

# Marques J. Ruff, Ph.D.

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## Education

<b>Florida State University</b> Ph.D. in Music Education, emphasis in Choral Conducting	<b>Tallahassee, FL</b> <i>August 2021-May 2024</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dissertation title: “The River Still Runs Deep: A Conductor’s Guide to Selected Negro Spirituals Arranged for SATB Chorus by Harry T. Burleigh”<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advisor: Dr. Michael J. Hanawalt</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>University of Missouri</b> Master of Music in Choral Conducting Master of Music in Vocal Performance	<b>Columbia, MO</b> <i>August 2017–May 2020</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Master’s Thesis: “From the French Grand Opera Stage to British Coronation Anthems: The Development of the British Coronation Anthem”<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advisor: Dr. Michael J. Budds</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>Central Connecticut State University</b> Bachelor of Arts Vocal Performance & Music Education	<b>New Britain, CT</b> <i>August 2004–August 2010</i>

## Work Experience

<b>Arkansas State University</b> Assistant Professor of Vocal Music Education/Associate Director of Choral Activities	<b>Jonesboro, AR</b> <i>August 2024 -</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Co-lead and administer aspects of a comprehensive university choral program of undergraduate and graduate students, community members, including four curricular ensembles</li><li>Conduct a 35-voice treble ensemble</li><li>Advise undergraduate vocal music education majors</li><li>Co-teach music teacher internship seminar</li></ul>	
Courses Taught:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MUED 2512 Introduction to K-12 Music Education</li><li>MUED 4402 Methods and Materials for Choral Education</li><li>MUED 2231 Vocal Techniques for Instrumentalists</li><li>MUS 1630/1631/3630 Scarlet Voices</li><li>MUS 3441 Elementary Conducting</li><li>TIMU 4826 Music Teaching Internship in the Secondary School</li><li>MUS 1630/1631/3630/3631/6630/6631 Scarlet Voices</li></ul>	<div>Fall 2024</div> <div>Fall 2024</div> <div>Fall 2024</div> <div>Fall 2024</div> <div>Spring 2025</div> <div>Spring 2025</div> <div>Spring 2025</div>
Current Courses:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MUED 2512 Introduction to K-12 Music Education</li><li>MUED 4402 Methods and Materials for Choral Education</li><li>MUED 2231 Vocal Techniques for Instrumentalists</li></ul>	<div>Fall 2025</div> <div>Fall 2025</div> <div>Fall 2025</div>

- MUS 1630/1631/3630 Scarlet Voices
- MUS 3370/3371 United Voices Gospel Choir

Fall 2025

Fall 2025

### **Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University**

Adjunct Voice Faculty

**Tallahassee, FL**

*January 2024 - May 2024*

- Teach weekly studio lessons at the intermediate and advanced levels to music majors, minors, and non-majors
- Participate in the assessment of vocal studio juries
- Serve on student capstone recital juries
- Coordinate bi-weekly studio voice class for music majors
- Coach repertoire for student competitions at the local, regional, and national level

### **Florida State University**

Graduate Teaching Assistant

**Tallahassee, FL**

*August 2021 - May 2024*

- Director of the Florida State Gospel Choir
  - Present two concerts per academic year
  - Represent the College of Music in local and statewide performances
  - Plan multi-city tour for 46 person ensemble, including transportation, accommodations, and food
- Co-Director of the Vocal Jazz Ensemble
- Assistant Conductor of Collegians Glee Club
- Assistant Conductor of Chamber Chorus
- Assistant Course Instructor for Undergraduate Choral Conducting
  - Mentor undergraduate choral music education majors via weekly playbacks
  - Provide style and gestural advice to aid in developing aural image
- Plan Music Education events for pre-service teachers

### **Tennessee State University**

Interim Director of Choral Activities

**Nashville, TN**

*August 2020 - May 2021*

- Conduct three curricular choirs (Meistersingers, University Choir, Commercial Music Ensemble)
- Teach a section of Music Appreciation for non-music majors
- Coordinate concert planning, choral retreats, and virtual school visits
- Engage in collaborative outreach and recruiting
- Create arrangements of musical works for various ensembles
- Manage the choral budget
- Advise music majors, including pre-service music teachers

### **University of Missouri**

Graduate Teaching Assistant

**Columbia, MO**

*August 2017 - July 2020*

- Director of the Vocal Jazz Ensemble
- Assistant Conductor of University Singers (auditioned ensemble)
  - Plan multi-city tour for 60 person ensemble
  - Create daily travel itinerary
  - Organize concerts, homestays, and hotel accommodations throughout tour
- Assistant Conductor of Choral Union (community symphonic chorus)
- Mentor undergraduate choral music education majors
- Teach applied voice to non-majors
- Teach vocal pedagogy to non-majors
- Provide vocal coaching for musical theater productions

## **Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia**

Director of Music

- Coordinated with the Senior Pastor in the design of thematic worship experiences
- Conducted a 25 person sanctuary choir for weekly worship
- Created a Chamber Music series for the early morning worship service
- Managed the music budget and personnel, including staff musicians

**Columbia, MO**

*August 2017 - July 2019*

## **Chanticleer, Incorporated**

Bass-Baritone, Chair of Education Committee

- Perform diverse repertoire including Gregorian Chant, Renaissance, Pop, Jazz, Gospel, and Contemporary works
- Tour across the globe, presenting approximately 120 concerts annually
- Develop curriculum for education program, including vocal and conducting masterclasses
- Conduct small group ensembles associated with the education program, and community engagement activities

**San Francisco, CA**

*August 2013 - July 2017*

## **Jumoke Academy at the Hartford Conservatory**

Middle School Music Teacher

- Taught general music to 5th-8th grade including harmony, appreciation, history, and ensemble
- Conducted an all-school choir comprised of students and faculty
- Conducted Treble Choir (6th-8th grade)
- Conducted 5th Grade Music Ensemble
- Differentiated music curriculum to meet the needs of the individual student and the student body
- Developed and refined music curriculum based on NAfME's standards of creating, performing, and responding
- Established and maintained standards of student conduct to provide an orderly and productive environment
- Assessed students musical growth
- Communicated with parents/guardians, fellow faculty, and administrators on the growth of students in class

**Hartford, CT**

*August 2011 - June 2013*

## **Professional Musician Experience**

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### **Tallahassee Symphony, Tallahassee, FL., 2025**

- G.F. Handel, *Messiah* - Bass soloist

### **Early Music City, Nashville, TN., 2025**

- G.F. Handel, *Messiah* - Guest conductor

### **Apollo's Fire, Cleveland, OH., 2025**

- Ensemble Member

### **Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Santa Fe, NM., 2025**

- S. Okpebholo, *The American Road* - featured soloist for world premiere & recording (due summer 2026)

### **Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus & American Choirs, Edinburgh, Scotland., 2025**

- A. Thomas, *Mass: A Celebration of Love and Joy* - soloist

### **Conspirare Symphonic Choir, Austin, TX., 2025**

- F. Price, *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight* - Bass Soloist

### **Rogue Valley Symphony, Ashland, OR., 2024**

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- Gospel Christmas with Marques Jerrell Ruff, *featuring* The Florida State University Gospel Choir

**Choral Arts Alliance of Missouri, Columbia, MO., 2024**

- F. J. Haydn, *The Creation* - Bass Soloist

**Charlotte Master Chorale & Symphony, Charlotte, NC., 2024**

- F. Mendelssohn, *Elijah* - Elijah

**Tallahassee Community Chorus, Tallahassee, FL., 2024**

- F. J. Haydn, *The Lord Nelson Mass* - Bass soloist

**Charlotte Master Chorale & Symphony, Charlotte, NC., 2023**

- R. Nathaniel Dett, *The Ordering of Moses* - Bass Soloist

**Tallahassee Civic Chorus, Tallahassee, FL., 2023**

- Guest Conductor

**Tallahassee Community Chorus, Tallahassee, FL., 2023**

- F. Mendelssohn, *Elijah* - Bass Soloist

**New World Symphony Orchestra, Miami, FL., 2023**

- M. T. Thomas, *Song Cycle* - Baritone soloist

**Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, Tallahassee, FL., 2023**

- J. Thompson, *Walk in Dignity (World Premiere)* - Baritone soloist
- Guest conductor

**Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Hartford, CT., 2023**

- M. Bonds, *Credo* - Baritone soloist

**Leon County Tenor/Bass Choir, Thomasville, FL., 2023**

- Guest Conductor
- Choral Clinician

**Symphony San Jose, San Jose, CA., 2022**

- Bass Soloist

**Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, Stanford, CA., 2022**

- Soloist
- Choral Clinician

**National Chorus of Korea, Seoul, Korea., 2022**

- R. Vaughn Williams, *A Sea Symphony* - Baritone soloist

**Rogue Valley Symphony, Ashford, OR., 2022**

- A. Dworkin, *The American Rhapsody* - Narrator

**Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, Urbana, IL., 2022**

- M. Tippett, *A Child of Our Time* - Bass Soloist

**Seraphic Fire, Miami, FL., 2022- present**

- Bass
- Soloist

**Conspirare, Austin, TX., 2022- present**

- Bass
- Soloist

**Exigence, Detroit, MI., 2022 - present**

- Bass

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- Soloist

**Tallahassee Community Chorus, Tallahassee, FL, 2021**

- F. J. Haydn, *The Creation* - Bass Soloist

**H. T. Burleigh Festival, Tennessee State University, 2021**

- Guest Conductor

**Florence Price Festival, Tennessee State University, 2020**

- Guest Conductor

**Parkway All-District Honor Choir, St. Louis, MO 2019**

- Guest Conductor

**Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Santa Fe, NM, 2019 - present**

- Bass
- Soloist

**Missouri Choral Artists, St. Louis, MO., 2018- present**

- Bass
- Soloist
- Guest Conductor (2019-2020 season)
- Guest Conductor (2023-2024 season)
- Guest Conductor (2025-2026 season)

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## Conference Presentations

- Ruff, M. & Murphy, E. (2024, January). *Removing Me: Fostering Agency & Collaboration in The Rehearsal Space*. Florida Music Educators Professional Development Conference, Tampa, FL.
- Ruff, M. & Webb, D. (2023, January). *Make A Joyful Noise: Building A Gospel Choir From Scratch*. Florida Music Educators Professional Development Conference, Tampa, FL.
- Ruff, M. & Davis, M. N. (2022, July). *Only A Drop in the Bucket: A Numerical Analysis of Black Music Faculty at NASM-Accredited Institutions*. National Association of Negro Musics National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Ruff, M. (2018, June). *Winning the Audition: Life As A Professional Musician*. Missouri Music Educators Conference, Jefferson City, MO.

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## Guest Lectures/Clinics

- Ruff, M. (2025, October). High School Honor Choir. Southern Oregon University, Ashland, OR
- Ruff, M. (2025, July). Pre-Concert Lecture: Roots & Rivers. Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Santa Fe, NM.
- Ruff, M. (2025, April). Choral Adjudicator. Celebration of Excellence Choral Festival, Houston, TX.
- Ruff, M. (2025, January). Choral Clinic. Liberal Arts and Science Academy, Austin, TX.
- Ruff, M. (2024, November). Choral Clinic. Aurora University, Aurora, IL.
- Ruff, M. (2024, November). Choral Clinic. Paragould High School, Paragould, AR.
- Ruff, M. (2024, September). Choral Clinic. Riverview High School, Searcy, AR.
- Ruff, M. (2024, May). *Pentecost Sunday Gospel!* First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, Hastings, NE.
- Ruff, M. (2024, May). *Middle School Choral Clinic*. Sedgwick Middle School, West Hartford, CT.
- Ruff, M. (2023, October). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Equal Justice Initiative, Santa Fe, NM.
- Ruff, M. (2023, March). *Move Out the Way: Agency & Collaboration in the Classroom & Rehearsal*. Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ.
- Ruff, M. (2022, December). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Ohio University, Athens, OH.

- Ruff, M. (2022, August). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, Los Altos, CA.
- Ruff, M. (2022, March). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, Los Altos, CA.
- Ruff, M. (2022, February). *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the Choral Arts*. Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.
- Ruff, M. (2021, July). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Tennessee Governor's School, Murfreesboro, TN.
- Ruff, M. (2021, March). *The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual*. Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

## University/Departmental Service

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- Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, *Chair* (Department of Music)
- Learning Outcome Assessment Committee, *Chair* (Department of Music)
- Music Infrastructure Committee (Department of Music)
- Music Assessment Committee (Department of Music)
- Vocal Music Education Scholarship Committee, *Chair*
- Scholarship Committee (Department of Music)
- Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America, *Faculty Advisor*
- Curriculum Committee (University - College of Liberal Arts & Communication)
- Living Legends Gala Committee (University - Office of Access & Institutional Engagement)

## Affiliations/Memberships

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- American Choral Directors Association
- National Association for Music Education
- National Association of Negro Musicians
- American Association of Blacks in Higher Education
- Society of Pi Kappa Lambda
- Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated

## References

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Available upon request.