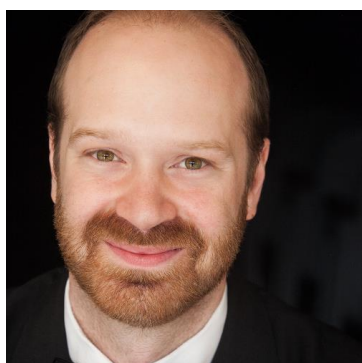

TODD WACHSMAN, CONDUCTOR

Bio coming soon

BEN ARENSEN, CONDUCTOR



Ben Arensen is an active conductor of choral music throughout the New York and Long Island area, currently in his first year as Music Director of the Forest Hills Choir. Ben serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Nassau Community College, where he also teaches music history and ear training. He is also a singer and conductor with C4: The Choral Composer Conductor Collective, a group committed to performing choral music written within the last 25 years. Past appointments include Associate Conductor of the Oratorio Society of Queens, Music Director with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestras (Nassau Symphony Orchestra), interim Music Director of the Sound

Symphony, and Music Director of the Gilbert and Sullivan Light Opera Company of Long Island

Ben holds a Masters Degree in Orchestral Conducting from Queens College's Aaron Copland School of Music, where he studied with Maurice Peress. As a guitarist, Ben has performed throughout New York and New England, including the Carnegie Hall Premiere of Steve Reich's Electric Counterpoint with William Anderson in 2006.

ADAM EGGLESTON, CONDUCTOR



ADAM EGGLESTON is Founder, Artistic Director, and Principal Conductor of The Astoria Choir. He has extensive experience as a chorister, educator, and conductor. He has appeared as a conductor with the Astoria Symphony Orchestra, AMDA Chorale, and serves as an associate conductor for The Baldwin Festival Chorus of New York.

As a chorister he has performed with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Berkshire Opera Company, Spoleto Festival Chorus (Italy), Tucson Chamber Artists, and the Baldwin Festival Chorus of New York. Additionally, he has prepared children's choirs for performances with the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln

Center, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, and the Curtis Institute of Music's Opera Theatre.

Over the past 20 years, he has taught choral music to countless children in grades K-12. He is currently the Visual and Performing Arts Chair for the prestigious Buckley School where he presides over a glee club of 200 plus boys. Mr. Eggleston holds degrees in Music Education and Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College and The University of Arizona. Email: aeggleston@astoriachoir.org

JAMES JOHN, CONDUCTOR

James John is Professor of Conducting at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College-CUNY, where he directs the QC Vocal Ensemble and Choral Society, and heads the graduate program in choral conducting. Dr. John is also Artistic Director of the Manhattan-based vocal ensemble, Cerddorion, a select chamber choir dedicated to adventurous programs that span the breadth of the choral repertoire (www.cerddorion.org). Under his leadership the choral program at ACSM has become recognized as one of the finest collegiate choral programs in the region, with performances by Queens College choral ensembles at state and divisional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association.



Dr. John's guest-conducting appearances include Brahms's *Requiem* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Tokyo Oratorio Society and Oratorio Sinfonica Japan, Avery Fisher Hall's annual *Messiah* Sing-In, a concert of American choral music with the Virginia Chorale, and honor choirs throughout New York State. As a teacher and scholar, Dr. John has served as guest lecturer in conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and has presented seminars on American choral music in Basel and Stockholm. He has given presentations at both divisional and national conferences of the ACDA, and is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States. His dissertation on Brahms won the Julius Herford Prize from the ACDA, and from 2011 to 2016 he served as editor of the scholarly journal *American Choral Review*, published biannually by Chorus America. He has also served as a member of ACDA's National Research and Publications Committee.

Dr. John received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music. His prior appointments include Director of Choral Activities at both Tufts University (Boston, MA) and Nassau Community College (Garden City, NY), as well as Conducting Fellow at Dartmouth College.

BARBARA PODGURSKI, ACCOMPANIST

A native of New York, pianist and teaching artist **Barbara Podgurski** holds a DMA in piano performance from The Graduate Center (CUNY) as well as a BM in piano performance and an MM in both piano performance and music theory from the Mannes College of Music.

Dr. Podgurski has performed as soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Caribbean and Europe, including a number of performances at Carnegie Hall. She has been featured in television and radio broadcasts which include



appearances on WQXR's Young Artists Showcase, WNYC's "Soundcheck", NPR, WPLN Nashville's "Live from Studio C", WQED and numerous others.

Ms. Podgurski was featured on the 2015 television documentary for NHK in Japan with her touring partner violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn and the famed "Red" Mendelssohn Stradivarius. Past collaborations with renowned artists include violinists Philippe Graffin, Grammy-award winner Jenny Oaks Baker, and the late Lorand Fenyves, flutist Harold Jones, clarinetist Charles Neidich, pianists Diane Walsh and Seymour Lipkin, and cellists Manfred Stilz, Marcy Rosen and the late Paul Tobias. Dr. Podgurski has premiered numerous new works including a concerto by Pulitzer-Prize winning composer George Walker.

Dr. Podgurski is currently the Executive and Artistic Director of Musica Reginae Productions in Queens, NY. She is also a past Music Director of NIAM (Nantucket Island Arts and Music Summer Festival). A former faculty member at The Mannes College of Music, Hunter College and Mercy College, she is currently on the faculty of the RiverArts Music Program in Hudson Valley and is a consultant for the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs as well as for the Board of Education in both New York City and State. By invitation in 2014, Dr. Podgurski became a Steinway Teaching Artist. She recently performed with rock band Evanescence on their 2017/18 Synthesis Tour. Barbara is currently a contributing writer to Cambridge's Nineteenth Century Music.

ALUMNI CONDUCTORS

David Close is the Artistic Director and Conductor of The Oratorio Society of Queens and founder, Artistic Director and Conductor of The Orchestral Arts Ensemble of Queens. David is the Music Director and Conductor of the Great Neck Choral Society.

Maestro Close studied conducting with John Castellini, founder and first Music Director of the Queens College Choral Society, and Laszlo Halasz, founder and first Music Director of the New York City Opera, and assisted Maurice Peress in the training of young conductors at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College. For many years, he served as conductor and vocal coach for the Queens College Opera Theater under the direction of the distinguished American opera composer and conductor, Hugo Weisgall.

David Close is the founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of Musica Reginae Productions, a professional classical music production arts organization in Queens. He is an active composer and arranger, and is currently the Music Director and Organist at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs in Forest Hills, and Organist at Temple Am Echad in Lynbrook.



Ronnie Oliver, Jr. is a conductor and educator whose commitment to the advancement of the choral art through performance, mentoring, and teaching has spanned over 30 years. Ronnie is currently the Associate Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music and the conductor of the Chelsea Music Festival Chamber Choir. He has served as choral director and teacher of conducting at the Juilliard School Evening Division, Westminster Choir College (Princeton, NJ), Western Michigan University, Western Kentucky University, Greensboro College (NC), and Texas Tech University. Ronnie has appeared at Carnegie Hall multiple times, most recently conducting Fauré's *Requiem* with the Masterworks Festival Chorus and New York City Chamber Orchestra.

