

2027 MADRIGAL & CHAMBER CHOIR FESTIVAL

MARCH 6, 2027
THE FOUNDRY CHURCH
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ADJUDICATORS



Brandon T. Cash is recognized for his dedication to artistic excellence and student success. Director of Choral Activities and Assistant Professor of Music at Mississippi Valley State University, a Historically Black College and University, he conducts the University Choir, Valley Singers, Men's Glee Club, and Women's Chorale. Since 2019, Dr. Cash has revitalized the choral program. Under his leadership, the Valley Singers earned their first-ever invitation to perform at the 2025 Mississippi Music Educators Association and Mississippi American Choral Directors Association State Conference. The University Choir also gained national recognition with a performance at the 2022 National Collegiate Choral Organization Conference. An active guest conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and presenter, Dr. Cash led the 2025 Mississippi All-State JH Treble Choir and has prepared ensembles for regional, national, and international performances. In March 2025, the Valley Singers competed in the 33rd International Verona Choral Competition in Italy and earned 2nd place (Silver Cup) in the mixed choir category. Dr. Cash's experience spans both K–12 and higher education, and he is known for guiding ensembles to high levels of artistry and performance. He currently serves on the National Board of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, Phi Mu Alpha, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and sings with The Greenwood Chorale.



Jo-Michael Scheibe chaired the Department of Choral and Sacred Music at the USC Thornton School of Music from 2008 to 2020 and holds the title Professor Emeritus of Choral Music. Professional Service includes National President of the American Choral Directors Association (2011-2013), Western Division President (1991-1993), National R & S Chair for Community Colleges (1980-1989, and Board Member, International Federation for Choral Music (2020-2023). His ensembles performed at seven national ACDA conventions, twice for the National Association for Music Education, the National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, and the World Choral Symposium in South Korea. He remains professionally active as a conductor and teacher with 2025 engagements in Taiwan, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Austria, and the U. S. Scheibe collaborated with Luciano Pavarotti, José Carreras, the Rolling Stones, Sir Elton John, the Eagles, and Kenny Loggins and prepared choruses for Helmuth Rilling, Sir Colin Davis, Michael Tilson Thomas, James Conlin, Carl St. Clair, Jeffrey Kahane, and Jamie Martin. Music publishers Walton, Colla Voce, Hal Leonard, Santa Barbara Music, and Pavane distribute the Jo-Michael Scheibe Choral Series internationally. Scheibe was one of fourteen US Fulbright Scholars in Ireland for 2023-2024, active throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland.



Tony Thornton is an award-winning educator, conductor, and author. He holds degrees from Westminster Choir College (B.M. in Music Education and Voice), Louisiana State University (M.M. in Choral Conducting), and the University of Arizona (D.M.A. in Choral Conducting and Historical Musicology). His principal mentors include Bruce Chamberlain, Joseph Flummerfelt, Kenneth Fulton, Frauke Haasemann, Margaret Hillis, and Donald Neuen. As a guest conductor and clinician, Thornton has led workshops and conducted more than 400 mixed, treble, and tenor/bass choirs across public and private schools, universities, churches, community organizations, and professional ensembles. His international career spans 25 states, Japan, and multiple European countries. He currently serves as President and CEO of Choral Planet and Artistic Director of the Sarteano Choral Workshop in Italy. Rooted in his early career as a singer, Thornton has performed as a tenor soloist in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He sang with the Westminster Choir at major international festivals, including the Spoleto Festival in Italy and the United States. His voice is featured on recordings with Leonard Bernstein, Riccardo Muti, Robert Shaw, Claudio Abbado, and Zubin Mehta. He performed as a member of the Grammy Award-winning Robert Shaw Festival Singers for six years.

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Richard Bjella is a distinguished conductor, clinician, and choral pedagogue. Artistic Director for the San Antonio Chamber Choir since 2014, he retired from Texas Tech University in 2017. Prior to TTU, Bjella spent 25 years as Director of Choral Studies at the Lawrence Conservatory of Music, known for the acclaimed performance at the 2009 National ACDA Convention. The Texas Tech University Choir has been celebrated for its excellence in Carnegie Hall, Orchestra Hall, at TMEA conventions, and at the 2013 ACDA Convention. Bjella has conducted and presented at ACDA national and regional conventions, at over 400 festivals and workshops in 34 states, including several appearances at Lincoln Center, Orchestra Hall, and Carnegie Hall and in SOUTH KOREA, ENGLAND, FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, COLUMBIA, HAITI, ESTONIA, AUSTRIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, and ITALY. University residencies include the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, the University of Central Oklahoma, Gordon College, Louisiana State University, the Lawrence University Conservatory, UW-Madison, Iowa State University, Baylor University, Abilene Christian University, and Wartburg College. Bjella conducted the 2025 Texas All-State Large School Mixed Choir at TMEA and the National ACDA Convention. Choral editor for the Hal Leonard Publications Richard Bjella Choral Series, he is renowned for sessions on programming for teachers.



Joey M. Martin is Professor of Music at Texas State University where he serves as the Director of Choral Activities and Associate Dean for the College of Fine Arts and Communication. He served as the National ACDA Repertoire and Resources Chair for College and University Choirs for seven years and continues his professional service with the National Collegiate Choral Organization. Dr. Martin has conducted numerous honor choirs and has presented master classes and clinics in seventeen countries, on six continents and throughout the United States. Under his direction, Texas State Chorale has toured internationally including much of Europe, South Africa, and China with performances for prestigious conferences such as TMEA, SWACDA, ACDA, and the International Kodály Festival. For over 35 years, Dr. Martin has been engaged in music ministry and is currently the director of music/organist at New Braunfels Presbyterian Church. He is a graduate of the Harvard University Management Development Program and the Texas Academic Leadership Academy. Honors include appointment to the Fulbright Specialist roster to represent the United States throughout the world and receiving the TCDA Award for Choral Advocacy. In his spare time, he dreams of culinary school.



Richard W. Robbins is Chorus Director and James Erb Choral Chair of the Richmond Symphony Chorus and Choral Editor for Oregon Catholic Press. He is active as a clinician, adjudicator, festival conductor, and church musician, with work spanning professional, university, school, community, and liturgical settings. Robbins made his Richmond Symphony Orchestra conducting debut in 2024 and has served as Chorus Master for the Opera Festival of Chicago since 2025. His international work has included residencies, performances, and collaborations in Poland, Lebanon, Portugal, and Spain, including work connected with Warsaw's Chopin Conservatory, Krakow's Academy of Music, the John Paul II Liturgical Institute, and Lebanon's Fayha National Choir. As an educator and scholar, Robbins has presented for ACDA, CMS, and NCEA, and his research and editions focus especially on American choral music of the 1930s and early Baroque Italian sacred music. He previously held a tenured faculty appointment at the University of Minnesota Duluth and taught at Shenandoah University, the University of Wisconsin–Superior, and the University of Houston. A native Texan and former Teacher of the Year at Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Robbins remains committed to teaching, mentoring conductors, and helping singers develop artistry through choral music.



Betsy Cook Weber is active internationally as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer. She taught Vocal Music K-12 for the first thirteen years of her career. She is the Madison Endowed Professor of Music Emeritus and former Director of Choral Studies at the University of Houston Moores School of Music. Under her direction, the University of Houston Concert Chorale was featured at numerous state and national conferences and won top prizes at prestigious competitions in Wales, France, Germany (2), Hungary, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands, and Austria. The Chorale enjoyed a world-wide ranking of #1 among choirs consisting of singers under the age of 24 and was listed in the top ten of Distinguished Collegiate Choirs. Director Emeritus of the Houston Symphony Chorus, during her tenure the chorus performed with some of the world's leading orchestral conductors and toured in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany. She is Artistic Director Designate of the Grammy Award-winning Houston Chamber Choir. Weber provides singers for Ars Lyrica and Mercury Houston, as well as for touring shows, including Josh Groban, Andreas Bocelli, and Eric Whitacre. In 2013, she became the thirteenth person and first woman to receive the TCDA's coveted Texas Choirmaster Award. Her degrees are from the University of North Texas, Westminster Choir College, and the University of Houston.



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