

# Houston Bronze Ensemble



EXPECT EXCELLENCE

Dedicated to *HandBell Excellence*

Ensuring the future of handbells for ringers and listeners

30<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary

## Calendar of Events

Houston Bronze Ensemble is currently scheduling events for 2019-2020

To schedule a concert, contact us at:

P.O. Box 541741  
Houston, TX 77254

Phone: 1-866-908-RING (7464)

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

Email:

[info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com)

[event\\_coordinator@houstonbronze.com](mailto:event_coordinator@houstonbronze.com)

## PERFORMANCE CALENDAR:

### CONCERT OF PEARLS

#### 30th Anniversary Dinner/Concert

May 18, 2019 6:00 pm

Maggiano's Little Italy

2019 Post Oak Blvd. Houston, TX

With the premiere of the two winning pieces of our 30th Anniversary Composition Contest

Sunday, May 19, 2019 4:00 pm

Free concert

With guest artists

#### The Brookwood Handbell Ensemble

Trinity Klein Lutheran Church

5201 Spring Cypress Rd.

Spring, TX 77379

With the premiere performance of a piece by Kathleen Wissinger commissioned by Houston Bronze for two bell choirs

### Date Pending

Clear Lake Presbyterian Church

Free concert

## CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

Friday, December 5, 2019 7:00 pm

Tomball United Methodist Church

Saturday, December 6, 2019 7:30 pm

**MATCH**

Midtown Arts and Theatre Center Houston



## A Concert of Pearls

by Lorna Noack, President of HBE

Oysters, pearls.....and HBE?? Seems like an unlikely combination! As we prepare to celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it's been interesting to discover more about pearls (the traditional 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary gift), the oysters in which they develop, and the wonderful way they depict Houston Bronze's story.

Pearls were chosen as the material to represent the 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary because they are enduring and last under pressure. Throughout our 30-year history, HBE has been faced with trials that could easily have caused the group to disband. Just one year after the group's formation, the artistic director, Hart Morris, moved away from Houston. Thankfully, our founding members didn't let this deter them. They made the choice to recruit another director (Maggi Tucker) and continue to enjoy ringing together. Now working under our eighth different artistic director, we are grateful that throughout all the changes in leadership, the group has not only endured under pressure, but also continued to grow and thrive.

Thanks to oysters, pearls exist. Interestingly, it is an intruder like a grain of sand or particle of food trapped inside the oyster's shell that begins the formation of a pearl. In order to protect its soft, delicate body, the oyster covers the irritant with layers of nacre - commonly referred to as mother-of-pearl. After several years of build-up of this protective layer, a beautiful pearl is produced. The older the pearl, the larger, more beautiful, and more valuable it becomes. Likewise, the intrusion of irritants has plagued HBE throughout the years. Directors and ringers moving on and leaving the group short-handed, issues with equipment, losing a rehearsal space, lost or forgotten music, and scheduling conflicts are just a few of the irritants that have been encountered. While working through the issues is often painful, looking back we can now see these irritants have resulted in a group that today is strong, vibrant, and truly a thing of beauty. We hope, that just like pearls, we will become more beautiful and valuable as we age.

We hope that you are making plans to join us at one of our concerts this spring as we celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We'll be sharing some of our most beautiful pearls of music from throughout our history as well as premiering new pieces that are sure to delight. Having endured and lasted under pressure, Houston Bronze is excited to share our "A Concert of Pearls" as we remember our past and look forward to our future as we change the way Houston (and beyond) thinks about handbells.

More information on the Dinner /Concert on the next page of this newsletter.



# *A Concert of Pearls*

## *30th Anniversary Dinner/Concert*

*Date: May 18, 2019*

*Time: 6:00 pm*

*Place: Maggiano's Little Italy*  
*2019 Post Oak Blvd. Houston, Tx 77056*

### *Tickets:*

*VIP with adult beverage package \$90.00*

*VIP without adult beverage \$75.00*

*Standard Ticket \$60.00*

Please join the Houston Bronze Ensemble on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at Maggianos on Post Oak as we celebrate our 30th Anniversary with a delicious four course dinner and a delightful Concert of Pearls from our past plus the premiere of two newly commissioned handbell works. The event will begin at 6:00 with check-in on the 2nd floor of Maggiano's. Seating is limited so please book your tickets now!

There are three ticket levels: Standard, VIP and VIP plus Adult Beverage Package. All ticket levels include the four course meal including tea, water, and soda and this not-to-be-missed concert. All VIP level tickets include preferred seating and a commemorative glass recognizing our 30th anniversary. The VIP plus Adult Beverage Package also includes all you can drink beer, wine and cocktails. A cash bar is available for those not selecting the VIP plus Adult Beverage package.

<https://hbe30.eventbrite.com>



**A Concert of Pearls**  
**May 19, 2019**  
**4:00 pm**  
**Trinity Klein Lutheran Church**

**The Brookwood Handbell Ensemble** will once again join us at our concert on May 19, 2019 at Trinity Klein Lutheran Church. They will perform some pieces alone and then will join us for a piece newly commissioned by HBE to celebrate the friendships that we have formed over the past two years of working together. Houston Bronze is happily working with Kathleen Wissinger on a piece for two choirs. We can't wait to see Kathleen's final composition and to once again have Brookwood join us on the concert stage.



**1000 LIKES REACHED LIKE**  
**us on [FACEBOOK](#)**

A major Facebook milestone was reached at our concert in Tomball on November 30. We had set a goal to reach 1000 Likes by our 30th Anniversary celebration in May. With the help of people at that concert we zoomed across that marker and are now at 1,028 Likes. A new goal of **1130** has now been set. Join us on Facebook to learn the most up to date news about Houston Bronze Ensemble! Thank you to all of you who are following us on Facebook. Please invite your friends to join us as well!

<https://www.facebook.com/HoustonBronze/>

Check out our [YouTube](#) Channel.



## **Houston Bronze 30th Anniversary Original Composition Contest**

The Houston Bronze Ensemble, is happy to announce the winners of our 30th Anniversary Original Composition Contests. The ensemble met on December 4 to read through the entries in the contest. We received 14 compositions. After reading through the compositions, the entire ensemble voted for the winning compositions. In a very close competition, first place was awarded to "Trinity", composed by Caleb Onstead. The second place award was given to Rob Riker for "Tapestry". Work on these two excellent compositions has already begun. They will both be performed at our 30th Anniversary Dinner/Concert on May 18, 2019 and then again on Sunday, May 19, at Trinity Klein Lutheran Church.



### **MEET CALEB ONSTEAD "Trinity"**

Currently 18 years old, Caleb's handbell experience started in 2006 when he participated in handchime and handbell programs at his local church at the time. By 2013, he had attended his first Handbell Musicians of America Festival Conference and attained membership in every handbell program offered at his church (including the adult ensembles). Since then, he has become a regular attendee of the local North Hills

Handbell Festival in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as well as Bay View Week of Handbells in Petoskey, Michigan; an event geared towards individual ringers and led by Fred Gramann. He has also rung with Grove City, PA Celebration Ringers and Ring Pittsburgh of Allison Park, PA.

Caleb's interest in composing began in 2014 with the purchase of Finale software. By Summer of 2015 his first piece, "Fanfare and Variation in C", was completed and accepted for publication. The piece is under contract with From the Top Publishing and is expected to be in print soon. Also published is "Triumphant Spirit" which is available from Sonology Music as of winter 2017. That piece was completed in the summer of 2016 and was premiered by The Celebration Ringers on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Other notable premieres of advanced compositions include the premiere of "Lydia's Song" by LA Bronze on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. Another work was also premiered in 2018. "Toccata Festivo" was premiered by the Stow Heritage Ringers of Stow, Ohio at Caleb's high school graduation recital. This was a special premiere; one that honored Caleb's close relationship with SHR.

Besides working with handbells, Caleb is also an advancing pianist. When not composing, he is working towards ARCT diplomas in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the Royal Conservatory in Toronto. He also enjoys the non-musical pastimes of reading, fishing, and watching movies.

Caleb and his cat, Allegro, reside in Berlin Pennsylvania.



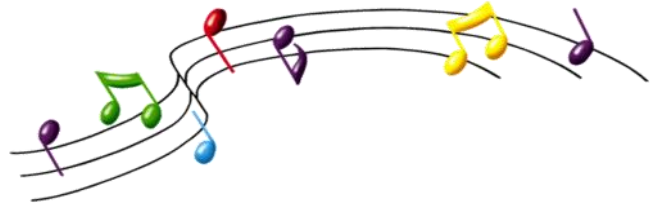
## MEET ROB RIKER Tapestry



Rob Riker graduated from Bucknell University with a BA in Music and followed that a few years later with a Master's Degree in Education from the

same institution. While at Bucknell, he sang with the Rooke Chapel Choir, the Concert Chorale, and rang with the Rooke Chapel Ringers, all under the direction of Dr. William Payn. Since that time, he has been the Director of Music at Moravian Academy Upper School, where he conducts three handbell choirs, two vocal choirs, and the a cappella group Coda Red. He also teaches music theory and composition and is the Chair the Fine and Performing Arts Department. In his "free time" he is the technical director and manager of the Dyer Auditorium at Moravian, where he creates and teaches lighting and sound design and helps with all aspects of technical theatre. He composes and arranges music for vocal ensembles as well as for handbells and boomwhackers at Moravian. This year he has taken the reins as the director of the Rooke Chapel Ringers at Bucknell University,

where he follows in the footsteps of his longtime mentor Dr. Payn. He lives in South Whitehall, PA, with his wife Laura, his son Jonathan (now a student at Bucknell himself), daughter Alison, and his pup Ruby. He is happy to report that everyone in the family rings bells (even Ruby, who has to in order to go outside!).



## Houston Bronze Celebration Ringers

had a very busy 2018 holiday season. We began in late November playing for a senior citizen luncheon in Magnolia and ended the season on Christmas Eve at a private party in the West University neighborhood. In between we played at the Alley Theatre and at neighborhood events in Manvel, the Heights, and Levy Park. We had a total of 8 engagements this season and have already begun taking dates for Christmas 2019.





## Jeremy Mattson College Ring-In Scholarship Winner

The Houston Bronze Ensemble is happy to announce that Jeremy Mattson was the recipient of our College Ring-In 2019 Scholarship. We offer two scholarships to this annual event sponsored by Handbell Musicians of America. Houston Bronze also supports this event by sponsoring a meal for these “starving artists”. If you are a college student interested in attending this event or know of one who might be, please apply for one of our 2 scholarships offered this fall when registration opens for College Ring-In 2020. Houston Bronze is thrilled to support these young adults and all the future generations of ringers they will impact.

This year’s event took place on January 6-8, 2019 in Bloomington, Minnesota (near Minneapolis). Jeremy is currently a student at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN where he rings with 'Tintinnabula'. He also directs a children's bell choir and 'Jubilation' at Atonement Lutheran in Fargo, ND. Jeremy was the first HBE scholarship recipient to take advantage of having one of his pieces read during the unpublished reading session. Below are some pictures from College Ring-In 2019 and Jeremy’s summary of the event. Congratulations, Jeremy!

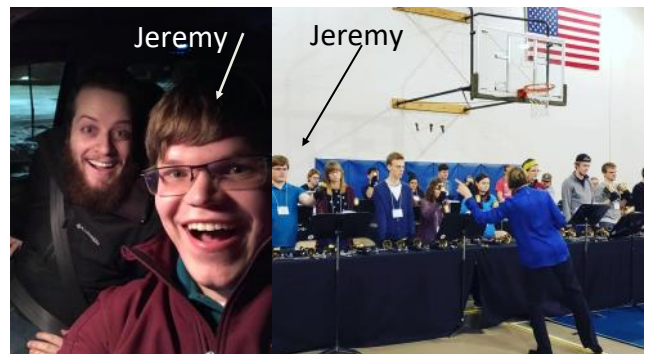
### **In Jeremy’s words:**

*My experience at the college ring-in was more than I was expecting it to be. I was able to meet so many new people and connect with the handbell community. At first, I was unsure about what it would be like to play with a new group. But whenever uncertainty came, it was matched with the grace of my peers and being welcomed into a community of wonderful musicians and people.*

*The ring-in gave me a look into the possibilities I*

*could pursue within the handbell world. I have been composing and arranging for a few years now, but I never imagined the possibility of following that passion beyond just doing it for fun. Having one of my pieces played in the unpublished reading session helped me see that people (especially college students) enjoy my style of music making and that gives me fuel to keep digging deeper into composition to see what comes out the other side. Whether it becomes a career or just a few pieces here and there, I know that things I (and everyone who choose to create art) have value despite their experience or lack there of. Likewise, I loved seeing the other students bring their pieces and enjoying their creations from the performance perspective. Performing something unique and never before read is a cool feeling and a great experience.*

*Lastly, this ring-in helped me on my journey to become a better music educator. Carolynne Mathis was my handbell director in church from 4th to 12th grade. I was lucky to have a great teacher from the beginning and to have good practices instilled in my habits. Playing under Carolynne's direction again after a few years studying education has connected the dots from theory to practice. I am looking forward to bringing all I've learned back to Moorhead (MN) with me to share with my bell choirs and help form wonderful musicians and people. (continued on next page)*





**Jeremy Mattson**  
**College Ring-In**  
**Scholarship Winner**  
*continued*

In Jeremy's final words to Houston Bronze he thanked us for helping him to attend. In his thank you, he stated several of the reasons why we feel the need to offer these scholarships each year. We hope to instill the passion we have for handbells encouraging the bell ringers and composers of the future. We will be back next year offering these scholarships for the College Ring-In. We hope that the ringers who attend will take advantage of them. We wish Jeremy all good things as he continues ringing, directing, and composing.

**In Jeremy's words:**

*Thank you for the opportunity to attend this event and to help me re-find my passion in music and in handbells. I've always been intrigued with how unique the handbell ensemble is. There are so many moving parts doing their own independent things, yet they are expected to be in sync with the whole ensemble. I believe that being a handbell player by definition makes one a better team player, more confident in their independence, and helps us overcome the fear of asking for help. It takes a crowd to play 7 octaves of bells.*



**DCINY** DISTINGUISHED CONCERTS INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK

**PRESS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Houston Bronze Handbell Ensemble Invited to Perform Carnegie Hall in New York City**

Houston Bronze Ensemble received an exciting invitation from DCINY Concert Series in NYC. Eight members of HBE are looking forward to participating in this awesome opportunity to perform in Carnegie Hall. We understand that we are one of 20 ensembles to receive the initial invitation and we are honored to be included. The hope is to assemble 250 ringers. The invitation reads:

*"In recognition of your dedication to musical excellence and due to the level of musicianship demonstrated by your ringers, it is with great pleasure that I extend an invitation to you and the Houston Bronze Handbell Ensemble to participate in a performance of The Great Christmas Ring on the DCINY Concert Series in New York City. This performance is planned to take place as part of DCINY's annual presentation of Handel's Messiah on Sunday, December 1, 2019 from the tier level in Isaac Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall under the baton of Kevin McChesney. Congratulations on this wonderful achievement and recognition."*





December 2018





Houston Bronze Ensemble thanks each of you who attended one of our concerts this season or who stopped to listen to the Houston Bronze Celebration Ringers' as they played throughout the city. We loved sharing with you the joy that handbells brings to each of us. We played to over 350 people at our concerts and thousands heard us in combined appearances on the streets of the Heights, in Levy Park, at the Spring Branch ISD Boys Choir concert, at the tree lighting at the Alley Theater, for senior citizens in Montgomery, the tree lighting in Manvel and private parties. Below are some of the comments about our concerts this season.

*Great concert! You were as impressive as always! -Patty*

*It was a fabulous performance! So many elements in each piece. Your hard work really shined last night. Thank you for a wonderful evening! -Elaine*

*This is always a fantastic way to begin the Christmas season!! My wife and I always make this a special night and your organization never disappoints! Thank you for all your hard work and dedication...it shows in the beautiful music that you produce with all of those different instruments. We look forward to celebrating your 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in May!! -Michael*

*Thank you for all you do for handbells. Your work behind the scenes with your workshops and special performances show how much you care about promoting handbell choirs. -Kathy*

*This was a BEAUTIFUL performance! Enjoyed it immensely! My 18 year old son LOVED it too....and it can be difficult to entertain this 18 year old boy! This was my first time attending but definitely NOT my last! -Gina*

*....talk about precision, talent, beauty.....WOW! Talk about unexpected surprise. Thank you for a wonderful experience. -Sara*

*Your concert tonight was wonderful. I've heard bell choirs, and thought I knew what to expect. I was way off. You are more of a symphony. I couldn't imagine the performance you did. It was a perfect way to start the advent season. Thank you! -John*

*I was at Match for their Christmas concert. You do not want to miss this performance - maybe the best one you will see this holiday!! -Betty*



As we move into 2019 Houston Bronze Ensemble will continue its pursuit of excellence as we change the way Houston (and beyond) thinks about handbells. We thank you for your support We hope to see you again soon in 2019.







*Thank you!*

Houston Bronze Ensemble would like to thank our contributors for their donations during this past year. You have helped us to send our director to a national handbell event, purchase new music and equipment, offer scholarships to students to attend College Ring-In, and so much more. It is because of you that we are able to continue to bring you our dedication to

**EXCELLENCE.**

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## The Houston Bronze Ensemble

Houston Bronze Ensemble is currently scheduling events for 2019 and beyond. If you are interested in hosting the entire ensemble or perhaps just a small group for a full concert, party or wedding, please get in touch with us at:

P.O. Box 541741  
Houston, TX 77254

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Email:  
[info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com)  
[eventcoordinator@houstonbronze.com](mailto:eventcoordinator@houstonbronze.com)

Houston Bronze Ensemble also loves conducting workshops for handbell organizations throughout the Houston area. We would love to do one for your group.

**[LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!!](#)**  
Check out our [YouTube](#) Channel!



## About the Houston Bronze Ensemble

The Houston Bronze Ensemble is a professional, auditioned, handbell ensemble made up of musicians from the greater Houston area. Known as Houston's premier handbell choir, the ensemble performs regular concerts in the winter and spring as well as at community events, regional and national handbell events, weddings, and private parties. In 2014 HBE had the honor of performing with the Houston Symphony. The group plays a wide variety of musical genres, always with the goal of EXCELLENCE.

Founded in 1988, Houston Bronze Ensemble was started as an avenue for Houston area handbell directors to have a place to ring. A lunchtime meeting with Jeff Weiss, Christine Anderson and Hart Morris in attendance and with only a napkin to write the names of those who might be interested is what started it all. The rest, as they say, is history. In the fall of 1988, Hart Morris became the first director of Houston Bronze. After Hart moved to Tennessee, the ensemble rang under the direction of Margaret R. Tucker. In the 1995 season, the group rang ensemble style with various ringers, including G.W. Shepherd, Andrew Bowen, and David VanderMeer, directing the ensemble. Conductors since then have included David VanderMeer, Dolan Bayless, Ben Harris, Ruth Seiwel and James Roberts. Bill Nave was appointed the artistic director in August, 2014.

Houston Bronze recognizes the importance of investing in the future of handbell ringing. We offer a variety of educational opportunities designed to meet the unique needs of churches and schools who wish to build or improve their handbell program. Workshops designed to meet the specific needs of a choir, mini concerts, and petting zoos are a sample of what we provide to the Houston area handbell community. Houston Bronze also offers scholarships to students wishing to attend College Ring-In, an event sponsored by Handbell Musicians of America.

Whether it is through a concert, playing at your wedding, party, private or community event, conducting a workshop for your ensemble, or presenting an educational program for your school, we would love to share our art with you! Please look at our website, [www.houstonbronze.com](http://www.houstonbronze.com) for more information about our group and what we offer. Feel free to contact us at [info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com) with any questions or requests. We look forward to working with you to provide handbell excellence to meet your needs!

Houston Bronze Ensemble holds a  
501 (c)(3) non-profit status.



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- Shop [Amazon Smile](#) and designate Houston Bronze Ensemble Inc as your organization. Amazon will contribute to HBE when you shop!
- Donate to Houston Bronze Ensemble. All donations, large or small, are welcome!!

A 501(c)(3) Corporation—All donations to HBE are tax deductible.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(As it should appear in our programs and newsletters)

I wish my gift to be anonymous. Please do not list my name in programs or newsletters.

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### Benefits of Being a Friend of HBE

- Direct mailing of newsletter
- Your name listed in HBE programs and newsletter
- Advance notice of public concerts

Please send donations to: Houston Bronze Ensemble P.O. Box 541741 Houston, TX 77254

You may also contact our treasurer at [info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com) to make arrangements to contribute via credit card.

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