



Pictured above: Connemara Region in Ireland. Photography by Alex Gould '17
 Website: <http://www.davidson.edu/the-arts/music/choral-arts>
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Choirs @ Davidson

Choral Activities at Davidson College

June 2014

A busy year for the singing Wildcats

New music department collaborations and overseas tour infuse energy, direction

The 2013-2014 academic year was both busy and successful for Choral Activities at Davidson. With the addition of 25 new student singers to the program and two first-time-ever music department collaborations, Davidson choirs enjoyed a year of growth in both numbers and in quality programming. In addition to the usual fall concerts, Davidson choirs joined together for the first time (Chorale, Collegium, Davidson Singers, Choral Arts Society) to produce the first annual *Holiday Gala*, featuring the Choirs,



Davidson Chorale at graduation 2014

Contact Us

Choral Activities at Davidson is seeking to connect with alumni who sang in or who support choirs at Davidson. Let us hear from you! Email chgilliam@davidson.edu to connect with the Arts at your alma mater. Help us put the *Choral Arts* in Liberal Arts.



More inside!

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IRELAND: Chorale Overseas

January 2014 saw the Chorale on their second overseas adventure! In 2010 the Chorale toured Vienna, Salzburg, and Prague with my predecessor, Dr. Raymond Sprague. Knowing the value and importance of overseas travel and performance, I was eager to again give the students an opportunity to experience other cultures and help broaden their educational and artistic experiences. Ireland turned out to be an exceptional fit for our choristers! Dr. Jennifer Stasack, Professor of Music and composer at Davidson, traveled along with us. Prior to our departure, Dr. Stasack was commissioned to write a piece specifically for our Ireland tour. Her piece, *Fons Luminis*, soon became a Chorale favorite, and was sung by the Chorale in all our concert venues throughout Ireland. During the eight-day journey, the students sang in the Dublin cathedral where Handel composed *Messiah*, and in the cathedral in Armagh where composer Charles Wood (*Hail, Gladdening Light*) worked as a choir boy. The Chorale learned the stormy history of Northern Ireland, and enjoyed meeting (and singing with!) people in churches and pubs throughout the country. For more about our Ireland tour or to learn more about Choral Activities at Davidson, visit my blog: www.christophergilliam.com



Welcome a new holiday tradition

December 2013 saw the first ever "Holiday Gala" on the Davidson campus. Over 200 students, faculty, staff, and community members came together to produce a show that was spectacular, funny, heart-wrenching, and entertaining! The Davidson College Choirs, Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Band, Dance Department, and community participants Dance Davidson and Davidson Community Players collaborated on stage all for the very first time for two nights in Duke Family Performance Hall. Everyone is eager to produce the second annual Holiday Gala later this year, and plans are already underway for what will be another wonderful (and filled to capacity) event you won't want to miss.
(12.2 & 12.3, 2014)



Collegium Musicum

New early music ensemble

Collegium Musicum is a select student-led ensemble in the Department of Music who serve as section leaders in the Davidson College Chorale. Collegium specializes in music of the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. In collaboration with the Director of Choral Activities, students who participate in Collegium are provided opportunities in service through semester concerts (including a holiday concert and spring madrigal dinner) and leadership through rehearsal direction, sectional instruction, ensemble administration, event planning, rehearsal accompanying, rehearsal conducting, and choral composition.

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...Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Band and a host of friends from the College and community including members of the Davidson Dance Department, Dance Davidson, and the Davidson Community Players. Two performances were held in December to full houses. Only a few days later, the Chorale sang for the annual Christmas Vespers service, a beloved campus holiday tradition, in Davidson College Presbyterian Church. Following a very short holiday break, the Chorale arrived back to campus early on January 2nd to prepare for the group's overseas tour to Ireland (see article).

In addition to the usual spring concerts including the "Farewell to Seniors Concert" (seniors get to choose their favorite selections to sing), the Choirs enjoyed another first-time-ever collaboration with the Opera Theatre directed by Jacquelyn Culpepper. The program entitled, *Do You Hear the People Sing?*® was a marvelous production featuring well-known and favorite opera and operetta solos, duets, trios, and choruses sung by student soloists, and accompanied by Davidson Singers, the Choral Arts Society, and the Symphony Orchestra. The concert was a crowd favorite, in particular, because the second half featured a 25-minute compilation of music from the musical *Les Misérables*. The choir, orchestra, and student soloists performed for a room that was filled nearly to capacity. Energy was high and the evening was a sure success!

Preparations are underway for an exciting concert season for the 2014-2015 academic school year. In the fall Davidson Choirs will sing Handel's Messiah with guest soloists in Duke Family Performance Hall, in addition to producing the second annual Holiday Gala. The Chorale will tour destinations in the US (tour itinerary will be forthcoming) and the Men's and Women's Choruses will be making guest appearances. We hope you will join us for all the exciting choral music offerings that are available to you at Davidson College!

Friends of Choral Activities

In January 2017, the Davidson College Chorale will tour CHINA. Davidson College "Friends of Choral Activities" is a group of community members and alumni who believe in the power of music and who wish to support and enable Davidson College students to share their gift of music with the world. Because a tour of this caliber costs between \$150,000 and \$200,000, the students are unable to afford such a venture on their own, and they must rely upon the generous contributions of alumni and friends who believe in the value of this multicultural educational experience. If you would like to partner with us, either as a financial supporter and/or to travel along with us, please contact Christopher Gilliam, Director of Choral Activities, at chgilliam@davidson.edu. The Chorale's recent trip to Ireland was made possible by the generous donation of a Davidson alumnus and "Friend of Choral Activities." Join with this donor and many like him who advocate for the Arts at Davidson, and who believe in helping the students pursue excellence in the Arts as a vital part of their educational journey. Help us put the choral arts in these students' Liberal Arts education!

Choirs @ Davidson – The Arts in Liberal Arts

Choral activities at Davidson College provide students a well-rounded education in the great historic works from the choral repertoire of the past, and introduce them to well-crafted contemporary works that are shaping the ever-evolving choral landscape of the future. Within those parameters, throughout four years of participation in the choral program, choirs at Davidson perform challenging repertoire that is artistically meritorious, scholarly, and historically relevant, while at the same time indulging in new and exciting repertoire that bridges the gap between the classical and popular genres through the performance and study of various multicultural, folk, and jazz-based compositions.

Through participation in Chorale, Collegium, Davidson Singers, and Men's / Women's Chorus, Davidson students find an exceptional outlet for artistic refinement and expression, learning the value of the study and discipline of music as a bridge to the past and a pathway to the future.



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