

Richard Colla
Artistic Director

Lisa Traugher
Booking Coordinator
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www.opushandbell.org

MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

The Opus Handbell Ensemble, Inc., a non-profit organization, has been a group of aspiring musicians since 1992 in Modesto and is currently 13 ringers strong, under the artistic direction of Richard J. Colla. With over 140 combined years of ringing experience, they perform on five octaves of Malmark handbells, four, plus octaves of Suzuki and Malmark tone chimes and occasionally, a selection of Whitechapel handbells.

Handbells are a very unique instrument requiring precision eye-hand coordination, music reading ability and a willingness to work as a "team." Repertoire for this art form ranges from classical Bach to Heavy Metal, Rock n' Roll. Opus is known throughout the handbell community for reflecting in bronze, the artistic interpretation of the director, while bringing musicality and depth to a performance beyond the expectations of the listening, viewing audience.

Opus has spear headed the art of handbell ringing in the Central Valley with theme concerts throughout the year, as well as hosted and conducted local workshops to raise the level of awareness of handbell ringing in the Modesto community. One of their greatest joys has been to take this artistic medium into the music mainstream through local schools by broadening the dreams of students who have never seen or heard a handbell choir.

Opus has played on the Community Concert Series in Porterville, four years on the Manteca Kindred Arts Council Concert Series and two years on the Sonora St. James' Concert Series. They also played on two occasions for the Evensong Series in Lodi. These fine musicians have attended festivals and workshops from Riverside to the Bay Area and were a featured choir to ring at Pinnacle 2000 in Las Vegas and at the AGEHR, Area XII Conference in Belmont in June, 2006.

Opus joined the Trinity United Koinonia Choir in Coventry, England for an International Choir Festival tour in June, 2008.

For the first time, by an audition process, Opus was chosen to be the featured "Showcase" ensemble for AGEHR, Area XII Bell Odyssey Conference held at UC Davis, in June, 2010.

Opus was featured on the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Holiday Pops Concert at the Gallo Center in 2007 and 2008 and were featured guest musicians at the Modesto Symphony's Candlelight Concert held at St. Stanislaus Catholic Church in 2009 and 2010. In 2011, they were guest artists for both the Holiday Pops and Candlelight concerts.

Opus is a member of the Handbell Musicians of America, a national organization established in this country in 1954.

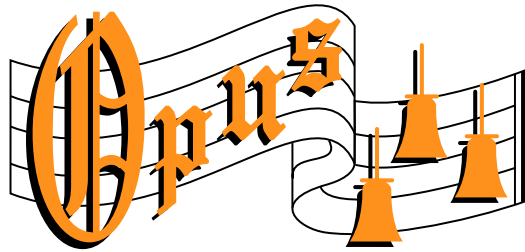
www.HandbellMusicians.org

For more information, contact Opus' booking coordinator Lisa Traugher at 527-2214 or check out our website at www.opushandbell.org.

The goals of Opus Handbell Ensemble include enjoyment, education, outreach, challenge and growth. It is our purpose to:

1. *Provide enjoyment of beautiful music for all who listen to us as well as those who ring.*
2. *Educate people, entertain audiences, make music for all and promote the art of handbell ringing in the greater Modesto, area.*
3. *Challenge ourselves to grow musically, spiritually and professionally in a creative, caring and nurturing atmosphere.*

*The pealing sounds of the Opus Handbell Ensemble
bring breathtaking magic through bronze to your soul.*



Handbell Ensemble Inc.



Richard J. Colla-Artistic Director

Richard J. Colla is artistic director and conductor of the *Opus Handbell Ensemble*. He is also the full-time Minister of Music and Worship at Trinity United Presbyterian Church in Modesto where he has directed a variety of vocal and instrumental ensembles since 1990. Richard joined the Modesto Junior College music faculty on a part-time basis in the Spring of 2003. He currently directs the *Concert Choir*, *Masterworks Chorus* and *Chamber Singers* and teaches *An Introduction to American Popular Music*. He has also taught *Music Appreciation* and *Music Fundamentals*. Richard has also served as a member of the voice faculty at California

State University, Stanislaus and is an active adjudicator and lecturer. He has presented lectures on a variety of topics including vocal technique and literature, choral literature and methods, as well as handbell techniques. He and his wife, Ginger, also conduct joint workshops in vocal techniques.

Richard is very active as a bass-baritone soloist and has appeared extensively in recital, oratorio and opera performances. Most recently, Richard sang the bass solos in Mozart's Coronation Mass under the direction of Sir David Wilcox in Coventry, England. Richard served a four-year term (1993-1997) as the California State Chair for Repertoire and Standards of Music in Worship for The American Choral Director's Association (ACDA). He has also published articles in *The NATS Journal* for the National Association of Teachers of Singing, *The Cantate California* for the American Choral Director's Association and *The Journal* for the Choral Conductor's Guild. Richard received his Bachelor of Music degree with honors from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln in vocal performance, and his Master of Music degree at the University of Illinois in choral conducting.

Richard and his wife, Ginger, were honored as the recipients of the 2007 *Excellence in Arts Awards for music* by the Stanislaus Arts Council. Richard's choir at Trinity United (Koinonia Choir) was invited to participate in a performance of John Rutter's *Requiem* in New York's famous Carnegie Hall in 2005. The Koinonia Choir and Opus Handbell Ensemble toured to England where they performed Handbell and Choir concerts in June (2008). As part of that tour, the choirs participated in the International Church Music Festival in Coventry, England.