

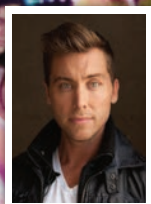
THE LA EDITION

# PRODUCTIONS

Show Choir Products and News

AN LA

## LOVE STORY



AN INTERVIEW WITH

## LANCE BASS

## SPOTLIGHT

## ON SHOW CHOIR STAGING

Featuring John Burroughs Powerhouse  
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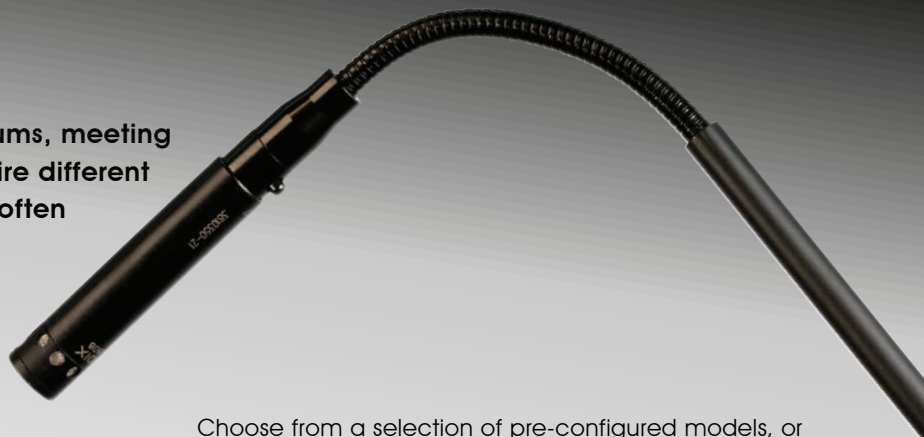


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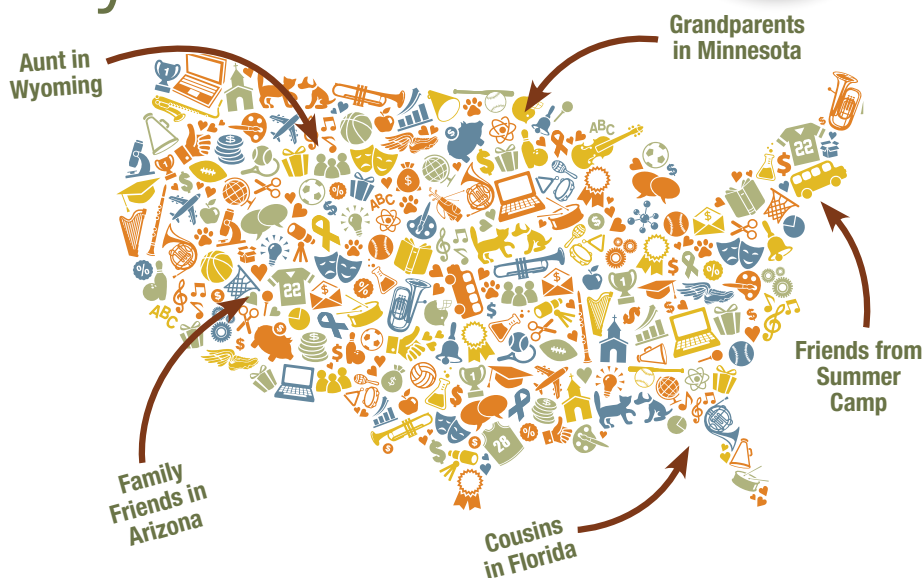
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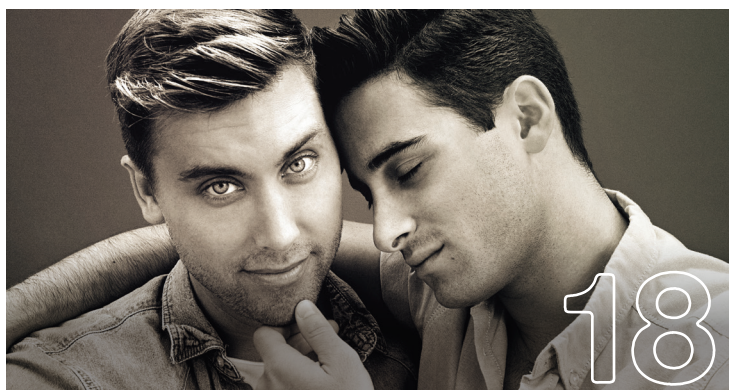
## AN LA LOVE STORY

by Rachel James Clevenger



## AN INTERVIEW WITH LANCE BASS

by Rachel James Clevenger



## SPOTLIGHT ON SHOW CHOIR STAGING

by Judy Fargher



# 6

## CHOIR SPOTLIGHT

### The John Burroughs Powerhouse Partnership

by Rachel James Clevenger

LA Music Director Brendan Jennings and Creative Director Jen Oundjian create a balanced, dynamic, and unstoppable team.

# 28

## PRODUCT SHOWCASE

### Fundraising Products

As you start planning your next fundraisers, learn more about some of the top products in Show Choir fundraising. These groups support show choir and provide excellent results for your fundraising efforts.

# EDITOR'S LETTER

My little sister, April James, has always been a gypsy—nomadic by nature and at home on the road. Luckily, this disposition suits her perfectly in the business of Show Choir, where she travels for most of the year. However, because she's my little sister, I've always wanted her to find a place that felt like home, a place she could put down her bags and be at rest. Then, recently, she found that place. Much to my disappointment, it was on the other side of the country in Los Angeles.

The LA life fits April though; it's energetic, interesting, and creative. I wanted to be excited, and I was to some degree. She was meeting fascinating people constantly, and she seemed happy and content. However, because most of what I knew of LA (aside from a couple of family trips) came from movies and TV, I worried that she would change into someone I didn't recognize. Of course, those fears were unfounded and—in retrospect—ridiculous. She's the same wonderful, funny, silly, down-to-earth person she's always been.

Then, when she pitched the LA Edition idea for *Productions*, and she started suggesting some of the people I could reach out to for interviews, I immediately went back to the warped media-inspired view of LA. I had to work up my courage for every call, working past worries along the lines of, "Why would this very important person take time to talk to ME?"

For instance, even though my family has known Lance Bass since he was in high school, my brain still approached Def-Con 4 in terms of stress and misgivings before interviewing him. When I was calling Tyne Stecklein and Corey Anderson, my brain was reminding me that I had just watched Tyne on "Dancing with the Stars," and surely someone so important wouldn't want to waste her precious free-time chatting with me. Then, every single person I interviewed—from Lance, to Tyne and Corey, to Pete Engle—the head of Dance with Clear Talent Group in LA—everyone was just so....nice. Really, they were more than nice. They were friendly, charming, and unhurried. They were humble and fun, quick to poke fun at each other and themselves.

When I talked to Kurt Gulsvig—one of April's best friends and another well-known Show Choir alum who just recently started an internship at Clear Talent Group—I told him about these moments I was having and how people kept surprising me. Then, he said something I found very insightful. Those people I worried about (the "I'm-better-than-you" sorts from the movies) are very much a part of LA. Kurt says he meets these "who are you and what do you do?" people quite often. However, he also meets wonderful people, and he thinks their personalities have far less to do with their current location, position, or status and "a lot to do with upbringing."

He's right, of course. People don't change who they are when their zip code changes. LA is a special place, and it's filled with talent, beauty, and creativity. However, it's just as packed with funny, smart, lovely people.

Now, with my little sister living there, they have another one to their credit.

Rachel James Clevenger, MEd, PhD  
Editor-in-Chief, *Productions* Magazine  
rachel@productionsmag.com



Ed Bauer  
Publisher  
ed@productionsmag.com

## EDITORIAL

Rachel James Clevenger  
Editor-in-Chief  
rachel@productionsmag.com

Sheila Wagner  
Editorial Assistance

April James  
Creative Advisor

## ART

Jeremy Allen  
Creative Director

Rebecca Allen  
Graphic Designer

Michele Hall  
Graphic Designer

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Judy Fargher

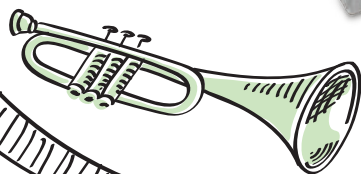


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info@productionsmag.com

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## The John Burroughs Powerhouse Partnership: Music Director Brendan Jennings and Visionary Jen Oundjian



Under the direction of Brendan Jennings, the John Burroughs Vocal Music Association (VMA) consists of over 200 students in four curricular choirs, three extracurricular ensembles and two theatre classes. The centerpiece of the program, the show choir Powerhouse, has appeared on "Dancing with the Stars," "The Oprah Winfrey Show," and "The Voice"—all in the last five years. In addition to traveling to Hong Kong and China, they have won several championships at Showstoppers competitions and FAME Events; they have won the FAME Events Show Choir Cup twice.

### THE POWER OF COMMUNITY: "INSPIRATION, EDUCATION, AND LAUGHTER"

Linda Cable, the co-president of the John Burroughs VMA, explains that the "success of this organization rests on the shoulders of many." She suggests the strengths of their VMA can be summed up in three words: "inspiration, education, and laughter."

Cable adds that because both Brendan Jennings, the Music Director, and Jen Oundjian, the Creative Director, attended John Burroughs high school, they have a special connection to the group and always will, since the group's leaders "performed on the very stage where they now teach and inspire students to continually reach higher."

In addition to having an incredibly devoted staff and association members, including community members, teachers, and administrators, the VMA is also filled with others that have long-term connec-

tions to John Burroughs. Cable adds that many "long-standing, talented individuals—including musicians, choreographers, and crew" are all graduates of Burroughs, so "it's really this sense of legacy that makes our program what it is, or rather what it has become."

Student Juliana Lyons moved to California two years ago, and she experienced the open and welcoming nature of this powerful community immediately. She notes that, like all teens, she was nervous about the move; she was even more upset to learn that she had missed the choir audition by months. To her surprise, she was allowed a late audition and was placed in an advanced choir just two days before the season started. For her, this opportunity was more than just a chance to perform. Participating with the VMA gave her a "great group of friends," and she adds, "I don't think I would enjoy high school if it weren't for choir." Now, Juliana is in her third year with the group, and she is the president of the vocal ensemble.

Cable believes their sense of community is best shown through the shows hosted by the VMA each year, including the Burroughs on Broadway show, a "full production that showcases the vocal and dance talents" of their students, in addition to functioning as a fundraising event. Student John Cutone, who serves as the vice president of the vocal ensemble, also praises Burroughs on Broadway for "adding another aspect of musical theatre" to make them "well-rounded performers and not just show choir kids."

Cutone suggests that Powerhouse is also unique in their classical influence. He explains that every year they have a classical festival,



where students have the opportunity to study several classical pieces. Cutone believes that singing a variety of styles helps to “mature” their sound, as well as offering Powerhouse a “distinct, big, signature sound” that sets them apart from other choirs.

## BRENDAN JENNINGS AND “BEAUTIFUL IMPERFECTION”

Parent Stacy Adams praises Jennings for putting together a “fabulous program of topnotch people.” She also applauds his ability to delegate responsibilities and oversee everything without micro-managing because he “knows it’s in trusted hands.”

Additionally, Adams is often touched by the way Jennings ties in his experiences as a student to connect with the choir members in a deep and meaningful way. She explains that Jennings has shared what being part of the program meant to him while he was in high school, and she wonders if even Jennings realizes “what an impact he’s had on these kids’ lives.”

Though his training and talent are outstanding, Adams also praises his personality as a leader, in that he is easygoing, approachable, and funny. Adams appreciates how Jennings keeps people involved in the program, whether it’s the former show choir director who returns to offer vocal assistance or a middle school director who works for a feeder school. Adams adds, “As a parent, you just believe in the program.”

For Jennings, he explains, “I’m teaching my students how to be excellent” (in general). He knows that many of his students won’t go into music, so he wants them to “get a sense of what it’s like to work really hard and be the best at something.” He also wants them to focus on doing “everything really well” and being their best “no matter what the stakes are.” However, Jennings is not about perfection.

Instead, the style at John Burroughs is more focused on this mantra: “Give all of yourself emotionally to the music and the choreography.” In fact, Jennings believes the most striking moments are when “everyone is really into it,” which means they may be letting go of “tiny, technical details.” He concludes, “Beautiful imperfection is more the goal.”



photo courtesy of Sus Shearer Photography

## SHARING THE SPOTLIGHT: JEN OUNDJIAN— A CREATIVE, DRIVING FORCE

Parent Stacy Adams says of Jennings, “He never needs the spotlight on him—it’s always about the kids.” Not surprisingly, Jennings was quick to shift the focus from himself to his long-time partner and creative director Jen Oundjian; Jennings stated that, stylistically, he is “not the best reflection of what goes on at Burroughs.”

Jennings calls Jen Oundjian the “creative driving force” behind Burroughs. In fact, the only praise he accepts really is that he’s good “at helping Jen make her visions come true.” Jennings also says, of their partnership, that they “strive to not stay inside of one box” and every year aim to do something “completely different.” Jennings adds, “You can creatively push the boundaries in whatever way you want to go, and you should have the courage to go those places.”

When they first met, Brendan was Jen’s student; the director of the program at that time—Mary Rago—and Jen started grooming Brendan, while he was still in college, to take over the John Burroughs VMA. Because Mary had built an entire program, Jen knew that Brendan taking over was a “big leap.” She even stepped away from the program for six months, so Brendan had the freedom to “be the director that he needed to be” and to let him get comfortable in his own space and in this new leadership role.

Not only did his calmness ease the transition, as well the meticulous nature of the planning that went into making this a smooth transition, but Oundjian also notes that the kids that year were “so helpful and accommodating.” They recognized that the adjustments would lead to a stressful period, despite all the careful planning, and the seniors (in particular) made sure that the choir members’ attitudes would always be helpful and supportive.

He’s “very, very trusting,” Oundjian shares; in fact, she adds, “Rarely does he question anything.” Oundjian praises Jennings for being logical, grounded, and even-tempered, which she believes offers a perfect balance for her “visions and ideas.” She notes that her “crazy, whacked-out, emotional” approach meshes with his methodical, logical approach—pitting her “craziness...and out-there-ness...and extremes” against his “calm, collected, compartmentalized brain.”

Stacy Adams says of Jen’s pieces, “As a parent, you hear it first from your kid. They might not even know how to explain it.” Then, in the audience—after the “Alice in Wonderland” set, for instance—you see the audience not knowing how to respond: “What did we just see? Do we clap here?”

Of Oundjian, student Juliana Lyons notes, “She is one of the most creative people I’ve ever worked with.” Though Lyons calls Jen “wildly creative and ingenious,” she does admit that Oundjian’s ideas are always—initially—a little jarring, and even shocking. She said the typical reaction goes something like this: “*What the heck?! How do you think of these things? Um....okay....all right....this is going to be weird.*” Then, as they trust her vision and start working

to make it a reality, as the show starts to unfold, they see Oundjian's brilliance—year after year after year.

## THE LA APPROACH

Stacy Adams notes that many choirs seem to be moving to this “LA approach,” so to speak, but she knows she speaks for all of them at John Burroughs VMA when she says that no school should ever “feel pressure to go this way.” She adds, as well, that there are schools in SoCal that still practice more traditional show choir, especially schools that have had the same directors for 30 years. For judging and competitions, she always believes the winner “needs to be the best one at singing and dancing.”

Jennings adds that in the mid-to-late 90s, show choirs started developing this style that wasn't received well at competitions. Here in 2013, there's more appreciation for this LA style, though there's still some complications, particularly when it comes to competing and judging.

Jennings emphatically states, “No one style of show choir is better than another.” He also understands that different approach can lead to tricky situations when judges are being asked to compare radically different styles. “Competitively, you have to judge them on something,” he adds, so you must “take care of certain technical elements” that will take away from the creativity of the show—posture, vocal elements, etc.

Some elements of judging—choreography, for instance—might create a more challenging and more subjective set of questions or potential problems. For example, some judges might watch a school that had a closer of popular songs, and those judges might record on their score-sheets that this choir had some busy and intricate choreography (i.e. “they ‘moved their arms and legs a lot’”). Does this automatically mean it was a more “difficult” closer, when it's not measuring any other factors or taking into account the culmination of a staged story with a story arc? He admits, “It's hard to be a judge in that case.”

He also knows score sheets may need revision. He notes, “If difficulty is an aspect of scoring, you have to know a lot about the genre.” Some judges might give high “Difficulty” scores—“looking at this theatrically, as a creation,” while other judges might look at that same set and score it poorly with a comment like, “You didn't dance enough.”

Because judges are asked to make “value judgments” and are placed in a role that requires them to “set aside personal likes and dislikes and evaluate what the school is doing,” the next step in the process, for Jennings, would be a panel that is filled with experts, people who can “separate personal style preferences and actually evaluate the work.”

He concludes of competitions: “If you're going to put yourself out there, you must prepare them for elements in which they can be

judged.” He also believes competitions give students “inspiration and guidance” as they see how their choir fits in the larger show choir universe. He also encourages his students to look to the audience for the reviews, as “reactions of the audience can be very powerful” when evaluating feedback for shows. Jennings adds that if the goal is to produce an entertaining show, and your audience is on its feet, then—quite obviously—“it worked.”

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS/ HOLLYWOOD PROFESSIONALS

Juliana Lyons is especially grateful the John Burroughs choir has garnered so much attention, as she intends to stay in the music industry after graduation, following in her parents' footsteps. “Burbank is so central to the music business and television business,” she adds, that students are offered “a taste of what the real business is like.” The opportunities offered to Powerhouse have been astonishing.

Parent Stacy Adams has been involved with the VMA for five years now, first with her son, Justin Fallon, and now with her daughter, Stephanie Fallon. Justin was in the program the year that some well-known young actors showed up to surprise the choir. Adams shares that when Justin called from school, after she was able to calm him down enough to understand any of his words, she realized what he was saying: “Mom, the kids are here from ‘Glee’ and they want us to go on ‘Oprah’!”

Being seen on “Oprah” was only one of that year's amazing moments. Adams notes that, throughout the opportunities they have been offered over the last few years, choir members are constantly reminded by both the director and the parents that “this is a privilege to be selected to do this.” She has been incredibly proud of the way those students have represented their music program. Though most members of Powerhouse are juniors and seniors, Adams adds that there's a maturity there even beyond what most expect from older high school students. Yet, students are embracing and internalizing the message that starts at the top: “We are representing our school. We are representing our state. We are representing show choir.”

Jennings explains that, ironically, the more gigs they get like those offering such high visibility—whether through television or film—“in order to be the kind of professionals we need them to be on set, it almost downplays the experience ultimately.” Though they are always “excited and thrilled and grateful,” they must behave like experienced pros on set—often “learning quickly” and “making last minute changes,” such as cutting or adjusting choreography one hour before the live show. He concludes, “They are trained for that, ready for that.”

He also notes that Powerhouse members are thrilled about all of their performances, and they are always an “excited group of






photo courtesy of Sus Shearer Photography

kids" during any chance they have to share their talents. He adds that they are always just as excited to do well in a competition as they are to be featured on a show like "The Voice." For instance, Jennings shares that they "were all in tears of joy after their performance at FAME."

Jen Oundjian adds that these students are "extremely professional" when participating in these once-in-a-lifetime performances, in part because the "culture" they have created at John Burroughs encourages a "level of professionalism" expected in Hollywood business and expected in the industry. Oundjian believes this level of talent, mixed with their irreproachable behavior, is why they became the "go-to choir" and why they have a long list of accomplishments that includes so many official "industry gigs." She notes, proudly, that these students are "literally doing professional gigs."

Their high level of experience also shows up in rehearsals, though sometimes in frustrating ways, Oundjian admits. She shares that she has been unnerved once or twice because in a late-night rehearsal—once they knew they "had it"—they might start marking it, offering low energy. She notes that she would tell them—emphatically—"Guys, you've got to rehearse at *this* level (performance level)!" Yet, when it's time to perform, she says, "They never disappoint."

In other words, they are trained pros, whether they are on "DWTS," "The Voice," "Oprah," or performing in their own auditorium for family, friends, and community. When it's time to shine, Oundjian adds, "They totally go there." 



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# An LA Love Story

by Rachel James Clevenger



# Talent agent Pete Engle and professional dancer Corey Anderson have long been enamored with show choir. Tyne Stecklein, recently seen on “Dancing with the Stars,” only learned of show choir through her husband and agent, but she quickly realized why show choir was easy to love.



Engle, who is originally from Wisconsin, graduated from Milliken University with a BS in Music Business, before making the move to LA. He started at Kazarian/Spencer & Associates in the LA Equity department. In 2005, Engle joined the Clear Talent Group team and has been the Director of CTG's premiere Dance Department for the past six years. He is also an agent in the Creative & Development department

that represents writers, directors, designers, and choreographers.

Corey Anderson is a professional dancer, based in LA, who has worked with recording artists such as Chayanne, Ricky Martin, Kelly Clarkson, Miley Cyrus, L'Amour, and Mariah Carey. He's also been featured in many movies, videos, and commercials.

Even in high school, Tyne Stecklein had an impressive dance career—winning multiple national titles and touring with numerous productions. After high school, Tyne moved to L.A. to pursue a professional career in dance. Over the last few years, Tyne has worked on several TV shows, including “Body of Proof,” “True Blood,” “CSI,” and worked on movies as well, including *Rock of Ages*, *Fame*, *17 Again*, *The Campaign*, and *No Strings Attached*. Corey and Tyne were both in *Burlesque* (2010) with Cher and Christina Aguilera.

In recalling his Show Choir days, Engle refers to himself as a “proud Dwight baby,” referencing the legendary Show Choir mentor Dwight Jordan. When Engle was at Milliken, he performed with “The Singing Blue,” which was founded by Jordan, and he worked with Jordan throughout college, as a counselor at Show Choir Campus of America in Milliken, Ohio, Orlando (Disney) and at Six Flags. Eventually, Engle decided to move to LA with a handful of other Milliken graduates. Unfortunately, the commercial strike turned what had been a paid job into an unpaid internship, so he had to turn to other work.

Flash forward four years, and Engle was working in graphic design for an LA firm. “It was fine...it was paying the bills,” Engle recalls, but

he realized as thirty was fast approaching that he had a choice to make. “I was getting older,” he notes, and he had to make a decision to keep doing what was “okay” or doing what he “really wanted to do.”

Engle shares that he has always been a believer in doing what makes you happy. He knows the previous generation was focused on one thing in business: “You do what you do to make your family secure.” He believes we have the luxury today to “actually accomplish that (security) and be happy.”

Making the brave decision to take a 70% pay-cut, Engle started over as an assistant at Clear Talent Group. “I’ve always been a performer but with a business sense,” Engle shares, and he was also interested in the backend of music, the business side. He had questions about his role: “*Did he want to do Broadway? Did he want to work as a performer in some way? Did he prefer the business route?*”

As he was struggling with those questions at this crossroads, Engle was interning with a woman who was helping him learn the industry. Engle recalls the day she told him to follow her into her office and listen to a phone call she was about to make. “The Lion King” was opening on Broadway, and she was calling the performer who had landed the coveted role of Simba. As he listened to that call, Engle had an epiphany: He knew he wanted to *make* that call more than he wanted to get that call.



While Pete Engle was at Holmen, Corey Anderson was growing up in Onalaska—attending a rival Wisconsin high school. Engle teases that he didn't know Corey but “he knew of me.” Then, a few years later, both young men ended up at Milliken in the same fraternity, where Engle became Anderson's “big brother.” A few more years in the future, and Engle was serving as best man at Anderson's marriage to Tyne Stecklein, who—by then—he represented. Engle joked in his toast, “I get 10% of everything they get at this wedding.”

Engle adds that Anderson is one of “his closest friends in the world.” However, because Anderson was already with an agency before Engle signed on with Clear Talent Group, Anderson stayed put for quite some time. “Corey is a very loyal person,” Engle adds, but he finally reminded Anderson of a simple fact: “As loyal as you are...I'm gonna be looking out for you every day.” There was no one else who would push harder to get Anderson the work he deserved than a talented and respected agent who also happened to be his best friend.

Eventually, after also becoming friends with Tyne, Engle started representing her as well. Tyne, who had been with the same agency since she was a child, had a similarly tough experience in switching agents, even when she knew a move was the best choice for her. She adds, “Even though you want it to be all business, you feel like you are almost breaking up.” She has had no shortage of work,

since moving to Clear Talent Group. In addition to the fact she's stunningly beautiful, Engle states, she's also incredibly talented; in short, he notes, “Tyne is one of the top dancers in the country.”

## A LOVE OF DANCE LEADS TO A LIFELONG PARTNERSHIP



Corey Anderson shares that in high school he was “majorly into sports” and “show choir was the thing all the guys did because the girls were in it.” He did have fun, he admits, especially when people started to notice his talent—for instance, when Rich Taylor from Disney contacted him about a job. He remembers thinking, “I must be pretty good at this.”

Even then, he wasn't “into the Broadway thing,” though he was “very into the dancing.” He landed a job with Great America in Chicago just two days after graduating and thought, “This is better than landscaping.” Later, in college, he realized he enjoyed Music Theory and the commercial side of the music industry. Of course, the love of dancing was persevering.

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At that point, Dwight Jordan told Anderson to take Jazz and Ballet. He remembers his response was an emphatic, "FOR WHAT?!" When Jordan asked, "Do you like dancing?" Anderson half-jokingly responded, "Not like that!" However, as always, he followed Jordan's advice and soon found himself "so juiced...so focused...so...passionate."

Though Jordan was keeping him busy with camps and gigs, after Anderson's junior year of college, Jordan told him, "Don't come back here. Go check out LA." Kye Brackett told Anderson about "The Edge" and Anderson was "so enamored he almost didn't go back to school." Anderson said that's the first time he realized he really could make a living dancing. From that point on, Anderson notes he was "always in the dance studio," teaching five classes a day and doing free pieces for choreographers to build his name. Then, to his delight, he booked a World Tour with Chayanne.

Interestingly, Tyne Stecklein had a brief (very brief) encounter with Chayanne as well. Despite her incredible résumé, amazing talent, and stunning beauty, Chayanne's people decided to let her go after one week of rehearsals because, at 5'5", she wasn't considered tall enough to fit with Chayanne. When Anderson found out, he approached Stecklein and said simply, "Let's go to lunch." Luckily, Tyne had no time for disappointment, as she immediately booked the High School Musical Tour with Kenny Ortega.

Luckily, they often have a chance to work together now. They have the added benefit, as a couple, of understanding the business; Stecklein explains that an outsider to this life and this career might be hard-pressed to sympathize with the unique demands placed on professional performers. Tyne says, "From a work aspect, it's really nice to have someone who understands the lifestyle." She adds that it's difficult for someone who doesn't work in the business to be supportive of 18 hour days or understand there are many days, sometimes many days in a row, where performers have no set time to wrap things up.



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They also know that they work well together, offering balance—based on personality differences. For instance, Anderson notes in his choreography that he's "always masculine," meaning he might forget momentarily that he's working on a girl's routine. "I would not do a lot of chick moves," he teases. However, Tyne chimes in that he can serve up some pretty feminine steps when he wants to, and he's actually really good at it. In fact, one girl—after mimicking a "sassy section" Corey worked out to a Taylor Swift song—told her giggling friends, "I am SO getting a boyfriend after this week."

Corey is organic, by his own description, but also "a little spacey...out in left field." Tyne loves this facet of Anderson, but she considers herself more "logical and organized and conscious of time." They are often purposely matched and get to dance together, which they both love. Tyne concludes, "We have totally different strengths."



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## FROM SHOW CHOIR KID TO PROFESSIONAL PERFORMER

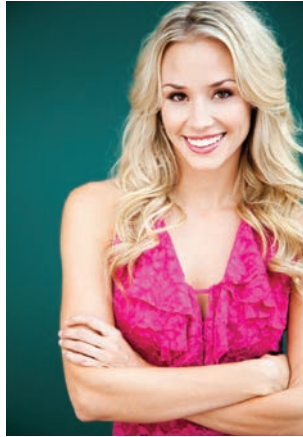
When discussing show choir performers who want to become professionals in the business, Engle explains, "Show choir is a whole universe." He notes, however, that show choir talent does tend to lean more towards singing and a Broadway focus, even though there are some great dancers in LA Show Choirs. "Sometimes I wish there was more dance training involved in show choir," he explains, since students aren't "really taking dance classes through the year".

When those high school students want to compete at an LA level, they have had a lot of voice training, but very, very little (if any) actual dance training, as there is a clear distinction between learning choreography and receiving dance training. They have had music education, concert choir, voice lessons, and many other experiences to prepare them to compete vocally. However, when it comes to dancing, Engle notes, "They are competing with trained people." This means they are "swallowed up" by the competition in LA.

Engle wonders why more schools don't invite visiting choreographers to visit—even if it's just once a month—to give these talented students a chance to learn choreography that has "nothing to do with the show." He notes that most show choirs offer a row or two of "great dancers," and the rest are "filler."


Engle suggests it's a "no brainer" for more schools to implement a program that would help those dance-lovers have a chance to excel. "If they want to be a dancer, there's a dance competition world full of training," he adds. Show choir kids can move, but end up gravitating toward musical theatre." Even these monthly opportunities at choreography that go beyond the show will help kids know "if they are dancers at heart," and directors wouldn't have to fly top LA choreographers out to their districts to make this work: they just have to bring in dancers.

## FALLING IN LOVE WITH SHOW CHOIR



For Tyne Stecklein, though she had extensive experience with dance and performance, show choir was "totally new." When she first accompanied Corey to a show choir camp, she remembers wondering, "What IS this world?" She came away with the impression that this was "the real live Glee" and she thought it was both sweet and endearing that the kids were "SO excited about it."

Then, she went back to camp and had her own group. Suddenly, she realized just how very complicated this lively little world can be. She realized she was, for the first time, setting a number on risers, and there were "all these levels" to consider—in particular making "all these pictures at different levels." Then, of course, there were other rules: There had to be time to breathe, and kids couldn't ever turn away from the audience while singing, though there needed to be plenty of movement and action. Before her first teaching day, she shares that she was "super stressed" and couldn't sleep at all.

Then, she met her kids. Now she says, "I totally understand the show choir bond." The stresses didn't immediately go away, but she started focusing on the kids and the relationship they were building. She concludes, "I just fell in love with the kids I worked with." 

If you aren't among the nearly 3.5 million people who viewed the viral video from Tyne's first night on "DWTS," you can watch here.



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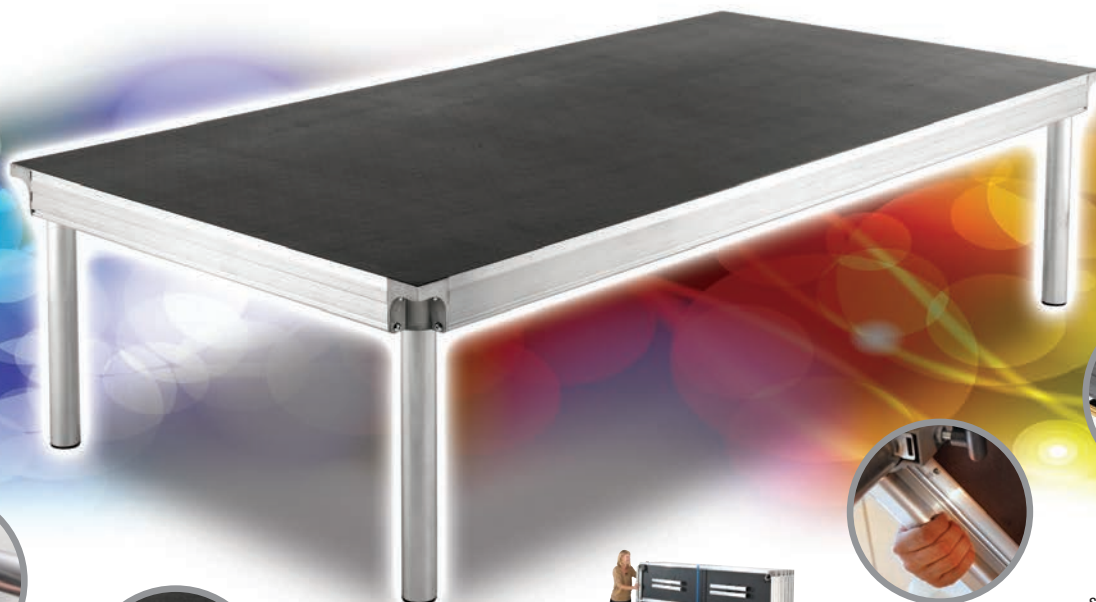
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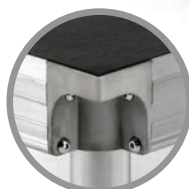
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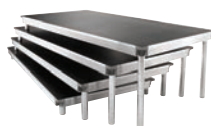
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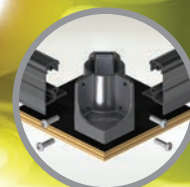
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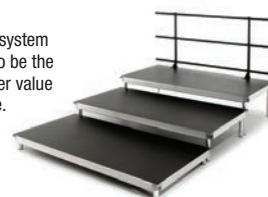
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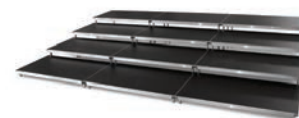
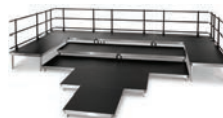
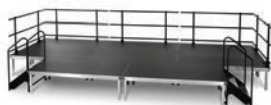
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INTERVIEW WITH  
LANCE BASS





Growing up in Mississippi, Lance Bass started singing early, the same way many Mississippi kids start singing—in a church choir. When the Bass family moved to Clinton, Mississippi, Lance was able to branch out into show choir, adding dance skills to his outstanding vocal ability, when he joined the nationally recognized, award-winning show choir Attaché. Lance was just a junior in high school when he auditioned for ‘N Sync; by 2000, their music sales were breaking records, and now you would be hard-pressed to find anyone who doesn’t instantly recognize his name, beautiful voice, and gorgeous face.

Over the years, Lance has also learned the ropes of music management, acting, and all sides of production. In fact, he never stops learning and growing, trying his hand at new creative endeavors—even while philanthropic work keeps him extraordinarily busy. To the delight of his fans, he was on season 7 of “Dancing with the Stars” in 2008, where his talent and likeability took him to the grand finale. Just this year, he reunited with other ‘N Sync members on the 2013 MTV Video Music Awards—a performance that had music fans happily buzzing for weeks.

Currently, Lance is reveling in a new creative endeavor, his daily, nationwide radio show “Dirty Pop,” which Sirius XM describes as “an insider’s guide to pop culture” which combines Lance’s “passion for music with his unique take on the pop culture news of the moment, his insider access and experience, and his sense of humor and fun.” The show is distinct for several reasons, one of which is that Bass combines in-studio celebrity guests with his long-time friends.

On an even more amazing note, on a recent trip to New Orleans, Lance proposed to artist and actor Michael Turchin. They are focused for the moment on enjoying the engagement, though they say the marriage will likely take place in 2014. Even with all of the excitement of an engagement and his incredibly popular new radio



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show, not to mention a packed schedule, Lance took the time to answer questions for a small, family-owned publication focused on show choir, a move that might surprise those who expect celebrities to be distant and unreachable—but a move that does not surprise anyone who knows Lance personally. Somehow, Lance has never lost the sweetness and generosity of spirit he's had since childhood.

**RJC:** Though your time with Show Choir might seem a lifetime ago—with all you have accomplished and continue to accomplish every year—what do you remember most about those early performances and those early times on stage?

**LB:** I remember how nervous I was! I knew how hard we all had worked to be perfectly in sync, and I didn't want to be the one to mess it up! There was some serious pressure.

**RJC:** What advice would you give show choir kids who are trying to get into the business?

**LB:** I would say that you have to move to a city where there are opportunities to break into the business.....Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, Atlanta....If you can get a job in a field that you are interested in—like movie studios, record labels, TV companies etc.—that helps a lot too.

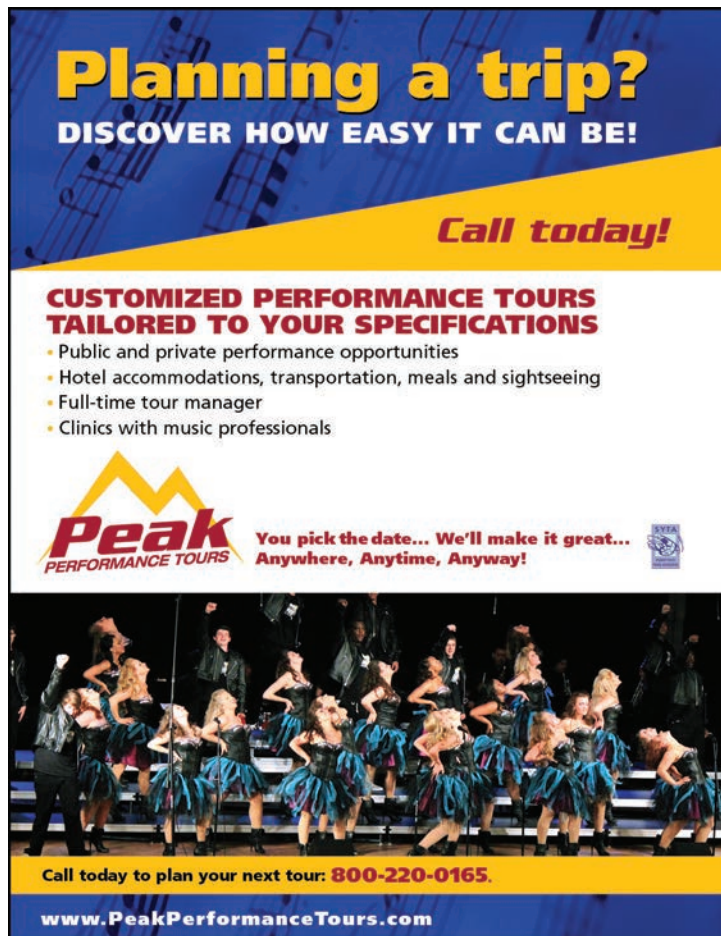
**RJC:** I know you stay somewhat involved with the show choir scene because many of your childhood friends have careers in

show choir. Have you been at all surprised to see that edgy, inventive, atypical side of show choir that has been evolving in the last few years?

**LB:** I am actually not surprised. Everything evolves with time. I think things would evolve even faster and bigger, if school system standards didn't hold them back.

**RJC:** You have held on to friendships that started in childhood, with those long-time friends saying that you're "the same Lance" you were as a kid. How hard has it been to maintain those friendships that started in middle school and high school? On that same note, how have you managed to keep the potentially toxic sides of celebrity from changing you?

**LB:** It hasn't been hard at all. It's the only thing that keeps me grounded and sane. They knew me and will always know me as just, "Lance." I managed to keep the toxic sides of celebrity away by keeping my friends and family close. They keep me down to earth.



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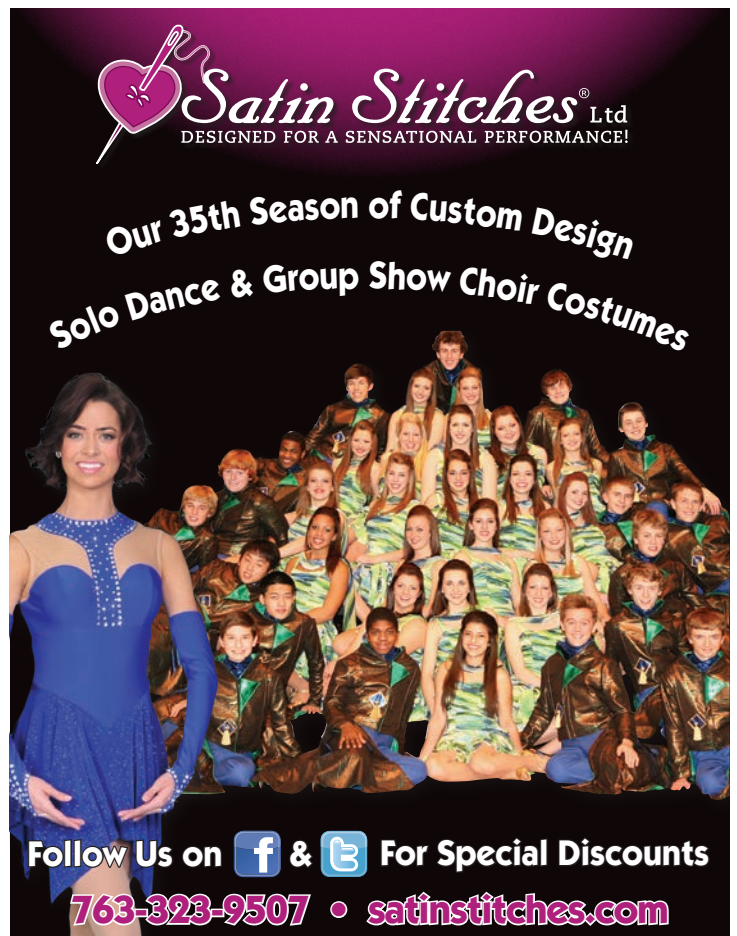
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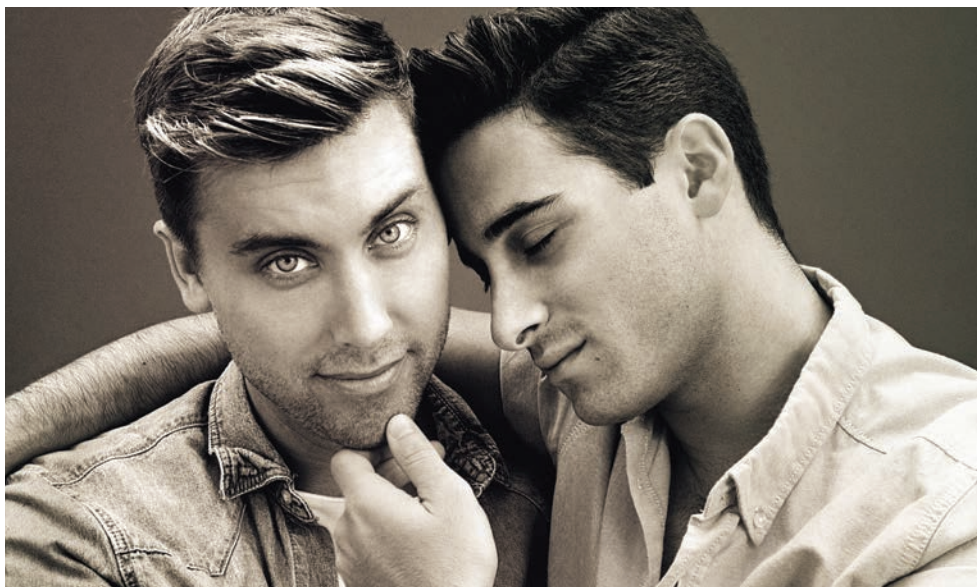


**RJC:** In the highly anticipated 'N Sync reunion on the VMAs, was there any anxiety for you to be dancing/singing onstage again, or was every emotion (that reunion surely must have evoked) a positive one?

**LB:** It was a 100% positive experience! It was like riding a bike, hitting the stage with my brothers. It was so fun and the best reunion ever!

**RJC:** You seem to be having a blast with your radio show "Dirty Pop." Do you see yourself staying involved in radio, and does your work as a radio show host feel quite different from all of your other creative projects or like a normal progression for someone living a creative and original life?


**LB:** Being a radio personality was my first dream as a kid. I would make several mixed tapes hosting countdown shows in the 80's pretending I was Wolfman Jack!



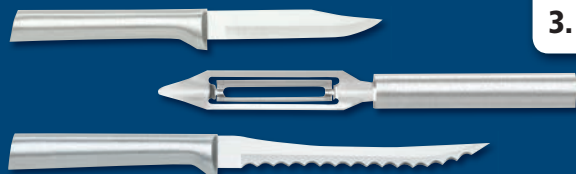
I want to figure out a way to continue to have a show on-air for the rest of my life.

**RJC:** Getting to work with your fiancé, the phenomenal artist Michael Turchin, on "Dirty Pop" every day must be particularly amazing. Do you find that your creative

paths seem to blend easily, and do you find inspiration in each other's interests and talents?

**LB:** He is the ying to my yang. We're creatively different in many ways, but that is what makes him so interesting to me. I am always learning something from him. 

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# SPOTLIGHT

## ON SHOW CHOIR STAGING

*by Judy Fargher*





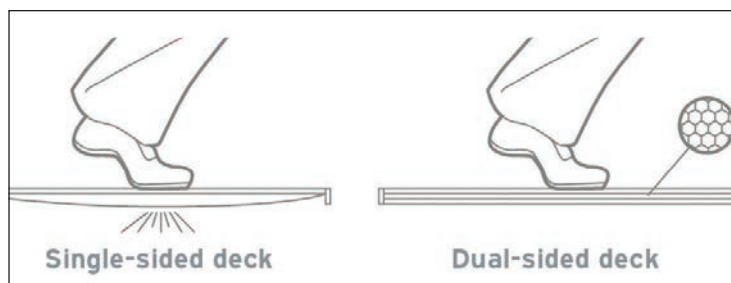




The songs have been selected, the arrangements have been rehearsed, the choreography has been mastered, the fundraising is complete, the press releases have been sent and the costumes and makeup are on.

It is Showtime, right? Not so fast, there is another critical component needed to execute a flawless performance, namely the stage equipment. Risers are the silent partner in show choir productions, and no one should be conscious of their presence as they can either enhance or distract from the

performance. If the audience notices stage risers, etc., due to appearance or noise, it will detract from the performance, thus when selecting show choir risers, things to consider are: Stability, Durability, Safety, Style, Ease of storage and transporting, Set up speed, and Sound projection.



## STABILITY/DURABILITY

Unlike a conventional seated choir riser, show choir risers have much dynamic motion on them; therefore supporting framework should have additional leg bracing to reduce a wobbling, creaking effect during "show stopping" performances. Support systems that have a single support under each deck allows for fast and easy reconfiguration of

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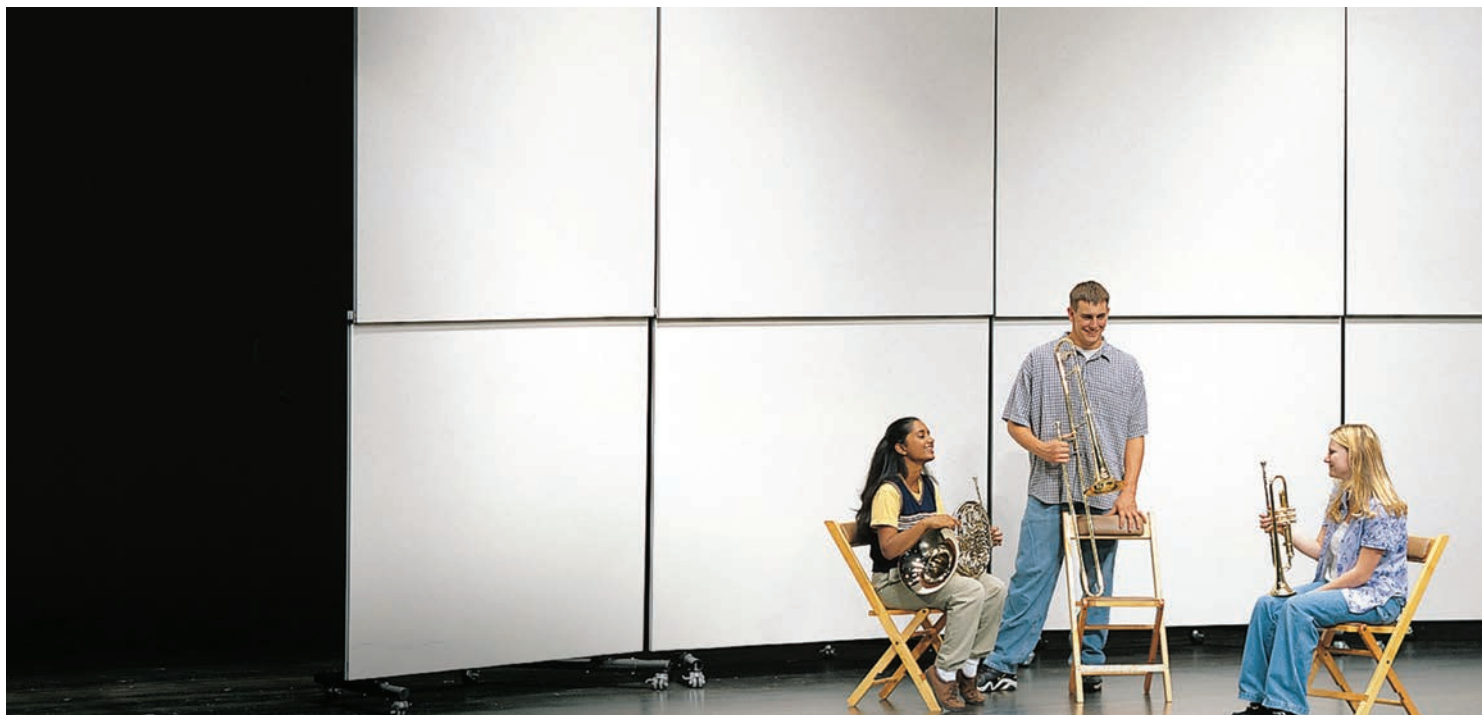
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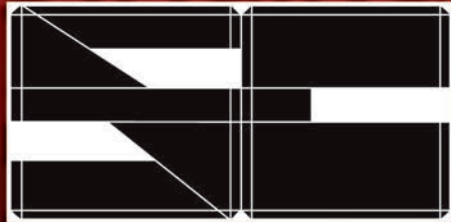




risers during performance. For example, a single or couple of units can be moved apart from the main riser to highlight a soloist or duet couple. This type of system gives you more flexibility in your staging.

Ideally, dual sided decks with a sound reducing center core, e.g. fiber honeycomb material, greatly reduces “drum head” foot sound and potential bowing of conventional single sided decks while performers are executing foot stomping

# STAGING



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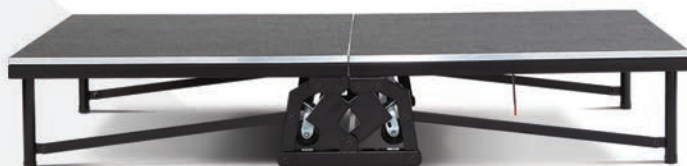
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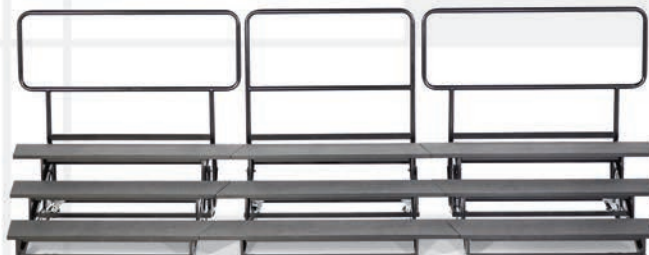
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energetic dance steps. Dual sided decks also afford owners double wear life by utilizing one side for rehearsals, the other for performance.

Attain additional stability via decks and supports tied together by some means, as with Velcro straps securing legs of one support unit to an adjacent one, is a possibility. Manufacturers often supply clips that lock adjacent decks together, and when combined with added Velcro straps, stage stability increases exponentially. Considering riser utilization and desired longevity, one would strongly suggest the lowest bidder is not always the best acquisition. Quality costs more initially, but amortized over time becomes the best value. Who can forget the low-bid mirror in the Hubble space telescope?

## SAFETY

The stability of the risers is particularly critical for show choirs due to considerable dynamic motion of the dancers. Solid structure assists in preventing potential injury or catastrophic failure of the equipment. Deck surfaces should be durable, slip resistant, but smooth enough to dance on. PolyTrac with a slightly textured surface provides superb performer traction. Smooth deck corners help prevent injuries or damage to costumes.



## STYLE

Standard competition show choir configuration uses four, 4' x 8' sections, three tiers high, with tier heights averaging 8", 16" or 24", providing ease of use and excellent audience sight lines even when performers are in the back row. Larger show choirs often add a fourth 32" level plus more sections across the stage. Mom and Dad don't want to miss seeing a single dance step of their "budding" Broadway star.

To assist audience attention on dazzling performers, using black matte finish on supports and decks plus contrasting, non reflective surfaces applied to deck edges making different levels easily distinguished, and reflection from powerful spotlights virtually eliminated. Contrasted with conventional



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seated choir risers, hardclosure panels between levels are infrequently used, thus special effects, e.g. fog machines or special lighting, are easily placed under the risers. Additional props per vaudeville hats, umbrellas, or canes, can be easily accessed with this open format. Additional stairs on riser back or sides affords choreographers more creative ways of having choir members enter the platforms. Remember Busby Berkley and Bob Fosse!

## RISER STORAGE AND TRANSPORT

Shows traveling to different venues require safe and easy transport and storage, including riser break down into manageable weight and size components. Transport carts require non-marring wheels with ability to fit through standard 36" doors when fully loaded, plus carts function best with two fixed casters and two swivel casters providing easier maneuverability. Look for carts with up to six decks and six support capacity, thus economizing storage space.

## SOUND PROJECTION


Acoustic sound shells aid music projection toward the audience, particularly on stages having high fly space. When a pit band is behind the risers, acoustic shell reflectors help

singers hear accompaniment music. Special effects lighting is often placed in front of these panels.

## SET UP SPEED

With set up / tear down time limits, the ability to set up quickly, thus removing potential for time related penalties. Suggest no hand tool, quick-set risers for these conditions.

## CONCLUSION

With respect to the above recommendations for show choir riser application, acquisition is accomplished with added knowledge to evaluate equipment available in the marketplace. Once acquired, one can enjoy show choirs' rising stars to hear, "Places everyone, lights, music, Showtime!" Break A Leg! 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Judy Fargher, a school and worship market representative for StageRight Corp. in Clare, MI., has a Masters in Music, is a former school choir director and current church musician. StageRight manufactures portable stages, risers, sound shells, and related music performance equipment. For more information visit [www.stageright.com](http://www.stageright.com).

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179-C Roymar | Oceanside, CA 92058 | (760) 721-1045

[www.baguscustom.com](http://www.baguscustom.com)

Bagus Custom Flip Flops provides totally customized flip flops for your show choir, school, team, club or class. Made in your colors and customized with your mascot or logo, sell them as a fund raiser, add

them to your logo wear, or use them as a member appreciation gift. Our top quality flip flops are retail quality, durable, comfortable, and stylish. Raise spirit as well as funds!

With over 25 years of experience and our top rated customer service, we make it easy for you.

## DUTCH MILL BULBS



PO Box 407 | Hershey, PA 17033-0407 | (800) 533-8824

[www.dutchmillbulbs.com](http://www.dutchmillbulbs.com)

Dutch Mill Bulbs originated Flower Bulb Fundraising over 50 years ago. Our Fall Fundraising Program and Spring Fundraising Program offer easy-to-sell and easy-to-grow varieties of flower bulbs and bare root perennials. We've helped tens of thousands of groups exceed their fundraising goals with our Flower Bulb Fundraising Programs.

Our Fundraising Program is the perfect flower bulb fundraiser for your group. School Fundraising, PTA Fundraisers, PTO Fundraisers, sport and athletic team fundraisers, cheerleader fundraisers, dance ensembles, booster clubs, academic clubs, marching bands, concert bands, choral groups, drama clubs, libraries, choirs, community groups, churches, and scouts—to name but a few—have all successfully raised funds by “going green” with our eco-friendly, economically priced no-risk Fundraising Programs.

Since its inception, Dutch Mill Bulbs has been recognized for outstanding service, value, quality and reliability. You can count on us for your most successful fundraiser ever!

## LITTLE OL' COOKIE HOUSE



305 Main Street | Little River, KS 67457 | (800) 276-4770

[www.cookiehouse.com](http://www.cookiehouse.com)

Superior Product Quality—since day one we've been committed to making the finest cookie dough we know how, the “finest in the world” is our aim.

Extraordinary Customer Service—as we state it “Our Customers are Our Friends.” We attempt to live this commitment every hour of every day. It is our Company Mantra—it guides our way of making decisions and executing them.

Enjoy delicious homemade cookies fresh-from-the-oven without the mess and hassle of mixing from scratch. Just scoop and bake. 10 irresistible flavors of frozen cookie dough to choose from | Repeatedly freeze & thaw our cookie dough without loss of quality, taste or texture | Keeps 3 months in the refrigerator, 1 year in the freezer | 6 great flavors of dry cookie mix to choose from

## WORLD'S FINEST CHOCOLATE



4801 S. Lawndale Chicago, IL 60632 | (888) 821-8452

[www.worldsfinestchocolate.com](http://www.worldsfinestchocolate.com)

Discover the best. Discover World's Finest Chocolate. Made in the USA. Family owned and based in Chicago, World's FinestR Chocolate has over 60 years of experience and prides itself on being one of nine American companies that manufactures chocolate directly from the bean.

The most modern machinery, dedicated employees and the finest ingredients allow World's Finest Chocolate to consistently deliver the perfect balance of flavor, texture and color. We are proud to make our chocolate right here in the USA.

For information on fundraising for Show Choirs, visit our Music Groups page.



# PRODUCTSHOWCASE

## RADA CUTLERY



PO Box 838 | Waverly, IA 50677 | (800) 311-9691  
[www.radacutlery.com](http://www.radacutlery.com)

Rada Cutlery Fundraising features 100% Made in the USA kitchen products—kitchen knives, utensils, gift sets (also cookbooks, stoneware, soy wax candles and quick mixes).

### Reputation “Sells Itself”

You will find that many of your customers recognize Rada Cutlery products and know their reputation for quality and value (over 135 million Rada knives have been sold). For this reason, many fundraisers say that Rada Cutlery “sells itself”!

### Profits

Your group will make a 40% profit—but that is only part of the story! The added benefit is the remarkable value your customers receive while supporting your cause. This value is created because you are working directly with the manufacturer and there are no middlemen adding costs and driving up the prices.

## SOARING ADVENTURES



PO Box 541 | 112 Old Ridgefield Rd | Wilton CT 06897 | (800) 762-7464  
[www.fundraisingrides.com](http://www.fundraisingrides.com)

### We Will Donate a FREE Hot Air Balloon Ride to Your Live Auction or Silent Auction Fundraiser!

In the 2012 / 2013 fundraising season, FundraisingRides helped 1,545 non-profit organizations by providing hot air balloon rides for use in their live and silent auction fundraising events.

We donated one hot air balloon ride to every non-profit that used our offer. In total, our hot air balloon rides raised nearly \$800,000 for non-profits across the country. This year, we want to double those results!

Your Live Auction or Silent Auction Will Soar to New Heights with Our Fantastic Hot Air Balloon Rides!

You Can Print Your FundraisingRides Auction Packet from This Website Or Get Your Free Copy Shipped to You Via USPS First Class Mail! All silent auction table display materials are included in the fundraisingrides auction packet! To print your FundraisingRides Auction Packet including all your auction display materials, [click here!](#)

## YANKEE CANDLE



P.O. Box 110 | South Deerfield, MA 01373 | (800) 351-1533  
[www.yankeecandlefundraising.com](http://www.yankeecandlefundraising.com)

### Five Reasons You'll Succeed with Yankee Candle Fundraising

(1) Friends and family know and enjoy America's Best Loved Candle; (2) You earn 40% profit for your organization; (3) People love having a trusted, healthy alternative to sweets and inferior products; (4) We make fundraising easy with features like individually packaging each seller's order; (5) With two selling seasons you have more opportunity to raise money.

### Easier for you to raise funds:

Choosing Yankee Candle® Fundraising will give your supporters a product that they recognize, trust and will be proud to give as a gift or a treat for themselves. Our products are priced comparable to our retail stores and your group earns 40% profit.

### Easy to run:

There are no materials costs to you, no order minimums, we tally all orders, ship each seller's orders with their names on their box, have a customer portal for our chairperson to understand how the sale worked and a 21 Day Service Guarantee.

# ADINDEX

| COMPANY NAME .....             | PAGE NO. |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Acoustics First .....          | 9        |
| Audix .....                    | 1        |
| Bagus .....                    | 13       |
| Breeze Tune Productions .....  | 24       |
| Charms .....                   | 14       |
| Custom Arrangements .....      | 27       |
| Dutch Mill Bulbs .....         | IFC      |
| FAME .....                     | 12       |
| Full Compass .....             | 19       |
| Little Ol' Cookie House .....  | 26       |
| Music Arrangements .....       | 27       |
| Peak Performance .....         | 20       |
| ProCAT .....                   | 24       |
| Rada Cutlery .....             | 21       |
| Satin Stitches .....           | 20       |
| Soaring Adventures .....       | BC       |
| Stage Accents .....            | 15       |
| Staging Concepts .....         | 25       |
| StageRight .....               | IBC      |
| Wenger .....                   | 16-17    |
| World's Finest Chocolate ..... | .5       |
| Yankee Candle .....            | .2       |

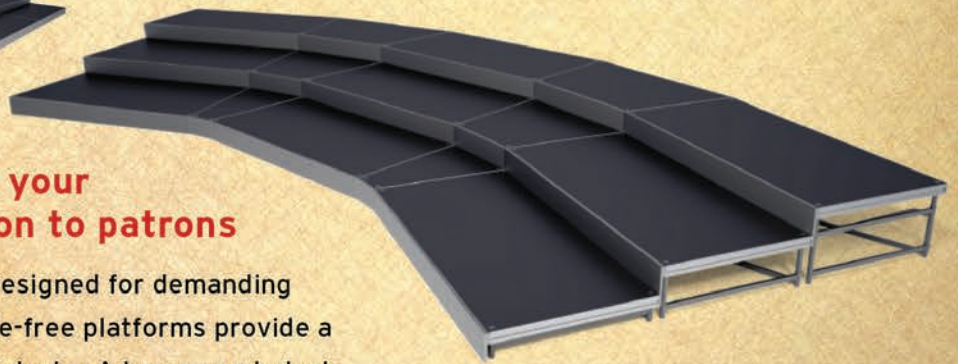
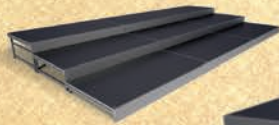


Photo courtesy of Susy Shearer Photography



# A Solid Foundation

*That won't steal the show*



## Don't let your riser upstage your event or become a distraction to patrons

StageRight risers are safe, sturdy and designed for demanding show choir needs. Our solid steel, wobble-free platforms provide a solid base for our lightweight dual sided decks. A honeycomb deck core creates a show surface free of the "drum-head" of foot noise.

*Visit [www.StageRight.com](http://www.StageRight.com) for more information*

[www.stageright.com](http://www.stageright.com) | 800.373.1912



STAGERIGHT



# FREE

## BALLOON RIDE TICKET!

**For the next Silent Auction at Your School, Church,  
Favorite Charity or Community Organization!**

**"The Best Auction Item Ever, Thanks!"**



### Watch the Bidding Go Wild!

**S**et up our Balloon Ride "Live and Silent Auction Kit" at your next Fundraiser and watch the bidding go wild! Everyone wants to go up in a Hot Air Balloon



and this is the chance they have been waiting for. You'll create excitement and fun at your event and raise lots of money. Thousands of Schools, Churches and

Charities have raised funds with our Balloon Rides during the past 10 years.

### We Make It Very Simple for You, Just 1, 2, 3!

**1. Order your free Live and Silent Auction Kit and Balloon Ride Ticket.** Go to [www.FundraisingRides.org](http://www.FundraisingRides.org) or call us Monday through Friday between 10 am and 6 pm Eastern Time at **1-800-762-7464**. We will answer all your questions and send you your free Auction Kit and reserve your free ticket.

**2. Then, just set up the Kit on your Silent Auction Table.**

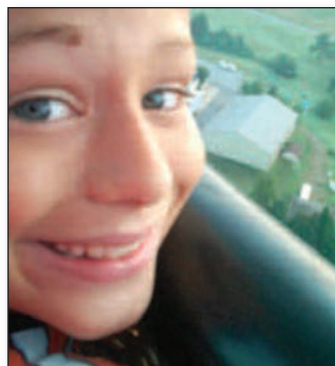
This new addition to your event will create quite a stir and everyone will join in the bidding. Everything you bring in on the free ride is yours, usually \$200 or so. If you sell more rides, you will make money on those, too. No purchase necessary to get your free ride. Often organizations will bring in \$500-\$1,000. or more, sometimes much more.

**3. Then, after the event just request your free ride and any others you have sold.** The winners can take their rides at any of our 200 locations nationwide during the next 12 months.

### Here's a Sample of Thousands Who Participate

United Way, Linda Vista Elementary School, CA, Avon Grove Library, PA, St. Boniface Episcopal Church, WI, American Cancer Society, Wolverine Band Boosters, FL, The Washington Hospital, PA, St. Ignatius College Prep, PA, Pets/People Humane Society, OK, The Boys and Girls Clubs, Montessori Center of South Dayton, OH, Special Olympics, Metropolitan United Methodist Church, MI, Mothers of Preschoolers, CO, Jewish Community Centers, NJ, Callier Preschool Parent Association, TX, Make-A-Wish Foundation.

### "All of the Kids in My 4th Grade Class Will Be Jealous!"



#### "I wanted something that we could do together!"

I bought the tickets for my son for his 10th birthday. We took our ride in Charlotte, NC and the sights and views were absolutely amazing. This was definitely an experience that would last forever for us. I think that my son's testimonial sums it up nicely..."

**"This is the best birthday present ever. Even though I had to get up early, this was a great memory that me and my mom will remember forever. All of the kids in my 4th grade class will be so jealous to hear what I did for my birthday!"**

### Also, Raffle-a-Ride Anytime!

We have a raffle kit, too. Posters and Raffle tickets. You can use it anytime. Just sell the raffle tickets and then, once you have collected the money, order the Flight Ticket for the winner, at our cost. Most organizations make \$500 to \$1,000. for their worthy causes.

**We are here to answer your questions. Call or click now!**

**[www.FundraisingRides.org](http://www.FundraisingRides.org)**

SOARING ADVENTURES OF AMERICA, INC.  
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