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## Years in the Making: Chorus of Westerly Achieves its Touring Goal

"If there's one thing I learned through this process, it's that with great risk comes great reward. I want to tell every one of you that if you are ever given the opportunity to take a risk that could result in something amazing, you must take it." These were the final words delivered by Ryan Saunders, the 35-year-old Executive Director of the Chorus of Westerly, during his speech on the last night of the group's tour of Central Europe.

As the boat on which the group was dining gracefully floated down the Danube through an illuminated Budapest, Ryan and Music Director Andrew Howell stood on the top deck, observing with misty eyes all the gleeful

*Chorus of Westerly . continued on page 4*

*Chorus of Westerly performs in the Matthias Church in Budapest, Hungary*



## Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra Packs Halls in China

ACFEA is honored to be the CYSO's exclusive concert tour organizer, and 2014 saw the fifth tour that we have arranged for them. Three have been to Europe, one to South America, and this latest one was to China.



As in Europe, many of China's best concert opportunities arise in cities that also offer the most from a cultural and touristic perspective, and CYSO's itinerary of Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou and Shanghai certainly proved that point. From the 2,000-year-old terracotta warriors in Xi'an and the opulence of the Imperial Palace in Beijing, to the brand-new airplanes and Shanghai's ultramodern architecture, the group had an opportunity to learn about China's great depth of culture while performing in some of the world's finest concert halls.

Their first performance, to a sold-out audience of over 2,000, was in the most prestigious concert hall in China: the National Centre for *Chicago Youth . continued on page 2*

*CYSO members on a rickshaw tour in Beijing*



Photo courtesy of Mariamne Swienink-Havard







*CYSO director Allen Tinkham autographs CDs for fans at the Opera House of the Hangzhou Grand Theatre*

*Chicago Youth . continued from page 1*

the Performing Arts in Beijing, often referred to as 'The Egg' because of its external appearance. Their final concert was in the Shanghai Oriental Art Center, a magnificent complex that fits three performance venues into a beautiful building that resembles an orchid from above; 1,600 people heard them there. In between were concerts in Xi'an's Concert Hall and the Opera House of the Hangzhou Grand Theatre. All the concerts were attended by large crowds that warmly welcomed these young musicians and their program of Brahms, Bartók, Copland, Stravinsky and Zhou Long (they played *The Rhyme of Taigu* by this popular Chinese-American composer) was very well received.

The total group size was 107, including musicians, staff, chaperones and a small group of parents and other supporters. They were on nonstop flights to Beijing and back from Shanghai, and traveled within the country by overnight train, airplane and bus. The instruments were transported by an expert trucking company, and the whole tour was put together by ACFEA's office in Shanghai.

Music Director Allen Tinkham was kind enough to write after the tour, "Thank you very much for all of your work putting together for us a wonderful tour! We saw amazing sites, played in wonderful concert halls, and played for very receptive audiences." 📌



*CYSO performs in the Shanghai Oriental Art Center*

# Men's Chorus's First Tour is Golden



The outstanding Golden Gate Men's Chorus from San Francisco, directed by Joseph Piazza, had never been on an international tour before 2014. However, far from choosing a mainstream destination for its first overseas adventure, the group decided on Latvia and Lithuania.



*Director Joseph Piazza shows off one of his gold medals from the World Choir Games in Riga, Latvia*

The focus of the tour was the World Choir Games in Riga, where they participated in three Champions Competition categories: Male Choirs, Musica Sacra with accompaniment, and Spirituals. They were delighted to win gold medals in the first two and a silver medal in the third – congratulations!

As a warm-up for the competition, and taking advantage of the opportunity to see a little more of this relatively unexplored corner of Europe, the chorus spent four nights in Lithuania, visiting Vilnius and Kaunas. They performed in Vilnius's St. Catherine's Church and Kaunas's Philharmonic Hall, with the former being a particularly memorable and rewarding event.

Tom Grothe, the group's tour coordinator, had this to say after the tour: "I know that all our members were very happy with the tour and festival. Many wonderful memories will stay with us forever. Our board is meeting soon to try and take stock of the whole experience and

learn from it. Generally, I think there is strong agreement we want to tour again. Thank you for several years of hard work and thousands of emails, etc. I think GGMC was very pleased with our experience."

How gratifying that this first international tour may lead to more in the future – a nice endorsement of our goal to create opportunities for memorable and life-changing experiences. 📌



*Golden Gate Men's Chorus at the Great Guild Hall in Riga, Latvia*



*Sno-King Community Chorale at Gustav Mahler Hall in Dobbiaco, Italy as part of the Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival*



# Sno-King Community Chorale at Home in Europe



Edmonds, Washington, in addition to being home to the headquarters of ACFEA, hosts many fine performing arts groups. The Sno-King Community Chorale, named for the two counties it draws from, Snohomish and King, rehearses at Edmonds Community College and is a wonderful example of all this area has to offer. The choir is made up of both students and community members and is directed by Frank DeMiero, a national leader in vocal jazz education and a local legend. His jazz festivals are beloved by the Edmonds community and are major civic events. Few people are more connected to the Edmonds area than Frank and his family, all of whom are involved in music locally.

For over a decade, Sno-King has been performing major choral works alongside jazz and folk music, as well as an incredibly entertaining annual spring pops concert. Though they had toured once before, this tour was a long time coming. It took several itineraries to come up with just the right one, but once the group decided to attend the Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival in the Pusteria Valley of Italy, the choir really embraced the tour and enthusiasm grew quickly.

Each year, during the last week of June, more than 60 choirs gather in the small communities along the Val Pusteria, performing dozens of concerts for each other and these communities. This year, choirs attended from 13 countries. Concerts take place everywhere from Gustav Mahler Hall in Dobbiaco to stunning baroque churches, such as the Chiesa di Santo Stefano in Villabassa, and the mountaintop observatory of the Plan de Corones. Groups are welcome to perform whatever repertoire they wish and aren't there to compete but rather to come together for five days of concerts, parades and parties. This festival was a fantastic fit for Sno-King, as most groups that attended were adult community choirs similar to theirs.



# Irish Eyes Smile on Southern California Children's Chorus

an interview with Lori Loftus, Director, Southern California Children's Chorus



## Why did you choose Ireland for this tour?

My family had been to beautiful Ireland on a bike trip. I believed the Chorus would LOVE the 100 shades of green, plus the amazing history and climate of this incredible country.

## What was the highlight of your tour?

Singing 'impromptu' in Bunnratty Castle was an honor! There we stood, where knights and ladies of the 16th century had held parties. Quite a memory, indeed.

## What was your favorite memory from your performances?

The concert in Dalkey that we shared with a senior chorus [the Dalkey Active Retirement Association choir]! The older 'kids' connected so dearly to our younger kids. We were surrounded by support, love and encouragement, just what young people need today!

## What surprised you most about the tour?

The beautiful weather! We had expected gloom and rain. Instead, it was as if we brought the California climate with us! Everywhere we went, we saw sunburned Irish people.

## What was the biggest learning aspect of the tour for the choristers?

The countryside and its history. The beautiful cliffs, the many, many ruins and stories of folklore that have been passed down through the ages. Some tales of heroism, some tragic and some very humorous.

## Why is it important for SCCC to go on tour?

Touring unites our chorus, teaches responsibility, punctuality and requires kids to become more mature. Touring opens our minds to different cultures, different foods and different people. Touring tests young people to get along with others for a confined and lengthy period, a great lesson for all of humanity. 📺



Southern California Children's Chorus at Bunnratty Castle

After the festival, the group continued its tour in Innsbruck, Salzburg and Munich, performing and sightseeing along the way. The festival was certainly a highlight of the tour, and being a part of this community event made them feel very much at home. 📺

*“Overall, this was a super tour – everything I had hoped it would be and more!”*

*Florence Jowers, Director  
Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus*

members of the group singing, taking photos and just enjoying every last drop of this epic adventure. You see, what looked on paper to be just a normal tour was, underneath the surface, so much more. The choir had toured regularly in the 80's and 90's, so when the group traveled to the UK in 1995 no one knew they would not tour again for nearly 20 years.

Since then, there had been many attempts, many itineraries and many meetings, but for various reasons familiar to most community choruses, no tour materialized. Then, over the last five years, changes began to happen. The group appointed Ryan as Executive Director in 2009, Andrew as Music Director in 2012, and several new board members, all of whom had been young singers in the Chorus 20 to 30 years ago. Many of them had been on the earlier tours and knew the transformative power of such a project. When Ryan and Andrew met with ACFEA in the spring of 2012, they both said: "We WILL go on tour in 2014 and we WILL take 220 people with us!"

And that was that. No doubts, no looking back, the tour was underway, and for the next two years it became everything. Planning, packing, rehearsing and a thousand lists later, departure day came. The chorus had put its faith in Ryan and Andrew, and, ultimately, in ACFEA, and on July 12, 2014, OVER 220 participants (227 to be exact) boarded three planes to Europe.

The tour began in Prague, where they performed Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with a local orchestra in Smetana Hall to nearly 1,000 eager audience members. They continued to Vienna, performing for a packed St. Stephen's Cathedral. Finally, they arrived in Budapest, giving a concert in the Matthias Church that was so full that several would-be concertgoers had to be turned away at the door for lack of space.

Eight days after they arrived in Europe, on the deck of their Danube vessel, the Chorus of Westerly, its leadership and its members, could only be described as elated. They sang and they danced, they ate and they drank, and they all recognized how important this tour was for the organization and the community. More than a few participants asked the question: "Where next?" While having packed halls for outstanding performances was certainly a highlight for the Chorus of Westerly, the feeling of accomplishment will last far beyond the end of the applause. 📍

## Fountain Valley Changes Direction: to China



*by Kevin Tison, Director of Vocal Music Fountain Valley High School*

ACFEA has hit yet another home run! In June of 2014, we embarked on our fourth international performance tour, planned by Hugh Davies and ACFEA's great staff abroad. After three previous tours to Europe, which were all amazing, I was ready for a change of direction, taking us to China and Hong Kong for ten days of spectacular performances and adventure!

If world-class venues packed with enthusiastic audiences were not enough, the tour was filled with profound and meaningful historic and cultural experiences – visiting such iconic places as the Great Wall (where we also did a casual performance), the terracotta warriors, beautiful jade and silk factories, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, the ancient city wall of Xi'an and Victoria Peak in Hong Kong with its stunning views. My goal was to have my students experience firsthand what they read and learn in so many other academic areas of school. No longer just photos and narratives in textbooks, these places and experiences were brought to life!

A personal highlight for me was getting to conduct a full performance in the beautiful He Luting Concert Hall at the internationally renowned Shanghai Conservatory of Music. I can still remember the faces of all the Chinese children, peeking over the edge of the balcony as they watched the concert below. I'm sure I had a huge smile on my face for at least two days after this concert!

For my singers, one of their highlights was unequivocally a music exchange we did with a local high school choir in Hong Kong. After getting to perform a finale piece together, the students shared some time talking and taking photos. I know many of them have maintained friendships over thousands of miles – all brought together by the joy and love of making music. These are certainly experiences that cannot be intentionally planned but, thanks to ACFEA, all of the puzzle pieces were in place for this and so many other memorable, life-changing experiences to occur!



*Fountain Valley High School Troubadours at the Great Wall of China*

I'm sure many directors may be hesitant to the idea of touring internationally, especially with students. However, I would wholeheartedly recommend ACFEA for their expertise, personal attention and their flawless planning to make your own performance tour something extraordinary...for director and students alike!

Thanks again to Hugh and his amazing staff, both local and abroad. 📍



*Fountain Valley High School Troubadours with The Music Office Youth Choir in the Academic Community Hall at Hong Kong Baptist University*





DC Youth Orchestra Program performs in the cathedral in Villa de Leyva, Colombia

## DC Youth Orchestra Program's Tour of Colombia Sparks Growth



In the fall of 2013, the DC Youth Orchestra Program (DCYOP) was facing some major obstacles, many of which are all too common to nonprofit arts organizations across the country. They were adjusting to a change in leadership, suffering a decrease in funding, and, due to the gradual elimination of many Washington, DC public school orchestral programs, a decline in new membership. At the beginning of its 2013/2014 season, DCYOP's top orchestra had 11 students.

So, it was nothing short of a surprise when the orchestra reached out to ACFEA to say it wanted to take a tour in 2014, and an even bigger surprise when the orchestra announced that the tour would be to Colombia, a place few American youth orchestras have ever toured. The small but mighty group of students and their parents had heard tales of the DCYOP's illustrious touring history and decided that they would do what it took to get the group back on the road again.

Around the same time, the orchestra had appointed a new Musical Director, Mariano Vales, and a new Executive Director, Elizabeth Schurgin. They agreed that the group should travel and started to think outside the box about ways to make it happen. A native of Argentina, Vales was well connected in Latin America and had contacts with a Colombian organization

*"The experience was life-changing for our students. Many had never been out of the country; several had never been on a plane. To have the experience to travel to a country as beautiful and welcoming as Colombia is without parallel. Our students grew as musicians, as cultural citizens and as people. As an educator, I could not have asked for a better outcome."*

*Elizabeth Schurgin  
Executive Director  
DC Youth Orchestra Program*

called Batuta, an orchestra program based on El Sistema in Venezuela. Batuta's mission is not unlike DCYOP's – to provide high-quality education to children and youth of all backgrounds and economic status. Batuta officially invited DCYOP to travel to Colombia to perform a series of concerts together. This approach was the perfect way for the group to tour in light of its size and balance challenges.

With the project underway, the orchestra and its supporters launched a series of recruitment and sponsorship efforts, including a program where existing players

brought in their friends to play along in rehearsals, many of whom eventually auditioned and joined the orchestra. Through word of mouth, media coverage and social networking, word spread about the tour and the orchestra was growing again. By departure day, they'd more than tripled the size of the orchestra.

On June 24th, the DCYOP, a hearty 37 in number, landed in Bogota. The nature of this project meant that the orchestra would stay in Bogota for the bulk of its trip, spending the first week of its visit in intensive rehearsals and workshops with Batuta players and teachers. This was followed by three joint concerts, with nearly 130 players on stage at each performance, first in the Basilica in Tocancipa, then in the colonial town of Villa de Leyva, and finally in the Auditorio León de Greiff at the National University of Colombia in Bogota. The combined orchestra performed a program of Beethoven, Ginastera and Wagner, followed by an encore of the popular Colombian tune "Colombia Tierra Querida," which never failed to inspire dancing in the audience (and the violin section!). By the end of the final concert, the bond between the two groups had become so strong that the DCYOP students had to be ripped out of the arms of the Colombians in order to make their flight home! 🇨🇴





**Morris Knolls High School Choir**

*performs in St. Peter's Church in Riga, Latvia*



**Highland Park United Methodist Church Chancel Choir**

*performs in the Spitalskirche in Perchtoldsdorf, Austria*

Photo courtesy of Marianne Swienik-Hovard



**The Choir of St. Wilfrid of York Episcopal Church**

*rehearses in St. Paul's Cathedral in London during its weeklong residency*



**Anima – Young Singers of Greater Chicago**

*at Mendenhall Glacier in Alaska*



**Seattle Men's Chorus**

*performs in the Friedenskirche in Krefeld, Germany*

*“ACFEA proves again why they are the leaders in their field. Every detail, arrangement and point of contact was expertly handled with the utmost professionalism. When you travel with ACFEA, you get to pour your energy where it should be – the musical experience.”*

*Christopher Gravis  
Director, The Choir of  
St. Wilfrid of York  
Episcopal Church*



**Berea College Concert Choir**

*gives an informal recital in the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain*

Photo courtesy of Marianne Swienik-Hovard



# All Around the World

## John Goldsmith Retires

19 years ago, the Heinz Chapel Choir of the University of Pittsburgh toured with ACFEA for the first time, to Italy and Greece. That project would be the first of six tours the choir would take with ACFEA, all under the direction of John Goldsmith, who retired from his post in May of this year. Throughout those six tours, the group visited 14 countries on two continents, and has the distinction of being ACFEA's first group to visit Macedonia, which the choir did on its most recent tour, in May of 2014. The final concert of John's last tour with the group was in the town of Trebinje, in Bosnia. The town got word that it would not only be the last concert of the tour, but that it was also John's last concert with the choir, so they rolled out the red carpet, complete with flowers and a local news crew.



John Goldsmith and Heinz tour members dancing with locals in Ohrid, Macedonia

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to John from everyone at ACFEA, for being a great friend and loyal client over all these years. We wish you and Elaine the best in your future adventures. 🎵



Heinz Chapel Choir on top of Srd Hill in Dubrovnik, Croatia

## Where Next?



COLOMBIA



CUBA



INDIA

ACFEA regularly sends groups on tour to over 50 countries. However, nearly every year a group asks us to arrange a tour to a destination that is new to us, knowing we can still provide them with a top quality tour experience. Colombia, Cuba and India are three new destinations to which we are very excited to send groups that are willing to get a bit off the beaten track.

### COLOMBIA

by Amanda Bauman, ACFEA Tour Manager

In July, I had the great privilege of accompanying the DC Youth Orchestra Program on its tour of Colombia, ACFEA's first to the country. The group visited Bogota and Villa De Leyva, a small, impeccably preserved colonial town in the mountains about three hours from Bogota. Both cities welcomed the group warmly and boasted friendly faces and robust audiences. After the group departed, I traveled to the city of Medellin with Latin America Manager Sylvia Garcia Marin. Opportunities for groups proved to be plentiful. There are half a dozen excellent, professional-level concert halls and theatres, along with countless churches,

including the Cathedral. Everyone we met assured us that visiting groups would be met with open arms. In addition to Medellin, the oceanside city of Cartagena and the coffee region in the south are possibilities as well. All of this, combined with its incredible value and easy access from North America, makes Colombia a rewarding destination to consider.

### CUBA

**ACFEA is authorized by the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) to provide travel services to performance groups who are licensed by the US Treasury Department to travel to Cuba.**

Though Cuba has remained off limits as a destination for most travelers, ACFEA can now plan tours of this enigmatic country for licensed groups. Cuban music has contributed to musical styles around the globe, and a rich musical culture has led Cuba to develop a strong program of state-sponsored music education. This cultural heritage means there are numerous unique educational opportunities and we look forward to helping more groups share in these experiences.

### INDIA

by Hugh Davies, President, ACFEA North America

I have been visiting India since 1979 and have thoroughly enjoyed watching it develop its infrastructure and economy while remaining a country of rich culture, revered history and great diversity. Now that I am married into an Indian family, I have had an opportunity on several visits to see the country from an insider's perspective – and it only gets more fascinating.

Its past, as part of the British Empire, has bequeathed it a perhaps surprising level of interest in Western classical music. This is demonstrated by there being music education in many high schools, by a good knowledge of the standard oratorio repertoire, and by the welcome phenomenon of the demand for high-quality performances exceeding the supply, so large audiences are common.

We have arranged several tours of India for British groups (for example, the Choir of Jesus College, Cambridge, and the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus), but not yet for a group from North America. Who will be the first? We are keen to show the right ensemble the sophistication of New Delhi, Mumbai or Chennai; the splendor of Jaipur or Agra's Taj Mahal; and the beauty of Goa or Kerala. We look forward to arranging performances in modern concert halls, churches or school auditoriums, and to explaining the myriad opportunities for philanthropic activities, some of which are directly music related. 🎵

# Suzuki Strings in Peru

by Christina Morton, Director  
Suzuki Strings of Hampton Roads

Our group's tour of Peru in June of 2014 was amazing! We brought 15 players, both violin and viola, ages 7-19, with their families. We traveled by bus to New York City where we flew to Lima and then to Arequipa.



We had a fantastic audience for our concert in Arequipa. Two of our Spanish speaking students went on a television show to promote our concert. The girls talked about their enjoyment of playing the violin and I shared with the host about the Suzuki method and helping every child learn.

After our performance in Arequipa, a teacher (Carmen Rosario) from a music program came forward to speak to us with her cousin, a young Suzuki violinist. We invited the girl to play with us in the square the next day. She joined us and her Suzuki teacher attended as well. It was a wonderful exchange!



In Cusco, we had an exchange with Flor Canelo and the Suzuki students (violin, cello, recorder, piano and guitar) of the Qantu Association. We visited their school and rehearsed two songs with them that we played together as well as shared Suzuki repertoire and our fiddle music. Then, they played a jam session for us of their native music, with percussion including a donkey jaw bone! It was fascinating. Afterwards we shared a pizza dinner. The next night, a group of students from their program joined us in our concert at the Iglesia Sagrada Familia while Corpus Cristi celebrations were going on in the square outside.

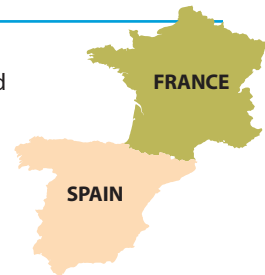


Our final event (after Machu Picchu) was meeting the students of Lima at the Dai Hall Centro Cultural Japonés. We had fun sharing teachers as leaders and making a big snake, marching while playing the Twinkle Variations throughout the hall. We shared a snack dinner and the students joined us in Concerto for Two Violins by Bach and several other Bach selections as part of our concert that evening. 📺



# Plano Civic Chorus Tours from Barcelona to Paris

It is always exciting to work with a group for the first time, getting to know one another and hoping that it may lead to many subsequent tours. With the 2014 tour for the Plano (TX) Civic Chorus, directed by Ralph Stannard, this excitement was combined with the pleasure of working again with Mike Richardson, who had been ACFEA's contact on previous Dallas Symphony Chorus's tours.



Plano Civic Chorus performs in the Església Santa Maria in Blanes, Spain

It all went very well! As chorister Karen Ebling wrote afterwards:

"Don't have much to say except positive! Chris and I have both done A LOT of international travel, both business and pleasure. This was the first time we had ever done a large group trip and were honestly a bit cautious, since we like to select our own hotels and schedules and such. But afterwards, both of us agreed it was so well run and flexible that we didn't see any downside. We much enjoyed everything: the itinerary, the accommodations, bus and guides, etc."

Ralph combined this community chorus with his choir from First Presbyterian Church, Richardson, creating a total group of 103. They performed in Barcelona (in the Sagrada Familia), Blanes (a wonderful joint concert with a local choir, followed by a great party), Aix-en-Provence (in the cathedral), Mâcon (in the Eglise Saint-Pierre), and Paris (in Notre Dame and La Madeleine).

To quote Karen again:

"Before we left, Chris told me he had no intention whatsoever of attending every concert. Sounded like torture to him, being a high school band geek years ago who could think of nothing more horrible than hanging out with choir people. Not REALLY, but it was his going-in position, and the way he likes to tease me. Well, he was there for every concert AND every rehearsal. He admitted it was just too good to miss. I consider that a victory."

A train strike thwarted the plans to travel to Paris by TGV (high-speed train), but also provided an opportunity for us to show the group two of ACFEA's fine couriers in action, managing to rustle up two buses at very short notice when the entire country was scrambling to find any available alternative to the trains.

We appreciated the opportunity to work together this time, and look forward to working with Ralph, Mike and their fine groups again in the future. 📺



# Rocky Mountain Children's Choir's First European Tour



Rocky Mountain Children's Choir at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin

The Rocky Mountain Children's Choir (RMCC), based in the Denver area, comprises both mixed and single-sex ensembles of varying ages. As its mission states, RMCC "actively seeks children from diverse backgrounds and offers the opportunity to experience musical excellence in a multicultural environment." The group has just returned from its third tour with ACFEA. RMCC travelled twice with us in 2012, to Washington, D.C. with Summit, one of its eight performing ensembles, and to Quebec with Mountain Aires, Fourteeners, Altitude, and Thin Air, four of its advanced ensembles.

This time, RMCC crossed the Atlantic in June, 2014 for the group's first foray into Europe. Starting in Berlin and ending in Munich, the choir explored both big cities and small towns throughout Germany. Highlights of the tour included a moving performance for the Jewish High Holy Days at the ruins of the Jewish sector of Buchenwald concentration camp, and an impromptu performance of Biebl's *Ave Maria* in Neuschwanstein Castle in Bavaria. In addition, the group had the opportunity to stay with local hosts in Wangen im Allgäu, a small town that opened its doors and hearts to the visitors.

"We feel like we all have new friends there," reported Leslie Britton, the group's director. The *Schwäbische Zeitung*, a local paper, published a review of the group's concert in Wangen's Stadthalle that paid them the ultimate compliment, given local furor over the World Cup:

"The chorus had long since left the stage, but the applause continued. The audience wanted one more encore – soccer could wait. Already partly changed into street clothes, the guests returned and proclaimed: 'Hallelujah, He is Wonderful!'"

## Princeton University Glee Club Tour Report

During its weeklong tour of Germany and the Czech Republic, the Princeton University Glee Club visited Nuremberg, Prague and Leipzig. The group performed four times, including two performances in the world-famous Thomaskirche in Leipzig. Here is what Tanya Tawengwa, 2013 Glee Club President, had to say about the tour:

This last tour with Glee Club was a very special tour for me. As a senior, I knew it would be the last time that I would be traveling abroad with the Glee Club and with some of my closest friends. I went on tour with the mindset of cherishing

each moment as it came by. The fairytale, ice-crusted landscape on our drive from Nuremberg to Prague, the mulled wine that warmed my insides and made me think of Butterbeer in Harry Potter, the lit faces that greeted us at every concert, singing the Bach Magnificat in the Thomaskirche, filling restaurants to the brim, celebrating birthdays and making music together are all highlights that bring a smile to my face. I can still feel the tour afterglow in our rehearsals now, and I cannot wait to see where this adventure will lead us next. I am grateful for everyone and everything that made this tour possible – it sure was a good one.



Princeton University Glee Club at the Bach statue outside of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Germany



# Cascade Youth Symphony's Fourth ACFEA Tour



Cascade Youth Symphony Orchestra director Gerry Marsh and tour coordinator Dennis Burkhardt wanted to break from the tried and tested Central European destinations of the past three tours. They had fond memories of performing at Helsinki's Rock Church many years ago, and wanted to include that in



*Cascade Youth Symphony Orchestra performs in the Church of the Rock in Helsinki, Finland*

their next tour. So, we worked up an itinerary starting in Helsinki and heading south to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In the Seattle area, Cascade often collaborates with other local ensembles. During their 2013-2014 season, they performed two concerts with the Sno-King Community Chorale. This season, they will be performing with the Olympic Ballet Theatre and requested a similar collaboration for their tour. Given the quick pace of the tour there wasn't time for anything too extensive, but Gerry has arranged a number of medleys for choir and orchestra over the years, and they were thrilled to be joined in Tallinn by the Estonian Radio Children's Choir for a performance of a medley from *The Sound of Music*. This performance, at the Estonia Concert Hall, was a wonderful highlight of the tour, and Tallinn continued to delight the next morning as the group visited Rakvere Castle, where they practiced their jousting and archery at this living museum.

Cascade continued its tour by heading south and celebrating the Fourth of July with a packed house and standing ovations for its concert in Riga's Great Guild Hall. A number of students commented on the CYSO tour blog about how special it was that the staff of the restaurant made dinner that evening so festive, going out of their way to decorate the dining room with bunting and

# Winston-Salem State University Choir in South Africa



*In May, the Winston-Salem State University Choir went on a tour of South Africa. The group traveled from Johannesburg to Cape Town, including visits to Pilanesberg National Park and the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy. Here are a couple of remarks from tour participants:*

"I returned to the United States with not only a greater sense of appreciation for my circumstances, but with a new fervor for my craft. As a singer, I felt enriched by the music of South Africa and the passion that the South African singers displayed. The sights and emotions, the culture and history, and even the tastes we experienced in Johannesburg, Pilanesberg, and Cape Town are ones that we could never have gotten anywhere else and for that I am truly grateful."

*Simone Price, Student Conductor*



*Winston-Salem State University Choir with Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy students in Henley-on-Klip, South Africa*

"The WSSU visit to the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy was truly a highlight of the tour. The girls at the Academy are unbelievably passionate, energetic and brilliant, and they were one of the best audiences I've ever encountered. Their reactions to the choir's singing were so real and vibrant that the energy in the room could hardly be contained.

Spending time with them after the concert was equally inspiring. Both the WSSU singers and the girls at the OWLA share a common goal of living excellent, productive and significant lives, so their interactions were almost unbearably exciting to watch."

*David Tang, Director, Firebird Arts Alliance, tour sponsor*

garland and putting out little US flags for every table centerpiece.

The tour ended with a couple of days in Vilnius and CYSO's fourth concert of the tour in St. Casimir's Church as part of the St. Christopher's Festival, capping off a wonderful tour experience.

## Office Locations

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Berlin  
Bucharest  
George, South Africa  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
Hong Kong  
London  
Rättvik, Sweden  
Shanghai  
St. Petersburg  
Vicenza, Italy

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For short biographies, please visit [acfea.com/why-acfea/our-people](http://acfea.com/why-acfea/our-people)



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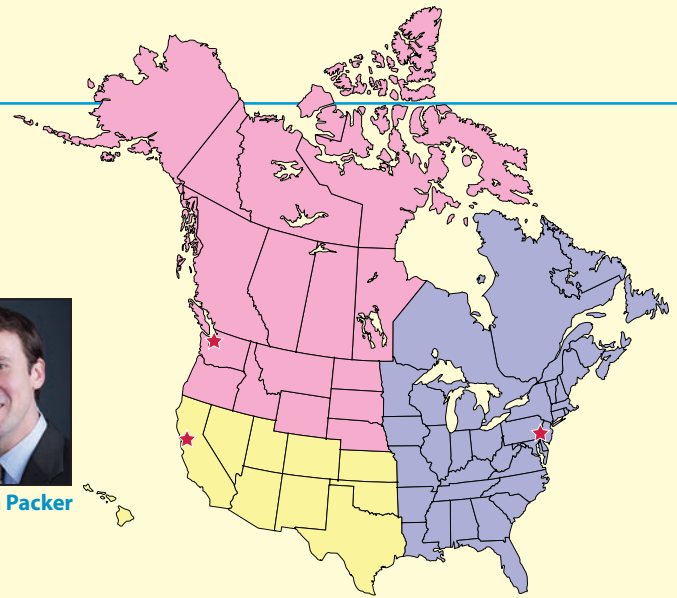
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Yuhi Aizawa  
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### YUHI AIZAWA COMBATTI

is a Tour Administrator in the San Francisco office. She grew up in Kanagawa, Japan and has sung in choirs and played piano all her life. Yuhi moved to the United States to attend Westminster Choir College, where she earned a degree in Vocal Performance as well as performed and toured with Westminster Choir and Kantorei. She performs regularly with professional groups in San Francisco, one of which is Volti, the award-winning chamber ensemble dedicated to the performance of new vocal music. Yuhi has traveled to Italy, France, Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Nicaragua and Australia.

### AMANDA BAUMAN

is a Senior Tour Manager in the Philadelphia office. Amanda has been performing in bands and choirs her entire life, including several ensembles at her alma mater, Duquesne University, and the Young New Yorkers' Chorus, for which she also served as board member for several years. She has travelled extensively in Europe, South America and Asia, but her true passion is Africa, where she met her husband, Maurice.

### HUGH DAVIES

is President of ACFEA North America, based in the San Francisco office. Born in England, he has a master's degree from Cambridge, where he sang at King's College under Sir David Willcocks. Hugh sang professionally in Europe, including with the Monteverdi Choir, before teaching music in Australia. He now performs as a soloist and with several professional ensembles in the Bay Area. Hugh was on the board of Chorus America for nine years, and is currently President of American Bach Soloists.

### COLLEEN EVANS

is a Tour Administrator in the Philadelphia office. She graduated from American University with degrees in Vocal Performance and Business Administration. Colleen has been singing in choirs since an early age, beginning with the children's choir at her church, followed by multiple choral groups at her high school. While at American, Colleen sang with the American University Chamber Singers and toured with them throughout Russia. Colleen has also traveled within Europe and Central America and is excited to visit countries she has yet to explore.

### RACHEL FLAMM

is a Tour Manager in the Seattle office. Originally from the Chicago area, Rachel sang with the Palatine Children's Chorus for 14 years, touring with them throughout North America and Europe. She graduated with a degree in Music from Carleton College, where she played clarinet and sang as well as studied abroad in Germany and Austria. Rachel has also traveled throughout Europe, Asia, Mexico, South Africa, Israel and Jordan. She currently sings with the Northwest Chamber Chorus.

### EMILY FRYE HENRIKSEN

is a Tour Manager in the Philadelphia office. She grew up in Missouri, where she sang with the St. Louis Children's Choir for nine years, including on tours to Russia and Scotland. Emily received degrees in Music and Magazine Journalism from Drake University, during which time she traveled to Paris for a study abroad program and toured Europe with the university's choir. She has also traveled extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and South America.

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### JEFFERSON PACKER

is a Tour Manager in the San Francisco office and is a lifelong singer and pianist. He began touring internationally as a performer while a student at Harvard, where he received a degree in Music and Romance Languages and Literatures, before going on to pursue a master's degree in Piano Performance at San Francisco State University. Jefferson has lived in Greece and Italy, and toured Germany and the Czech Republic as Manager of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. He is particularly fond of Latin America for his own travels, but there's nowhere in the world that he wouldn't like to see, or see again.

### JEFFERY THYER

is a Tour Manager in the Philadelphia office. He grew up in Indiana and holds a bachelor's degree in Church Music from Indiana Wesleyan University and a master's degree in Choral Conducting from Ball State University. Previously, Jeffery was Director of Program Development for Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY), a concert production company in New York City, and Conference Consultant for the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). He currently sings with the Greater South Jersey Chorus. Jeffery has traveled to several countries in Europe as well as to Turkey, Mexico and Nicaragua.

Our goal is to provide unique opportunities for memorable and life-changing experiences.

## Unseen but Indispensable

The Tour Managers are ACFEA's front line, but there are many others in our organization who make our tours happen. We gratefully acknowledge the mighty efforts of:

**Bill Barber**  
Group Travel Manager

**Añña Budden**  
Business Assistant

**Christine McLaughlin**  
General Manager

**Greg Newell**  
Marketing Manager

**Ken Olson**  
Operations Manager

**Andréa Wallis**  
Operations Administrator



# “Americans in Paris” Tour a Dreamlike Success



In July, the Hartford Chorale traveled to Paris with 80 singers and over 20 friends and family members. Over the course of their weeklong “Americans in Paris” tour, they sang three different programs at three different performances in some of the city’s most iconic venues. Richard Coffey, Music Director, reflects on the tour’s inspiration, planning, and magic as it unfolded during the tour:

At the age of 26 I sang the Duruflé *Requiem* in a performance accompanied at the organ by Marie-Madeline Duruflé-Chevalier, marking the beginning of my lifelong love affair with what I still



Hartford Chorale Director Richard Coffey with Vincent Warnier at St. Étienne-du-Mont in Paris

consider to be one of the greatest masterpieces of all time. I have had the privilege of conducting the work many times since then, never thinking that the opportunity might come for me to have that honor in the Duruflé ‘temple’ itself. Yet, after having visited St. Étienne-du-Mont on almost every one of my several trips to Paris, my dream to present the *Requiem* in that sacred space was finally going to come true, in the form of a magnificent tour by the Hartford Chorale, for which I serve with pleasure as Music Director.

Getting to work with Vincent Warnier, co-titular organist of the

church, was the tour’s true *pièce-de-résistance*. Mr. Warnier is steeped in the Duruflé tradition – its instrument, its magnificent space, and a close relationship with Mme. Duruflé herself. He knows the complete Duruflé *oeuvre* and performs and accompanies with unparalleled mastery. Working with him in both a private rehearsal and in the chorus/organ rehearsal revealed his immense talent, his reverence for the scores, his respect for those with whom he performs, and a compelling generosity of spirit. Following the final rehearsal, he graced the chorus with genuine words of high praise for our work.

Of course there were many other memorable moments of the tour, including the pleasure of providing musical leadership for a service of worship in the historic American Church in Paris. The church’s distinguished Music Director, Fred Gramann, not only hosted us with grace and charm, but made possible an environment in which we could offer our own gifts of music and also join our voices with those of the standing room only congregation, yielding a thunderous and thrilling sound. Chartres Cathedral is, of course, one of the



Hartford Chorale performs in Chartres Cathedral

# ACFEA Turns 60

by Hugh Davies, President, ACFEA North America

Founded in 1955, before almost all of our staff were born, we will be celebrating our 60th birthday in 2015. Even I, the longest-serving employee in North America, will have ‘only’ been with the company for 29 years by then, a humbling thought that emphasizes the durability of the organization regardless of any individual.

When we started, tours were much longer (not least because the transatlantic journey was by sea) and much cheaper (I have a brochure for a 1967 tour, 12 years later, advertising 22 days in 8 countries for \$745, including airfare). But much has not changed: we are still staffed by musicians, we still inspect every hotel and every performance venue, we still give pre-departure briefings, and we still see groups off at the departure airport. It seems we got a lot right from the very beginning.

I am honored to be part of an institution that has given so much pleasure to so many people for so many years, and very content knowing that, when the time eventually comes for me to retire, the company has a momentum and longevity of its own.

Happy birthday, ACFEA! 🎂



ACFEA staff in Savannah, GA during our 2014 Global Summit

most venerated holy places in all of Christendom. Performing a fully unaccompanied program there permitted us to explore the acoustical glories of the space, and the large audience made clear its pleasure at what they had heard.

To cite the single most memorable moment, a return to the Duruflé *Requiem* is necessary, and that was the instant when all of us were finally able to deliver the fruits of our labors, rehearsing at last in the Duruflé church and hearing the opening notes of the work on the organ for which it was conceived. A look at the faces of the singers revealed a common splendor, silently acknowledging “this is what our tour is all about,” and for that I will be forever grateful. The concert itself was one of unexpected calm and poise, made possible because all of the stars were in alignment, and Maurice Duruflé was smiling upon us. 🎂



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