

ALABAMA

AMERICAN CHORAL
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION



21ST ANNUAL

***Collegiate Choral
Festival***

DR. JEFFERY AMES
DR. ALLEN HIGHTOWER
DR. DEANNA JOSEPH

GUEST CLINICIANS

Thursday, November 6, 2025

Brock Recital Hall (AM) & Reid Chapel (PM)
Samford University
Birmingham, Alabama

ABOUT THE CLINICIANS

Jeffery L. Ames serves as Director of Choral Activities and is a Full Professor within the School of Music at Belmont University. His prior appointments include Assistant Director of Choral Activities at Baylor University and Choral Director at Edgewater High School and Lincoln High School in Florida.

As a choral clinician, Dr. Ames has conducted senior and junior high school mixed and male choirs at the state and regional conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and the Music Educator's National Conference, including the inaugural Florida Male All-State Chorus, and annually at Carnegie Hall with the National Youth Choir. He has performed and guest conducted internationally in the countries of Costa Rica, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Estonia, South Korea, and the Republic of Ghana.

An accomplished accompanist, he has performed and collaborated with well-known conductors such as André Thomas, Jo-Michael Scheibe, Lynne Gackle, and Anton Armstrong. Additionally, he has collaborated with well-known celebrities such as Trisha Yearwood, Laura Bell Bundy, CeCe Winans, Connie Smith, Ricky Skaggs and The Whites, internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves, Michael W. Smith, Kathy Mattea, Sheryl Crow, and legendary rock band the Rolling Stones.

With a reputation as a distinguished and well-respected composer and arranger, Dr. Ames' music has been premiered by the Florida Music Educators Association, the Florida American Choral Directors Association, the Southern Division of ACDA, at National ACDA Conferences, and on the 2017, 2015, 2013, and 2011 telecasts of *Christmas at Belmont*. His compositions and arrangements are published with Colla Voce Music, Earthsongs, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and Walton Music Corporation.

Professor Ames holds the Ph.D. in Choral Conducting/Choral Music Education and a Master of Choral Music Education degree from The Florida State University, and a Bachelor of Music degree, with a double major in Vocal Performance and Piano Accompanying, from James Madison University. He holds the honor of being the first recipient of the National ACDA James Mulholland Choral Music Fellowship, as well as being the first African American to represent the United States in the ACDA International Conductor Exchange Program. He lives in Nashville with his lovely wife and three children.

Allen Hightower is a seventh generation Texan, and resides in McKinney, Texas with his wife, Dr. Kristin Hightower and their two daughters Caroline and Julianne. As the director of Choral Studies at the University of North Texas, Allen leads the master's and doctoral programs in choral conducting and oversees a comprehensive choral program of eight ensembles. Allen serves as the conductor of the UNT A Cappella Choir, and the UNT Grand Chorus which collaborates annually with the UNT Symphony Orchestra in performances of major choral-orchestral works. As a member of UNT's Early Music faculty, he leads the vocal ensemble *Vox Aquilae* and its artistic partner the UNT Baroque Orchestra.

Since arriving at UNT in 2016, the A Cappella Choir has received invitations to perform for the Texas Music Educators Association in 2020, the National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association in 2021, the Southwestern Division of ACDA in 2022, and the National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association in 2025. *Vox Aquilae* and the UNT Baroque Orchestra were featured at the January 2022 conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization. In June of 2025, the A Cappella Choir won First Prize at the Marktoberdorf 19th International Chamber Choir Competition in Germany.

As a teacher and conductor, Dr. Hightower has visited 30 states, Asia, and Europe. His students hold positions of leadership as choral conductors in public schools, colleges and universities, and churches and community choirs throughout the United States.

Prior to his appointment at UNT, Dr. Hightower held the Weston Noble Endowed Chair in Music at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he served as conductor of the renowned Nordic Choir and artistic director of *Christmas at Luther*. As Luther's Director of Choral Activities, he gave leadership to a choral program that included four conductors, six choirs, and over 530 singers. Under Dr. Hightower's direction, the Nordic Choir performed at the 2014 North Central Division of ACDA, recorded six compact discs, made annual concert tours throughout the United States, and toured Europe on two occasions.

From 2000-2010, Dr. Hightower served as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at Sam Houston State University. During his tenure, the SHSU Chorale toured Europe, performed for the 2007 National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association, the 2010 Southwestern Division of ACDA, and the 2003, 2006, and 2010 conventions of the Texas Music Educators Association. His high school teaching career included tenures at Klein High School in Spring, Texas and at Odessa Permian High School in Odessa, where he led the PHS *Kantorei* and Satin Strings in performance at the 1996 TMEA convention.

Outside of his work in the academic setting, Allen has served as the Artistic Director of the Houston Masterworks Chorus and Orchestra, leading an annual concert series of choral-orchestral masterworks. As a deeply committed church musician, he has served Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches in Texas, California, and Minnesota. He currently serves on the music staff of Stonebriar Community Church in Frisco, Texas, and has served as the Church Music Vice-President of the Texas Choral Directors Association. Dr. Hightower was as an Adjunct Professor of Conducting at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. Hightower served as the interim Chorus Director of the Houston Symphony Orchestra preparing the Chorus for conductors such as Juraj Valčuha, Itzhak Perlman, Matthew Halls, and Jeannette Sorrell.

As a conducting student of the Texas choral legend Bev Henson, Allen earned his undergraduate degree in music education and piano from Sam Houston State University. He went on to earn a master's degree in choral conducting from the Eastman School of Music where he was a student of Baroque scholar Alfred Mann, and a master's degree in orchestral conducting from Baylor University, where he served as assistant conductor to Stephen Heyde and accompanist to Donald Bailey and the Baylor Chamber Singers. Allen earned his doctorate in conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he served as assistant conductor to Donald Neuen. Hightower pursued additional orchestral conducting studies with Jung-Ho Pak at the University

of Southern California, additional choral conducting studies with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College, and choral-orchestral conducting with Helmuth Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival. After winning first prize in the graduate division of the American Choral Directors Association's Conducting Competition in 1997, Allen served as assistant to Paul Salamunovich, conductor of the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Deanna Joseph is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at the Georgia State University School of Music where she conducts the University Singers and leads the master's program in choral conducting. A recent review of her work states, "[t]he choir sings with great musicality, excellent intonation, clear diction, and a healthy and beautiful pallet of tone colors..." (*The Choral Scholar*).

Dr. Joseph's teaching and scholarship has been recognized with several awards, including the Georgia State University College of the Arts Outstanding Faculty Achievement Award in 2021, and in 2019, the Georgia State University Alumni Distinguished Professor Award, a university-wide award given to "a model of the teacher-scholar ideal." In 2015, she was selected from over 800 faculty members to receive the College of Arts and Sciences' Outstanding Teacher Award

Under Dr. Joseph's direction, the Georgia State University Singers have been invited to perform at two national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), in 2021 and in 2025, and perform regularly at ACDA regional and Georgia Music Educators Association state conferences.

In April of 2023, the Georgia State University Singers performed two concerts at the World Symposium on Choral Music in Istanbul, Turkey. In May of 2017, the University Singers under won first place in the renowned *Marktoberdorf International Chamber Choir Competition* while on a concert tour of Austria and Bavaria. In May of 2013, the University Singers competed in *La Florilège Vocal de Tours* where the choir placed second overall in the mixed choir category and Dr. Joseph was honored with the *Prix du chef de choer* (conducting prize).

During Dr. Joseph's tenure, the Georgia State University Choirs have been hired to sing two productions of David Bintley's *Carmina Burana* with the Atlanta Ballet: in 2013 (North American premiere performances) and 2017 as well as several collaborations with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Opera, the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, and Andrea Bocelli.

The choir's three professional recording, *Evening Hymn*, *Heavenly Display: Songs Inspired by Shaker Tunes*, and *Requiem* (Gothic Records), are distributed internationally by Naxos. The *American Record Guide* review of *Evening Hymn* states "There are no runts in the repertory litter...[and] [t]he Georgia State choir of 40 is very good at all of it: radiant as dusk approaches, but hushed and sensitive to the coming darkness as shadows deepen and fall." All three disks have been featured several times on National Public Radio's program, *With Heart and Voice*.

Dr. Joseph is an active guest conductor and headline clinician and has conducted all-state and honor choirs in more than twenty-five states. She is a frequent conductor of choral-orchestral repertoire and has led performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Beethoven *Mass in C*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Duruflé *Requiem*, Haydn's *Creation and Lord Nelson Mass*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Schubert's *Mass in A-flat* and Bruckner's *Mass in D Minor*.

Dr. Joseph's research in 19th-century choral-orchestral performance-practice has led to invited presentations on the topic at several division conferences of the American Choral Director's Association and at the national convention for the National Collegiate Choral Organization. In October of 2012, she was selected as one of 25 presenters from ten countries to speak at the Lund Choral Festival in Sweden.

Prior to her appointment at Georgia State University, Dr. Joseph served on the faculties at Smith College, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Dr. Joseph holds conducting degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where she was awarded the Walter Hagen Conducting Prize. She is the founder and artistic director of the Atlanta Summer Conducting Institute (ASCI), a weeklong, summer conducting master class that draws conductors from across the country.

PROGRAM

~Morning Block~

9:00 a.m. WELCOME

9:05 a.m.

Shelton State Community College Shelton Singers

Dr. Mark Brown, director

Amy Ashley, collaborative pianist

Fly Away Home Pinkzebra

Stars I Shall Find Victor C. Johnson
(b. 1978)

The Storm is Passing Over Charles Albert Tindley
(1851 – 1933)
arr. Matt and Adam Pond

9:30 a.m.

Huntingdon College Concert Choir

Dr. Christopher Loftin, director

Laryne Monte, collaborative pianist

Dr. William Hayter, clarinet

Carry the Light Andy Beck
(b. 1986)

Ave Maria Jacob Arcadelt
(1505-1568)

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Now and in the hour of our death. Amen.*

I Choose Love Mark A. Miller
(b. 1967)

The Storm is Passing Over Charles Albert Tindley
(1851 – 1933)
arr. Barbara W. Baker

Sing Your Way Home Joseph M. Martin
(b. 1959)

9:55 a.m.

University of Alabama at Birmingham Concert Choir

Dr. Biran Kittridge, director
Dr. John Lowe, collaborative pianist

Swifter Than Flame Elaine Hagenberg
(b. 1979)

Ave Maria Anton Bruckner
(1824-1896)

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Now and in the hour of our death. Amen.*

In the Middle Dale Trumbore
(b. 1987)

And The Swallow Caroline Shaw
(b. 1982)

Flower of Beauty John Clements
(1910-1986)

Down By the Riverside Traditional Spiritual
arr. Stacey V. Gibbs

10:20 a.m.

Alabama A & M University Choir

Dr. Horace R. Carney, director

Adoramus Te, Christe Eric William Barnum
(b. 1979)

*We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee,
For by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.*

A'int a Dat Good News Traditional Spiritual
arr. William Dawson

Ubi caritas Ola Gjeilo
(b. 1978)

*Where charity and love are, God is there.
Christ's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.*

Judgement Mark Butler
(b. 1974)

10:45 a.m.

Jacksonville State University A Cappella Choir

Dr. Eliezer Yanson Jr., director
Dr. Rachel Park, collaborative pianist

Wake Up, My Spirit Adolphus Hailstork
(b. 1941)

Sure on This Shining Night Samuel Barber
(1910 – 1981)

Entreat Me Not to Leave You Dan Forrest
(b. 1978)

Precious Lord Thomas Dorsey
(1899 – 1993)
arr. Arnold Sevier

Unclouded Day J. K. Alwood
(1828 – 1909)
arr. Shawn Kirchner

11:05 a.m.

Hewitt – Trussville High School Chamber Choir (guest choir)
Dr. Ben Cook., director

Ave verum corpus William Byrd
(ca. 1540-1623)

*Hail, true body born of the Virgin Mary;
Who truly suffered and was sacrificed
On the cross for mankind;
From whose pierced side
Flowed water and blood:
Be for us a foretaste in the trial of death.
O sweet, merciful Jesus, son of Mary,
Have mercy on me. Amen.*

On the Mountain Jennifer Lucy Cook
(b. 1988)

assisted by Hudson Rogers, snare drum

Will the Circle Be Unbroken traditional Appalachian
arr. J. David Moore

Reese Wolfe, Juliette Mead, & Ryder Gray, trio

~~~

**~Afternoon Block~**

**1:00 p.m. WELCOME**

**1:05 p.m.**

**University of Montevallo Concert Choir**  
Dr. Melinda Doyle, director  
Dr. Lynn Faulkner, collaborative pianist

Alleluia ..... Jake Runestad  
(b. 1986)

Befiehl dem Engel , daß er kommt , BuxWV 10 .....Dietrich Buxtehude  
(1637-1707)

*Command the angel, that he come, thine own to guard within our home,  
give us the dear guards, that we from Satan may have rest. So in Thy Name, O Lord, we sleep,  
because the angels are with us; Thou holy blessed Trinity, we praise Thee eternally. Amen.*

And I Saw a New Heaven ..... Eric Nelson  
(b. 1959)

Ofulú Lorêrê .....arr. Osvaldo Lacerda  
(b. 1958)

assisted by Gabriel Moore, percussion

Kéramos ..... James Q. Mulholland  
(b. 1935)

**1:30 p.m.**

**University of West Alabama Choir**  
Dr. Christopher Shelt, director  
Dr. Manley Blackwell, collaborative pianist

Gloria RV 589 (Choral Sections) ..... Antonio Vivaldi  
(1678-1741)

- I. Gloria in excelsis Deo  
*Glory to God in the highest*
- II. Et in terra pax  
*And on earth peace among men of good will*
- III. Gratias agimus tibi  
*We give Thee thanks*
- IV. Propter magnam gloriam tuam  
*for Thy great glory*
- VII. Domine, Fili unigenite  
*Lord, only begotten Son, Jesus Christ*
- VIII. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei  
*Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
Thou who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us*
- IX. Qui tollis peccata mundi  
*Thou who takest away the sins of the world have mercy on us.*
- XI. Quoniam tu solus sanctus  
*For Thou alone art the Holy One. Thou alone art the Lord,  
Thou alone art the Most High, Jesus Christ*
- XII. Cum Sancto Spiritu  
*With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

**1:55 p.m.**

**Alabama State University Choir**  
Dr. Kristofer Sanchack, director  
Rebecca Taylor, collaborative pianist

Hallelujah, Amen ..... George Frederic Handel  
from *Judas Maccabaeus* 1685-1759)

Daemon irrepit callidus ..... György Orbán  
(b. 1947)

*The Demon sneaks expertly  
Tempting the honorable heart:  
He sets forth trickery among praise, song and dance!*

*However amiably the Demon acts,  
It is still worth less than the heart of Jesus.  
The Flesh is tempted by sensuality;  
Gluttony clings to our senses;  
It overgrows, it encroaches, it stretches.  
They neither fulfill nor put out the desire of the heart, Demon, Demon!*

It is Well with My Soul ..... Philip P. Bliss  
(1838 – 1876)  
arr. Joel Ramey

Assisted by Aaron Perez, piano; Benard Juma, flute

Fix Me ..... Traditional Spiritual  
arr. Maria Thompson Corley

Didn't It Rain ..... Traditional Spiritual  
arr. Donald E. Dillard

Tyair Charles, Jaelin Russell, Delroy Owino,  
Fernando Gonzalez and Bowie Hare, soloists

**2:20 p.m.**

**Miles College Choir**

Dr. Valerie R. Harris, director

Patrick J. Whitehead, assistant director / collaborative pianist

Dona nobis pacem ..... Daniel Elder  
(b. 1986)

*Grant us all peace*

Little Innocent Lamb ..... Traditional Spiritual  
arr. Marshall Bartholomew

The Last Words of David ..... Randall Thompson  
(1899-1984)

Glory Hallelujah! Since I Laid My Burdens Down ..... Wallace M. Cheatham  
(1945-2021)

Talk About a Child That Do Love Jesus ..... Traditional Spiritual  
arr. William Dawson

Niya Austin/Kendra Smith, soloists

Didn't It Rain ..... Traditional Spiritual  
arr. Donald E. Dillard

**2:45 p.m.**

**Jefferson State Community College Jefferson State Singers**

Jessica Kaufhold, director

O magnum mysterium ..... Tomás Luis de la Victoria  
(1548 – 1611)

*O great mystery and wonderful sacrament  
that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger!  
O blessed virgin, whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!*

In Remembrance ..... Eleanor Daley  
from *Requiem* (b. 1955)

The Lamb ..... John Tavener  
(1944 – 2013)

Somewhere ..... Leonard Bernstein  
from *West Side Story* (1918 – 1990)  
arr Robert Edgerton

Over the Rainbow ..... Harold Arlen  
(1905 – 1986)  
arr. Kirby Shaw

**3:05 p.m.**

**Samford University A Cappella Choir**

Dr. Philip Copeland, director

Aftonen ..... Hugo Alfvén  
(1872-1960)

*Tranquil the woods, skies crystal clear,  
Faint the alluring shepherd horns beckon.  
Sunset aglow, blushing fading, settling  
slowly, oh so gently, onto a peaceful rippling wave.  
Through the valleys, verdant hillsides,  
lingering echoes sound...*

Regina caeli ..... Tomás Luis de Victoria  
(1548-1611)

*Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia.  
For he, whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.  
Has risen as he said, alleluia.  
Pray for us to God, alleluia.*

Ave maris stella ..... Trond Kverno  
(b. 1945)

*Hail, star of the sea, blessed Mother of God*

*and ever Virgin, happy gate of heaven.  
 Receiving that Ave from the mouth of Gabriel,  
 establish us in peace, changing the name of Eve.  
 Loosen the chains of sinners, give light to the blind,  
 drive away our ills, obtain for us all good things.  
 Show thyself a mother may he hear thy prayers  
 Who, born for us, was willing to be thy Son.  
 Virgin above all others, meeker than all,  
 make us free from sin, meek and pure.  
 Obtain for us a pure life, make safe our path,  
 That seeing Jesus we may ever rejoice with thee.  
 To God the Father be praise, glory to Christ on high,  
 honor to the Holy Spirit, one in three. Amen.*

Richte mich, Gott ..... Felix Mendelssohn  
 (1809-1847)

*Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation:  
 O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For thou art the God of my strength:  
 why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?  
 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill,  
 and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy:  
 yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.  
 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God:  
 for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

Organ Fugue ..... J.S. Bach  
 (1685-1750)  
 arr. Ward Swingle

~~~

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Eliezer Yanson Jr – Collegiate Choral Festival Coordinator, Alabama ACDA College & University Chair, Director of Choral Activities at Jacksonville State University

Samford University, Dr. Philip Copleand, director of choral activities; **Dr. Joel Davis**, chair, division of music

Shaun Gates – recording engineer

Special Thanks to the Alabama ACDA Board members for their support of this event, especially **Dr. Quint Harris, Dr. Melinda Doyle, Tucker Ratcliff, Jordan Banks** and student volunteers from **Jacksonville State University, Samford University, and University of Montevallo.**