

## Artists' Reports | September 2022

### Education

Joe, Samuel, and I have been meeting periodically for the past few months to go over Strategic Priority #4. Samuel has slowly been phasing out as he focuses on his new role of Production with the ensemble, and Joe and I have found eight colleagues both in the Twin Cities and nationally to conduct interviews that will hopefully shine a light on any adjustments that we need to make to our educational offerings. The focuses of these chats will revolve around our High School Residency program, as well as trying to discern any trends both locally and nationally about culture, development, or priority shifts in the choral landscape as we navigate our way out of the pandemic.

We have kicked off our first educational masterclass on our recent tour to Goshen, IN, working with the singers of Goshen College as well as Goshen High School in our "Telling A Story Through Song" masterclass. The students were incredibly receptive to what we had to say and had great energy throughout. The workshop offered them a really nice "Inside look" at Cantus' programming process. We finished the masterclass with a casual joint performance of "Finlandia" with their low-voice ensemble.

### Programming

#### MKI + Cantus

- The AD met our primary contact, Jarvis, in Massachusetts last season. He seems lovely and responds to us quickly and thoughtfully.
- MKI seems to understand and be onboard with the Cantus programming model. They appreciate the narrative-driven nature of our shows, and they've been helpful in offering thoughtful comments and observations about our programs.

#### 2022/23 Season

- **Holiday:** We recently programmed our Lessons & Carols show! Over half the songs will be content from our new album, *Into the Light*, and we continue to keep an eye on curating works from a diverse pool of composers with half the works being written by non-male identifying and/or POC composers. This season, we hope to work with spoken word artists and poet, [ShaVunda Brown](#). The AD hopes that Ms. Brown will read the poetry she curates for some, if not all, of our Twin Cities holiday shows. Joe Heitz is in process with Ms. Brown to move that forward.
- **Covers/Chamber instrumentalists:** We're getting an early jump on hiring instrumentalists for our covers (*Just My Imagination*) and chamber (*And All the Days Were Purple*) shows. We're currently looking for musicians to contract in hopes to have instrumentalists finalized before the end of the calendar year.
- **Collaboration:** We're still in nascent stages, but the AD is looking forward to being connected with Cantus to explore the collaboration's possibilities.

#### 2023/24 Season

- **Touring Show A:** This month, we will finalize our primary touring show for season 2023/24. We're internally calling it *Brave 2.0*, but the yet-to-be-named show is a fleshed out version of *Brave* from our 2020/21 virtual season.
- **Touring Show B:** We've selected *A New World* as our secondary touring show.
- **Holiday:** The AD has selected the stories for our Three Tales of Christmas show and is brainstorming song selections. We intend to have it completely programmed sometime next month.
- **Collaboration:** The AD will brainstorm artists later this month in hopes to find an exciting collaborator. Current considerations include but are not limited to Canadian Brass, Lorelei, and the Bach Society of MN.

#### 2024/25 Season

- **Touring Show A:** The AD selected a concept for our touring show - music and memory. The show (TBD title) will focus on the incredible connection we feel both emotionally and cerebrally to music - how music and music therapy can improve memory recall, lower stress, improve sleep, and reduce anxiety. The AD intends to have a fully realized show by the end of this November.