



ABIGAIL BEERWART

Abigail Marie Beerwart has been praised for her “wonderfully crafted theatrical characterizations and purity of vocal tone” (The Republic) and performs actively as a soloist and in roles throughout the United States.

Recent solo appearances include Bach’s BWV 21 with the University of Maryland’s Bach Cantata Series, the Salute! 2019 Concert with the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic, guest soloist in the Michael W. Smith Benefit Concert at Wheaton College, the Wheaton College Honor’s Concert, and the guest vocalist with the Columbus (IN) Symphony Orchestra.

Her latest stage credits include the World Premiere of *Four Freedoms* by Joseph C. Phillips, Jr., *La Musica (L’Orfeo)*, *Rosalinda (Die Fledermaus)*, *Pamina (The Magic Flute)*, and the *Gossip (Noye’s Fludde)*.

Born and raised in Columbus, Indiana, Abigail received her bachelor’s degree in Vocal Performance from Wheaton College (IL) and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Opera Performance at the University of Maryland through the Maryland Opera Studio.

When she is not performing, Abigail enjoys spending time with her family, playing with her dogs, hiking, riding her horses, and doing any activity at beautiful Crystal Lake, Michigan.



SAMANTHA JOHNSON-HELMS

clarinet

Hailed for her “great dynamic sensitivity and exquisite phrasing,” Samantha Johnson-Helms is a sought-after collaborative musician and teacher. She currently serves as Principal Clarinet of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic where she has been a featured soloist on numerous occasions.

Growing up in Columbus, Sammy had many musical opportunities. She received her Bachelor of Music degree at Butler, then completed her MM at the Jacobs School of

Music at Indiana University where she is currently a DM candidate. Her dissertation is entitled *Creating New Career Paths in Music: A Graduate Level Minor Field Curriculum in Entrepreneurship for Musicians* and anticipates completion of the document and her doctorate in December 2021.

Sammy also holds the position of Principal Clarinet with the Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra and is a frequent substitute for ensembles across the midwest. She can be heard on recordings for Naxos and Hal Leonard and is a founding member of the award-winning clarinet quartet, the Novacane Quartet.

When she is not performing, Sammy and her husband love to cook, spend time with their two dogs, and enjoy local craft breweries.

First Financial proudly supports the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic!

For over 150 years, First Financial Bank has successfully combined the expertise and services of a larger bank with the care and perspective of a neighborhood community bank.

For more information on First Financial Bank, visit us online at bankatfirst.com or stop in to your local banking center today.



first is a registered trademark of First Financial Bancorp. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LENDER FDIC



MELISSA GARCIA *director*

CICC Concert Choir, Descant, and Preparatory Choir

Melissa M. García is a passionate instructor who inspires children by allowing them to experience music from many genres and cultures. She is an expert at motivating the young singer through activities aimed at music literacy while giving them a foundation of healthy and age-appropriate singing technique.

Mrs. Garcia has served as a conductor with the Indianapolis Children's Choir for the past 6 years. She has been fortunate to work with ICC singers of many different ages spanning from the Intermediate-advanced choir and beginning level choirs for the Indianapolis Children's Choir as well as all choirs for the Columbus Indiana Children's Choir. As a specialist in youth choirs, Mrs. Garcia has been served as a guest conductor for numerous honor choir festivals in Indiana. Additionally, she is on the summer staff of the Heartland Youth Choir in Des Moines, Iowa where she

serves as conductor of the SummerTunes Choir and teaches Kodaly Musicianship classes.

Mrs. Garcia's teaching career spans from pre-school music through high school choral programs. In addition to her work with children's choruses, Mrs. Garcia served for several years as a music educator at Light & Life Christian Preschool in Avon, IN. Prior to her work in Indiana, Mrs. Garcia was the Associate Director of the Northern California Children's Choir where she also served as an elementary music educator. While living in Iowa, she served as a private voice teacher and instructor for the Heartland Youth Choir in Des Moines, as a music instructor for the Des Moines Children's Choruses and the Iowa Youth Chorus. In addition, she served as a director for the middle school and high school choral department in Earlham, Iowa. While a student at Iowa State University, she held an internship position as the Assistant Conductor for the Preparatory Choir with the Ames Children's Choir.

Mrs. Garcia received her BME from Iowa State University in 2005. In addition, she has completed her Kodaly Certification from Indiana University. She is recently served as a Co-President of Indiana Kodaly Educators.



RUTH E. DWYER *legend*

Ruth E. Dwyer, Founding Artistic Director of the Columbus Indiana Children's Choir, (CICC) recently retired from her various roles with the Indianapolis Children's Choirs (ICC) after serving for nearly 35 years. She is an internationally recognized youth and children's choir specialist and Kodály educator. Mrs. Dwyer has been the guest conductor for the OAKE National Children's Choir, numerous All-State and Honor Choirs and for MidAmerica Productions Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center Youth Festivals. She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Philthrusong, Inc. (Philanthropy Through Song) a non-profit organization supporting anti-impaired driving education and traumatic brain injury research through choral performance.

She has authored and contributed to a number of music education textbooks for ICC and Hal Leonard. She is also the editor of the Ruth Dwyer Choral Series at Colla Voce.

Prior to her fulltime position with ICC, Mrs. Dwyer served the State of Indiana for 19 years as a public school music educator. She has recently been awarded the National OAKE Life Time Achievement award, the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic Golden Baton, the IMEA Elementary Music Teacher of the Year, the Hoosier Musician, and the IPS Rising Star awards. Mrs. Dwyer is a graduate of Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CICC ON PG. 21



MOLLY HOTEK

Molly Ann Hotek, soprano, is currently a Junior at Columbus North High School, where she is very active in both the choral and drama departments. She sings locally with Columbus North Vocal Pointe Mixed Show Choir, the Philharmonic Chorus and is a regular soloist at St. Bartholomew Catholic Church.

Molly has benefited greatly from the Philharmonic children's educational programming. She is a graduate of the Philharmonic's own CICC (2014-2020) and continues her choral singing with the Indianapolis Children's Choir- Master Chorale. In addition, Molly was a violinist with the Philharmonic Youth Orchestra from 2015-2020.

Molly is an avid learner and has participated in Master Classes presented by recent Philharmonic guest artists Ronan Tynan and Tony DeSare as well as many others offered regionally. In 2019, Molly was selected for the DePauw University Vocal Arts Immersion Program and was recently chosen as an alternate for the Schmidt Summer Vocal Institute at Miami (OH) University (2021). She studies voice locally with Jenny Heichelbech and this past summer was awarded first place, ages 14-16 treble voice, in the Great Lakes Region for the National Association of Teachers of Singing- National Student Auditions vocal competition.

When not performing, Molly enjoys reading, drawing, writing novels, water sports, and going on drives with her grandfather in his '65 Corvette.



GRANT JACKSON

Grant Jackson graduated from Columbus North in 2020 and has been the recipient of the Anna Newell Brown Award for Vocal Excellence for three years in a row.

He has taken part in numerous performances throughout his life, most notably: in many of Dancer Studio's performances since he was 5, as well as performing in CNHS Concert Choir, Debuteens and Music Men, and Vocal Pointe.

Grant Jackson is currently studying at DePauw University, where he is pursuing degrees in German and Vocal performance. In his free time, he enjoys Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Historical European Martial Arts.



ANNA NEWELL BROWN AWARD FOR VOCAL EXCELLENCE

Celebrating its 33rd year, the Anna Newell Brown Award for Vocal Excellence has become one of the most highly regarded scholarship competitions in Indiana. The award was established in honor of Anna Newell Brown, an accomplished vocalist, patron of the arts and grandmother of Jeff Brown, fifth generation of the Brown family to lead Home News Enterprises.

The Betty F. Brown Award for Instrumental Excellence, established by Jeff's father, Bob, honors Jeff's mother, an accomplished musician and a guiding force behind the establishment of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic in 1987.

Administered by the Heritage Fund - The Community Foundation of Bartholomew County, the competitions encourage formal music training for students and help to strengthen the school and community music programs.