



A free program sponsored by the
Chicago Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

CHORAL REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES

with guest conductors

Paul French & Benjamin Rivera

Saturday, January 19, 2019

Church of the Ascension

1133 N. LaSalle Blvd., Chicago

- 8:30 am Refreshments and Greetings -- St. Michael Hall
- 9:00 am BENJAMIN RIVERA: Choral Warm-Ups
Basics for Choral Tone – Working with Amateur Voices
- 9:30 am PAUL FRENCH: Choral Warm-Ups
Improving Your Choir's Sound – Quick Fixes for a Better Sound
- 10:00 am BENJAMIN RIVERA: Three Seasonal Choral Anthems that Work for
Advent/Christmas/Epiphany - Planning and Executing an Effective Rehearsal
(score preparation – pitch, rhythm, diction – time management –
anticipating/fixing problems)
- 10:45 am Break for coffee, conversation & questions
- 11:00 am PAUL FRENCH: Three Seasonal Choral Anthems that Work for
Lent/Easter/Pentecost (score preparation – pitch, rhythm, diction – time
management – anticipating/fixing problems)
- 11:45 am Break for coffee, conversation & questions
- 12:00 pm Mini Choral Festival – Church Nave
FRENCH and RIVERA Conduct four of the seasonal anthems

Possible Further Topics: *Singing in different spaces, collaborating with the organist, conducting from the console, aging voices, sight-reading*

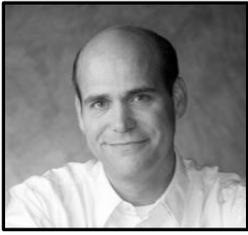
We will finish no later than 1:00 pm.

Each participant will receive complimentary copies of the six choral works featured in this program.

The Church of the Ascension is located on N. LaSalle between Elm and Maple. There is free church parking at Maple and LaSalle. If taking the CTA Red line, depart at the Clark/Division Street station.

Please turn over for profiles of Paul French and Benjamin Rivera.

Profiles of our Guest Choral Conductors



PAUL FRENCH - has worked in parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago, and since 2001 he has been the Director of Music at *Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church* where he leads a thriving choral program of adult and children's voices. He served as Music Director of the *William Ferris Chorale* from 2005-2016, in that time establishing it on the professional choral scene as the premier ensemble for breathing life into works of lesser-known and living composers.

Critic Lawrence Johnson proclaimed. "French and his singers provided glowing and deeply felt advocacy to these beautiful, neglected works".

Mr. French studied composition, conducting, chant and organ at *St. John's University, Northwestern University*, the *Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra* in Rome, and privately with William Ferris. A composer of more than 200 instrumental and choral works, he is the Director of Choral Recordings for *World Library Publications*, for whom he is also the editor of a series of choral works for children's choirs, under the distinguished banner of the *American Federation Pueri Cantores*, the official student-choral organization of the Roman Catholic Church, and has conducted choral festivals for AFPC in New York, Pittsburgh, Phoenix, and Indianapolis. One of his works, *Concertato on Grosser Gott*, was performed for the papal visits of both Pope Francis (2015) and Pope Benedict XVI in 2008.

Mr. French's published music is available through Morning Star Music, Paraclete Press, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, World Library Publications, GIA Publications, and Oregon Catholic Press.



BENJAMIN RIVERA - has prepared and conducted choruses at all levels—from elementary school through adult, volunteer and professional—in repertoire from sacred polyphony and chant, choral/orchestral masterworks, and contemporary pieces to gospel, pop, and folk. He serves as Chorus Director and regular conductor of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, and has appeared multiple times as Guest Chorus Director of the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago and Guest

Music Director of Chicago *a cappella*. Artistic director and conductor of *Cantate Chicago*—featured at Chorus America's national conference in 2018—Rivera also serves as Choirmaster of the Church of the Ascension and High Holidays Choir Director at Temple Sholom, both featuring fully professional ensembles. A professional singer in the Chicago Symphony Chorus for over twenty seasons—including twelve as bass section leader—Rivera also sings professionally with the Grant Park Chorus. He sang for many years with Chicago *a cappella* and several other ensembles, appearing as a soloist on numerous programs, and singing on dozens of recordings.

Especially adept with languages, Benjamin Rivera frequently coaches German, Spanish, and Latin, among others. He holds degrees in voice and music theory from North Park University and Roosevelt University, respectively, and a DMA in choral conducting from Northwestern University.