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*The Association of Anglican Musicians is an organization of professional musicians and clergy in The Episcopal Church and throughout the Anglican Communion. The Association works to elevate, stimulate, and support music and the allied arts in the liturgy of the Church. The Journal publishes articles on liturgy, music, spirituality, and theology which pertain to the work and purposes of this Association and to the Church in general.*

## THE AAM MENTORING PROGRAM

by Marilyn Keiser, S.M.D.

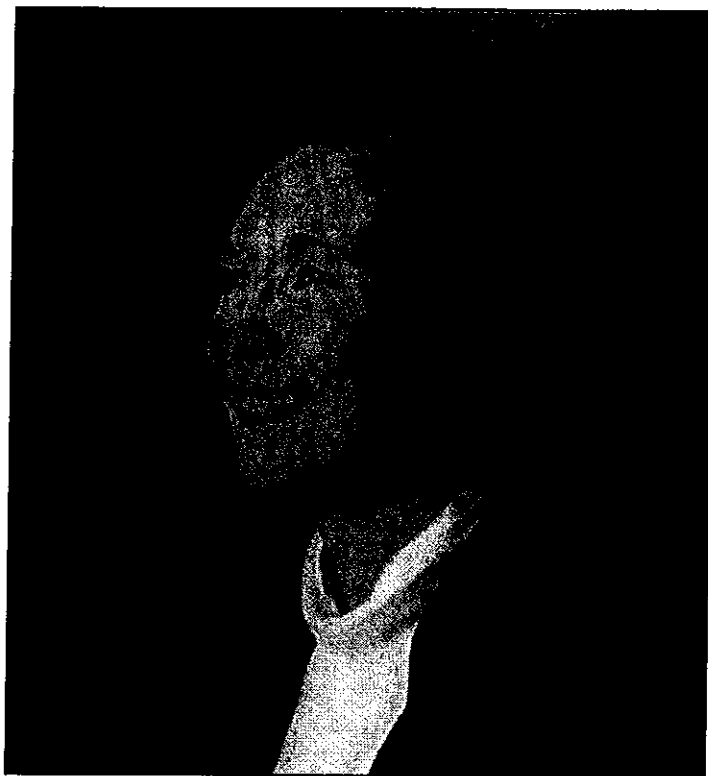
The Task Force on the Formation of Young Church Musicians held an exciting and fruitful meeting on February 22nd and 23rd, 2008, in Indianapolis, where they heard reports of the work of three pilot projects that were begun during the past year and where they discussed plans for the future work of the Task Force and its Advisory Group.

When the Task Force met last May in Asheville, North Carolina, the small group who were in attendance renamed the program and more clearly defined the mission of this group. The Task Force on Formation is now known as the AAM Mentoring Program.

The mission of the AAM Mentoring Program is to identify and support the young or less experienced church musician who seeks enrichment by establishing a mentoring relationship with a seasoned and experienced colleague.

The Task Force was formed in October of 2006 and, in its two subsequent gatherings, Task Force members:

- outlined procedures
- created an application form for the young musicians we call "mentees"



**Marilyn Keiser**

- created a survey for the mentors, who are experienced professionals
- drafted a letter which will be sent to the clergy who work with the young musicians.

In Indianapolis we spent a great deal of time discussing the ways in which we can market and communicate our enthusiasm for this program. We listed tangible objectives for the first six to nine months of the mentor-mentee relationship, and we heard

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# RECORDING REVIEWS

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by Victor Hill, Ph.D.

As usual, I am writing reviews of Advent and Christmas discs in the spring so that, should any titles strike members' fancy, they have time to order and consider recordings before they do all of their seasonal planning. It has become clear by now that AAM members are not at all interested in yet another "Favorite Carols" disc, nor in recordings of lovely but overworked anthems such as Elizabeth Poston's *Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree* and Boris Ord's *Adam Lay Ybounden*. Hence I concentrate in these reviews on selections that may be unfamiliar to some directors, and on new arrangements that may have a particular appeal.

**Go Tell It on the Mountain.** The Choir of Men and Boys, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco; Jeffrey Smith, director of music; Benjamin Bachmann, organ (Pro Organo #7212; [www.zarex.com](http://www.zarex.com)).

Some of the selections on this delightful program are notable for sparkling, if tricky rhythms, including the *Dance: Tomorrow Shall Be my Dancing Day* from the *Carol Symphony* of James Bassi and his ambitious Evening Canticles, not to mention Jeffrey's "all riffed-up and swingin'" version of *Go Tell It on the Mountain* with piano realization by Matthew Edwards ("Not suitable for church," as Jeffrey notes). A parish that is prepared for slightly less "swingin'" jazz would probably love *O Mary and the Baby* by Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott.

In contrast, *That Hallowed Season* and *The Birds* by John LaMontaine may be familiar

to some readers, but are worth noting for a pleasant stylistic departure from the excessive sweetness of some Christmas music—not easy, but worth the rehearsal effort. Donald Nally's *Christ Child's Lullabye* sets a Scottish original in evocative style. A familiar Early American tune appears in an arrangement for men's voices with the text *The Hills Are Bare at Bethlehem*. Other composers have set Robert Herrick's fine text *The Best of Rooms*, but perhaps none so compellingly as Gerald Near, heard on this program.

Richard Wayne Dirksen's energetic *Chanticleer* and some other recent original works and arrangements on this disc have become modern classics, but still sound fresh. The choral sound on this recording is likewise fresh, beautifully produced, wisely phrased, and always idiomatic.

**Beautiful Star.** Schola Cantorum on Hudson; Deborah Simpkin King, artistic director (P.O. Box 3914, Jersey City NJ 0733; \$16.00 postpaid from 201-918-3009 or [www.scholaonhudson.org](http://www.scholaonhudson.org)).

This 23-voice ensemble (including a smaller Repertory Singers group) presents choral literature in New Jersey and in the New York metropolitan area and has a variety of educational programs. Their Christmas collection takes its name from the third movement of Libby Larsen's *Ringeltänze*. This six-part suite, of which this CD gives the world premiere recording, is scored for soloists, mixed chorus, handbells, and piano. It is a most engaging work, well worth consideration for a seasonal program, perhaps as an SATB alternative to the Britten *Ceremony of Carols*.

With a few exceptions (such as the Elizabeth Poston and fairly imaginative arrangements of three vapid secular selections at the end), the disc consists of interesting original compositions, largely contemporary, and of fine arrangements. Among the latter are Joel Martinson's atmospheric realization of *O Come, O Dayspring from on High*, an adaptation of the *Spiritual Glory Hallelujah to duh Newborn King* (sung with the enthusiasm typical of the genre, but also with admirable nuance), two other Spiritual settings, and

Sally Ann Morris's realization of *'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime*. The *Carol of Beauty* by Hubert Bird is actually a setting of the tune *What Is This Lovely Fragrance?* Jeremiah Ingalls' *Slow Traveller* sets the words of the *Coventry Carol*, a nice companion to Steve Pilkington's rich arrangement of the usual melody. Original compositions of Gordon King and Ned Rorem are striking. The program contains quite a few good ideas for choral programs.

The Schola has warm tone and sensitive phrasing. Texts are not provided, but diction is good enough that the omission is not serious.

**The Holy Child.** Choirs of Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, Houston; Brady Knapp & Courtney Daniell-Knapp, directors of music (Palmer Memorial, 6221 Main Street, Houston TX 77030; phone 713-529-6196).

This mixed program of old chestnuts and newer works includes many worthy repertory ideas. The *Matin* and *Vesper Responsories* by Thomas Foster are stimulating alternatives to the well-known adaptation from Palestrina. *Light One Candle* by Michael Bedford is a fine piece for unison trebles, performed here with piano. Virgil T. Ford's *Salvation Is Nearer* would be useful at any time in Advent season. Stanley Vann provides an appealing setting in English of the *Ave verum corpus*. The *Chorale-Prelude on "Veni Emmanuel"* by our late colleague Calvin Hampton provides a nice instrumental interlude. Andrew Carter's new setting of *Sweet Was the Song the Virgin Sang* is refreshing and attractive, as is Jeffrey Van's arrangement of the traditional Mexican carol *El Rorro (The Babe)*. The disc takes its title from a charming Puerto Rican carol arranged by Dolores Hruby. The program concludes with two elegant new settings of traditional texts, *Brightest and Best* by Malcolm Archer and *Where Is This Stupendous Stranger?* by David Ashley White.

In addition to providing many repertory ideas, this well-sung recording is simply enjoyable to hear. Texts are provided for all but the most familiar carols. One suggestion for the future: please provide