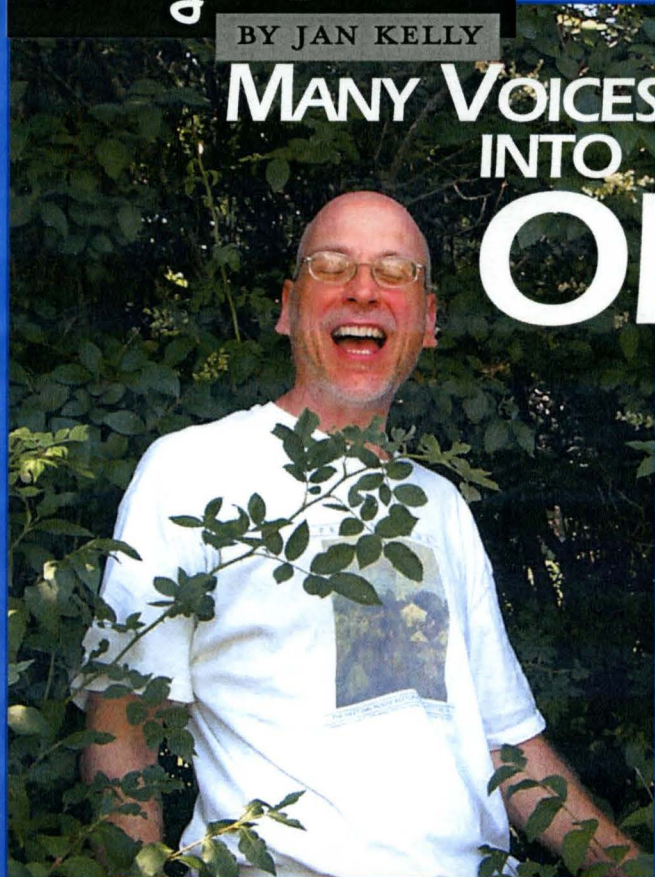


Kelly's Corner

BY JAN KELLY

MANY VOICES INTO ONE



John Arterton and the Outer Cape Chorale

Jon Arterton led the members of the Outer Cape Chorale, of which I am one, through a winter of Thursday evening rehearsals in preparation for this spring's performance of "Carmina Burana." We've performed the dramatic piece three times already, twice at the Provincetown Town Hall and another in Harwich and we're preparing to perform again on August 20th. It's just the piece of music for Carnival Week. Carl Orff composed this secular cantata and first performed the piece in Frankfurt, Germany in 1937. The original text on which the cantata was based was written in medieval latin and high middle german by a group of defrocked monks in the 13th century. This collection of poems set to particularly stirring music boasts and celebrates love, drinking, roasting swans, coming of age, debauchery, drunkenness, gluttony and religion. The music perfectly accompanies such themes: soft to loud, loud to soft—you will be pulled on a lusty ride through the notes.

But such a wonderful piece of music wouldn't be possible without Jon Arterton, director of the chorale, who has run the

organization for the third year. But the origins of the group go back much further.

Before Jon took over local woman Betty Kelly conducted the Provincetown Chorale Society for 35 years. So respected was the group under her stewardship that their standing-room-only audiences ever looked forward to performances. Betty was offered a job at Cape Cod Community College teaching voice and choral music in 2001 and the running the Chorale became too much for her. Suddenly, the Outer Cape was without their beloved chorale. Several people approached Jon Arterton and he willingly stepped in, bringing chorus music to Provincetown.

Jon Arterton has a Masters in Chorale Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music. After school, he taught music and English in a private high school to avoid the draft during Vietnam. Then from 1988-1997 he went on to singing pop music with the a capella group "The Flirtations."

Jon has lived in Provincetown for ten years though the first five he was often away on tour. He had been away from classi-

The 80 vocal members of the Outer Cape Choral



cal music for 30 years when he was approached to head the chorale. He transitioned back into the genre effortlessly with his years of professional experience. The second year of its renewal, the chorale's board established the organization as a nonprofit. The costs of rehearsal space, performances, musicians, scores, music, posters, stamps and advertising had to be negotiated and with its new corporate status the chorale, in the words of Arterton, can now "tie its own bow." Community support and sponsors have made

that possible.

Jon has an interesting way of dealing with soloists in the group. Many chorales hire outside soloists—professionals. But Jon prefers giving more people an opportunity. Shorter, less demanding solos allow this. So members of the group are chosen to give them the unique experience "of fearing for their lives," remarks Jon humorously. "A large part of my mission is to try to make each concert a growth opportunity for every-

one," he went on to explain. "There is always a different benefit from each concert for individuals and the group. I have probably had 150 people pass through [the chorale] in the last three years. There is transiency in Provincetown, so some can't commit. They're here. They're gone."

Jon went on to talk about his work as a conductor. "Conducting is its own experience. Many times when I'm conducting I ask myself, 'Is this ever going to happen?!' But then I have to pinch myself when I'm up there waving my arms and people are singing. It's thrilling."

"The range of people's experience is interesting. Some are in their 70's and have been choral singing all their lives and others haven't sung in 50 years since elementary school. Some people have no idea what notes mean; they use their ears. Those musical notation leaders help the others. And fear plays a big factor in singing. The soloists fear a mistake or that their voice will crack when they come in. Taking little risks displaces fear. They did a study in New Haven. The study showed that people who sang in choruses were healthier. It's a release of tension. You're not thinking. When you're in a room full of people vibrating good energy, when you're in the presence of positive things, positive things happen to you. The study showed that before and after rehearsals a substance was released by the body in the saliva. A nonintrusive test showed immunoglobulin A, an antibody used in fighting disease, increased 150% after rehearsals and 240% after performances.

So there's your invitation everyone. Join us."

This fall, the 80-voice chorale will sing a portion of Hadyn's "Creation" and Bach's "Cantata 191" for their holiday performance in mid-December. Rehearsals for all those interested begin Thursday, September 16 @ 6:30 pm at the Methodist Church in Provincetown

Meanwhile, check your calendar for Friday, August 20th for the chorale's performance of "Carmina Burana." Arterton calls this piece, "our most successful piece so far."

Carl Orff's masterpiece "Carmina Burana"
with Chuck Griffeth and John Thomas, keyboards
Mark Prall, Paul Gross and Daniel Hann, percussion
Friday, August 20th @ 7:30 pm
Provincetown Town Hall
260 Commercial Street
Call 508.487.9793 for tickets or log on to www.ptowntix.com

