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

As highlighted in this newsletter, ACFEA arranges customized performing arts tours throughout the world. From life-changing performances in Scandinavia to homestays in Australia, ACFEA can make it happen.

While we were only able to include a few of our tours in the newsletter, we wish to express our sincere thanks to all of the groups that toured with us this year.

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Turkish Delight

Washington and Lee Chamber Singers Tour of Turkey

Under the direction of Gordon Spice, the Chamber Singers from Washington and Lee University embarked on a tour to Turkey in April. During the week-long tour, the choir performed three concerts to large and appreciative audiences, joined forces with a Turkish university choir to learn Turkish songs and teach American spirituals, and even performed live on television.

The group began its trip in the bustling colorful capital of Ankara. On their first night, the group members were treated to a traditional Turkish kebab dinner – and a passion for Turkish food was ignited! This was satisfied throughout the trip by many diverse culinary experiences, from charcoal-grilled meats with juicy peppers, to baklava pastries dripping with honey, to the thick, aromatic and extremely strong Turkish coffee.

A workshop had been arranged with choral students from Gazi University in Ankara, who helped Washington and Lee perfect the traditional Turkish piece *Suda Balik Oynuyor*. In each performance given on tour, members of the audience had tears of joy in their eyes when this piece was performed. That evening, Washington and Lee had the opportunity to sing in the Gazi University concert hall to a packed audience, who loved their international repertoire and were awed by their interpretation of the Turkish music.

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Washington and Lee Chamber Singers at Topkapi Palace in Istanbul

St. Louis Children's Choir Tour of Australia

written by Barbara Berner, Artistic Director

We were very pleased with the quality of ACFEA's planning for our Australian tour. The music-making and educational aspects were everything we hoped that they would be. Our Australian courier (travel guide) Robert Latimer is an absolutely delightful gentleman who took diligent and thoughtful care of our every need. Another wonderful thing about Rob is that he used to be a high school vice-principal, so he is very experienced in working with young people. We love the fact that he learned the names of all the students!

We started our visit gently as we transitioned to the new time zone. Our itinerary included time in the beach town of Surfers Paradise, with a stop along the way at Lone Pine Sanctuary to see kangaroos, native birds, and koalas. After a couple of days of fun in the sun, we drove into the city of Brisbane and had a great workshop with Australian composer Stephen Leek and a joint concert with the Brisbane Birralees before an appreciative audience of parents, local



St. Louis Children's Choir in front of the Sydney Opera House

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Crossing the Bridge to Understanding

When a group begins the tour planning process, one of the most important questions posed is: "Why tour?" Some groups tour to perform in the great cathedrals and halls of Europe. Some tour to increase their profile abroad, while others wish to benefit the communities they visit through philanthropy or volunteerism. A number of groups tour to enjoy the cultural benefits provided by exchanges with local musicians and interact with people of their same age and interests while increasing camaraderie within the group. Without any doubt, the Empire State Youth Orchestra of Schenectady, New York, achieved all of these goals and more.

The group's second ACFEA tour was a long time coming – eight years after its first tour. Because the group had such fond memories of its 2000 tour of Central




ESYO at the Mozarteum in Salzburg

Europe, it decided to create a similar tour in 2008, which would include Eisenach, Prague and Salzburg. An orchestra of around 90 young players, ESYO had dreams of playing for the second time in the famous Mozarteum in Salzburg for its final concert. After a successful application process, the concert was confirmed for the last night of the tour. After the concert, one student said, "I enjoyed playing in the Mozarteum for its beauty, for its great audience, and for it being the hall where I experienced the greatest concert of my life." This concert, at the group's request, was a benefit for

the local charity, Hilfswerk, an organization that provides in-home care to seniors in Austria. The concert raised over \$10,000 for the cause.

Because of the group's high performance level, ACFEA had no problem organizing a concert for them in the prestigious Dvořák Hall of the Rudolfinum in Prague. Chaperone John Spinelli had the following to report: "Imagine a concert by a group of teenagers in one of the most beautiful concert halls in the world, with acoustics so perfect you could hear every single section of the orchestra individually and yet still have them blend perfectly. Then imagine the 800-plus seat hall filled to near capacity by an appreciative and discerning crowd of local Czech music lovers giving thunderous applause for one of the most amazing performances in the history of ESYO."

While the Mozarteum and Dvořák Hall were musical highlights, one cannot discount the other gratifying experiences that ESYO had while on tour. They took home amazing memories from Germany, where they had the exciting opportunity to perform a joint concert with the members of the local student orchestra, Cappella Juventa. "The concert was advertised all over town, and the kids played to a full house. We were told that at least 50 people were turned away at the door after all the seats were filled" Spinelli said. Additionally, friendships within the group were formed or strengthened, something that regularly happens on tour. Clarinetist Rebecca Kurtz explained it best when she said, "Orchestra is where you meet people – a double-decker bus is where they become your friends!"

The theme and title of ESYO's tour was 'Bridge to Understanding', named after a commissioned piece by German native and New York resident, Sam Adler, that the group performed on tour. It seems to all of us at ACFEA that the orchestra was able to embody that concept every step of the way. ESYO violinist Helen Rowe summed it up, saying "this tour changed my life and gave me, as well as some amazing performance opportunities, a whole new perspective on lifestyles and traditions in different countries." 

Cantare Con Vivo Chorale Enchanted in Europe

*written by David Morales,
Artistic Director*

This past June, ACFEA provided a life-changing experience for 74 singers (112 people in all) from Cantare Con Vivo's Chorale, through our journey to Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna, Brno and Prague. In addition to our standing-room-only concerts, we were able to fulfill our goal for a very special international collaboration of Ernest Bloch's *Avodat HaKodesh (Sacred Service)*, geared towards the Jewish community. ACFEA took the challenge, searched each city and landed us an unforgettable experience. We performed *Sacred Service* with Zemlinsky's *Psalm 13* in the historic symphony hall in Bratislava, accompanied by the professional Bohuslav Martinů Symphony Orchestra from the Czech Republic, and with baritone Martin

3 out of 3 for ACFEA and Ottawa Choral Society

The Ottawa Choral Society has been on three tours of Europe since 1996, and ACFEA is pleased to have arranged them all:

1996, directed by Iwan Edwards, to Germany and the Czech Republic

2000, directed by Daniel Gordon, to Britain and Ireland

2008, directed by Matthew Larkin, to Italy

The latest, involving 50 singers and 25 friends and family, visited three of the most spectacular cities in Italy: Venice, Florence and Rome. Even though economics dictated that the time in each city be limited, the group



Cantare Con Vivo in the Basilica of St. Margaret in Jaromerice nad Rokytnou

Mikuš from Slovakia. The event was sponsored in part by the United States Embassy and served as a fundraiser for the Slovak Cancer Research Charity, raising over 32,000 Slovak crowns (\$1,600). Through this grand performance, we deeply connected with a passionately diverse populace, displaying the positive social agenda that exemplifies the power of music making, which is essential in today's dramatically changing world.

Through our other tour concerts, we were able to touch the hearts of our listeners, performing repertoire well suited to the lovely acoustics of each setting. Our audiences were immensely appreciative, at times having tears in their eyes as they joined in singing *Teče Voda, Teče (Waters Ripple and*

managed to accomplish all the most important activities: sightseeing, free time, meals – and concerts.

The concerts were in spectacular venues in each city: the Basilica San Giovanni e Paolo in Venice ("The church was beautiful as were the acoustics. It was well attended and received"), the Chiesa di Santo Stefano al Ponte Vecchio in Florence ("Church was lovely. The concert was well attended and well received") and the Chiesa San Marcello al Corso in Rome ("Venue was lovely. Again the concert was well attended and received"). The first two concerts were a *cappella*, featuring music by Vaughan Williams (including the Mass in G Minor), Bruckner and Larkin; the one in Rome was with orchestra and consisted of four works by Mozart: his 'Coronation' Mass, *Regina Coeli, Sancta Maria Mater Dei and Ave Verum Corpus*.

Flow) in the Czech Republic. For us, the ultimate act of performing is freely giving away that which we have come to discover to be of great beauty. We now have a lifetime of memories from our efforts to connect with those who call this part of our shared world their home.

Travel and hotel arrangements, shared meals, city tours and other outings were very well thought through and organized, allowing us to appreciate the splendor that each unique environment presented without worrisome distractions. If that was not enough, our two couriers were magnificent in handling the myriad details that accompany moving over a hundred people through four countries and offered a daily clinic in how best to lead us with an authority undergirded with grace, patience, tireless energy, lots of humor and genuine compassion.

We now have returned no doubt a better choir, and better people. As individuals, we now must work to assess what we learned and how we might apply that to our respective lives. ACFEA served us well in making our goals achievable and enabling us to discover above and beyond what we had imagined. As director, I could not have asked for more. 📺

ACFEA sees our couriers – those people with you 24 hours a day – as being critical to the success of a tour, and we spend much time recruiting, training and reviewing them. It was very gratifying to read from Andi Murphy, the group's tour manager, that "Both Patricia and Alicia were professional, knowledgeable, and committed to our group. They were always one step ahead of our activities, planning for the next rehearsal, the next city or the next wake-up call. It was a pleasure working with both of them." 📺



Ottawa Choral Society in the Basilica San Giovanni e Paolo in Venice

Washington and Lee . continued from page 1

Many audience members took videos which were later posted on YouTube, making the choir feel famous!

Local fame did not stop there, as Washington and Lee were also invited for an interview on TV8 Channel, one of Turkey's national television stations. They performed a few songs from their repertoire for the Morning Program Live, reaching hundreds of thousands of listeners, with translations provided by their much-adored and ever-enthusiastic ACFEA couriers, Ilker and Altug.

Travelling on to Bursa and Istanbul, the choir members were eager to explore the silk markets, relax in the Turkish baths and see the nearly 1,500-year-old Hagia Sophia. They also visited Topkapi Palace, housing the treasures of the Ottoman Empire, including the 86-carat Spoonmaker's Diamond, the Emerald Dagger and bejewelled caskets brimming over with gemstones. A concert given in the spacious new concert hall in the University of Anadolu in Eskişehir again drew a large and admiring audience, and the final concert to a packed house in the Caddebostan Cultural Centre in Istanbul was

another highlight. The tour was rounded off with a truly memorable farewell dinner under the light of the full moon in a restaurant overlooking the mighty

Bosphorus Straits.

With so much culture and so many new experiences to take in, one week always seems too short. Many tears were shed at the airport as each singer left with memories that will surely remain for years to come. In their own words, Washington and Lee had the "best choir tour in 35 years" – perhaps some explanation as to why ACFEA receives an ever-increasing number of inquiries about touring in this fascinating region. 📺

Cornelia Connelly Tours China

written by Emily Pankau, Tour Participant

On July 16, 2008, the Cornelia Connelly High School Advanced Women's Ensemble, directed by Brian Dehn, was on its way to Beijing, China. We arrived on a hot, muggy night, but our wonderful couriers Tony and Jeff quickly got us into an air-conditioned bus. After a brief welcome reception, which included cookies and our trusty couriers telling us the events for the next day, we all fell into bed.

Our first day was incredible. We went to two famous landmarks: the Great Wall and the Temple of Heaven. Getting to sing on the Great Wall was an experience we are not likely to forget.

After this exciting adventure, we were given our first taste of Chinese cuisine. While we were perplexed by the size of our plates, we quickly learned how to take full advantage of the Lazy Susan and the many dishes piled upon it. While some of us struggled with chopsticks at first, we were handling them like pros by the end of our tour. We also learned that if none of the tantalizing Chinese dishes appealed to our liking, there was the trusty, ever-present watermelon at the end.



Cornelia Connelly performs at the Great Wall

Our remaining time in Beijing included a tour of the historic Tiananmen Square and the newly refurbished Forbidden City, a trip to the Summer Palace and a scrumptious Peking duck dinner. We also had two major performances: in the Olympic Square and the Central Conservatory. We were amazed by the 500 Chinese people who came to support us. At the time we thought this was a phenomenon, but we continued to draw in hundreds of audience members at our subsequent concerts.

We arrived in Xi'an after a short plane ride. Our first day in this walled city we saw the Big Goose Pagoda, which sustained some wear and tear during one of China's most recent earthquakes. The next day, we were all taken aback by the enormity of the famous Terra-Cotta Warriors. The icing on top of the cake was meeting the farmer who had discovered the soldier statues.

After Xi'an we took another short flight to Nanjing. The city houses a wonderful shopping bazaar and a beautiful concert hall. By our third performance, we had our concert routine down. After intermission, our Chinese emcee Tony would ask the audience if they thought we knew any Chinese. We would then greet

the audience with "Ni hao" and show our gratitude by saying "Xie xie." We had broken the language barrier, and the Chinese people responded with gales of laughter and much applause.

Our next stop was beautiful Hangzhou, where we took a boat ride on the breathtaking West Lake. Our concert that night was a joint concert with the Hangzhou Philharmonic Angel Choir. None of us could believe how spectacular these young singers were. Taking pictures and receiving small gifts from the Chinese children after the concert was an amazing global experience.

Shanghai showed us one of the most awe-inspiring skylines we had ever seen. Our last concert in this historic country was met with an unexpected obstacle. The electricity in the university we were supposed to sing in went out, but our brilliant courier Jeff arranged for us to sing in a different building that day, and he made sure there were buses to take the audience and all of us to the new location. We couldn't have asked for anyone more wonderful than him and our other incredibly knowledgeable and personable courier, Tony.

While there are so many memories we can take away from this experience, I think my most wonderful memory actually came in the airport on the last day. As I was hugging Jeff goodbye, he said to me, "You have the most beautiful voice I have ever heard." I was able to spread my gift to someone who lives half a world away from me; to me there is nothing more amazing than that. 📺

St. Louis . continued from page 1

music teachers, and people from the community.

We then flew from Brisbane down to Sydney and stayed at a beautiful youth hostel with a spectacular view of the ocean. Lots of local choirs and bands as well as community and church groups hold retreats there so we felt like we got to live alongside some Australians. We sang a joint concert with the Sydney Children's Choir. We really enjoyed hearing

their repertoire, which included the premiere of a new piece by their composer in residence. The concert was recorded at the studios of the Australian Broadcasting Company and will be heard on a classical radio program entitled "Rising Stars" this fall.

A definite highlight of the trip was the time we spent in Bairnsdale, which is the hometown of our tour guide, Robert. We had homestays with families from Robert's church. When the choir members came back together after time spent with their

homestay families they were all smiles and told us about the beautiful homes, delicious home-cooked meals, and the tender-loving care that they enjoyed with their new Australian friends.

We visited Nagle College in Bairnsdale and worked with its small choir, which is in the rebuilding stage with a new music teacher. We taught them various warm-ups, and then they taught us an Aboriginal song. Concert Choir

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Reflections on A European Tour

written by Nancy Brakke, Managing Director, Tacoma Youth Chorus

Our adventure to Europe really began eighteen months before the plane left. Our staff gathered around a table, discussed the pros and cons of various destinations, the length of our stay, the kinds of educational experiences we wanted for our young people and who might serve as chaperones. Cities like Budapest, Prague and Salzburg were just names learned in geography classes at that point.

The months went by and all the groundwork was carefully laid to ensure a safe and meaningful journey. Hours were spent on the details that were about



Tacoma Youth Chorus at St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest

to come to life in a fourteen-day trip. We held our final rehearsals, our potluck dinner with families and our exquisite Bon Voyage concert. Then came the early morning check-in at the airport: lots of excitement, a few nerves, confidences bolstered by clinging to friends and chaperones hovering to make sure all is well. A few hours later, we were all on our way and settled in for the long flight to Europe.

Our courier, Tassos, met us in Budapest as we exited customs.

Later he remarked that he could

tell from the first moment that we were a group he would enjoy, a feeling that became mutual over the next two weeks. Traveling with a group of 53 singers and 7 adults means that every transition takes time, from loading and unloading luggage, to checking in to hotels and airports, or being seated in restaurants or changing clothes for a concert. It requires patience, organization and efficiency. Overall, the groundwork laid by ACFEA and facilitated by Tassos meant that we were met with staff who were courteous, ready to greet us and very competent.

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In between all the transitions were the real experiences of the tour. These are the life lessons for our young people: not only exchanging currencies four times, but understanding what the local prices mean in dollars, learning to navigate where the landmarks and street signs are unfamiliar, understanding the history and culture of the countries visited, discovering the joys of gelato,

members sang a 40-minute concert for about 600 of the students. The music teacher said that this was probably the first classical concert for nearly 90% of the students there. There just are no orchestras or choirs in the rural township and few of the children have the opportunity to go to the city. One young boy in junior high came up to us after the concert and said, "I usually don't like classical music, but that was a really great performance!"

become more self-sufficient. St. John's is a small brick church that seats about 200 and every single seat in the church was taken! They had chairs wedged in wherever possible: at the sides, around the organ, and at the edge of the altar area.

We closed our Australian concert tour singing with the Young Voices of Melbourne at the remarkable and very modern BMW Edge theater located in the heart of the arts district of Melbourne on the banks of the Yarra River. We loved the diversity of their repertoire and the opportunity to sing two of Stephen Leek's pieces, directed by Melbourne's dynamic conductor, Mark O'Leary.

It was exciting for us to see how

and, above all, bringing their music to the basilicas, churches, gardens, cathedrals and castles where they were met with cheers of bravo and tears for the hearts they touched. And through all these shared experiences, they learn to rely upon one another and share money, worries, jokes, frustrations and triumphs. They grow enormously as they successfully traverse many foreign experiences and understand the power of the music they brought to share.

My personal joy was watching these ordinary-appearing teenagers transformed into this professional, dignified and disciplined ensemble that lifted their voices into one glorious sound and strummed the heartstrings of all who could hear them. They are simultaneously so proud of themselves and yet so humble about their abilities.

The lasting gift in this journey is not only the music that will resound in many hearts and minds beyond my own, but it is that these young people grew into world citizens on this journey. Their success in handling passports, foreign languages, currencies, foods and customs has empowered them to move beyond their previous boundaries. They will never hear about an event in Prague, Budapest or Salzburg on the radio without listening more carefully because this is no longer just a name learned in geography class, but a real place to them. The dimensions added to their lives have changed them forever in the most positive of ways. 📌

each performance deepened our understanding of the repertoire. Concert Choir's artistry, teamwork, and mastery of the music really developed on this tour and that's one of the main reasons we take these trips. Something very special happens when the students travel together. They learn about other cultures and they learn more about each other. Their horizons broaden and their artistic sensibilities are strengthened. There's no question this can be heard in the music they make. We are very grateful to have worked with the whole team at ACFEA who share our high standards of excellence in providing a quality concert tour for young people. 📌



Palo Alto High School Choir with the Anyel Choir in front of the Iglesia de San Francisco in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico



Boston Youth Symphony performs in Smetana Hall in Prague



Mississippi College Choir in Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic



University of Maine Singers at the Temple of Concordia in the Valley of the Temples, Agrigento, Italy

Colorado Children's Chorale in Brazil

February 26, 2008, saw the Colorado Children's Chorale (director, Deborah DeSantis) checking in at Denver airport for their flights to São Paulo. The country and the group turned out to be a perfect match, both having endless supplies of energy, smiles, generosity and *joie de vivre* (*alegria de viver* in Portuguese), and the group and its audiences fell in love with each other with a wonderful



Colorado Children's Chorale entertains retirement home residents in São Paulo

spontaneity. Debbie's typically entertaining programs were perfect for the Brazilian audiences, showing off the group's flawless singing and its famous choreography.

The Chorale performed twice in São Paulo, each time with different local choirs and standing-room-only audiences. They also participated in ACFEA's growing practice of adding a philanthropic element

to tours by singing at a retirement home. As Debbie wrote, "the retirement home visit was wonderful" and, looking at the photographs, it is difficult to tell whether the children or the residents are having the better time.

From there they drove to one of ACFEA's favorite little spots, the cobbled-street town of Paraty. A "very responsive, excited audience" enjoyed the concert in the Casa de Cultura, which came at the end of a day spent sailing around the bay on a schooner and enjoying beach time and snorkeling.

The next stop was the old Brazilian capital city of Petrópolis. It was here that they gave a joint concert with an excellent girls' chorus, the Meninas dos Canarinhos, to an audience of over 600.

Finally, of course, there was Rio de Janeiro. With a hotel right on Copacabana Beach, a cable car ride up Sugarloaf Mountain, a visit to the Christ the Redeemer statue and a stroll around the Botanical Gardens, these 36 young people certainly got a taste of this amazing city. Their final concert, in the Teatro Zaccaria, had "another very enthusiastic crowd", and was followed by a farewell dinner in the famous Restaurant Porcão Rios.

It was perhaps the quality of the food that most surprised the group. Debbie's comments on successive dinners, were, "Perfect", "Still perfect!", "Have moved from perfect to unbelievable!" and "Unbelievably perfect and fantastic!". We think she enjoyed them - and certainly no one went hungry.

To give Debbie the last words: "This tour was exceptional: the quality of performance venues; great audiences; the number of performances balanced with relaxation time and sightseeing. We were well cared for and enjoyed every minute. We hope we did our part in return by providing quality performances!" 📌

Vox Femina Los Angeles Builds Bridges In Mexico



written by Allie Fukushima, Tour Participant
Mexico City - Pyramids and Pride

From the ancient pyramids at Teotihuacán to the gay pride celebration in the Zócalo, the thriving, cosmopolitan capital city offered a rich sampling of Mexico's historic past and present day vitality. When we sang *Mahk Jchi* atop the Pyramid of the Sun, we swear we made contact with the ancestors!

Making music with the six warm, talented women of Coro Karites – a joy! They taught us *Siyahamba* in Spanish – making our shared performance that much more meaningful! The full house seemed to think so, too.

Tepotzotlan - Rococo Cuckoo!

Nothing could have prepared us for the Iglesia de San Francisco Javier in Tepotzotlan – every surface covered in gold! Singing the strains of a Hildegard chant in this setting was hauntingly beautiful.

Once again, a packed house and a warm and responsive audience. Wow – a lot of young children sat in rapt attention and applauded enthusiastically! It didn't hurt that Laurie Fox had met a group of them beforehand and they had become fast friends – Laurie's groupies were great.



San Miguel de Allende - The Emotional Highlight

Before visiting the Casa Hogar Santa Julia orphanage, we expected to encounter shy, reticent youngsters. Were we wrong! We were greeted with hugs by a group of outgoing children who were interested in many things – but especially hair. It was obvious that Lisa Bell had the coolest hair!

That evening, we shared the stage with Santa Julia's fledgling girls' choir. When they weren't performing, the girls were in the first two rows and we couldn't help but kick it up a notch just for them. The audience responded with a standing ovation and demands that we sing an encore – of course, we had to comply.

Guadalajara - Colonial Cooldown

With performances complete, Voxxies kicked back and enjoyed the colonial conviviality of Guadalajara before we sadly said *adios* to our wonderful tour guides, the intriguing country and the warm, welcoming and musically sophisticated people we met in Mexico. 🇲🇽



Idaho State Chamber Choir Tour of Peru

An Interview with Scott Anderson, Director

Why did you choose Peru for your tour?

After receiving presentations from ACFEA for Peru and South Africa, the singers and I made the choice to travel to South America. Peru seemed to offer a combination of acoustical opportunities for our musical performances (the many Spanish colonial churches and cathedrals), rich cultural experiences, and world-class sights such as Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley.

What was the top highlight of the tour?

I simply can't identify ONE most memorable aspect; there were dozens! Some of our extraordinary memories include: joint concerts with Coro Femenino in Lima, and with the Catholic College Choir from Arequipa; Machu Picchu; the stunning scene at the Arequipa airport being surrounded by seven volcanoes; the wonderful weather we encountered for most of our tour; the overwhelming hospitality of our host choirs and their conductors; and the graceful way in which our courier, Sylvia Garcia Marin, dealt with everything we encountered along the way...and so much more!

Could you elaborate on your joint concert experiences with Coro Femenino in Lima and the Catholic College Choir in Arequipa?

If the singers and I were forced to name the "most" memorable aspects of this trip, I would say that our two joint concerts would be strong candidates. The sharing of music (when most of us could not speak the language) proved to be our "communication" and cut through all the cultural and language barriers completely. In addition, the reception offered to us by the College students, faculty and administrators in Arequipa was extraordinary: dancers; musicians; gifts; food and drink; friendship – really overwhelming! We will never forget these moments.

What type of repertoire did you perform?

We tried to present a wide variety of choral music including sacred "classical" music from the masters (Palestrina, Victoria, Bach, Franco, etc.), art music composed by predominantly American composers (Eric Whitacre, William Hawley, Morten Lauridsen, Mark Anderson, etc.), and arrangements of American folksongs and spirituals. This program hopefully offered a snapshot of our culture and musical tastes. I'm sure much of the music we performed had never been heard by our audiences in Peru.

In Cusco, you attended a presentation about different traditional musical instruments. How did that go?

Kike Pinto's presentation was another highlight of our tour. He was the "real deal": a sensitive musician and teacher who presented a compelling and passionate presentation about Andean musical instruments. We all felt as though Kike brought us into the culture in an intimate way.

"ACFEA continues to be a highly professional and dependable organization. Our trip to Paris included venues packed with energetic and passionate audiences. We left feeling as if we had been fortunate to have a chance to offer music in such historic venues. Our experience in Lourdes was as close to feeling like rock stars as we'll ever have!"

**Kevin Turner, Director
Davidson United Methodist
Church Choir**



Idaho State University Chamber Choir at Machu Picchu

What did you think of the food? Were there differences from home?

The diversity of the menus and dishes was excellent. The group especially appreciated the several buffet-style meals that offered wide varieties of local and regional cuisine. There were many preparations of fish, beef, alpaca, ostrich, etc., which were wonderful (no one was brave enough to try one of the guinea pigs on a stick, however!). Many of us fell in love with one of the national drinks of Peru: the pisco sour. In fact, the conductor from Lima, Isabel Salas, gave me her special recipe for pisco sours, which I have already successfully attempted!

What advice would you give to other groups looking to go to Latin America on a tour?

Latin America, and Peru in particular, offers rewarding musical and cultural opportunities for any choir. When comparing costs of such a trip to travel in Europe, the Far East, or other destinations, South America is still a very good value. We would all recommend Latin America very highly based upon our experiences there. 🇵🇪

"FANTASTIC! I have already spoken with Erin concerning a tour in the spring of 2010. It's ACFEA all the way!"

**Ardelle Ries, Director
University of Alberta
Augustana Choir**

Sacramento Children's Chorus Concert Tour of Norway and Sweden

Excerpts from poems sent home from the road by Joan Birdsell, Tour Manager

Today it hails on Californians in Oslo!
We had free time
The Chorale and Choraliers decided to
test building acoustics
They sang in the lobby of the
Oslo National Theater
They sang in the stairwell of the
Nobel Institute
They sang in the lobby of our hotel
All agreed the National Theater
lobby was best
The sound soared and blended
The tourists stopped talking
Tears were wiped away afterwards

Today we spent the day in Karlstad
We were told it would rain
It didn't rain
The sun shone
The sky was blue
The tour participants rejoiced
We turned our faces to the sun
We put on sunglasses
We ate ice cream
We visited the park
We rode the water bus
We sang on the boat
We waved to the people on the bank
We went up and down the canal lock
We watched the lock master crank the
gates open and shut by hand
All day long, first one gate, then
the other
First one side, then the other

Today we went to the water park
in Örebro
It is the largest indoor water park
in Sweden
It has your basic indoor swimming pool
It has Olympic quality high dives
There are water slides
There are wave machines
There are snorkeling pools with sharks
(the sharks are behind glass)
There are palm trees and tropical drinks
Just your basic indoor swimming pool!

Today was Midsummer Eve
It is an important holiday in Sweden
Many Swedes consider the Dalarna
region to be the best place to
celebrate Midsummer
Rättvik is in Dalarna
We are in Rättvik

The Midsummer Eve festivities start
with a procession
It is led by prancing horses and
flag bearers

A troop of fiddlers set the
mood and the pace
All fall behind and walk to the
festival grounds
Some ride in large wooden
wagons decorated with
greens for good luck
Everyone is in a good mood

The festivities continued
without us
We had a concert to give
In a church by a lake
In a church that has been here
for centuries
In the little town of Rättvik
More than 400 people came to
hear us sing
They left their midsummer
festivities to hear us sing
They gave us 2 standing ovations
They were beaming with pleasure
Their pleasure needed no translation

Today we sang at Dalhalla
It was a quarry in a former life
It was a meteorite impact site in a
former life before that
It is a unique stage in a
unique environment
The sound floated over the water and
swirled around and around
Few can boast of performing at Dalhalla

This morning we were in church
The church service was
standing-room-only
They had heard of our performance
in Rättvik
They had heard of our performance
in Mora
They came to the church service
this morning
They came by the hundreds
They came to the concert this evening
They came by the hundreds

We have felt so appreciated
How could we not?
They tell us so every night
They tell their friends and neighbors
about us
They come to our concerts
They come more than once
They give us standing ovations
Tonight we received 3 standing ovations
Wow!
And they asked us back again



*Sacramento Children's Chorus at the
Scandic Grand Hotel in Örebro, Sweden*

Today we helped honor the
church organist
The Santa Clara Kyrka organist
Has played the church organ
Every day of the past 32 years
Today was his last day
We dedicated to him our last song
We sang a song of Swedish blessing
It seemed a fitting tribute
He was someone we had just met
He was someone who deserved
to be honored
I hope the choir never forgets
The look on his face as we sang

We had a terrific run of concerts
We have many memories to savor
We have new friendships
We have touched the lives of people
a world away
And they have touched ours

We will remember the tears
We will remember the joy
We will remember the beauty
of the churches
We will remember the lined faces
We will remember the kindness
of the people
We will remember how language
was no barrier
Music was our common language
Music was our powerful language
The most powerful language of all 🎵

Our Worldwide Staff

NICK ABBOTT

is General Manager of Sales based in Bath. Nick received his degree in Music at the University of Cambridge and was organ scholar of Girton College. Prior to joining ACFEA, he combined post-graduate studies in Musicology at the University of Bristol with work as a conductor, organist, accompanist and baritone. He has toured throughout much of Europe, North America and Asia.

DAN BUCUR

is ACFEA's Representative in Romania, based in Bucharest. Dan graduated from the Economics Studies Academy of Bucharest with a degree in Tourist Marketing and International Relations. Fond of tourism and music, Dan joined ACFEA in 2003 and has already organized many successful ACFEA concerts in venues throughout Romania and has enjoyed introducing the delights of his country to those performing ensembles.

HELEN DAVID

is an Operations Manager in London. After receiving her degree in Music from Sussex University, Helen worked for 15 years as Tours Manager for the Philharmonia Orchestra in London. In this role, she traveled throughout Europe, the Far East and the USA. Helen studied the violin at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has sung with the BBC Symphony Chorus on various occasions.

ILKER ERSIL

is ACFEA's Representative in Turkey. Ilker has a degree in Business Administration and has managed events for many worldwide companies. He is a founding member and manager of one of Turkey's most successful choirs, Orfeon, and also works with internationally-renowned artists from around the globe.

ELEANOR ETHERINGTON

is an Operations Manager in London. She attended the University of York, where she received her Masters degree in Music, specializing in vocal studies and community music. After leaving university, Eleanor traveled extensively in Europe, living and working in Germany and Holland. She sings with three different ensembles, notably this season at the Royal Albert Hall and the Sage Gateshead.

LEONE GRUEBNER

is ACFEA's Manager in New Zealand. She has been in the travel industry for thirty years, having owned a travel agency as well as managing coach companies and she now operates her own inbound tour company. Her singing has spanned a lifetime including twenty years in the Auckland Dorian Choir and ten years with her current group, the Orlando Singers. She has been associated with ACFEA for several years, arranging the New Zealand portion of their Australasian Tours.

TONY HASTINGS

is European Projects Consultant. He is a graduate of Sussex University and worked previously in music publishing and artist management. He sings professionally with the choir of Bath Abbey, and is also a member of the Bath Camerata.

ROBERT LATIMER

is ACFEA's Manager for Australia. Robert has been an educator and businessman, having taught at both primary and secondary levels, and involved in the photography and cinema industries. As an amateur musician, he has sung in choral groups in addition to performing in musical and dramatic productions. He is well traveled with extensive experience in organizing and conducting study tours of North America and Europe. Robert, who lives in rural Victoria, has been associated with ACFEA for over 15 years.

ELFRIEDE LEIMER-RIZZOTTI

is the Regional Representative in Italy. Although born in Austria, Friede has been ACFEA's consultant in Italy since 1983. Before joining ACFEA, she worked for the Austrian diplomatic service.

ANDERS LINDSTROM

is ACFEA's Representative in Scandinavia, based in Rättvik, Sweden. He received his music degree in conducting under Professor Eric Ericson at the Stockholm Royal College of Music. He also studied conducting and church music with Nicholas Conran at Surrey University, and with Dr. George Guest and Sir David Willcocks in Cambridge. For many years, Anders was organist and choirmaster in churches in Stockholm and Sollentuna. He has formed choral festivals and choirs in Sweden and made many recordings and radio and TV productions with his choirs. Anders now works as a teacher and guest conductor in the field of Anglo/Swedish church music.

SYLVIA GARCIA MARIN

is ACFEA's Representative in Latin America, based in Guadalajara, Mexico. She graduated from Georgia State University with a degree in Business Administration and French before moving to France. During her time in Paris, she earned a degree in International Relations from the University Pantheon Assas Paris II and was ACFEA's France representative for over ten years before taking on her present role.

NEIL MCGOWAN

is ACFEA's Representative in Moscow. Neil ran the English National Opera Schools and Community Touring unit for four years. He has acted as a tour leader for American groups around Russia, produces concerts of his own (using Russian professional performers) in Moscow, and is Artistic Consultant of the Vremena Goda Music Festival in St. Petersburg.

PIETER MYBURGH

is ACFEA's Manager in South Africa. Born in Upington near the Kalahari Desert, Pieter now resides in George with his wife and three children. He holds honors degrees in Human Resources and Psychology, and has owned his own travel business for over ten years. Pieter is an avid traveler and currently sings with the George Male Choir.

ALINA PERETTI

is ACFEA's Representative in Poland and has worked for ACFEA since 1987. Educated in Wroclaw, she has a degree in Architecture and Art. Alina worked first as an architect and then as a qualified tourist guide in four different languages: Polish, Russian, French and English. She has lived in Poland, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and is a keen piano player.

SUE PETER

is ACFEA's Representative for Germany. She has a varied background in travel administration and has worked for the British Tourist Authority and the Welsh Tourist Board. Now living in Berlin, she sings with the Wilmersdorf ensemble 'Kissi Choir'.

RICHARD SAVAGE

is Managing Director of ACFEA Europe, and has been with the company since 1970. He graduated from Oxford University where he sang in Christ Church Cathedral Choir. In addition to his responsibilities at ACFEA, he still maintains a professional singing career, having taken part in over 150 CD recordings and appearing regularly with the Gabrieli Consort, King's Consort, Polyphony, Tenebrae, Les Concerts d' Astree and other European ensembles.

BECKY SHAFTOE

is General Manager of Operations in London. After receiving a degree in Music at Newcastle University, she trained in arts administration at the London Sinfonietta before spending five years organizing concerts and education projects for the London Symphony Orchestra. In her role as LSO Tours Manager she traveled widely with the Orchestra across Europe and the USA. Becky plays the oboe and, prior to joining ACFEA, taught English in Spain.

ANASTASIOS STRIKOS

is ACFEA's Representative for Greece. He is an accomplished musician, a pianist and orchestra conductor and has toured as an accompanist with several groups, including the Vienna Boys' Choir. Tassos has lived in Germany and Austria and, apart from his native Greek, he is fluent in English, German, French and Italian.

MARIANNE SWIENINK-HAVARD

is ACFEA's Representative for Spain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. A native of the Netherlands, Marianne has worked in the travel industry for 35 years, both as a professional tour guide and in operations. She has traveled extensively and has escorted tours throughout Europe, North America, South America, Australasia and China. Fluent in Dutch, English, German, French and Spanish, Marianne has worked for ACFEA since 2001.

OLGA YEMELANOVA

is ACFEA's Representative in Russia, based in St. Petersburg. She attended a specialist music school and has a diploma in English and German Education. Olga received a PhD in Linguistics from Herzen Pedagogical University of St. Petersburg, where she teaches English. She is actively involved in music-making, and is a keen American square- and contradancer.



Farewell to Tricia George

by Hugh Davies,
Managing Director,
North America

After nearly 30 years with ACFEA, Tricia George, Head of Operations in our London office and our longest-serving staff member, left the organization in September, 2008.

Tony Hastings (European Projects Consultant) and I have known Tricia for our entire ACFEA careers – well over 20 years for each of us. The idea of ACFEA without Tricia is as bizarre to us as that of a meal without wine, a day without sunshine (maybe just to me: I live in California; Tony lives in England), baseball without hotdogs (so I'm told: I don't understand either of them), summer without cricket (that's for Tony), flying without taking your shoes off, a season without two a.m. telephone calls, life without jet lag, and a world without music.

But it is the greatest tribute to Tricia that, while arranging hundreds of the creative, well planned and responsive tours that are ACFEA's hallmark, she has nurtured a European operations department that will thrive without her.

On behalf of the entire ACFEA organization worldwide, and the thousands of people for whom the tours she arranged were wonderful, life-changing experiences, I offer Tricia our deep respect, heartfelt but inadequate thanks, and very best wishes for the future. 📌

North America Staff



AMANDA BAUMAN

is a Tour Manager in the New York office. An Ohio native, she performed with the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus before receiving her degree in Music Education from Duquesne University, in Pittsburgh. There she was a member of symphonic and jazz bands, as well as the Chamber Singers, with whom she toured Europe on an ACFEA concert tour. Amanda currently sings with and serves on the board of the Young New Yorkers' Chorus. Her travels have included excursions to Europe, Australia, Africa and Central and South America.



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, including on tours to Britain, Austria, Italy, Canada, New York and Hawaii. She graduated with a degree in Music from Carleton College in Minnesota. At Carleton, Rachel played clarinet and conducted and managed the Carleton Choirs on tours to Los Angeles and New Orleans. Rachel has also traveled independently throughout Europe and on performance tours of Belgium, Holland and Germany. She currently plays clarinet with the Shoreline Concert Band.



ERIN HARLAN

is a Tour Manager in the Seattle office. She received a degree in Communications with a minor in Vocal Music Performance from Pacific Lutheran University. At PLU, Erin sang with the Choir of the West, with whom she toured Norway and Sweden on an ACFEA concert tour. Her travels include a study abroad program in Australia, and trips throughout Europe, North America, Mexico, Iceland, South America and China. Erin currently sings with and serves on the Board of Directors of The Esoterics, an *a cappella* group in Seattle.



HUGH DAVIES

is Managing Director of ACFEA North America, based in the San Francisco office. Born 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, and serves on the boards of the American Bach Soloists and Chorus America.



EMILY FRYE

is a Tour Manager in the New York 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 is currently singing in the choir at St. Peter's Lutheran Church as well as the Young New Yorker's Chorus.



CHRISTINA MARTIN

is a Tour Manager based in the California office. Born in San Francisco, she graduated from the University of California, San Diego, and has worked with ACFEA since 1992. As a student she lived in France and Guatemala, and traveled throughout Europe with Arête West, a youth club combining cultural study and track competition. She has also toured through North and South America, Russia, China, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Christina currently sings with the UC Alumni Chorus in Berkeley.

ACFEA Now Offers Guaranteed Exchange Rates

While many of our groups continue to appreciate the flexibility and transparency offered by our long-standing policy of quoting land prices in the currency of the destination, with the recent weakness of the dollar some groups have wanted the security of a fixed exchange rate. We are now pleased to be able to offer that option, on the understanding that once the group has accepted the fixed exchange rate no benefit will be derived from any strengthening of the dollar.

Please discuss this option with your Tour Manager if you are interested.

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

Christine McLaughlin
Finance Manager

Greg Newell
Marketing Manager

Ken Olson
Operations Manager

David Wert
Finance and Operations Administrator

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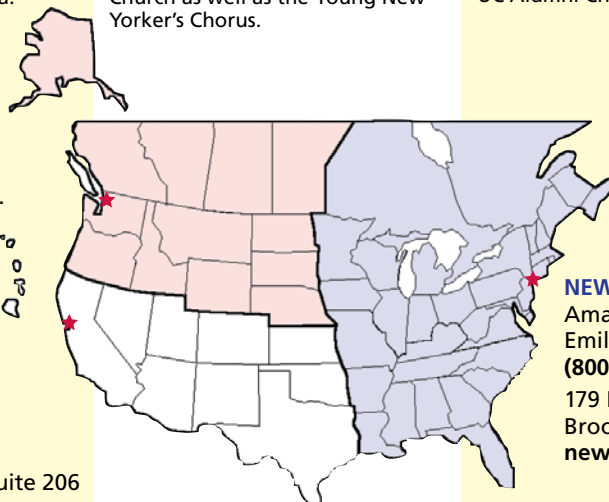
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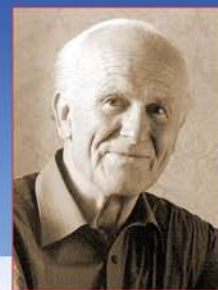
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2009 Alaska Choral Cruise



with **Duain Wolfe**
and **Sir David Willcocks**

July 18-26, 2009

Enjoy a Holland America Line cruise in Alaska while preparing for a concert in Seattle with Duain Wolfe and Sir David Willcocks.

The tour program includes:

- Seven-day Alaska cruise aboard Holland America Line's *ms Amsterdam*, with stops in attractive ports of call including Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan and Victoria, British Columbia
- Rehearsals and receptions aboard the ship open only to ACFEA choral cruise participants
- The opportunity to meet and perform with choir members from North America and beyond
- Group transfers from the hotel or airport to the pier on July 18 and all transfers on July 25
- Seattle sightseeing tour upon completion of the cruise
- Lunch and dinner in Seattle on July 25
- Grand finale concert and post-concert reception in Seattle with other choral cruise participants
- Final night's accommodation in Seattle on July 25
- Breakfast buffet on July 26
- Group transfer from the hotel to the airport on July 26



Prices start at \$2,225*.
Book now as space is limited.

The cruise departs Seattle, Washington on July 18, 2009 and returns on July 25, with Seattle sightseeing, the farewell dinner and the concert that day. The tour ends with breakfast on July 26.

For further information please contact
ACFEA Tour Consultants
123 2nd Ave South, Suite 105, Edmonds, WA 98020
TEL (425) 776-3273 or (800) 627-2141 . FAX (425) 672-8187
EMAIL seattle@acfea.com

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Performing Arts Tours Since 1955

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*Prices in US dollars based on double occupancy. Airfare not included but available. Government taxes and fuel surcharges not included.

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"We had a well-conceived itinerary, the right number of concerts, excellent sight-seeing, beautiful hotels, wonderful food, enthusiastic expert couriers and guides. I think this experience was a tremendous value for the price paid."

Chuck Moore, Executive Director
Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra Wind Symphony

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