

Dale Warland

*2001
Distinguished
Artists*



Introduction

Choral music is perhaps the most ubiquitous American art form, performed in and out of tune by school and church choirs in every city, town, and rural outpost. But choral music in the Dale Warland style—elegant, moving, provocative, sublime—is rare. Few professional choruses exist in the United States today; even fewer exhibit the quality of the Dale Warland Singers.

Warland's decision to establish his career in Minnesota has brought countless rewards to musicians and audiences here. As a collaborator with local music organizations, a commissioner of Minnesota composers, a conductor of eagerly anticipated concerts, and a recording artist, Warland has made Minnesota a national center of choral music. In so doing, he has kept an ancient tradition alive and relevant. Be sure to hear for yourself on the commemorative CD recording inside the back cover of this book.

To achieve so much, an artist must have high expectations of himself and others. There is no doubt that Warland is demanding, but always in a way that is warm, human, and inspiring—that makes people want to do their best. Person after person who has been associated with Warland mentions his modesty, his quiet nature, his thoughtfulness, and his support. He leads by example.

The McKnight Foundation created the Distinguished Artist Award to honor those whose lasting presence has made Minnesota a more creative, more culturally alive place. Dale Warland has conducted his Singers and others all over the world. He is internationally recognized as one of the masters of choral music. But his humility, his capacity for delight, and his hard work are as Minnesotan as they come.

Noa Staryk
Chair
The McKnight Foundation



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Music from the Heartland

by *Brian Newhouse*

I first heard the Dale Warland Singers 20 years ago from the inglorious vantage point of a dank hallway outside a closed-door rehearsal. That moment is still with me. Music is the hardest art to describe, but I remember pressing my ear to the door and hearing warmth. Human musical warmth. I auditioned the first chance I could and joined the Singers for several seasons of concerts, tours, and recordings.

Their music is splendor when it comes out of your speakers or embraces you in the concert hall. It all sounds so easy, too. It is anything but easy.

Dale's three-hour rehearsals consist of going over a single bar, sometimes even a single beat of music, innumerable times to make sure intonation, vowels, and the endless list of fill-in-the-musical-blanks are all checked off. When the nuts and bolts are set and you think you've finally got it—you haven't. "Feeling, people!" Dale exhorts, one hand clutching his heart while the other implores the choir. "It just can't be notes on a page, people. Any choir can sing the notes. You've got to feel it! OK, from the top again."

I learned quickly that the splendor of the Dale Warland Singers and the power of Dale's musical vision are the end products of a complex musical equation whose main element is plain old hard work.

The Warland work ethic began early in his life, because work was the easiest thing to come by. He was born in 1932, the grandson of Norwegian immigrants and the son of farmers who operated 160 acres of corn, oats, and soybeans near Badger, Iowa, population 100. Conveniences like tractors or electricity were far-off dreams. This was the Depression. The cows had to be milked, the hogs fed, eggs collected—by hand.

One of his earliest memories is of sitting in a farm wagon being pulled through a cornfield by two horses. His mother and father are walking alongside the wagon, hand-picking ears of corn and tossing them into the wagon. He is strapped into a special box made just for him inside the wagon. Corn sails overhead, hits the bang board and drops into the wagon. His parents' aim is good, but once in a while one of those rock-hard missiles hits him on the head.

He soon took his place working alongside his parents, getting a reprieve from morning milking during the school year. Once school let out in the spring, however, that task and all the others were his to help with. Amid the seven-days-a-week operation, the family always made time to notice the beauty around them.

"My father had only a grade-school education and my mother only a few years of high school," Dale says. "But my sensitivity to beauty—both visual and in sound—was instilled by them. They would just point out with awe the everyday things around us: a sunset, a beautiful rain pattering on the house, the way moonlight fell on the fields."

His parents occasionally took Dale and his brother, Bob, to a small art museum in nearby Fort Dodge. "We didn't necessarily know what we were looking at," Dale says, "but they knew instinctively that we should see those things."

As his powers of observation matured, Dale became increasingly interested in sound. "The way the train whistle moved through the countryside, that beautiful chord," he recalls. "Or bells in our church—things that you don't hear constantly around you. Unique sounds. Even then, I remember trying to distinguish between the ugly and what struck the soul. The first time I heard our little church choir when I was a kid, I remember being terribly moved. Again, those sounds and those chords. That was my first inspiration."

That church also gave him his first gig. On Sunday before services, he'd wedge himself into the dusty passageway behind the organ. There he'd grab the long wooden handle and, on cue from the organist, begin to pump it up and down providing wind for the pipes. Every Sunday, until electrical pumps came to his rescue, he'd pump

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through a prelude, three or four hymns, incidental pieces for Communion, and a postlude.

The behind-the-organ job brought him close to the church choir, which put him in close contact with his musical roots. His grandfather held the attendance record in that choir: 50 years straight, never a weeknight rehearsal or a Sunday morning missed. Dale's father also sang in the choir. With roots like that, Dale's interest in choirs naturally began to bloom.

He took particular notice of the director, a woman possessed of perfect pitch and great keyboard facility, and whom Dale still describes as "an innately brilliant musician." She gave him his first piano lesson when he was five. At least she tried to. Overwhelmed by her personality, he almost fainted. Six months later he returned for lesson number two. He kept up lessons but also discovered he could sing.

School offered another musical outlet. "We had a one-room schoolhouse, and we sang every day," he says. "Thirteen kids in eight grades, and we all sang together—folk songs, canons, everything. Whenever we did two-part canons, because I was so loud, they put me on one side of the room and the rest of the kids on the other."

A boisterous singing voice was one of the first signs that Dale was a talent to watch. Leadership qualities were another—also evident from the beginning.

There were small examples at first, like writing the ocarina fingerings for his younger brother (who didn't read music) so they could wow the locals as "The Warland Warblers." Then larger ones, like his first conducting job leading an offstage choir in a high-school play, a responsibility he remembers taking "so seriously that I should have known then I'd do this for the rest of my life." He also started to write music, and by his senior year in high school he won first prize (\$10) from the Iowa Federation of Music Clubs for his motet "My Sins."

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Dale's dynamo church-choir director had attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, and this became Dale's dream as well. He entered St. Olaf in the fall of 1950 and quickly settled into his life's work—rehearsing and performing with choirs.

By his junior year, Dale had his own student choir. Intrigued by the scores of European-trained composer Jean Berger, who was then on the faculty of Middlebury College in Vermont, Dale wrote Berger a letter requesting a new work for the student ensemble. One day Dale came home and found a package on the dining room table: Berger's new score, dedicated to Dale Warland. The sweet thing is, this transaction took place without

a dime changing hands. Dale had written Berger unaware that composers like to be paid for their work and, to his immense credit, Berger didn't dampen the young man's passion by demanding a fee. (How much could a college student pay anyway?) Thus began the career of the man who was to become America's most prolific commissioner of new choral music.

After St. Olaf came a two-year hitch in the Air Force. First Lieutenant Warland was stationed at Scott Air Force Base in Belleville, Illinois, and, true to form, he started a choir. Officers and enlisted men met to rehearse each week in a building near the base runway. When the jets revved their engines for takeoff, rehearsal came to an abrupt halt. "You couldn't even yell and be heard," Dale remembers. But the choir quickly became noticed and was invited to perform at a banquet keynoted by then-Vice President Richard Nixon.

Dale began work on his master's degree at the University of Minnesota right after military service. University Lutheran Church hired the graduate student to conduct its choir. At a Sunday morning rehearsal, in January 1957, the regular accompanist was absent, so Dale asked for a volunteer from the choir. The volunteer turned out to be the woman he would marry. Ruth and Dale Warland wed in 1959 and moved to Los Angeles, where Dale earned a doctorate at the University of Southern California in 1965.

Before finishing his doctorate, Dale taught for a year at Humboldt State College in California. In 1965, the Warlands moved to the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, where Dale chaired the Music Department of Keuka College. Two years later, he returned to the Midwest as director of choral activities at Macalester College in St. Paul.

Word got out that there was something special about this young conductor, and one day in 1972 the Walker Art Center called asking if he could assemble a group of singers to present a concert of new music. Although Dale's Mac students were good, he knew it would be a challenge for such young singers to deliver a full concert of new material. So he worked the phones and gathered 40 community singers he'd come to know. Their concert was a smash. The Walker called again. The Minnesota Opera (known then as Center Opera) called. The Schubert Club called. Everyone needing a good chorus. The phone kept ringing. And ringing. The Dale Warland Singers were born.

Thirty years later, the numbers are impressive:

- ◆ 23 Dale Warland Singers recordings
- ◆ 200 newly commissioned scores
- ◆ 1.5 million listeners across the United States through the annual Dale Warland Singers *Echoes of Christmas* broadcast

As for Dale, he's garnered nearly every award for musical excellence. In 1995, he joined luminaries Robert Shaw, Roger Wagner, and Margaret Hillis as the recipient

of the prestigious Michael Korn Founder's Award—the “Grammy” of American choral music. The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) has honored him and the Singers three times for adventuresome programming, recognizing his enthusiastic commissioning activity and his championship of superb, neglected scores of the last three decades. Dale Warland Singers recordings on the American Choral Catalog label have earned rave reviews from critics and music lovers across the United States and Europe, and twice the Singers have been invited to represent America at the World Symposium on Choral Music.

Not bad for an Iowa farm boy.

On top of the numbers, awards, and raves are the young conductors who've been influenced by Dale Warland. Theirs is probably the greatest tribute to who he is and why he matters to music in Minnesota and far beyond. One of them is Timothy Sawyer, who sang under Dale for several seasons and is now the director of choral activities at Northwestern College in St. Paul.

“He is a pioneer who's influenced a whole generation of conductors, singers, and lovers of choral music,” Sawyer says. “Mention to any choral fan anywhere ‘I sang with the Dale Warland Singers’ and you will receive a deep and knowing smile, followed by a quiet and affirming ‘Oh, yes. . . I know that choir.’ He has a signature sound and, for my ears, it includes a sinewy legato, purity of tone and vowel, an ease of enunciation and naturalness of delivery, and a fierce attention to detail in the rehearsal process.

“I try to teach my college choir how to sing in the Warland way, but it isn't easy. Artists who are natural with their skills often make their artistry seem effortless. This is true of Dale and his Singers. Though I used to be one of them, I am still trying to figure out how he does it! Dale is a vital part of the fabric of choral music in Minnesota, the United States, and the world.”

Accolades from musicians like Timothy Sawyer are commonplace in Dale's career. Concertgoers and music lovers second that praise with their own. Dale is an international giant in choral music.

But there is one last thing you should know, an element of his personality that, for me, rounds out the picture. For this, I'll close with a personal story.

My father passed away last year on the evening of October 23. Guess who was the first person to call the next morning with condolences—at seven o'clock. Standing barefooted in my kitchen that morning with the phone crooked in my neck, waking up to grief, all of what I know about Dale Warland suddenly coalesced.

He has talent, he works hard (and begins his workday early), and he has accomplished much. But these are secondary. What makes him remarkable is that his artistry is braided to a simple yet profound decency, to a warm heart. I, and just about anyone who's been touched by him, call him friend.



Brian Newhouse is author of the memoir A Crossing (Simon and Schuster, 1998). He lives in St. Paul.



An American Hero

by *Frances Richard*

Dale Warland is a quiet man whose modesty belies his strength of character and commitment. He is one of the true heroes of American concert music. He has commissioned, performed, and recorded more American music than anyone in the profession, and at the same time created in all our minds the great sound of the Dale Warland Singers. While he promotes and advocates for his fellow creators, he is a fine composer in his own right. He is a formidable role model and a force to be emulated by all who aspire to follow in his footsteps.

If there is just one memory involving Dale Warland that will be forever with me, it is the concert at the Chorus America conference in the Twin Cities in 1999. Dale Warland conducted the Singers for an audience of their peers. He had carefully prepared them in a program of works he had himself chosen just for the occasion. Seated in the balcony of the church, we heard a concert of such beauty and emotional impact that we all wept.



Frances Richard is the vice president and director of concert music for ASCAP, New York City.

“It just can’t be notes
on a page, people,”
Dale says at rehearsal.





“Any choir
can sing the notes.
You’ve got to *feel* it!”



The Dale Warland Sound

by *Royce Saltzman*

It may seem improbable to find a choral ensemble of international renown among the cornfields and fishing lakes of Minnesota. But Minnesota's heritage is an important element in the success of the Dale Warland Singers. The Scandinavian pioneers who settled Minnesota brought with them the great Lutheran tradition of choral music—that rich, profound, multivoice harmony that has filled churches and cathedrals across northern Europe for a thousand years.

This tradition has been nurtured in Minnesota for more than a century, thanks in large part to the Christiansen choral dynasty. F. Melius Christiansen founded the famed St. Olaf College Choir in Northfield, and his sons Olaf, who followed him at St. Olaf, and Paul, who led the Concordia College Choir in Moorhead, spread the gospel of choral music throughout Minnesota and beyond.

Dale Warland, who earned his bachelor's degree at St. Olaf in 1954, has helped maintain Minnesota's place on the world's choral map. He is indisputably one of the most important figures in American choral music today. His importance stems not only from his depth of understanding about the choral art but also from the fact that he has helped bring this art form out of academia into the cultural mainstream. Moreover, his ambitious commissioning projects have made it possible for living

composers to write choral music, assuring that a longstanding tradition remains vital, contemporary, and relevant.

Dale embodies another tradition, too—the pioneering spirit of the Midwest. There may be no trails left to blaze nor farmland to clear, but those who have inherited the pioneer spirit find many other challenges to satisfy their instincts.

A decision Dale made 16 years ago exemplifies this forward-looking spirit. In 1985, he left the security of an academic position at Macalester College to devote full time to the professional choir he founded in 1972, the Dale Warland Singers. In establishing a professional choir, he followed in the footsteps of conductors such as Robert Shaw and Robert Wagner, leaders of what one critic has called “the first Golden Age of American choral singing in this century.” Because of people like Dale, choral singing in America has lost none of its luster. To my mind, the Dale Warland Singers have become the premier professional choral organization in the United States today.

Dale chose to stay in Minnesota, and Minnesota has returned the favor. The Dale Warland Singers have benefited from collaborations with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Minnesota Orchestra. Through these associations, the ensemble has worked under the batons of Edo de Waart, Leonard Slatkin, Hugh Wolff, Bobby McFerrin, and David Zinman—to name only a few. The choir has reached radio listeners nationwide through Minnesota Public Radio and has worked with some of the country’s leading composers who happen to be based in Minnesota, such as Stephen Paulus, Libby Larsen, Carol Barnett, Dominick Argento, Janika Vandervelde, and Mary Ellen Childs.

Minnesota is an indelible backdrop to the accomplishments of the Dale Warland Singers. But the choir is not strictly a Minnesota arts organization. The Singers and their conductor belong to the country—and to the world.

Consider: In 1990, the Dale Warland Singers represented North America at the World Symposium on Choral Music in Stockholm and Helsinki, a global event that invites only the finest choirs to participate.

The Singers toured the Midwest and the southeastern United States and were the first group to receive the Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence, presented by Chorus America to an ensemble that demonstrates artistic excellence, a strong organizational structure, and a commitment to outreach, educational, and/or culturally diverse activities.

The Dale Warland Singers’ 23 recordings have brought further acclaim. “Splendid, melting stuff,” said the *BBC Music Magazine* of the Singers’ *December Stillness*. The *Oregonian* called it “peerless.” “The loveliest choral disc to emerge in a long time,”

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said the *Seattle Times* of *Blue Wheat*. Few conductors win such praise as consistently as Dale Warland does.

An ensemble, of course, mirrors its conductor, and Dale Warland has the respect of his peers around the world. In 1995, he was recognized with Chorus America's Michael Korn Founder's Award for his many contributions to the growth and development of the choral art. Krzysztof Penderecki, a Grammy Award-winning classical contemporary composer, paid Dale the great tribute of asking him to prepare his *St. Luke Passion* for major choruses in Los Angeles, Caracas, Stuttgart, and the Oregon Bach Festival. Dale has conducted the Swedish Radio Choir, the Danish Radio Choir, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and Israel's Cameran Singers, and has been a guest conductor at Carnegie Hall, at the Zimriya Festival in Jerusalem, and with the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. He has lectured at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and served as a juror at the national choir competition in Japan. This year he will travel to Spain, where he will serve on the jury of the Tolosa International Choral Festival.

How does a conductor rise to the top of his profession? What sets him apart from the ranks of the very good conductors? What makes him an inspiration?

Several qualities distinguish Dale Warland and his choir, the first being discipline. The honor of becoming a member of the Dale Warland Singers belongs to those who not only possess talent but share a sense of discipline. Dale chooses voices carefully from those who audition, with an ear to how they will work together. He rehearses the choir rigorously, paying attention to the details and nuances, until it echoes the sound in his mind. A concept of the music and how to achieve it is all-important. When you listen to the Dale Warland Singers, you hear a fine-tuned, superb instrument—a Stradivarius. That is the Dale Warland sound.

Second, Dale is a conductor with integrity. His selection of repertoire in concert and on recordings reflects a commitment to music of the highest quality. Over the years that I have known Dale, he has not compromised when choosing literature, even if the choice is not always audience-pleasing or financially beneficial. Of major significance is his commitment to commissioning new works that has set a standard to which other conductors aspire but that they seldom achieve.

Third, and perhaps most important, one senses humility in Dale Warland's work. Ego and flamboyance are absent. The music is always foremost in his programming. He has the ability to get inside a score and bring to light the composer's intentions in a way that allows the music to speak, while the role of the conductor remains secondary. His special talent as an interpreter reflects modesty, but always with the intention of making the music come alive. And it does—in an exciting and carefully crafted way. As a critic in Toronto wrote, "This isn't just a choir an audience listens to, it's one an audience experiences physically."

I have known Dale Warland for 40 years—since we were graduate students together at the University of Southern California, studying under Charles Hirt, one

of the major choral leaders in the United States for more than 30 years. Dr. Hirt was our mentor, a person we admired as an imaginative conductor, superb teacher, and skilled administrator. Robert Shaw also was influential. The Robert Shaw Chorale was the premier professional choir in the country with its touring and recordings. Most of us as choral conductors aspired to do what Shaw did—to lead a professional choir outside of academic life. Dale saw the potential, understood the challenge, and devoted himself to making it a reality. Over the years his success in realizing this goal is a remarkable achievement, a blend of entrepreneurship and art that is uniquely American.

Dale has been a mentor to others, including my daughter, Kathy Saltzman Romey, who followed in his footsteps at Macalester College, and is now the artistic director of the Minnesota Chorale and on the choral faculty at the University of Minnesota. Kathy, in her own words, says it best: “Through his visionary programming, impeccable realization of the score, commitment to excellence, and sublime performances, Dale Warland has inspired me to reach for new levels in vocal artistry.”

Dale intends to continue conducting as long as he can—a decision that pleases his many friends. I sense an inner fire that burns even stronger today than yesterday. Age is not a factor. It only tells you when he was born, not how old he is. He is in his prime as a conductor, with musicianship that is fully mature, a sound that is distinct, and an ensemble that is among the elite—anywhere. I hope that in the years to come the quality of his work will be even better known, nationally and internationally. The choral world deserves to hear the best.

When you listen to the Dale Warland Singers, you hear a fine-tuned, superb instrument—a Stradivarius. That is the Dale Warland sound.

Royce Saltzman is executive director of the Oregon Bach Festival and past president of the American Choral Directors Association and the International Federation for Choral Music.





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Notes from a Composer

by *Stephen Paulus*

Dale Warland first requested a new work from me during intermission at a Jeffrey Van guitar recital in 1973. I was amazed and thrilled. At the time I was just beginning my graduate studies at the University of Minnesota and had written very little choral music. I thought he was taking quite a chance, but eventually I decided that if he was willing to risk it, why shouldn't I?

It was not actually a paying commission, but it was a commission in the sense that a real professional who led the renowned Macalester College Concert Choir was asking me to create something for his group. The result was a five-minute work in four quick movements titled *Personals*, based on some of the milder ads in the "personals" section of a New York newspaper. Dale premiered the work and recorded it on an LP released by the college.

Since then, Dale has commissioned more than 30 of my works. The largest has been the 40-minute *Voices for Chorus and Orchestra*, premiered by the Minnesota Orchestra and the Dale Warland Symphonic Chorus in 1988. Others include the second part of my *Visions from Hildegard* for chorus, brass, and percussion, and the *Nativity Carols* for chorus, oboe, and harp. And there have been countless arrangements and shorter works, from Christmas carols to American folk songs. In some cases these have resulted in publication and in many they have included recording. When he calls to commission a work, he says, "I want to do the whole thing," meaning commission, publish, and record it.

Dale's passion for new works and working with living composers goes back to his earliest years in the profession. I once showed him a book I had bought on modern choral notation. As we paged through it, I was amazed at how many composers'

works he had premiered or had been the first to record or take on tour.

Some of my fondest memories of working with Dale include planning Christmas carol albums at Moose Lake. The Warland family used to rent a cabin on Moose Lake every July, and they often invited my wife, Patty, and me to visit. On these occasions, energized by the proverbial bottomless cup of coffee, Dale and I (with input from his wife, Ruth, and Patty) would sit at a picnic table or on the beach with yellow legal pads in hand and write down the names of countless Christmas carols. Then we would combine them in various ways, discuss keys, texts, pacing, and so on, and narrow the list down to what we thought would make a terrific album. It's a pleasure to see Dale still making lists, albeit now at his own beautiful cabin.

Anyone who has worked with Dale on a new composition will attest to his passion for delivering precisely what the composer wants. Of course, he may have a suggestion or two developed from his years of rehearsing, performing, and recording. You can always tell when Dale has begun to sink his teeth into your work. The phone rings constantly and the questions sound like this:

"Are you sure you want a B-flat on page 12? It's B-natural 43 bars earlier."

"Do you want everyone to breathe at that point? A big breath or just a little lift?"

"Would you like the voicing to be balanced evenly throughout?"

And so on.

This attention to detail has made those of us who have had the privilege of working with him better composers who strive to write with feeling and sensitivity for the voice and not to obscure the text. He takes this same passion for detail into the recording studio, where each nuance is massaged until he is satisfied.

I believe that the greatest reward for Dale is simply hearing the most beautiful instrument we have—the human voice—singing in concord and creating a gorgeous sound,

whether it be a breathtaking unison or a heart-rending, 11-part divisi chord. That joy must be paired with the knowledge that he has done so much to raise the bar in the choral world. His achievements have inspired not only composers but also other music directors to strive for the same level of excellence.

Dale's belief in commissioning new works rises from his desire to further the repertoire, as well as his eagerness just to tackle something new. I am convinced he believes that the very new things enrich the old. There is a long line of composers who wouldn't dream of saying no to Dale's request for a new work, no matter how busy they might be.

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Stephen Paulus, who composes music for chorus, chamber ensemble, piano, organ, solo voice, opera, and orchestra, lives in St. Paul.



“There is a long line of composers
who wouldn't dream of saying no
to Dale's request for a new work,
no matter how busy they might be.”



Dale Orland and Stephen Paulus

A Chorus of Thanks

Composers, conductors, singers, and former students remember Dale Warland's influence.

DALE WARLAND took Chicago by storm on a summer evening when he conducted a grand chorus in Rachmaninoff's *Vespers*. The setting was one of Chicago's largest (packed to the doors) and most historic churches. The audience responded in a spirit approaching awe. Here was music of the Russian Orthodox Church, alien to most listeners. Yet thanks to the presentation—to Warland—it was accessible and spoke as if in universal tones. The next day, my wife and I had a long lunch with Dale at the home of friends. We had not met him before, but we had the experience so many have had: that he has “soul” and reaches for soul. Cardinal Newman liked to speak in the language of Psalms in Latin: *cor ad cor loquitur*, “Heart speaketh unto heart.” As with the person, so with his music.

*Martin E. Marty
Professor Emeritus,
University of Chicago
Member, the President's Committee
on the Arts and Humanities*



IN THE LATE 1960S, Dale Warland was one of the first American choral conductors to visit Sweden to learn about Nordic choral music. His curiosity and openness inspired and encouraged me. Since then, we have been in continuous contact, guest conducting each other's choirs and meeting at choir conventions all over the world. We have always tried to strengthen each other in our common belief in the importance of a cappella choral music. When Dale traveled to New York last February to listen to a concert of the Swedish Radio and Chamber choirs, I was deeply touched. To me, that was a sign of true friendship.

*Eric Ericson
Conductor
Swedish Radio Choir
Stockholm*

He is as close to being a *pure* musician as anyone I have ever known.

◀ *Dominick Argento
Composer
Minneapolis*

I MET DALE in New York through a mutual acquaintance. From then on, our apartment was filled with laughter whenever he made a trip to the Big Apple. One day I received a call from Dale asking if I would agree to compose a piece for the Singers featuring jazz piano and bass. That was the beginning of a whole new and exciting career for me. I decided that my “lyricist” should be one of the finest for this choir, so I chose William Shakespeare. I set a group of Shakespeare songs and sonnets to music for the Singers. I was privileged to be at the premiere. It was a joy! Thank you, Dale, for having the courage to ask an old jazzer to write something for such a distinguished group.

George Shearing
Composer
New York City



DALE, you are *so* monotonous. I have been listening to, performing, and recording with the Dale Warland Singers for 29 years, and it’s always the same old thing: challenging repertoire, fabulous intonation, sustained richness of tone at all dynamic levels, balance, vocal lines filled with nuance and color, elegant phrasing, clear diction, and emotional content. I just don’t know if I can take much more of this astonishing beauty and unbelievable excellence! Thanks for performing my compositions, and for three decades of close friendship and great memories.

◀ *Jeffrey Van*
Guitarist, Composer
St. Paul



YOUNG COMPOSERS have been wonderfully served by his commitment to the reading and commissioning program, which has nurtured emerging talents. His support of American music has greatly enriched the choral repertoire. He carefully and subtly draws a beauty of sound from his singers that one doesn't easily forget.

◀ *Aaron Jay Kernis*
Composer
New York City

THE DALE WARLAND SINGERS have joined the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in performances of works by Mozart, Brahms, Beethoven, and Paert, among others, under conductors Hugh Wolff, Bobby McFerrin, and Nicholas McGegan. The consistent quality of the musical performance which Dale coaxes from his ensemble is of genuinely world-class standard. We at the SPCO continually wonder at the warmth of sound and variety of character which Dale elicits from his ensemble, and which is essential in any great live musical performance. And all this from a man who is himself kind and generous, passionate yet self-effacing.

Barry Kempton
Vice President and General Manager
The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra



Macalester Concert Choir, 1975

“IT’S TIME!” That singing phrase ushered us daily into rehearsals of the Macalester Concert Choir. And, oh, how welcome his wonderful smile made us feel!

The softly lit concert hall at the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center was Dale’s haven of music-making for almost 20 years, and each day he would have us relax one another with back rubs to the mellifluous sounds of his piano noodlings: sometimes jazzy, often playful, always calming to the spirits of the 40 overstressed collegians gathered to become a choir. There followed the various vocalises—“ee—ay—ah!” led by his liquid, flowing gestures that contributed to the rich, legato singing typical of the Warland sound. Then on to the precisely planned rehearsal, during which we strove for perfection in phrasing, nuance, timbre, and for the eagerly anticipated “forearm shivers”: When the hair on Dale’s arms rose, we knew we had achieved a truly inspiring musical moment.

Rob Reid
Artistic Director and Conductor
Lawrence (Kansas) Civic Choir

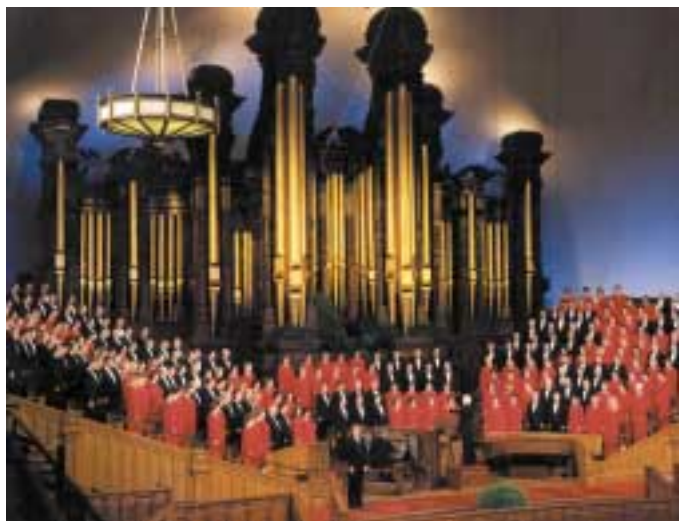


You've inspired an entire generation of composers, and I count myself lucky to be among them.

◀ *Libby Larsen*
Composer
Minneapolis

IN 2000, Dale conducted the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on our Sunday morning radio and television broadcast—the second time he had appeared with the choir. It was an extraordinary musical experience. Once again, standard choral repertoire was performed, but, as always, there was something new, this time from the pen of his longtime associate Stephen Paulus. Dale has always remained true to the performance and dissemination of new choral repertoire. He also has worked tirelessly for the professional choral singer. He has devoted his life to promoting and lifting the level of the choral art in our nation.

Craig Jessop
Music Director
Mormon Tabernacle Choir
Salt Lake City



DALE WARLAND has unfailingly represented a passionate commitment to the music of our own time. He has never flagged in his determination to build an inspiring choral repertory through his discriminating commissioning. In working with Warland's group, I have always found his preparation of these vocalist-musicians

excellent. Last year, Dale commissioned a short work of mine for his Christmas concert. And when he performed my *Christmas Chant*, again, his meticulous, intelligent, thorough preparation of this rather difficult piece resulted in a beautiful performance.

◀ *Stanislaw Skrowaczewski*
Composer
Conductor Laureate, Minnesota Orchestra
Minneapolis



DALE'S REPUTATION as one of the greats rings throughout the world: I have had the remarkable honor of working with many wonderful practitioners of the choral arts: Howard Swan, Helmuth Rilling, Joseph Flummerfelt, Roger Wagner, John Oliver, and Robert Shaw, to name a few. It was Shaw who would

always tear up a bit when discussing Dale, sometimes out of love, sometimes out of envy, because Shaw felt there were so many things Dale did better than he!

Welz Kauffman
President and CEO
The Ravinia Festival
Highland Park, Illinois

IN 1957, when I was conducting the Luther College Concert Band at the Lutheran World Federation in Minneapolis, Dale Warland approached me with the question: "How do I become a successful choral director?" I must have given him incredible advice, for look at his accomplishments! The Twin Cities are recognized as the choral center of our country, in no small part because of Dale. How many choirs owe their existence to the inspiration of the Dale Warland Singers! How many singers are drawn to Minneapolis-St. Paul because of the opportunity to continue in the choral art! Now he is a model of success to students of our art. Wouldn't it be interesting to have him answer the question posed to me over 40 years ago?

Weston Noble
Conductor, Nordic Choir
Luther College
Decorah, Iowa



High Notes

Among music and friends



▲ A conductor among composers. Dale Warland (second from left) with Stephen Paulus, Cary John Franklin, and Steve Barnett, November 1985.

Warland's ambitious commissioning program has helped keep choral music contemporary and relevant.



◀ The annual *Echoes of Christmas* concert brings the Dale Warland Singers to a national audience via public radio.

Here, Warland (seated) with composers Janika Vandervelde and Randall Davidson at the University of St. Thomas Chapel in St. Paul.



▲ At the 1987 Colorado Music Festival at Chautauqua Park near Boulder, the hills are alive with the Dale Warland Sound. The Singers were a guest choir and Warland was a guest conductor during a week that featured the works of Stravinsky.



Warland was inspired by the great choral conductor Robert Shaw (center) and in 1967, assisted Shaw at Meadowbrook Music Festival in Rochester, Michigan. Shaw with assistant Clayton Krehbiel (left) and Warland.



 The Macalester College Concert Choir toured Poland in 1978.



Warland and guest soloist Wanda Cobb at a 1973 Concert of American Music at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.



The Dale Warland Singers in Atlanta, 1999



Warland and Sanford Moore collaborated in a “Glorious Gershwin” concert.

Shaw and Warland backstage at Minneapolis’s Orchestra Hall, 1994. Shaw conducted the Singers in works of Stravinsky and Duruflé.





▲ A proud and historic moment: The Dale Warland Singers made their debut in 1972 at Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.



▲ Helmuth Rilling, artistic director and conductor of the Oregon Bach Festival, with Warland in 1989.

▶ A special guest played “Happy Birthday” at Warland’s 60th birthday—pianist and composer Dave Brubeck.





▲ Warland was a student at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, when he first became a choral conductor, leading the Viking Male Chorus from 1953 to 1954.



▲ Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer with Ruth and Dale Warland. The Dale Warland Singers have performed many of Schafer's works.

◀ In 1977, the Dale Warland Singers collaborated with the Minnesota Opera in a staged production of Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion*. The work has been called "monumental... with its operalike recitatives and its two choruses that question each other."

The Dale Warland Singers

Discography

Echoes of Christmas

1979

Augsburg, LP, 1621

Burt, Ives, Paulus, Preston (arr.),

Van (arr.), Wagner (arr.), Warland (arr.),

Zgodava

La Fiesta de la Posada:

A Christmas Choral Pageant

1979

CBS, LP, 36662

Brubeck

250 Years of Great Choral Music

1980

Musical Heritage Society, LP, MHS 4358

Argento, Bach, Brahms, Ginastera,

Messiaen

Choral Mosaic

1980

Augsburg—Musical Heritage Society, LP,

Augs 1454—MHS 4358

Argento, Bach, Brahms, Ginastera,

Messiaen

Americana: A Bit of Folk

1981

Augsburg, LP, 23-0980

Arr. by Churchill, W. Hall, Kubik,

A. Parker, Paulus, Rutter, Van, Warland

Carols of Christmas

1981

Augsburg, LP, 1317

Billings, Fissinger, Luboff (arr.), Paulus

(arr.), B. Pierce, Rutter (arr.), Van,

Warland (arr.), Warlock

Gloria: Twentieth Century Choral Music

1981

Walton Music Corporation, LP, WR 1

Edlund, Hallock, Janson, Melnäs

Swedish Choral Ballads

1981

Walton Music Corporation, LP, WR2

Alfvén, Larsson, Lundvik, Malmfors,

Pettersson, Rangstrom, Stenhammar

Sing Noel: Christmas Music of Daniel Pinkham

1982

Augsburg, LP, 1916

Pinkham

Sing We of Christmas

1983

Augsburg, LP, 1918

Britten, Distler (arr.), C. Franklin (arr.),

Paulus, Poston, Rutter (arr.), Van

On Christmas Night

1986

Augsburg, LP, 1761

S. Barnett (arr.), C. Franklin (arr.), Holst,

Joubert, Paulus, Prentice (arr.), Van (arr.),

Walton, Warland (arr.), Warlock, Willcocks

Stephen Paulus: Carols for Christmas

1987, 1996

d'Note Records (re-release), CD, DND

1015

Paulus

**Dominick Argento: Peter
Quince at the Clavier—I Hate
and I Love**

1988

Musical Heritage Society, LP/CD,

912199Z

Argento

A New Creation

1990

Mark Foster, CD, MFCD01

Clausen

**The Dale Warland Singers:
Choral Currents**

1991

Innova Recordings, CD, MN110

*C. Barnett, S. Barnett, Childs, C. Franklin,
Hodkinson, L. Larsen, Paulus*

Christmas Echoes, Vol. 1

1992

Augsburg, CD, 4-11

Billings, Burt, Fissinger (arr.), Ives,

Luboff (arr.), Paulus, Pierce, Preston (arr.),

*Rutter (arr.), Van, Wagner (arr.), Warland
(arr.), Warlock, Zgodava*

Christmas Echoes, Vol. 2

1992

Augsburg, CD, 4-12

Britten, Distler, C. Franklin (arr.), Holst,

Joubert, Paulus, Pinkham, Poston, Prentice

(arr.), Rutter (arr.), Van, Walton, Warland

(arr.), Warlock, Willcocks

Cathedral Classics

1994

American Choral Catalog, CD, ACC 120

Allegrì, Barber, Howells, Martin

Fancie

1994

DWS Collections, CD, 1001

C. Barnett (arr.), Brahms, Britten,

Carmichael, Chatman, Dello Joio, Diemer,

Ellington, Erb (arr.), Gershwin, Hawley,

Oxley (arr.), Rorem, Rossini, Schafer,

Shearing, R. Thompson, Vaughan

Williams

December Stillness

1995

American Choral Catalog, CD, ACC 121

Busto, Heitzeg, Hess, Houkom, Howells,

Kverno, Pärt, Paulus, Penderecki, Poulenc,

Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky

Blue Wheat

1996

American Choral Catalog, CD, ACC 122

C. Barnett (arr.), Burleigh (arr.),

De Cormier (arr.), Fissinger (arr.), Foster,

Houkom (arr.), Keller (arr.), Kubik (arr.),

Luboff (arr.), G. Martin (arr.),

A. Parker (arr.), Paulus (arr.), Rutter (arr.)

A Rose in Winter

1997 (re-release)

d'Note Classics, CD, DND 1022

Carney, Hassler, Koszewski, Kverno,

Messiaen, Paynter, Poulenc, Sandström,

Tavener, Van, Victoria, Warland (arr.),

Willan

Bernstein & Britten

1999

American Choral Catalog, CD, ACC 123

Albright, Bernstein, Britten, Harlap,

Hovland, Paulus, Rautavaara, Wertsch

A Music Catalog

DALE WARLAND, *Composer*

Psalm 98

(male voices, trumpet), 1954

A Child Is Born

(SATB*, English horn), 1962

Be Joyful, O Earth

(SATB, a cappella), 1963

Let All the World Now Hail Our Lord

(SATB, a cappella), 1963

Thee We Adore

(SATB, a cappella), 1965

Benedictus

(SA, a cappella), 1968

Psalm 67

(SATB divisi, a cappella), 1969

Greetings According to Mother Goose

(SATB, a cappella), 1974

Ode for Christmas Day

(TBB**, harp), 1983

To a Young Child

(SATB, a cappella), 1986

American Child

(SATB, piano), 1988

Petitions

(SATB, a cappella), 1992

Videntes Stellam

(SATB, harp, glockenspiel), 1996

Boyo Balu

(SATB divisi, a cappella), 2000

DALE WARLAND, *Arranger*

The Cuckoo

(SATB, a cappella), 1962

Coventry Carol

(SATB, a cappella), 1968

Catalonian Carol

(SATB, oboe), 1980

Of the Father's Love Begotten

(SATB, a cappella), 1981

Simple Gifts

(SATB, flute, guitar), 1981

What Child Is This?

(SATB, flute, harp), 1981

What Is This Fragrance?

(SATB, oboe), 1981

Kling, Glöcken

(SATB, a cappella), 1986

Wexford Carol

(SATB, flute), 1986

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

(SATB, oboe), 1990

Instrumental Works

Notturmo

(clarinet and piano), 1959

Adagio

(clarinet, cello, and piano), 1959

Mattinale

(clarinet and piano), 1986

* Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass

** Tenor, Bass, Baritone



Ear Play #2

Mission



EAR
GION



EAR
GION

PLAY

mf

mf

A Conductor's Life

1932

Born April 14 on a farm near Badger, Iowa.

1950

Graduates from Fort Dodge Senior High School and enrolls at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota.

1954

Receives B.A. in music from St. Olaf.

1955

As first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, founds Scott Male Chorus at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

1957

Enrolls at University of Minnesota for a master's degree and serves as minister of music, University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis.

1959

Marries Ruth Seim. First recording, *Great Lutheran Hymns*, for Augsburg Publishing House.

1960

Receives M.A. in theory/composition and enrolls at University of Southern California School of Music.

1963

Joins music faculty at Humboldt (California) State College. Birth of first child, David.

1965

Obtains doctorate from USC and moves to Keuka Park, New York, as chairman of the Music Department at Keuka College.

1967

Birth of daughter Kari. Warland joins Macalester College in St. Paul as director of choral activities. Assists Robert Shaw at Meadowbrook School of Music. Prepares U.S. premiere, in the Twin Cities, of Krzysztof Penderecki's *The Passion According to St. Luke*, with Penderecki conducting.

1968

Prepares Carnegie Hall and Twin Cities performances of *The Passion According to St. Luke*, with Penderecki conducting.

1971

Receives Ford Foundation grant to study with Eric Ericson in Sweden and David Willcocks in England.

1972

Dale Warland Singers debut at Walker Art Center on June 12.

1976-1977

Collaborates with Norman Luboff to produce two recordings with the Dale Warland Singers.

1977

Dale Warland Singers tour Sweden and Norway.

1980

Singers offer first subscription series and present first *Echoes of Christmas* concert at Orchestra Hall. Warland is appointed to National Endowment for the Arts choral panel.

1981

Dale Warland Singers achieve full professional status and release four recordings.

1985

Resigns from Macalester College to devote full time to the Singers. Macalester Concert Choir and the Singers travel to Germany to help celebrate Bach's 300th birthday. Singers perform at Ordway Music Theatre for the first time.

1987

Major Jerome Foundation grant launches the Singers' New Choral Music Program for Emerging Composers. Singers featured at American Choral Directors Association national convention in San Antonio.

1988

Receives St. Olaf College Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dale Warland Singers perform with Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

1989

Receives Outstanding Alumnus Award from USC Thornton School of Music.

1990

Singers represent U.S. at Second World Symposium on Choral Music, held in Sweden, Estonia, and Finland; and host the annual Chorus America convention in Minneapolis.

1991

Echoes of Christmas broadcast carried by 175 public radio stations nationwide.

1992

Dale Warland Singers receive first-ever Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence and ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming (the first of three such awards).

1994-1996

American Choral Catalog releases three Dale Warland Singers CDs.

1995

Receives Michael Korn Founder's Award from Chorus America.

1997

Dale Warland Singers recordings featured in two films, *My Best Friend's Wedding* and *The Garden of Redemption*.

1999

Adjudicates Japanese Choral Festival, Fukuoka, Japan, and guest conducts Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir.

2000

Guest conducts Utah Chamber Artists, Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and Grant Park Music Festival (Chicago).

From top: Brothers Dale and Bob Warland ready for school; Dale as an Air Force cadet; leading the Scott Male Chorus at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois; at Macalester College; Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducting the New York premiere, at Carnegie Hall, of Penderecki's Passion According to St. Luke, for which Warland prepared the choirs.

Background photo: Macalester College Concert Choir



Dale Warland Singers

Dale Warland, founder and music director

Selections on the CD commemorating the 2001 Distinguished Artist Award

American Favorites

Is there a flower, from *Flower Songs*
By Vincent Persichetti
Live performance—May 5, 2001

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Montium custos nemorumque, Virgo,
from *Odes of Horace*
By Randall Thompson
Live performance—October 21, 2000

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The Rune of Hospitality
By Alf Houkom
Live performance—December 7, 1997

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Pilgrims' Hymn, from *The Three Hermits*
By Stephen Paulus
Live performance—March 20, 1999

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O Magnum Mysterium
By Morten Lauridsen
Live performance—March 1, 1997

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Commissions

This Endris Night, from *Three Nativity*
Carols
By Stephen Paulus
Live performance—December 6, 1998

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I Hate and I Love (excerpts)
I Hate and I Love
Let us live, my Clodia
Greetings, miss with nose not small
By Dominick Argento
Live performance—October 21, 2000

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Dorma, ador
By Aaron Jay Kernis
Live performance—December 2, 2000

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Cindy
Arranged by Carol Barnett
Recorded on *Fancie*

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Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind,
from *Music to Hear*
By George Shearing
Recorded on *Fancie*

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Dale Warland Compositions / Arrangements

What Is This Fragrance?

Arranged by Dale Warland
Recorded on *Christmas Echoes, Vol. I*

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Publisher/SESAC

Coventry Carol

Arranged by Dale Warland
Recorded on *Christmas Echoes, Vol. I*

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Wexford Carol

Arranged by Dale Warland
Recorded on *Christmas Echoes, Vol. II*

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Boyo Balu

By Dale Warland
Live performance—December 2, 2000

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International Favorites

Otche Nash (Our Father)

By Nikolai Golovanov
Live performance—March 29, 1998

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American Folk

Oh, Shenandoah

Arranged by Alf Houkom
Live performance—May 5, 2001

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CD mastering: John Scherf

Special thanks to all composers, publishers,
instrumentalists, and singers who made this
CD possible.

About the Award

Minnesota is often cited as a special place to live because its citizens have access to such a wealth of cultural activities. Theaters, museums and galleries, dance programs, performances, music, and films enliven our storefronts and street corners, our stages and concert halls. But we often forget who set all this activity in motion.

The Distinguished Artist Award, now in its fourth year, recognizes those who, individually and collectively, laid the foundation for what we enjoy today. Although they had opportunities to pursue their work elsewhere, they chose to stay, and by staying made a difference. These artists have founded and/or strengthened Minnesota's vibrant arts organizations, mentored and inspired younger artists, and attracted audiences and patrons who enable art to thrive. Most of all, they are working artists who have made the most of their formidable talents.

Many of these artists have received national or international honors. But, despite the state's rich cultural history, there was no appropriate tribute for them at home. To fill that gap, The McKnight Foundation has established the Distinguished Artist Award—a Minnesota award for Minnesota artists.

One artist each year receives the award, which includes a \$40,000 stipend. Anyone is welcome to nominate an artist. Nominations received by March 31 are considered the same year. A panel of people appointed on the basis of their knowledge of Minnesota's cultural history reviews the nominations, sometimes suggests others, and selects the Distinguished Artist.

As is customary, this year's panelists considered more than one hundred artists from all over the state before reaching a unanimous decision. Our thanks to Linda Hoeschler, executive director of the American Composers Forum, St. Paul; Linda Myers, executive director of The Loft Literary Center, Minneapolis; Dale Schatzlein, director of Northrup Auditorium, University of Minnesota; and Stewart Turnquist, coordinator of the Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program, Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Each year, the panel members have set a high standard that makes this award all the more meaningful in documenting Minnesota's cultural history.

Neal Cuthbert
Program Director, Arts
The McKnight Foundation

McKnight Distinguished Artists

2001

DALE WARLAND

2000

ROBERT BLY

1999

WARREN MACKENZIE

1998

DOMINICK ARGENTO

Special thanks to Gayle Ober, Debra Harrer, and Jared Anderson of the Dale Warland Singers for their invaluable assistance with this book.

DESIGN Barbara Koster

PHOTOGRAPHY Mark Luinenburg;
Argento page 24, by Sal Skog;
Van, page 25, Larsen, page 27, and
Skrowaczewski, page 28, courtesy
of the Minnesota Orchestra;
archival photographs courtesy
of the Dale Warland Singers

EDITING Sylvia Lindman, Gayle Thorsen

PRINTING Diversified Graphics, Incorporated
on Mohawk Options made with
30 percent postconsumer fiber

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