

MUSICA SACRA

PROFESSIONAL CHORAL MUSIC AT ITS FINEST
RICHARD WESTENBURG, FOUNDER

KENT TRITLE, MUSIC DIRECTOR | JANICE L. MAYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | SCOTT LETHBRIDGE, PRESIDENT

MICHAEL SHEETZ APPOINTED MUSICA SACRA'S FIRST ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, NY, August 6, 2013: Michael Sheetz has been named Assistant Music Director of Musica Sacra. The appointment was announced by the President of the Board of Directors, **Scott Lethbridge**. Mr. Sheetz is the first Assistant Music Director in the history of this professional choral organization.

Music Director Kent Tritle spoke of Michael Sheetz's experience and artistic sensibility: "I met Michael Sheetz when he served as my accompanist for the Symphonic Chorus at the Manhattan School of Music four years ago. I immediately knew that he was an especially gifted musician. After he completed his Master of Music degree in Collaborative Piano, we worked together toward his Choral Conducting Certificate. I have observed first-hand that he has that magic combination of talent, charisma, integrity and a willingness to do the hard work."

In accepting the appointment, Michael Sheetz said "I feel humbled and honored to work alongside Kent Tritle to bring the finest professional choral performances to the audiences of New York City. He has opened my ears, heart, and mind to the highest levels of music making, and I look forward to helping him achieve his vision for Musica Sacra." Mr. Sheetz described his commitment to choral music: "It has been one of the great fortunes of my life to have studied and worked alongside Kent Tritle. I have sung and accompanied for church, school, and community choirs since I was a child, and have loved the process of working with others to create a powerful, moving experience for audiences."

Kent Tritle is the second Music Director of Musica Sacra in its almost 50-year history, having succeeded Founder Richard Westenburg. Now entering his seventh season in the post, he reflected on perpetuating Maestro Westenburg's legacy: "I consider Richard Westenburg to have been a mentor of mine, and it is in this regard that appointing Michael to the post of Assistant Music Director for Musica Sacra feels so very right."

The responsibilities of the Assistant Music Director are wide-ranging and will utilize Michael Sheetz's entire portfolio of skills. Specific responsibilities include: co-chairing the community engagement programs of Musica Sacra, assisting in choral preparation for Musica Sacra's presentations and contracted engagements, preparing parts as music librarian, as well as performing as collaborative pianist and as cover conductor.

In addition to New York City posts at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola and Manhattan School of Music, Mr. Sheetz is the Accompanist of the Fairfield County Chorale in Connecticut. He has been the Chorus Master, Coach and Music Coordinator at La Lingua Della Lirica in Italy each summer since 2009. In the summer of 2008, he was an Opera Coaching Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Michael Sheetz holds Professional Studies Certificates in Conducting and Accompanying, as well as a Master of Music in

Accompanying degree from Manhattan School of Music where he studied on a Music Merit Scholarship. While there, he was awarded the Janet D. Schenck Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Life of Manhattan School of Music. He is also a graduate of Vassar College where he completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music and Drama.

The mission of Musica Sacra is to create definitive, professional choral performances of the highest caliber for the widest possible audience. Musica Sacra supports its mission by presenting concerts; recording, commissioning and performing new choral works; and educating audiences, students, and the general public in the appreciation and history of choral music. www.musicasacrany.com

Musica Sacra subscriptions are now on sale for the 2013-2014 season. For information, or to purchase tickets, please visit: www.musicasacrany.com, call 212.330.7684, fax 212.330.7685, or email tickets@musicasacrany.com.

Single tickets will go on sale August 12, 2013.

Photo credit for image of Michael Sheetz: Richard Blinkoff.

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