

## **NACUSAsf MEETING, Tuesday August 10, 7:30 PM at Joanne Carey's home**

**Attending:** Dale Victorine (*President*), Joanne Carey (*Secretary*), Karl Schmidt (*Treasurer*), Anne Baldwin, Daniel Hughes (*director of the Choral Project*) and Jonathon Atwood (*Executive Director*).

### **Joint Concert Logistics**

#### **Pre-Concert Issues**

##### **Date of Concert:**

Previous discussions have determined that this joint concert will be in the late Spring of 2012, either at the end of May or in early June. Daniel explained that determining factors would be 1) whether this joint concert is the Choral Project's final concert of their season or their penultimate concert, and 2) whether they win a competition in Tolosa, Spain in the Fall of 2011, in which case they may be traveling to Europe in the Summer of 2012. Daniel Hughes, the director of the Choral Project, said he would propose workable options for either scenario: Plan A if they don't win and Plan B if they do. He said he would think about whether to offer the NACUSAsf program twice, or just once as the penultimate concert of their season. A less likely option would be to do our program as the final concert of the season on a Sunday afternoon.

##### **Venues:**

Daniel and Jonathon told us that their regular venue is Mission Santa Clara and they normally present the same program twice, once on a Saturday night and again on the following Sunday afternoon. We discussed the possibility of locating the Sunday concert in Palo Alto, if they wanted to do our program twice and talked about possible venues besides the Palo Alto Arts Center, whose acoustics are not great for chorus. Several churches in Palo Alto were mentioned as possibilities: Unitarian Church on Charleston Avenue, Covenant Presbyterian on East Meadow, First Methodist on Hamilton or All Saints Episcopal on Waverly in downtown Palo Alto or First Congregational Church on Louis and Embarcadero. Dale mentioned that Covenant has an attractive space and charges \$200 for 4 hours, a good price. In response to a question about their usual rental fees, Jonathon said they usually pay \$1000 to \$1200 per concert [or concert cluster].

##### **Scores and Submission deadline:**

Anne mentioned to Daniel that we have in the past invited a hired performing group to help select pieces for the program.. Daniel was not particularly interested in choosing the program; his main concern is mastering the music he is given. He said that a program of all new music with wide ranging styles is difficult, especially with a community chorus. He added that while some composers have a knack for choral and vocal writing, others don't. His chorus is now 40 to 45 singers. He has recently winnowed the group in order to hone and polish their sound for the upcoming competition next year.

Dale asked Daniel when he needed to have the music. Daniel proposed January 12, 2012 as a deadline. Anne suggested that might be too late, perhaps we should pull it back to early December or November. Daniel said he would think about it, along with where to place our concert in their season. Jonathon told us that their season was comprised of four concert clusters, each program repeating once: a Gala in the Fall, a Christmas concert set, a March collaborative Event and the

June (or May) finale. Our collaboration would be presented on the last or penultimate concert. If it was the very last one, Daniel said he would be inclined to want to include other music from their repertoire.

#### Printed tickets, Comp tickets and Ticket sales:

Daniel said that printing tickets is not expensive or a problem. The intake would be divided 50/50 at the door. All pre-concert sales earnings would go to the group who made the sale.

Regarding complementary tickets, Daniel said that we have to make it really clear so there is no embarrassment at the door. Anne said that usually comp tickets go to students of our members. Daniel said that their policy is all high school students are free. Dale suggested we go with their policy on this.

#### Advertising and Marketing:

Daniel said that he knows Rich Schienin and can probably get him to do some kind of pre-concert review. Jonathon said that they send out press releases to 100 people or organizations for each concert, adding that they don't do paid ads of any kind because they are not cost effective. Daniel said they have a huge email list and we are welcome to add names to their list.

Regarding marketing, Daniel informed us that their marketing director works for Artsopolis, which sells tickets at a discount rate. Jonathon added that they do take \$1-\$2 of each ticket, but this helps build the audience. They limit the tickets sold through Artsopolis and Gold Star to 25 tickets per concert. Daniel said that it's hard to predict audience attendance. Sometimes advance ticket sales don't do well, but at the concert itself, they will get a full house. They do a lot of collaborations. Around Christmas they do a joint concert with Barbara Day Turner and the San Jose Chamber Orchestra called *Festival of Light*. They also collaborate with high school and junior college choirs. This is part of Daniels strategy to make sure young singers are aware that there are interesting choral singing opportunities outside of educational institutions.

#### Flyer

##### Graphics:

Dan said that he does all the graphics and he will do the flyer. From us, he needs accurate copy, which is information about our group and program information, and images that identify us such as our NACUSAsf logo.

##### Mailing:

Jonathon said that they use an Advertising Mailing Service to send the flyer to their snail mail list, which they are not adding to at this point. Jonathon said he sends them an Excel Spread Sheet with the list and they take it from there.

Daniel said that they could add our names to their email list by sending the email addresses to their marketing person. She uses a program called "Constant Contact".

In addition, we can request flyers to send out on our own, just as we do with NACUSA concerts. Jonathon said that the flyers cost \$600-\$700 to do about 4500 of them.

##### Program Needs:

Daniel said that he would do the program as well as the flyer. He will need our notes, rosters, and bios early, including lyrics and additional notes on the sources of the lyrics. He also needs our donor lists and they must be accurate. He reiterated that this will be a Choral Project Program and the graphics need to fit their seasonal themes, which this season is "Voices of Crystal".

When Anne asked how we divvy up the cost, Jonathon asked us how many people typically show up at our concerts. We said 70 at best. Jonathon said they get 375-400 people at each of their concerts. Daniel said that to make this comfortable for us, we need to do some of the heavy lifting. Since we are not paying the performers in this case, which is the Choral Project singers and music director, we can contribute in other ways.

Daniel enthusiastically embraced the idea of selling ads in the program. He said we could really help by contributing here. Usually, he added, people get contributions from businesses that they frequent often and who know them. The prices are not high, ranging from \$60 for a quarter page to \$140 for a whole page. All they need to do is send a camera-ready ad. Friendly businesses like to feel that they are supporting a community group that contributes to the local musical culture. Because a larger audience is expected at this concert, it shouldn't be too hard to sell some ads.

## **Concert**

Dan said that he would need a meeting with us about three months prior to the event. They have a house manager who takes care of all the details of the event and coordinates the tickets, ticket sales, ushers and box office; they have a system. The venue should provide a stage manager to move chairs, pianos, music stands etc.

Daniel said there is no unpaid will-call and any pre-sale ticket info needs to be in one week ahead. They also have a volunteer coordinator who will manage all volunteers.

Jonathon said that they have a spreadsheet to keep track of reconciliation issues. Normally, they pay the pre-concert costs up front and work out repayment later.

Daniel mentioned organizing display space to sell CD's by composers whose pieces are being performed. He said that the Choral Project sell their CDs at their concerts when they can.

The concert will be recorded for personal and archival use.

### **How much music:**

Daniel said that one-hour of music is good, but this will depend on how the program shapes up once the pieces are submitted. If the music itself comprises 60-70 minutes, he recommends no intermission. He suggested that if the music were not too difficult, more could be learned and performed. Anne and Dale asked about padding a 60-70 minute program so we could have an intermission. Since we were not in favor of including music that was not by our composers, Daniel suggested having each composer talk about their music before each performance. This could work as long as it was done with the right sense of style, he said, adding that the "Mission" was not the venue for this kind of interactive experience. Karl said he was open to other non-NACUSA pieces being included, the goal being a really nice aesthetic experience. Dale suggested interspersing the choral pieces with art songs. Daniel said he would mull over various options about adding pieces or speeches, or not, and get back to us.

Anne expressed her concern about cost. Jonathon asked how much we could afford. Anne told him that in order to fund our last orchestra concert we had to charge each composer in \$500. Karl said that the concert was over an hour and Daniel responded that that was too long for an all-new-music concert. Jonathon said the usual cost of their concerts is \$4000 - \$6000. He said they are willing to divide the costs approximately 70% to 30%. Daniel asked Karl to give Jonathon a basic breakdown of our normal expenses and expectations. Then Jonathon can work something out.

### **Recording the concert:**

Daniel said they have a really good recording engineer and his prices are reasonable. CD

production and graphics are part of his fee. Also, he will respect the wishes of composers regarding inclusion on the CD.

Karl mentioned the possibility of setting a theme for this concert. Daniel liked the idea, but Anne and Joanne objected strongly.

Daniel informed us that they do have an accompanist.

Last note, Daniel said that they open the hall one-half hour before show time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanne D. Carey  
Secretary of NACUSAsf