – eager to meet new people; tackle new music; read as many books as he could get his hands on; enjoy a great meal; play Bach for hours; attend plays, Met auditions, opera; snow skiing for his 80th birthday, and on and on. He had a rare zeal for life which was infectious to all those around him. Bob set high goals for himself and those around him came along for the ride.

The first performance I heard of the WWU Chorale was in 1984 when I was a student at the University of Washington. The WWU choir sang double-choir pieces 50 or so feet apart with Bob standing in the middle. The ensemble was perfect, great intonation, phrasing, balance, and had

a seemingly endless pallet of colors and styles with the various pieces. That performance is in the top handful of choral performances that I will always remember. From that moment, I followed Bob's performances at WWU, and also the *a cappella* performances that he did with the Seattle Symphony Chorale.

After working together at MMR, I asked Bob to serve on the Board of Opus 7. He said that he really wanted to sing with us. A dream became real. Bob sang with us for many years and shaped the tenor section through his positive and constructive mentoring. He and I would get together for coffee and Bob and I would talk for hours about musical things, rehearsals, what things he thought I did well and what things he thought I needed to work on. I know that much of Opus 7's early success was due, in part, to his influence.

Bob was a master at moving on to the next thing or reinventing himself with new pursuits. He put everything that he had into his work – always making it seem fun – and when he had left his mark and thought the time was right, he moved on. This included retiring from WWU, the Seattle Symphony Chorale, directing at University Congregational Church, singing in Opus 7, and from being on the faculty at Midsummer Musical Retreat. The first time he tried to retire from MMR, I talked him into staying on for a few more years. He was concerned about a decline in his hearing. Actually, his pitch perception was impeccable, but he said that it was difficult for him to hear the "joking" from the back row of singers and therefore thought it time.

~Loren Pontén, MMR Festival Chorus Conductor

MMR REGISTRATION

MMR expects to accept everyone who completes their registration by March 1, 2015. The Steering Committee and the Registrar may exercise discretion in admitting campers as needed to be fair to all interested applicants and to meet the admission goals of MMR. They may take into account musical balance and leadership needs, registration date, "camper connections" and previous MMR participation, and may use a lottery to determine acceptance.

FEES FOR 2015

Partial Scholarships are available for those with financial need. Please contact us at midsummer@musicalretreat.org. Deadline for scholarship requests is May 1.

Registration: \$190

Paid by participants and "friends". Covers administrative costs, equipment and storage, promotions, facilities rental, golf cart service, licenses and permits, Fermata Bar and other social-event food, and miscellaneous general expenses.

Tuition: \$375

Paid by participants. Covers faculty expenses and fees, accompanists, piano tuning and rental, music purchase, rental, preparation and copying.

Board and Room charges are set by Whitman College.

Room: \$200 double occupancy; \$100 MMR surcharge for single. Mon. - Sat.

Meals:

Bon Appetit provides meals in the dining halls at Whitman College.

Special dietary needs can be accommodated.

- All applicants should register online. Contact MMR if you need help
- Registration will open January 1, 2015.
- An application is officially complete when the non-refundable \$150 deposit is paid online or when a received check is postmarked.
- Applicants submitting registrations after March 1 will be accepted at the discretion of the Admissions Committee.

If you have questions, please contact us at midsummer@musicalretreat.org or 1 800 471-2419.

Full Meal Plan \$235 — Monday dinner to Sunday breakfast including Saturday banquet.

Partial Meal Plan \$180 — lunches and dinners only, Monday night to Saturday banquet.

Deposit: A deposit of \$150 is required from all participants and "friends." This is NOT a separate fee and will be credited to your account.

Refunds: The deposit is non-refundable if applicant withdraws and fully refundable if applicant is not accepted by Midsummer Musical Retreat. Other fees may be refunded at the discretion of the Board.

- Applicants will be notified by postal mail of their program acceptance between March 15 and April 1.
- All fees are due June 1, 2015
- Wait-listed applicants will receive a full refund if they are not admitted. Wait-listed applicants must pay full fees on acceptance.
- Campers may purchase T-shirts and commemorative wine glasses when registering.
- Fermata Bar premium wines and beer/wine service may be purchased at Check In.

HOUSING OPTIONS

On-campus housing at Whitman for MMR 2015 will be in Prentiss, Douglas, Anderson, and College House. Only Prentiss has air-conditioning. There are lots of beds and lots of fans.

Assignment to Prentiss will be made by lottery after March 1 with email notifications by March 15.

Off campus housing is plentiful too.

Visit the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce website to explore the wide variety of housing available in Walla Walla. Indulge yourself at the Marcus Whitman or in a lovely B&B. Rent a house with several friends by searching for Vacation Housing. Stay at a nearby motel. Many national chains have facilities in Walla Walla.

Many motels serve breakfast to their guests as part of the room charge and we are offering a Partial Meal Plan (lunch and dinner only) for those who choose that option.

If you are considering a motel that is not close to the campus, remember that there is ample parking north of Boyer on the northwest corner of the Whitman campus.

The following motels are within easy walking distance of Whitman College and have authorized discounts for our campers:

The Red Lion Inn & Suites

(509) 529-4360

\$65.00 + tax 1 Queen

\$75.00 + tax 2 Queens or 1 King

Call (509) 529-4360 identify yourself as Midsummer Musical Retreat for discount. Handicap rooms available, WiFi, in-room refrigerator, pool and Roaring Start Breakfast Buffet.

Travelodge (509) 529-4940

\$55.00 + tax for 1 Queen

\$60.00 + tax for 2 Queens

Breakfast, Wifi, microwave, pool.

Book Jan 6, 2015 through April 30, 2015. Call (509) 529-4940. Ask for Hemal or Setal and identify yourself as Midsummer Musical Retreat.

2015 TIMELINE

January 1—On-Line registration opens

April 1—Preliminary Housing assignment and self-evaluation/elective forms mailed

May 1—Deadline for scholarship requests

June 1—All fees and self evaluation forms due

MIDSUMMER MUSICAL RETREAT

Midsummer Musical Retreat Society
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AUGUST 3rd – 9th 2015

Please set your email filter to accept mail from:
midsummer@musicalretreat.org and
registrar@musicalretreat.org
Please keep us informed of your current email address.

QUICK FACTS FOR MMR 2015

August 3rd–9th, 2015 at Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA

Call for information: 1-800-471-2419

general email: *midsummer@musicalretreat.org*

registration email: *registrar@musicalretreat.org*

Corporate address:

Midsummer Musical Retreat
12345 Lake City Way NE, PMB 255
Seattle, WA 98125

Registration address:

MMR c/o Jessica Croysdale, Registrar
12639 NW Ally Elizabeth Ct.
Portland, OR 97229

www.musicalretreat.org

Airfare Discounts

To use the Alaska/Horizon Air Discount, go online to <http://www.alaskaair.com/alaskaair.com> and input the Discount Code ECMV860 when searching for flights. MMR will help you with your ground transportation needs.



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Midsummer Musical Retreat is a non-profit organization and operates on income generated by fees and by donations from our supporters.

I'D LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION TO MMR

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Donations to MMR, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, are tax deductible.

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