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LLAMA, JEFF BOWEN**



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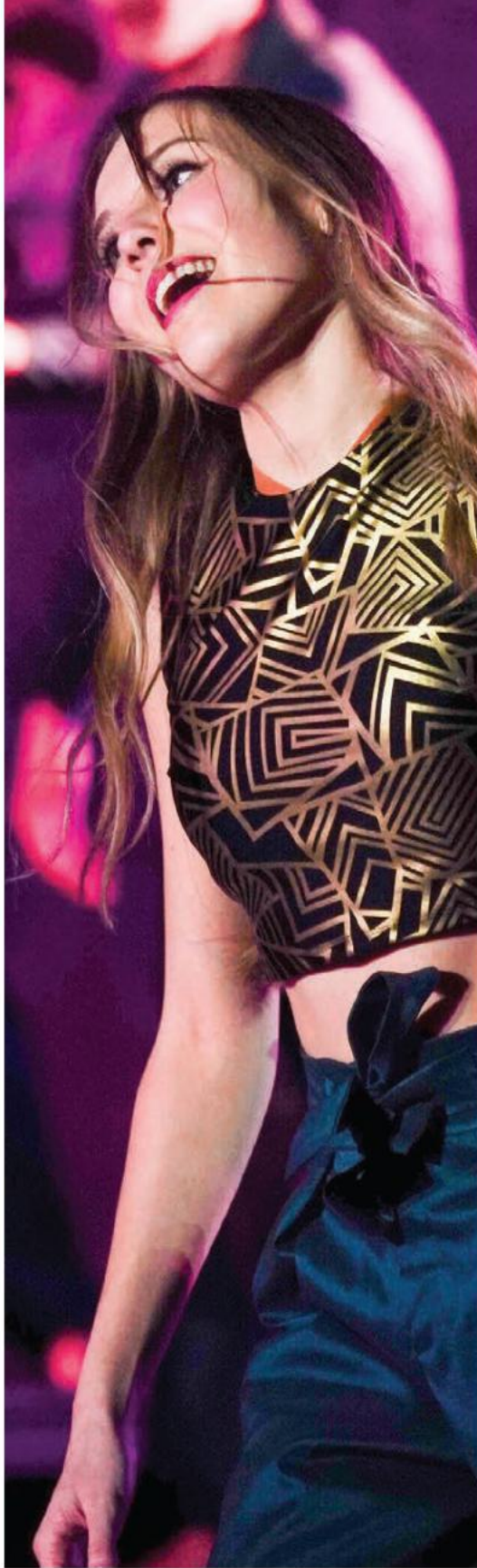
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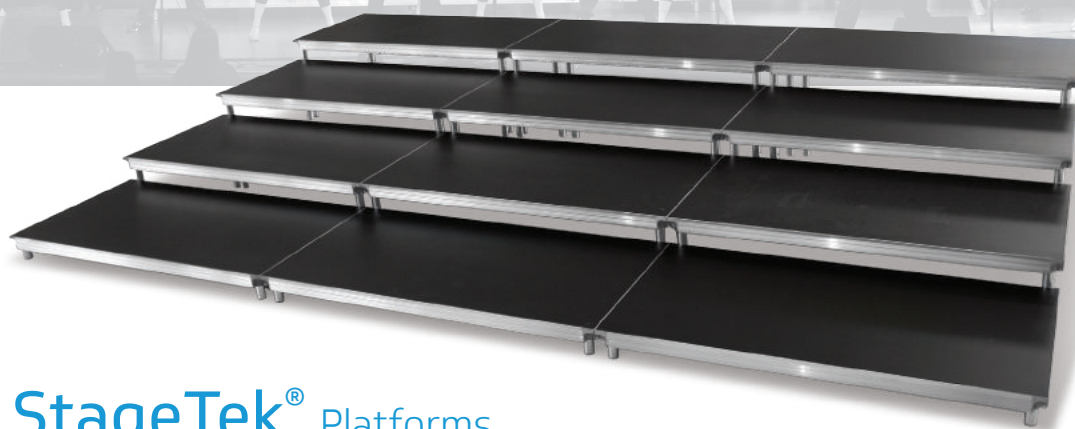
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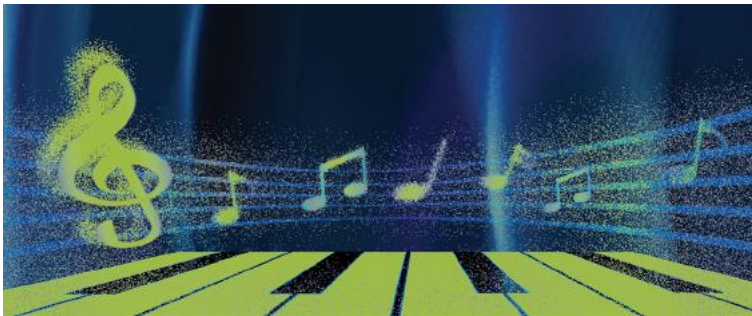
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## MANY HATS, ONE UMBRELLA

Performer, music director, adjudicator, composer, arranger, and creator of *Llouie the Llama*, Jeff Bowen is one enthusiastic guy. He participated in his first show choir competition at Bishop Luers High School in 1980 and has been involved in the field ever since. Bowen shared with us the passion that drives him.

## 16 HARMONIZING BRILLIANCE: THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC SELECTION IN SHOW CHOIR COMPETITIONS

In the dynamic interplay of show choir competitions, music serves as the thread that weaves together melody, movement, and emotion. From playing to your choir's unique strengths to pairing great music with intricate choreography to create a cohesive and impactful presentation, learn expert tips on selecting music that will stay with audiences and judges long after the curtains close.



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Can show choir transcend the stage to become a global force for good? Lisa Gibbs asked freelance choreographer, songwriter and show designer Damon Brown how he ties his passion for important causes back to his successful career in the world of show choir.

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A well-designed stage set, complemented by sophisticated lighting and effects, transforms a concert into a mesmerizing journey. Explore the possibilities of integrating the right stage equipment into the show to set the perfect tone, enhance depth and drama on stage, and highlight soloists and key choreography. When it's all in place, the magic unfolds.



# editor's letter

Dear Show Choir Community,

As I sit down to write this letter, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and warmth. The holiday season is upon us, a time when our hearts are full of festive spirit, and joyous melodies seem to dance in the air. It is during these magical moments that I find myself reflecting on the incredible community that is the heart and soul of show choir—you, our esteemed directors, and the tireless boosters who stand steadfastly behind our performers.

The holiday season, with its twinkling lights and nostalgic carols, is a time of celebration and togetherness. It is a season that mirrors the very essence of show choir performances—a harmonious convergence of voices, movements, and visual splendor. Your dedication and passion bring immeasurable joy, not just during this festive season but throughout the year.

In the tapestry of holiday traditions, show choir performances hold a special place. The stage becomes a canvas where stories unfold through the power of music and dance, creating indelible memories for those fortunate enough to witness the magic. Your tireless efforts to create enchanting performances resonate far beyond the auditorium walls, touching the lives of families, friends, and community members.

These performances bring the spirit of the season to life. The joy emanating from the stage becomes a gift that transcends age and background, bringing people together in shared moments of wonder and delight. Show choirs, under your guidance, have the unique ability to capture the festive cheer and spread it far and wide, fostering a sense of unity and community spirit.

As we navigate the complexities of the world, your commitment to the art of show choir becomes a beacon of light, reminding us of the enduring power of creativity, collaboration, and the pursuit of excellence. The tireless dedication of boosters, whose unwavering support ensures the success of each performance, is nothing short of remarkable.

I want to express my deepest gratitude for the privilege of being a part of the show choir family. Your passion, creativity, and commitment to excellence inspire us all. May this holiday season bring you moments of peace, joy, and reflection, surrounded by the love of family and friends. As we step into the new year, may it be filled with fresh opportunities, continued success, and the boundless joy that comes from being an integral part of the show choir community.

Thank you for all that you do, and may the music of the season continue to resonate in your hearts.

Wishing you a holiday season brimming with joy and a new year filled with peace and prosperity.

Warm regards,

Ed Bauer  
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# MANY HATS, ONE UMBRELLA

BY LISA GIBBS, Ed.D.

Performer, music director, adjudicator, composer, arranger, parent to a 22-year-old cat, and creator of Louie the Llama, Jeff Bowen is one enthusiastic guy. He participated in his first show choir competition at Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1980 and has been involved in the field ever since. I talked with him about making a career in music through his openness to following his talents wherever they lead.

CONTINUED...



**I've done dueling pianos, been music director for several shows in town and the Lilly Theatre at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, and arrange music for show choirs.**

**Lisa:** You've made a living creating music. I think it's so cool to make enough money to live a good life and do what comes naturally to you and you love to do.

**Jeff:** Yes, I've been blessed, in all avenues. I'm a performer, I've done dueling pianos, been music director for several shows in town and the Lilly Theatre at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, and arrange music for show choirs. As an independent

artist, you have to divide yourself among different things. I learned that a very long time ago. Many hats.

**Lisa:** Many hats but all related.

**Jeff:** Many hats but all under the umbrella of music.

**Lisa:** Let's talk about some of those hats. How did you get into show choir arranging?

**Jeff:** In the fall of 1987, I was contacted to arrange a piece of music for a school in Indiana. I don't know how they got my information, but I wrote that one for them. Around that time I also played piano for Craig Tornquist, a comedian who would host competitions. I collected programs and started sending letters to high school show choir directors saying, 'I'm new to the arranging thing, and if

you'd like to give me a try we'll work out something.' I got three shows out of that. By 1990, I was writing a lot.

It was handwritten, so one arrangement would take about a week or more. I would write out all the individual parts. I would play it on a little keyboard, sing the vocal line, try the horns as chords to see if it might work. It took a long time and you really didn't get to hear what it sounded like until it was on stage. It seems so archaic nowadays.

**Lisa:** That's how we worked in the days before computers. What is different now?

**Jeff:** By 1995 I was using Finale on a computer. That changed the whole ball game. You could actually hear it played back. It was so revolutionary! And of course, it sounded like a rinky tink video game compared to now where they have such lush sounds even for basic midi playback. Now, in about 12 hours, I can write a full arrangement, using Finale 25.

**Lisa:** Are you solo or do you have other people working with you?

**Jeff:** It's just me.

**Lisa:** How do you come up with your arrangements? What is the process, if a school comes to you?

**Jeff:** Like if someone says can you write Song ABC from Group XYZ and here's what we want? They tell me what parts they want, the stop times, the chorus, the dance break, then verse one, then short dance break, etc. I write it, then they try it, and sometimes they come back and say we need something more here or there. I'm fine with an edit like changing a part or changing a key. The choir may have 26 altos

and seven sopranos. It has to work for them. All of these things have to work so the kids get something out of it. You never know what's going to blossom out of those little things.

**The choir may have 26 altos and seven sopranos. It has to work for them. All of these things have to work so the kids get something out of it. You never know what's going to blossom out of those little things.**

**Lisa:** I like that philosophy. So this is custom work?

**Jeff:** Yes, and this is all work-for-hire because I am not the license holder for the song. I use someone else's material and get paid for my work without ownership of the song. I have the right to be the arranger, and that's where my rights start and end. I'm fine with that because I've had the opportunity to make a career of this. My main goal is map it out. I start with an introduction. Then I write the melody line all the way to the end of the piece. I know where my start and end are. When there is a band break, I will write either a single horn line or chords. Then I put the words in, then the piano. It's a building block system. When I was writing by hand, it made it easier for me to write it all as I went. When you do that on a computer you really slow yourself down. Now

CONTINUED...



I write one part at a time. And I always write a drum line over all of that as I'm going, because then when they get a preliminary mp3 of the arrangement, it's the vocals, the piano, and the drum parts so they can feel those fills and the splashes with the cymbals. I also like to put in the popular essences of show choir. To me, there are mechanisms that should happen in the arrangement without being canned and that's a fine line. To me, it's at least one good vocal splash, particularly before the band break.

**Lisa:** I was wondering about musical trends in show choir. So with technology, you can take an arrangement that followed the trends of the time, say the early 2000s, and rearrange it with current trends.

**Jeff:** That's a very good point. Years ago it was "make it big." What I've learned over the years as a judge is when horns are playing all through the vocals, they have to sing over it. So I have gone back and wiped out a lot of my horn parts that I way overwrote.

**Lisa:** How did you get into adjudicating?

**Jeff:** One of the first clients I had in Indiana, after three years of working together, asked me to be a judge in her competition. She knew I had no experience judging and asked me anyway. That was 30 years ago and luckily I've been doing it every year since. She opened that door for me and I still work with her now and then when I judge north of Fort Wayne.

**Lisa:** On your website, showchoirmusic.com, there is a page dedicated to Thirst Project. Can you explain that?

**Jeff:** Thirst Project was started by a show choir kid and a friend of mine and very popular choreographer, Damon Brown. [He] started Show Choirs for Thirst. He has groups that do Miracle Minute fundraisers and they can raise money at competitions or concerts. That

money goes to drill wells in very remote areas, where the source of water might literally be a muddy bog after a rain. It's life saving and life changing! Damon remains very active with it—it's a passion of his.

**Lisa:** What do you do for that project?

**Jeff:** I donate some of my sales and I pledge X number of dollars to Damon every year. I am really pleased to be part of it.

**Lisa:** Such an important cause! And it was started by a show choir kid. I saw a tab on [jeffreybowenmusic.com](http://jeffreybowenmusic.com) that is titled "Llouie the Llama." Tell us about Llouie.

**Jeff:** Years ago, I stayed with my brother and his wife when our dad was sick. Down the road was a cute little llama named Louie. I used to say "hey, hey,

Louie" which became a song, which became a CD. It's spelled with two L's because he's a llama. In my head I could see a music video. That got done this year and was released November 25 of this year and the stage musical opened on November 24.

**Lisa:** A musical?

**Jeff:** Yep! I wrote a script and some songs and submitted it to the Lilly Theatre and they chose to produce it. Llouie gets lost in the woods and all the woodland creatures help him find his way home. In fact, we've talked about having Llouie visit one of the villages Damon works with and tell a story. Once Llouie starts to get bigger, that will increase what we can give to that project.

**Lisa:** I love that! I also saw that you have a 22-year-old cat?

**Jeff:** Nix turned 22 the first of October. His bed has a heating pad under it. He's a tiny wisp of a cat but he still jumps up on the bed and goes up and down the stairs.

I've had this wonderful life all these years. I grew up in the country and ran barefoot all summer long. I live right in the heart of Indianapolis now. I'm comfortable where I am.

**Lisa:** Your exuberance when talking about your work and life in general is very inspiring. Thank you so much, Jeff!!

---

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Productions* staff writer Lisa Gibbs earned her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration in 2018. She is an advocate for arts, particularly dance, in education and for increasing the financial well-being of artists through financial education.

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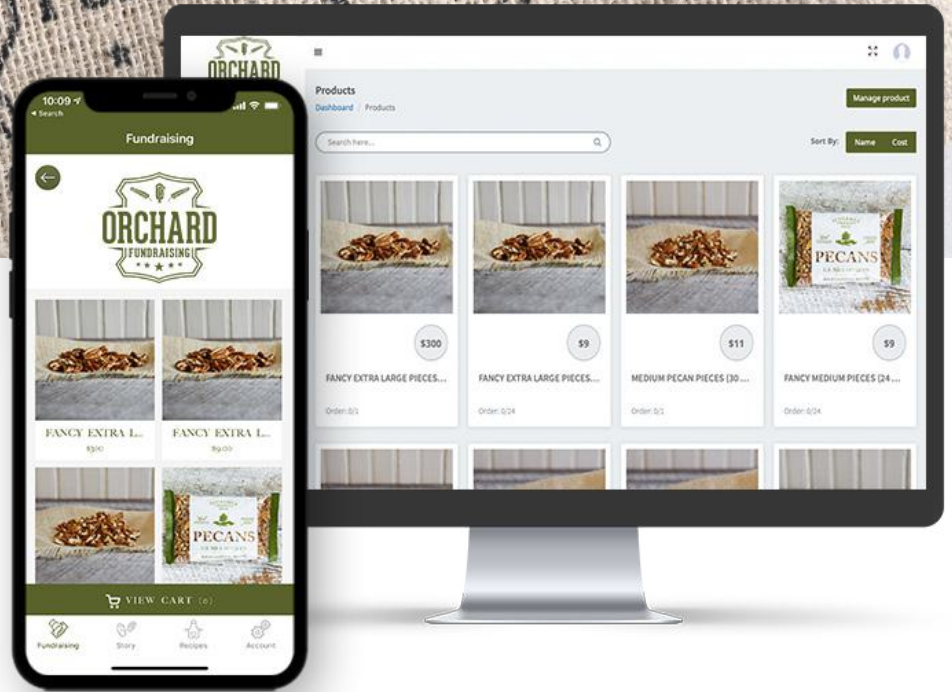
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Wimberly continues, "We've shared the idea with many different organizational groups who are looking for new ways to fundraise. Many organizational leaders are eager to learn about what is to come from this platform. We offer the ability to add their own products, which is even more exciting."

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Aron Wimberly can be reached at [aron@schmerpecans.com](mailto:aron@schmerpecans.com) or by calling 1.800.841.3403. Contact Orchard at [info@orchardfundraising.com](mailto:info@orchardfundraising.com), call 833.850.8324, or visit [www.orchardfundraising.com](http://www.orchardfundraising.com)



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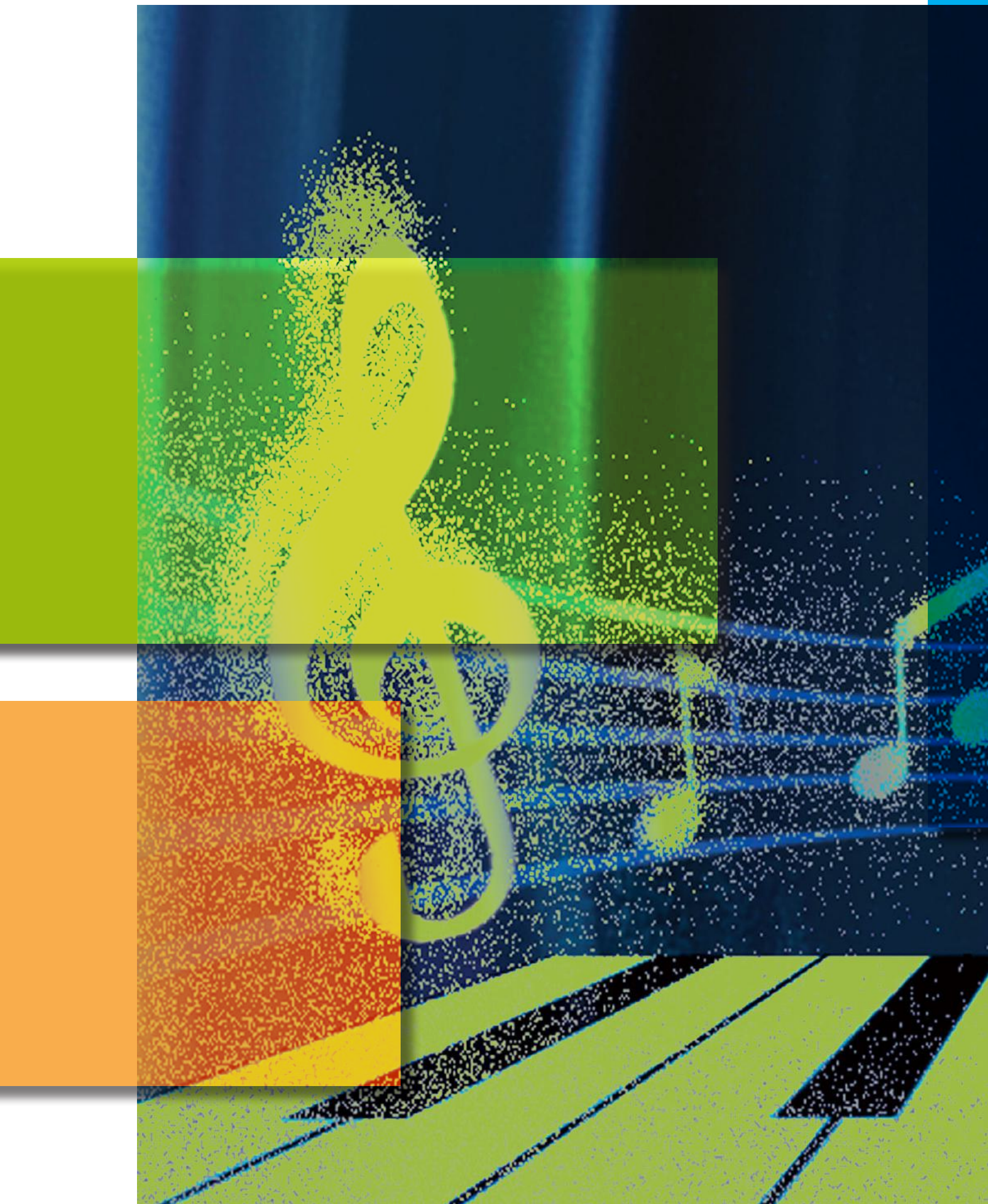
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# HARMONIZING BRILLIANCE

## THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC SELECTION IN SHOW CHOIR COMPETITIONS

BY ED BAUER

In the intricate world of show choir competitions, where melody meets movement, the significance of music selection cannot be overstated.

It is a delicate dance between artistic expression and strategic planning, requiring directors and designers to navigate the vast ocean of musical possibilities. In this comprehensive exploration, we delve into the multifaceted nuances of music selection, emphasizing the need for a cohesive theme, alignment with the choir's abilities, and a meticulous consideration of judging criteria.

CONTINUED...



## Creating emotional resonance with the audience is critical to a show's success.

### Setting the Stage: The Power of a Unified Theme

Creating emotional resonance with the audience is critical to a show's success. As noted by Melanie Green and Timothy Brock in their research on narrative coherence published in the *Journal of Communication* (2000), a clear theme contributes to the overall coherence of a performance. A well-chosen theme provides a narrative structure, weaving a story that captivates judges and spectators alike.

Music selection is a key component. A study by Patrik Juslin and Daniel

Västfjäll (2008) in the *Journal of New Music Research* suggests that music has a profound impact on emotions. Selecting music that resonates well with a show's theme amplifies the emotional connection between the performers and audience. Great music also stays with the audience long after the curtains close. A study by Elaine Schubert and Charles Wolfe (2006) in the journal *Psychology of Music* highlights the role of memorability in music. A themed performance paired with the right music has a higher likelihood of being remembered, leaving a lasting impression on judges and increasing the choir's competitive edge.

### Matching Music to Choir Talents: The Art of Strategic Selection

Your choir's unique vocal strengths are a critical factor in choosing the

best music for a show. This includes evaluating the choir's proficiency in executing complex harmonies, rhythms, and stylistic elements inherent in the chosen repertoire. In short, the music should play to your choir's unique strengths. Meanwhile, music that complements the strengths of the choreography enhances the visual appeal of the performance. So what, specifically, are judges watching for?

### 1. Vocal Quality

According to the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), vocal quality is a critical judging criterion. Directors must select music that allows their choir to showcase a range of vocal techniques, ensuring the ensemble's ability to deliver a performance that is both technically proficient and emotionally resonant.

### 2. Choreography and Movement

The American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) emphasizes the importance of choreography and movement in show choir competitions. Music selection should align with the choreographic vision, allowing for seamless integration of movement and enhancing the overall visual impact of the performance.

### 3. Artistic Expression

Judges often evaluate the choir's ability to convey emotion and tell a story through their performance. The right music selection plays a pivotal role in allowing performers to express themselves artistically and connect with the audience on a deeper level.

### 4. Overall Impact

The Show Choir Nationals judging criteria underscore the significance

of overall impact. Music serves as the backbone of the performance, and directors must select pieces that contribute to a cohesive and impactful presentation.

## Practical Strategies for Music Selection

### 1. Thematic Brainstorming

Begin the music selection process with a collaborative brainstorming session. Involve choir members, choreographers, and other key stakeholders to generate theme ideas that resonate with the group's collective vision.

### 2. Genre Exploration

Explore a variety of musical genres that align with the chosen theme. Consider how different genres can contribute to the emotional arc of the performance CONTINUED...



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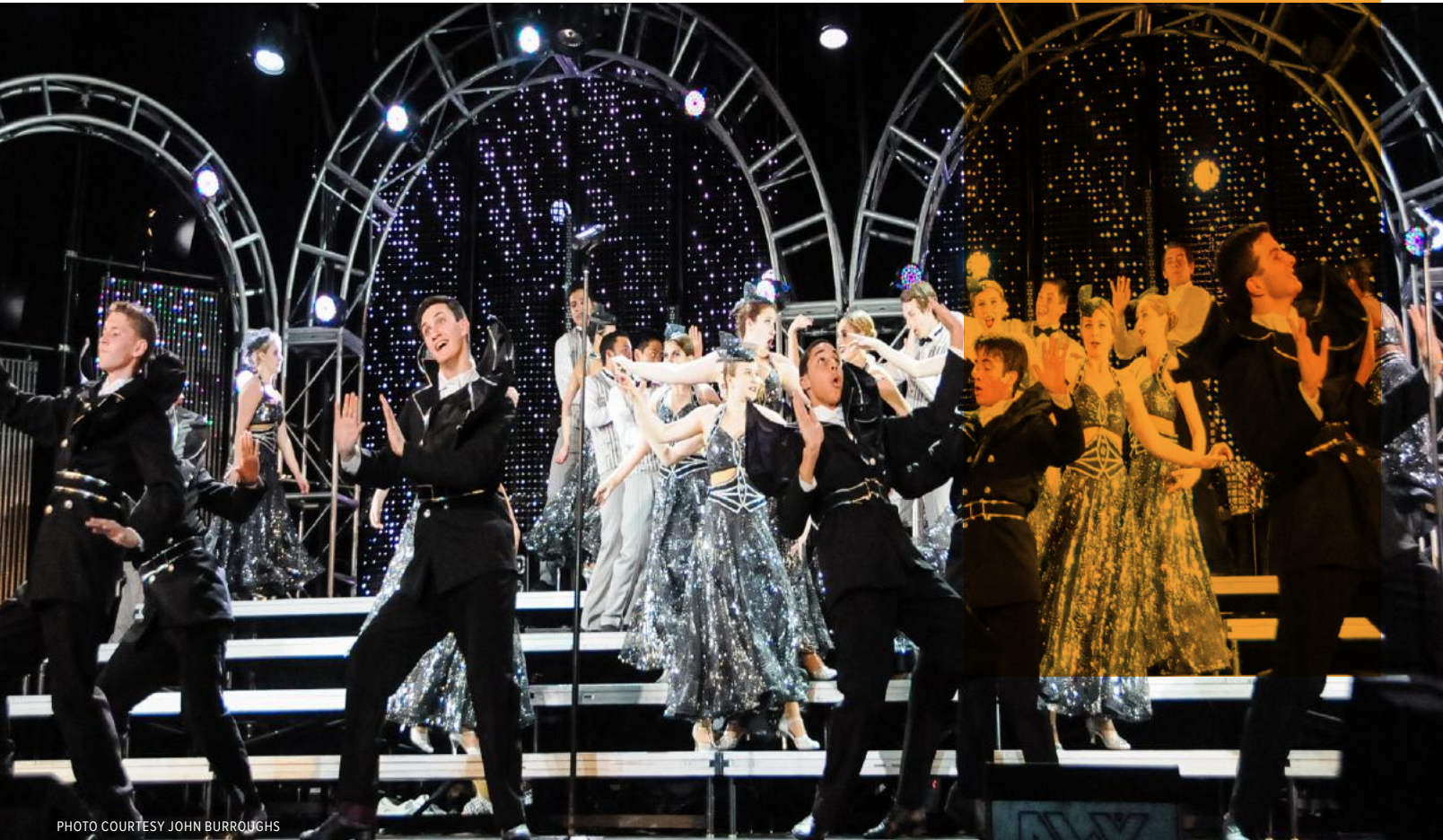


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and showcase the choir's versatility.

### 3. Choir Feedback

Gather feedback from choir members regarding their favorite genres, styles, and musical preferences. This ensures a more inclusive decision-making process and increases the likelihood of a performance that resonates with the entire ensemble.

### 4. Artistic Collaboration

Collaborate with choreographers, lighting designers, and costume designers during the music selection process. An integrated approach ensures that all elements of the performance align seamlessly, creating a harmonious and visually stunning presentation.

### 5. Audition Process

Consider conducting auditions or vocal assessments to identify the strengths and unique qualities of individual choir members. Use this information to inform the selection of music that highlights the ensemble's collective talents.

In the dynamic interplay of show choir competitions, music serves as the thread that weaves together melody, movement, and emotion. The process of music selection, guided by a cohesive theme and a deep understanding of the choir's abilities, is an art form that directors and designers must master to create performances judges and audiences will remember. The power of music lies not only in its notes and rhythms but in its ability to transcend, connect, and elevate the human experience.

Thank you, esteemed directors and dedicated boosters, for your unwavering commitment to the art of show choir. Your dedication enriches the lives of performers and spectators alike, bringing joy and inspiration to the stage. As we embrace the holiday season, may the melodies of your choirs continue to echo the spirit of unity and

**The process of music selection, guided by a cohesive theme and a deep understanding of the choir's abilities, is an art form that directors and designers must master to create performances judges and audiences will remember.**

celebration. Wishing you all the joy and peace that your music has brought to countless hearts, and a new year filled with harmonious achievements and artistic triumphs.

---

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ed Bauer has been in publishing for over twenty years. He was introduced to Show Choir by his daughter and he is forever grateful to her for this wonderful gift.

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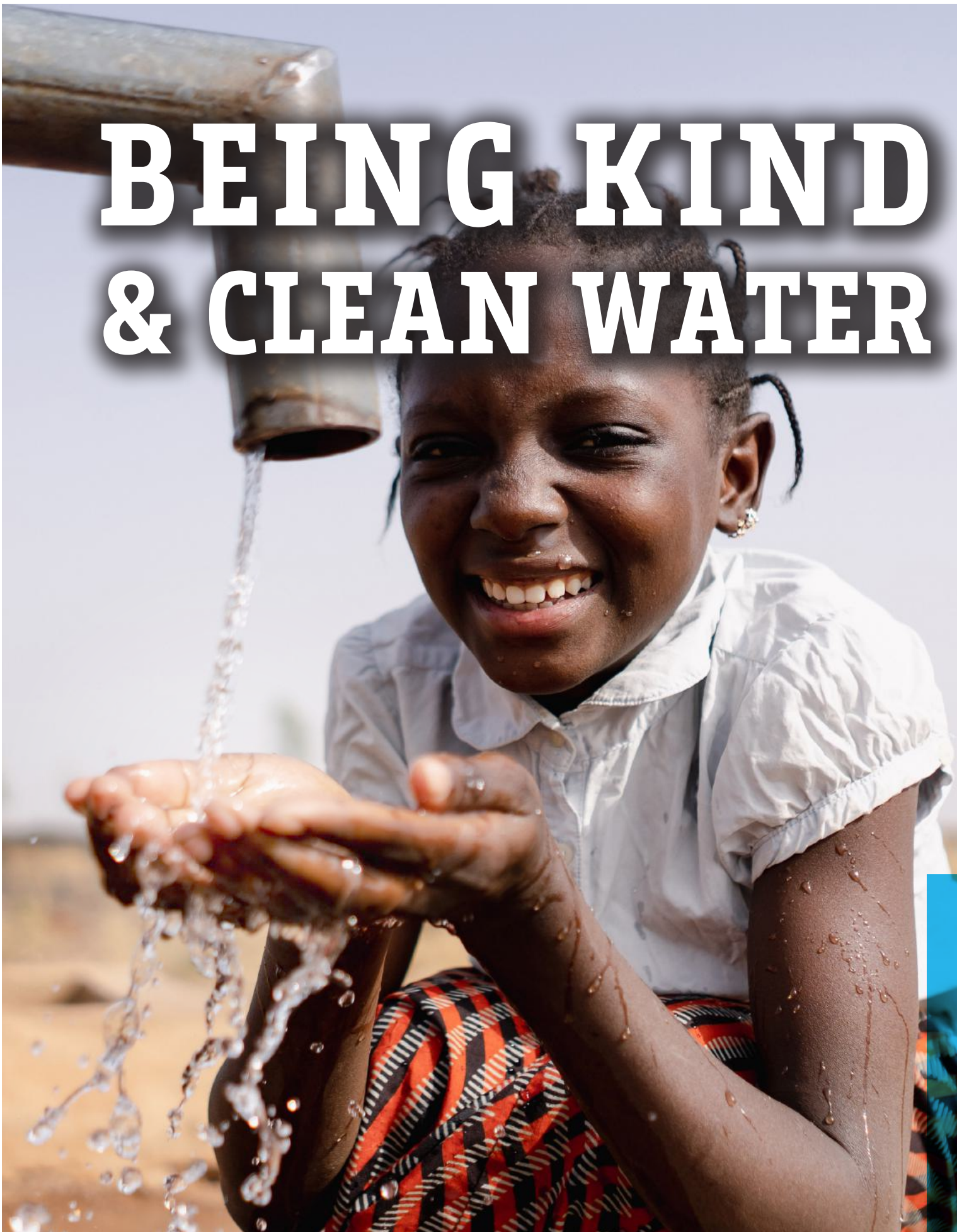
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# BEING KIND & CLEAN WATER



# FOR LIFE

by Lisa Gibbs, Ed.D.

What would you do if you encountered young people harassing elderly people? What would you do if you knew more about the devastating effects of a global water crisis? If you are Damon Brown, you take action. Because he has had these experiences, Damon founded a group named Show Choir Kindness and another group named Show Choirs for Thirst.

Damon took a moment to tell me more about these dynamic initiatives and how they tie back to his thriving career in the world of show choir.

**Lisa:** What is your journey, in that you've been able to make a career in the show choir world?

**Damon:** In 1979, I made show choir after my second attempt. I didn't make it the first time because of my dancing. So I got my mom's Jane Fonda workout tapes and started practicing and following along. I joined show choir on my second try and a year later I was dance captain. In my senior year in high school, I asked the director if I could choreograph and he said yes. I did a song called "American Pop" and they loved it! The group asked if I could choreograph the whole show the next year, and that's how I got my start. Little by little, I got another school in the city, then one a county over, and through word of mouth got more and more work. Forty-two years later, I've worked with over 75,000 kids, traveled to Europe, and worked via video with groups in Germany, Switzerland, and Ukraine.

**Lisa:** That's amazing! All because of Jane Fonda.

**Damon:** Jane helped launch my career, and she will never know it!

**Lisa:** You are involved in two very meaningful projects related to show choir. One is Show Choir Kindness and the other is Thirst Project. Will you explain those?

**Damon:** Show Choir Kindness is a Facebook group with currently around 3,900 people in 25 countries. Years ago I was in Carlsbad, California and I was doing a late-night run on a path by the ocean. There was an elderly couple out for a walk and some kids came up and started harassing them, saying some really nasty stuff. I decided to walk with the couple and the kids harassed me as well. We walked in silence, then after a while the kids lost interest and went on their way. It shook me up and I thought, 'That's not who I work with, that's not what show choir kids are like.' I went back

CONTINUED...



to my hotel room and didn't sleep at all that night, thinking about what I could do. I wanted to put something forward that was all positive about show choir kids. That became Show Choir Kindness. We will post about anything such as what's your favorite sandwich topping or things the groups are doing in the community. We also dive into discussions about how we treat each other or what we are trying to gain from being in show choir.

**Lisa:** That was brave—having a troubling interaction with kids and actually doing something positive about it. How did Thirst Project get started?

**Damon:** My connection with it originated at Franklin Central High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. I was the choreographer and had a student named Seth Maxwell. He was a great performer. He wanted to become an actor and after graduating high school in 2006 went

to the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. While there, he met a photographer who did a photo essay on the water crisis in Swaziland, which is now called Eswatini. Seth asked 'What is that stuff in the buckets that looks like chocolate milk?' It's the water that people are drinking. This was in 2008 and he thought he needed to help these people, and he learned about the global water crisis.

He went with some friends to the local grocery store and asked for a deal on cases of water. They went to the corner of Hollywood and Vine and they passed out water, telling people about the global water crisis and asking for donations. At the end of the day they turned \$75 into \$1,700. That day, a woman told Seth she was a teacher and asked if he could come talk with her students about the water crisis, which he did. A few weeks go by and he still has the \$1,700, trying to figure

out which organization to send it to. Then the woman called him and said they had raised \$12,000 and asked him to whom do they write the check. Seth realized while there were a lot of water organizations around the world, there were few that were geared towards activating young people to have a global impact on the water crisis. At that point in time, as a 19-year-old kid studying to be an actor, he decided to found a 501(c)3 and named it Thirst Project. We were at a restaurant when he told me about it. I agreed to donate \$25 a month and thought it was something that would last for only a little while. Fast forward to 2010 and they drilled their first well in Swaziland. In 2016 I went to Swaziland with Seth and my heart was broken into a million pieces and at the same time I was inspired in ways that I couldn't describe. I told him you've got to bring me on staff and he agreed. In 2017 I founded Show Choirs for Thirst. We do Miracle Minutes at show



choir competitions across the U.S. This year, just the show choir community donations since 2017 are going to surpass half a million dollars.

**Lisa:** Wow! Explain what a Miracle Minute is.

**Damon:** We go up on the stage and take about three minutes to talk about the global water crisis and Thirst Project. Sometimes it's me, or a video, or the emcee reads a script. We play upbeat music and take buckets out into the audience and ask for donations. The school counts the money and writes us a check. It takes 15, maybe 20 minutes total.

**Lisa:** What a neat way to do something that will have a deep impact on others!

**Damon:** One of the smartest things Seth did early on was decide that all money raised by students would go directly to the water crisis and never to pay staff or buy office supplies.

**Lisa:** What has happened since Seth began Thirst Project?

**Damon:** We have wells in 13 countries and we are active in four—Eswatini, Kenya, Uganda, and El Salvador. We are not active anymore in some places because of government regulation, safety issues, and/or controversy within the countries.

**Lisa:** What does it cost for a well?

**Damon:** A well in Eswatini costs \$12,000, in Uganda it's \$8,000, in El Salvador it's \$10,000 and in Kenya it's \$20,000. That includes fees, material costs, labor costs, etc. Every year I run a marathon to raise at least \$12,000 to build a well.

**Lisa:** Are the people who build the wells locals?

**Damon:** We only use local contractors because we want to provide employment. There are side effects from our work. Eswatini has the highest rate of HIV in the world. You can live a lot longer, being

HIV positive, if you have clean water, water that is not stressing your immune system because it is contaminated. The life expectancy in Eswatini has risen since we started our work there. (According to WHO, the average life expectancy in Eswatini has risen from 47 years in 2010 to 57.7 years in 2019.)

Every time a community wants to work with us, they provide a 10-person leadership committee with five men and five women. They learn how to keep the well maintained and commit to the cost of maintenance. That's another side effect of our work—it provides the affirmation of gender equality in a substantive way. And it's been that way since the beginning.

**Lisa:** What might a school need to know before contacting you about becoming a Show Choir for Thirst?

**Damon:** These are the things schools typically want to know: One, are we a religious or political organization? No and no. Two, is all the money going to the charity? 100 percent yes. Three, is it going to take us a lot of time? It takes whatever time it takes to read a short script, to walk

around with buckets, to count the money, and write a check. Four, is it going to take anything away from our own fundraising? It does not cost the school anything. It's purely voluntary. Any amount donated will make a difference. \$25 will give one person clean water for life. They can contact me at [damonb@thirst-project.org](mailto:damonb@thirst-project.org) or 317-319-5223.

**Lisa:** What else would you like to share?

**Damon:** Seth had amazing foresight. This is a show choir kid who left college and started a worldwide charity. He was my student, then my co-worker, now he's my boss. He is the kindest leader I know.

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Productions* staff writer Lisa Gibbs earned her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration in 2018. She is an advocate for arts, particularly dance, in education and for increasing the financial well-being of artists through financial education.





# ILLUMINATING EXCELLENCE:

A GUIDE TO LIGHTING AND EFFECTS FOR  
PREMIER SHOW CHOIR CONCERTS

BY ED BAUER

Show choir competitions are more than just vocal performances; they are captivating spectacles that engage the audience through a harmonious blend of music, choreography, and visual effects. Lighting and effects are crucial elements that often take center stage in creating a memorable show. In this guide, we'll look at the art and science of illuminating excellence, exploring the importance of stage sets, their role in storytelling, and the equipment that can elevate your premiere show choir concert to new heights.

## The Importance of Stage Sets in Show Choir Performances

A show choir's stage is not just a space; it's a canvas waiting to be painted with light and color. The stage sets the tone for the performance, providing a backdrop that complements the music and choreography. Here's why stage sets are integral to creating a captivating show:

**1. Visual Storytelling:** The right stage set can instantly transport the audience to a different time, place, or emotion, enhancing the storytelling aspect of the performance. It also reinforces the story's theme. Whether it's a love story or an energetic pop medley, the set serves as a visual cue, reinforcing the thematic elements of the performance.

**2. Enhancing Choreography:** Lighting can be strategically used to accentuate dance routines, drawing the audience's attention to specific movements and creating a dynamic visual experience. Other effects such as fog or haze can add depth to the stage, making dance sequences more visually appealing and immersive.

**3. Audience Engagement:** Well-designed lighting directs the audience's attention to key performers or moments, ensuring that the intended focal points are emphasized. The right combination and timing of lighting and effects can evoke emotions, forging a deeper connection between the performers and the audience.

## Choosing the Right Equipment

What does it take to pull off a spectacular stage set? The right equipment for your performance can turn a show choir concert into a dazzling visual spectacle.

**1. Intelligent Lighting Systems:** Moving head fixtures are versatile lights that can pan, tilt, and change colors, offering dynamic lighting effects that add excitement to a performance. Meanwhile, spotlights are ideal for highlighting soloists or key

The right stage set can instantly transport the audience to a different time, place, or emotion, enhancing the storytelling aspect of the performance.

performers, providing a focused beam of light that draws attention to specific areas on the stage.

**2. LED Panels and Strips:** LED panels can be used to create vibrant color washes, transforming the mood of the stage and complementing the music. LED strips can be programmed to create dynamic chase effects, adding a visually stimulating layer to the performance.

**3. Special Effects Machines:** Who can resist the element of spectacle produced by special effects? Fog and haze machines, for instance, can add atmosphere to the stage, enhancing the visibility of lighting effects and creating a sense of depth, while confetti cannons are perfect for celebratory moments. Confetti cannons can also add a thrilling visual element to the climax of a performance.

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#### 4. Projection Mapping:

Projection mapping allows you to display custom visuals or scenic backgrounds, transporting the audience to different settings without the need for elaborate physical sets. Combine projection mapping with choreography to create dynamic visual effects that sync seamlessly with the music.

#### 5. Control Systems:

Invest in a sophisticated lighting console that allows for precise control over color, intensity, and movement, enabling seamless coordination with the music and choreography. You might also consider a DMX controller, which facilitates communication between lighting fixtures, ensuring a synchronized and cohesive lighting design.

### Putting It All Together

Now that you have an understanding of the equipment available, let's explore how to effectively integrate lighting and effects into your show choir concert.

**1. Collaborative Design:** Start by collaborating with experienced lighting designers who understand the nuances of show choir performances. Their expertise can help translate your vision into a visually stunning reality. Producers should also work closely with their choreographers to identify key moments in the performance that can be accentuated with specific lighting effects.

**2. Rehearsals with Lighting:** Conduct technical rehearsals with lighting and effects to fine-tune the synchronization between music, choreography, and visuals. Encourage open communication between performers, directors, and lighting

designers during rehearsals to address any adjustments or improvements needed.

#### 3. Storyboarding Lighting and Visual Effects:

Develop a lighting plot that outlines the intended lighting cues for each segment of the performance. This serves as a roadmap for the lighting team during the concert. If using projection mapping or dynamic visuals, create storyboards to ensure that the visual elements align seamlessly with the narrative of the performance.

#### 4. Adaptability and Flexibility:

Be prepared to make real-time adjustments during the concert based on the energy of the audience, the pacing of the performance, and any unforeseen circumstances. Have contingency plans in place for technical glitches or equipment malfunctions to minimize disruptions during the concert.

It's hard to overstate the role of lighting and effects in the production of a great show choir performance. A well-designed stage set, complemented by sophisticated lighting and effects, transforms a concert into a mesmerizing journey. Embracing the potential of these elements not only elevates the quality of your productions but also ensures that your choir's performances are etched in the memories of all who experience them. So illuminate the stage, tell your story, and let the magic unfold in the spotlight of your premier show choir concert.




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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Ed Bauer has been in publishing for over twenty years. He was introduced to Show Choir by his daughter and he is forever grateful to her for this wonderful gift.

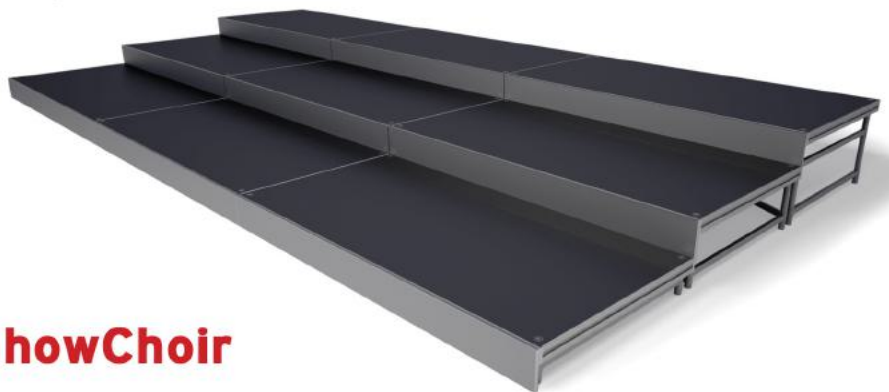


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# CLOSE-UP

# JOSE MADRID

We would like to introduce to you to a new partner, José Madrid Salsa, which offers not only direct sales of its products but fundraising opportunities for organizations of all kinds. As a way to let you know more about the people behind the name, we thought you would enjoy the chance to learn more about the background of this wonderful company.

In 1976, Mike Zakany and his brother decided to open a restaurant in downtown Zanesville, Ohio. A welcome addition to the small urban center, their contemporary casual restaurant was successful from the beginning. It was clear that the emerging ethnic food market was a logical niche for the Zakany brothers as their own Mexican heritage had a huge influence in the family kitchen. Estelle

Zakany, the family matriarch, helped her sons integrate more authentic Mexican cuisine into the menu and life of the restaurant.

The Zakany family has always had a rich history of entrepreneurship. Mike's paternal grandparents opened a butcher shop and grocery store in Zanesville in 1942. Mike's father, uncle and entire family worked together to continue to grow the family business over the years. Zak's Restaurant was a natural extension of the Zakany's passion for the food business and quickly developed a strong clientele, confirming their prominent place in "New Mexico" cuisine.

Along the way, the Zakany brothers realized the salsa Zak's Restaurant served

was a key part of the complete menu; salsa enhanced the flavors of all the dishes served. Mike started an extensive marketing study that examined all kinds of spices and chili peppers. He read intensively about the migration patterns of the European Spaniards to Mexico and the influence America's native people had on the newcomers' cuisine.

Mike continued to work on new salsa recipes based on his research and experimentation, using the restaurant customers as critics for the salsa formulas born from Mike's hard work in the kitchen. Eventually, a favorite blend of spices, chili peppers and herbs emerged from recipes reflecting the influence of the cooking culture of his maternal grandfather, José Madrid. From there, a new company was born: José Madrid Salsa, named after the family icon. Mike Zakany's tribute to his grandfather celebrates his childhood memories of this larger-than-life man from Clovis, New Mexico, who could ride a horse and shoot a gun better than anyone else in the unsettled New Mexico Territory of the early 1900s. José Madrid Salsa made its first sales in gourmet and grocery stores during the Christmas season of 1988. The legend of José Madrid lives on and continues to grow with a line of 25 different salsas and more in development.

We spoke with Mike and asked a few questions about his history and how José Madrid Salsa got into fundraising.

**What sparked your interest in fundraising, and how did it lead to building your customer base while supporting groups in fulfilling their missions?**

I was drawn to fundraising as it presented a unique opportunity to simultaneously expand our customer base and contribute



to the success of various organizations. It's a fulfilling journey where our growth aligns with the accomplishment of shared goals. You won't regret giving us a try.

### What distinguishes José Madrid Salsa and its services from others in the market?

At José Madrid Salsa, our distinction lies in the meticulous crafting of gourmet salsa, rooted in our original family recipes. We prioritize the use of high-quality ingredients, resulting in a superior product that sets us apart from the rest.

### When a group opts for Jose Madrid Salsa for their fundraiser, what can they anticipate?

Choosing us ensures a swift turnaround for your fundraiser. Upon receipt of payment, expect a 10-14 day fulfillment period, with a generous 50 percent

## Our commitment to being effortlessly accessible makes the entire process smooth and enjoyable for everyone involved.

profit margin. Our commitment to being effortlessly accessible makes the entire process smooth and enjoyable for everyone involved.

### If a reader were face-to-face with you, what question would you suggest they ask that they might not have considered?

An interesting question would be, "What is your favorite salsa?" The answer varies based on personal preferences, and it's

worth exploring the versatility of our salsa beyond just dipping. Visit our website at [www.josemadridsalsa.com](http://www.josemadridsalsa.com) for exciting recipes that showcase the diverse ways our salsa can enhance your culinary experience.

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