

Christopher M. Cock, Director of Choral and Vocal Activities at Valparaiso University, holds the Phyllis and Richard Duesenberg Chair in Lutheran Music, and is Director of the Bach Institute.

Through his activities as a choral music educator and as a distinguished solo artist, Dr. Cock has forged a unique career path combining the roles of conductor and performer. He frequently brings his focus on outstanding repertoire, vocal technique and polished musicality to high school ensembles throughout the country. For six years he served as director of choirs for Lutheran Summer Music, the national Lutheran high school music camp. In 2006 he led the International Choral Invitational in Hong Kong, and was conductor of the Spivey Hall High School Honor Choir, a festival begun by Robert Shaw. He has conducted All-State Choirs in Minnesota and Georgia, and will conduct the Ohio All-State Choir in 2009. He was the guest conductor of the Pennsylvania Collegiate Honor Choir in 2008.

At Valparaiso, Dr. Cock founded the Bach Institute in 2004. The Institute performs the major works of Bach triennially and in the years since its formation has devoted scholarship and performances to studying Bach's professional years prior to his appointment in Leipzig (1723). In 2008/09 the Bach Institute will offer performances, lectures and seminars around the theme: "Bach and the St. Thomas Church."

His leadership of the Valparaiso University Chorale has led to numerous recordings and extensive concert tours in the United States and Europe. The Chorale has served two performance residencies at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig – the only American choir to enjoy such a strong relationship with the church of J.S. Bach. Dr. Cock led the Chorale in two performances of Bach's *St. John Passion* with the Leipzig Baroque Orchestra in 2007. The Thüringer Allgemeine reviewed the Chorale's concert program in 2007: "a first class ensemble...such a high degree of tonal unity, such sure intonation in the most complex and dissonant groups of chords, and such a precise feeling for dynamic shadings...." On March 30, 2008, he will lead the Chorale, the New England Symphonic Ensemble and guest choirs in a performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

As a solo artist Dr. Cock's extensive range and communicative performances have established him as a premier lyric tenor. Appearances as a Bach Evangelist are taking him to concert venues throughout the United States. In April of 2001, he appeared as Evangelist in the *St. Matthew Passion* with The Los Angeles Philharmonic. The LA Times praised his performance for its "illuminating freshness." He has, for numerous seasons, appeared as a guest artist with the Oregon Bach Festival, led by German conductor, Helmuth Rilling. He appeared as tenor soloist in *B minor mass* in 2008. In recent seasons he has sung with the Florida Orchestra, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the Miami Bach Society, the American Sinfonietta, the Grand Rapids Symphony, and the Seattle Chamber Singers (with Orchestra Seattle). He frequently appeared as a soloist with Maestro Robert Shaw and the Robert Shaw Festival Singers. His performances with the Festival Singers can be heard on recordings released by Telarc International, including *Francis Poulenc: Mass and Motets, Amazing Grace: American Hymns and Spirituals, Songs of Angels, and O Magnum Mysterium*. He has sung the role of the Evangelist in both Bach Passions with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and is tenor soloist on their recording of hymns (2001). In 2002 he made his solo debut at Carnegie Hall and appearances with the Bach Choir of Berlin. He returned to Carnegie Hall for performances of *Messiah* with the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra in 2008.

Dr. Cock studied at the University of Southern California and completed his undergraduate study at Pacific Lutheran University. He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Arizona (Tucson), where he was a student of Maurice Skones.