



The Rockford Aces

Jed Scott, Director

Through the Years



ACDA Michigan Fall Conference

October 28, 2017

Western Michigan University



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~ From the Superintendent ~

We are honored to participate in the 2017 ACDA Michigan Fall Conference, and we appreciate the opportunity to showcase the talents of Rockford High School's *The Rockford Aces*. I'm sure you will agree, this is an extraordinarily talented group of young men.



Michael Shibler, Ph.D
Superintendent of Schools

A program of Rockford's caliber would not be possible without countless hours of effort devoted by students, directors, and parents. On behalf of the Rockford community, I thank and congratulate these individuals for this tremendous accomplishment.

We are proud to share our musicians with you, and I am confident you will enjoy their performance which demonstrates the excellence to which our community has become accustomed and is blessed to enjoy throughout the year.

~ From the Principal ~

It is with sincere gratitude that we thank the American Choral Directors Association Michigan for extending this great invitation to our Rockford High School *Rockford Aces* to perform at your upcoming conference. We are deeply blessed to have such talented performers and music educators at Rockford High School. I'm quite certain you will enjoy their performance.



Dan Zang
Principal, RHS

Each and every year, I am just amazed with the musical performances that take place on our campus. They are possible thanks to four essential ingredients: a fine group of students dedicated to performing first and foremost in the classroom, and then on stage; a dedicated teaching staff who always go above and beyond with the time and talents they share with our students; tremendous parents who tirelessly support Fine Arts; and a community that supports us with their sponsorships and sold out auditoriums. Enjoy the conference and the performance by *The Rockford Aces*. We are so very proud of you, gentlemen!

Through the Years

- * Wondrous Love.....Dupuy's Hymns/*Southern Harmony*
Adapted Jed Scott (b. 1977)
- Once More A-Lumbering Go.....Michigan Lumberjack Song
Arr. Jed Scott
- Soloists: Matt Brown, Baritone & Eric Liu, Tenor*
- * May Michael McGlynn (b. 1964)
- * CindyTraditional American, Arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925)
- Through the Years Vincent Youmans (1898-1946)
& Edward Heyman (1907-1981), Arr. Gene Puerling (1929-2008)
- Big Bad World Anders Edenroth (b. 1963)
- IndodanaTraditional isiXhosa
Arr. Michael Barrett (b. 1983) & Ralf Schmitt (b. 1982)
- Soloists: Donovan Jewell, Baritone & Sean DeWard, Bass*

* Indicated piece originally commissioned by *The Rockford Aces*

Notes

The Rockford Aces celebrate their tenth anniversary season with this program looking backward at past successes and forward to new opportunities. We have programmed several pieces commissioned by the group and have attempted to represent the breadth of styles the ensemble takes on each year.

Wondrous Love

Sacred Harp

Sacred Harp, arguably the first truly American style of singing, is still sung in tradition-minded church congregations and is also being rediscovered by choirs around the country and world. It has been said of Sacred Harp singers, "These people shake walls. No microphones, no amplifiers, but you can hear them singing from half a mile away."

We based our version on that of the Minnesota-based men's ensemble *Cantus*, using the original 1840 hymn book *The Southern Harmony*. This piece appeared on the Rockford Aces' 2012 CD *Close Harmony*.

Once More A-Lumbering Go

Michigan Lumberjack song, collected by Alan Lomax on August 22, 1938 in St. Louis Michigan

At only 23, the legendary folk music expert Alan Lomax was already a field researcher for the Library of Congress. He collected *Once More A-Lumbering Go* as performed by Carl Lathrop, a veteran lumberjack, railroader, and singer who died shortly after the recording.

The Michigan Educators' Male Ensemble (Clayton Parr, director) commissioned this arrangement in 2015. Jed Scott wrote his arrangement based on Lathrop's performance, which is part of a collection recently made available on the U.S. Library of Congress website. This arrangement will be published by Pavane Publishing in 2018. The Aces recorded it for our 2017 CD *Get Ready!*

May

Text by Francis Ledwidge (1888-1917), Music by Michael McGlynn (b. 1964)

Irish poet Francis Ledwidge is noted especially for his lyrics about natural life. According to Michael McGlynn, Ledwidge's poetry was for a long time rejected from the canon of Irish poetry due to his service (and death) in Belgium during World War I. It is only recently that Ledwidge's poetry has regained acceptance in the canon of Irish poetry; this may be in part due to McGlynn's frequent and passionate settings of his poems.

May was completed in 2015 as a commission from The Rockford Aces. The piece was written as the sister piece to McGlynn's popular *August*, which was set nearly twenty years earlier. It appears on our fourth album *Get Ready!* Both *August* and *May* imagine months as beautiful women with powerful personas. For *May*, McGlynn has written a lilting and entrancing tune with rich harmonies to match Ledwidge's lovely poetry. It is available directly from Michael McGlynn at his website (michaelmcglynn.com). Our recording of *May* appears on *Get Ready!*

Cindy

Traditional American

The voice of Alice Parker comes through clear as day in this flirtatious, fun folk arrangement. The Rockford Aces commissioned this piece from Ms. Parker in 2013, and were fortunate to have Ms. Parker in attendance at the premiere. It was part of The Rockford Aces' gold-medal performance set at the 2014 World Choir Games and appears on our album *sing...be...live...see....*

Cindy is published with Santa Barbara Music Press.

Through The Years

Music by Vincent Youmans, Lyrics by Edward Heyman

Gene Puerling is the undisputed father of modern vocal jazz. As primary arranger for both The Hi-Lo's and The Singers Unlimited, he influenced virtually every vocal harmony arranger currently working. This piece, originally recorded by The Hi-Lo's on their 1955 album *Under Glass*, is a shining example of his approach, with clever reharmonizations and acrobatic vocalisms, offset by unison singing and straightforward harmony. We recorded it live in Europe for *sing...be...live...see....*

Big Bad World

Words & Music by Anders Edenroth (b. 1963)

Anders Edenroth is recognized across the world for his work with The Real Group, both for his flexible countertenor voice and for his clever compositions for the group. *Big Bad World* features a nod to Disney's *Three Little Pigs*, and was originally recorded by The Real Group on their album *Commonly Unique* (2000). This TTTBBB version was commissioned by the world-renowned Swedish men's chorus Orphei Drängar. We recorded it for *Get Ready!*

Indodana

Traditional isiXhosa

This Traditional South African song is sung in isiXhosa, one of eleven official languages in South Africa. The text translates, "The Lord has taken his son who lived among us. The son of the Lord God was crucified." This setting was arranged by two young South African choral musicians, and was featured prominently at the 2014 World Choir Games, where it was performed by the Stellenbosch University Choir. The Aces got to know these singers since they stayed in the same hotel for that week. The best part of our trips to the World Choir Games have been the ability to connect with other choirs - a sentiment we feel whenever we get the chance to share a space with other choirs.





The Rockford Aces are an elite extracurricular TTBB a cappella ensemble from Rockford High School in Michigan. Directed by Jed Scott, they are auditioned from the roughly 300 students involved in curricular choirs at the high school. They have a single two-hour rehearsal per week, plus an additional weekly student-led sectional. They generally include members from 9th through 12th grades, and perform all genres of vocal music, from Renaissance to Jazz and Barbershop to contemporary pop. They regularly commission new music from composers and arrangers.

Since their founding in 2008, the Aces have been recognized for their excellence in a variety of genres and have been selected three times to perform at the MYAF Honors Recital, as one of the finest high school choral ensembles in Michigan (2010, 2014, 2017). They have opened for The Real Group, The University of Michigan Men's Glee Club and WMU Gold Company. They have released four albums: *Unaccompanied Minors* (2011), *Close Harmony* (2012), *sing...be...live...see* (2015), and *Get Ready!* (2017).

The Aces have competed twice in the biannual World Choir Games: in July of 2012 the group earned two silver medals for their performances in Cincinnati, Ohio. In July 2014 they culminated a five-country European tour with gold and silver medals in Riga, Latvia. They are currently ranked by Interkultur among the top 40 men's choirs worldwide.

The Rockford Aces thank ACDA-Michigan for the chance to share their music with choral professionals from across the state of Michigan.



The Rockford High School Choirs are known throughout their region for consistently exemplary performances. With roughly three hundred students participating in five curricular choirs, as well as multiple extracurricular choirs, opportunities abound for small and large group singing.

The Rockford Choirs are currently conducted by Mandy Mikita Scott, Renee Vande Wege, and Jed Scott. They regularly earn top ratings at District and State Festival performances. Since 2010, they have had nine ensembles selected to perform at the Michigan

School Vocal Music Association Honors Recital at Michigan Youth Arts Festival. Featured conference performances include: Michigan Music Conference (Treble Chorus, 2012; Freshman Choir, 2018), and ACDA-Michigan (Advanced Treble Ensemble, 2016; The Rockford Aces, 2017).

In July 2014, the Rockford Choirs completed a European tour with performances in Prague, Vienna, and Budapest, culminating in three gold medals and one silver medal at the 2014 World Choir Games in Riga, Latvia. They will tour Italy in spring, 2018.

Over the past six years, they have commissioned or co-commissioned at least nine choral works, including pieces from Alice Parker, Michael McGlynn, Andrea Ramsey, Jeffrey Cobb, Jed Scott, and Kayle Clements, among others.



Jed Scott is an active freelance arranger, composer, and conductor. He is currently published by Pavane Publishing, UNC Jazz Press, Sound Music Publications. His vocal music is performed throughout the United States by leading vocal jazz and choral ensembles. He maintains a busy commission schedule and recently founded and runs the Michigan Choral Commission Consortium, which is dedicated to facilitating the creation of new choral music commissioned for Michigan choirs.

Jed has conducted the Rockford Aces, an extracurricular TTBB ensemble, since 2008. He

also serves as adjunct faculty at Grand Rapids Community College, where he conducts the vocal jazz ensemble *Shades of Blue*.

Jed currently serves on the ACDA-Michigan Executive Board as Webmaster/Editor and MSVMA as the Supervisor of the All-State Jazz Choir. He is the 2015 recipient of the MSVMA Carolyn Leep Scholarship. For three years, he has published daily essays about creativity, choral music, and education at www.jedscott.com. Jed is a lifelong resident of Michigan and lives in Rockford with his wife, Mandy, and their three sons, Owen, Julian, and Daniel.



Mandy Mikita Scott is in her fifteenth year of teaching, her tenth at Rockford High School, where she is Director of Choirs and teaches over 200 students in four ensembles. She previously served as Director of Choirs at Grosse Pointe North High School for five years. Mandy holds a Bachelor of Music Education at Western Michigan University and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Miami.

Mandy's sophomore Women's Chorus performed at the 2012 Michigan Music Conference. She conducted RHS Advanced Treble

Ensemble at the 2016 ACDA-Michigan Fall Conference. In January 2014 she conducted the Michigan High School SSAA State Honors Choir. She has conducted her ensembles as part of the Michigan Youth Arts Festival Honors Recital seven times. In July 2014 she conducted the Rockford Choirs on an acclaimed European Tour, with ten concerts in four countries, culminating in two Gold Medals at the World Choir Games in Riga, Latvia.

Mandy served MSVMA on the Executive Board as the Director of Sight Reading and Music Selection from 2013-2017. She is the 2012 recipient of the MSVMA Carolyn Leep Scholarship. Mandy lives in Rockford with her husband Jed and their three sons.



Renee Vande Wege has been a music educator since 2000 at all educational levels from Early Childhood to Post-Collegiate. She has served as the Rockford Freshman Choir Director since the fall of 2013. The Freshman Choir has been selected to perform as a featured ensemble during the MSVMA Choral Hour at the 2018 Michigan Music Conference.

Ms. Vande Wege holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Hope College and a Master's Degree in Music Education from Michigan State University. She is

also certified in Music Learning Theory from the Gordon Institute.

She serves as an instructor for the Grand Rapids Children's Opera Workshop, and for many years was a member of the Grand Rapids Opera Chorus, singing in *La Boheme*, *The Magic Flute*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *Turandot*, and *Die Fledermaus*, among others. She maintains an active voice studio in Rockford.

Renee is an Iowa native and long-time resident of Rockford with her two children, Emily and Levi.

The Rockford Aces

are

Matt Brown (12)	* Donovan Jewell (12)
Ethan Burke (10)	* Eric Liu (11)
Alex Callaghan (10)	Boede Mitchell (10)
Sean DeWard (11)	Mason Parker (12)
Noah Drueke (12)	Noah Parker (10)
Jack Fix (12)	T-Bone Rehwoldt (12)
Alex Hoffman (10)	Will Van Eck (10)

* Section Leader

Rockford High School Administration

Dan Zang, Principal

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Eric Cavalli, Assistant Principal

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to our Aces Alumni, Renee Vande Wege, Peggy Odren, Kaelynn Van Buren, Brian Phillips, Erin DeYoung, John Shear, Chelle Good, Gayla Fox, Dan Brown, Lisa Doering, Joyce Kash, the Aces Parents, the RPS Administration, the RHS Choir Booster Board, the Rockford Education Foundation, Steve Zegree, Anna Ellerbroek, Brandon Johnson, Mike Mitchell, Ginny Kerwin, Clayton Parr, Michael McGlynn, Anders Edenroth, and Alice Parker. As always, Owen, Julian, and Daniel Scott.

Most of all to Mandy Mikita Scott. Fearless leader. Passionate musician. Soul of a remarkable community. Best of wives and best of women.

This program has been graciously underwritten by the Rockford Public Schools Administration

The Rockford Aces



TEN YEARS OF SONG

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