

Winter 12-2018

# Holy Cross Choirs Newsletter (December 2018)

Choir, College of the Holy Cross

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# Holy Cross Choirs

FALL 2018



The Holy Cross Choirs presented their Family Weekend Concert on October 26<sup>th</sup> in St. Joseph's Chapel. The concert featured many talented soloists, including Hannah Baker '21 on a beautiful Scottish folk song, *My Love's in Germany*

Spring Break

Tour Fundraising Update

The choirs have been hard at work fundraising for our upcoming tour over Spring Break! We have hosted two phone-a-thons and reached out to friends and family for donations, but we still have a long way to go. If you would like to make a gift to the Choir Fund in order to help make this trip a possibility for all of our singers, please visit [holycross.edu/choirfund](http://holycross.edu/choirfund) to make a donation. If you live in the Western Connecticut, Washington DC, Philadelphia, or New York City areas, stay tuned for chances to hear us in your city this coming March!



KEEP UP WITH THE CHOIRS!

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## Lessons and Carols

Join us for one of the College's most cherished winter traditions! The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols will take place on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. ET in St. Joseph's Chapel. For those who are unable to travel to campus, the concert will be streamed live by the College at: <https://www.holycross.edu/live>



### "A Choral Collaboration"

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Holy Cross College Choir had the opportunity to present a collaborative concert alongside the WPI Festival Choir at Trinity Lutheran Church in Worcester. The groups had a two-hour rehearsal on Saturday afternoon and then presented a concert that evening. Both choirs presented a set of their own repertoire and then combined together to perform a set of Scottish folk songs learned together. In the words of Nina Evangelista '22, members of the Holy Cross Choirs loved being able to "meet other singers in the same city and meet other people who share the same love of singing as I do!"

*Pictured below: The Holy Cross College Choir, with director Allegra Martin and collaborative pianist Dr. Matthew Jaskot with the WPI Festival Choir, with director Dr. Joshua W. Rohde and collaborative pianist Wesley Hall.*



## the little match girl passion

SADIE O'CONNOR '22

*The Holy Cross Chamber Singers collaborated with Arts Transcending Borders and Maine-based puppet company Figures of Speech to perform "the little match girl passion." Sadie O'Connor '22, shares her thoughts:*

When I entered my very first Chamber Singers rehearsal in August, I was promptly handed one of the most difficult and definitely the most unusual piece of music I have ever performed to date. Between the off-kilter rhythms, atonal melodies, and stark, melancholy story, *The Little Match Girl Passion* by David Lang is a musical force to be reckoned with. But we worked hard, and we rose to the challenge. Over the past few months I have been honored to share in this remarkable piece of art with the other Chamber Singers (an immensely talented group of students, who embraced this challenging piece with generosity and diligence), with Professor Martin (our fearless leader who helped push us to be the best we could be), and the stunning theatrical artists of Figures of Speech Theatre, who brought the musical story to life on stage with us.

Still, this is an unusual piece, definitely not something we would hear at an ordinary concert. We were all wondering-- why this piece, and why now?



My favorite movement in the piece is Movement 11. In this movement, the lyrics are almost entirely made up of one word: *eli*. The full phrase according to the Gospel would be "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani*", spoken by Jesus on the Cross -- "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" This is, as far as I've observed, the only lines in *The Little Match Girl Passion* taken directly from the Passion of Christ, its musical inspiration. I couldn't help but wonder. Why that line?

It occurred to me when we finally saw the Little Match Girl puppet move alone on stage, shunned by invisible people, shivering and clutching her match: she is innocent in a way that a Christ figure would be, and she suffers, but she is also a human person, a child who has been abandoned. Our society has abandoned people like her by standing by and letting them suffer.

This piece is meant to catch our attention, to draw us into the Little Match Girl's world, and, as we saw when Figures of Speech's Grandmother offered the little girl's body toward the audience in Movement 1, to ask ourselves about what role WE play in the story. At its heart, *The Little Match Girl Passion* is a reflection, and ultimately a call to action. Who are the people that we reduce to "shadows" in our lives, who we neglect because of our own worries? What innocent lives have we let slip through the cracks?

The Little Match Girl's undeserved pain is literally and figuratively *illumination*, shining light on suffering, humanity, and prompting us to think of how we can bring that light into the world.

### The Holy Cross Choir Executive Board 2018-2019

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