



Conducting and Teaching Choral Music in a Changing World

*We can re-dream this world and make the dream real. All roads lead to death,
but some roads lead to things which can never be finished. Wonderful things.*

Ben Okri, The Famished Road

Based on the *Choral Music Experience* performance model for music education, the CME Institute for Choral Teacher Education continues to inspire, support and sustain the professional development of conductors and choral teachers in the philosophy, principles and practices related to the music education of children and youth through choral singing. The Institute and its related summer courses engage participants in the study, singing, conducting and teaching of a musically distinguished and culturally diverse repertoire suited for the social and cultural conditions of a changing world.

Founded In 1986 by Doreen Rao with Chicago composer Lee Kesselman, this acclaimed professional development program and choral teacher certification program is dedicated to the on-going education of choral conductors and music teachers seeking to develop and improve the singing, conducting and teaching skills required to teach through ensemble performance. Teaching teachers to conduct and conductors to teach, the *CME Institute for Choral Teacher Education* changed the landscape of music education in America. This seminal work fostered the children's choir movement and continues to inspire and certify conductors and teachers to lead choirs in schools and communities around the world.

The CME Institute course of study and Certification program integrates Doreen Rao's philosophy of performance teaching with the curriculum principles and instructional practices closely aligned with the Choral Music Experience textbooks and performance repertoire published by Boosey & Hawkes. The interactive conducting course explores the essential practices of choral music education as a cross-cultural, transformative and inclusive musical practice – a human practice inspired by diversity, a healing practice rooted in ancient cultures and a mindfulness practice for

living in the 21st century. The following material introduces selected course content upon which CME instruction is based.

Choral Teaching in a Changing World: The CME Artist-Teacher

*The CME choral teacher is one who is **fully present and aware**; one who **honors diversity**; one who **empowers** students through musical instruction; one who **encourages** the ensemble's commitment to **service and community building**; one who **celebrates the differences** between people and ideas; one who practices **learning partnerships and co-creativity**; one who engages in **honest connection** in each rehearsal; one who helps students help others. The CME choral teacher is one who encourages the joy and transformative musical moments that constitutes an ethical way of being in the world.*

- I CME PHILOSOPHY OF PERFORMANCE TEACHING: Guidelines for Practice
 - Program Paradigm and Teaching Models
 - Repertoire and Resources
 - Instructional Styles and Approaches
- II PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES: Resources, Planning and Pedagogy
 - Repertoire
 - Concert Programming
 - Score Study
 - Rehearsal Planning
 - Conducting
 - Rehearsal Pedagogy
 - Performance Practice
 - Interpretation
- III RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
 - Engaged Musicianship
 - The Practice of Awareness
 - Cultural Sensitivity and Social Responsibility
 - Community-Making and Collaboration
 - Therapeutic Corrective
 - Diversity, Inclusion, Ethics of Empathy
 - Peacemaking

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CHORAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE: A Performance Model for Music Education

In an effort to unify the values of choral singing with the goals of music education at a time when educational trends sought to separate the activities of music listening from music-making (singing and playing), we searched for a way to unite the best practices of classroom teaching with a musical repertoire and reflective pedagogy that would bring distinctive choral literature and musical experience back to the center of music teaching and learning in school and community programs. *Choral Music Experience* was developed and inspired by Doreen Rao as *a performance model for music education* starting with a musically distinguished and culturally diverse repertoire essentially suited for the social and cultural conditions of a changing world.

In 1986, Conductor-Teacher Doreen Rao signed with Boosey & Hawkes to launch the *Choral Music Experience* series of publications devoted to bringing a balanced choral repertoire of European classics, contemporary composition and world musics to classroom choirs, concert stages and choral curricula. Developed into specialized series of treble and mixed voice materials, and organized for teaching and rehearsing by levels of musical challenge (beginning, intermediate and advanced levels), the award-winning CME publications have evolved into ten different choral series, various collections, anthologies and classroom textbooks expanding the Boosey & Hawkes printed music catalog and serving diverse populations of school, community and church choirs unlike any other publication effort in history.

CHORAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE: Historical Perspectives

A Performance Approach to Music Teaching and Learning through Choral Singing

CHORAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE teaching methods and musical materials were inspired and developed by Doreen Rao during her pioneering tenure with the Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus, her acclaimed concert and recording preparations for the Chicago Symphony Chorus and Orchestra and her visionary work in founding and leading the National Committee on Children's Choirs for the American Choral Directors Association.

Published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1986, Doreen Rao's trend-setting teacher textbooks and culturally diverse choral music series for school and community choirs developed simultaneously with the annual CME Institute for Choral Teacher Education. The first program of its kind, the CME Institute and Choral Teacher Certification Program continues to influence choral teachers in the United States, Canada and Great Britain.

Throughout North America, the United Kingdom and around the world, CHORAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE has provided developing conductors with a set of clearly articulated principles and practices informed by Doreen Rao's "music performance approach to music teaching and learning in the choir."

Distinguished from both the autocratic-technical approach to rehearsing and performing and the conceptually oriented, musical-elements approach to music education, CME methods and materials continue to emerge as a uniquely dynamic and distinctive performance approach that

differs significantly from conventional choral methods by its joyful, real-life and commonsensical rehearsal pedagogies practiced for the artistic, educational and social benefit of young singers.

Doreen Rao's CHORAL MUSIC EXPERIENCE teaching methods and musical materials link the standards of concert performance with the goals of music education. In a national tribute presented to her by the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA), eminent American conductor Robert Shaw wrote: "The world of choral music owes her special thanks. She is preparing our future."