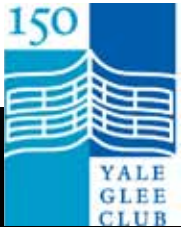


"An exciting, beautifully sung concert . . .with clarity, rhythmic precision and passion."—NY Times

Fol-de-rol

de-rol-rol-rol



Newsletter of the
Yale Glee Club Associates
Spring 2011

What a Weekend!

What a Year!

What a Tradition!

Bass Notes

Editorial Comment • Linus Travers

What a weekend . . . what a year . . . what a tradition! The Glee Club's Past, Present, and Future—splendidly cast in 2011. Two of the sesquicentennial year's capstone experiences, a February weekend in New Haven and an April evening at New York's Carnegie Hall, were incomparable.



The third, Jeff leading the undergraduate club through much of Barty's 1928 European Tour hegira, meeting in joint concert with the Alumni Chorus in Istanbul, and then leading the intrepid alumni singers (and a few of the undergraduates) through ten more days in Turkey, Georgia, and Armenia, has already begun. Look for notes about this final Sesquicentennial outburst in the next *Fol-de-Rol*.

This issue features this special year's New Haven and New York celebrations, some responses written originally for the Yale Glee Club blog, some published elsewhere and included here for those who don't see each and every issue of the *New York Times* (and mostly because that review was so exquisite!), and some regular columns penned for *Fol-de-Rol*.

Photos from the February Reunion are the work of Yale's tireless Harold Shapiro, who has both our gratitude and admiration for his ability to find compelling faces.

The 150th year revealed lots of YGC heroes—many of their faces are in these pages. So here's a last tip of the hat to them and to a few others whose names aren't in print: the YGCA Board from five years ago to the present, for example, who under Marv Berenblum's leadership and Jeff Douma's amazing foresight envisioned this sesquicentennial year, complete with DVD, coffee-table history, and spiral-bound songbook. (If you haven't ordered the last three, you're missing something!)

Hats off also to all who have created and sustained this remarkable musical and human tradition. Today's glee-clubbers are extensions of all of us, a few only now beginning to understand what they have inherited. They, as we, dwell in friendship as melody flows.

"*Fol-de-rol (de-rol-rol-rol)*," the newsletter of the Yale Glee Club Associates, ought to be published twice yearly at New Haven, CT.

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Milton March Choral Weekend Adds Kids

What had begun in 1997 as a weekend to bring YGC alums and friends together so that Fenno Heath could once more lead a group of Yale singers and prepare them for an informal concert which, over the years, featuring many of his arrangements, took another leap forward this March by inviting a local children's chorus to share the stage.



Team Effort—Boston City Singers and the Festival Weekend Chorus join forces to perform "Chariot."

Once more nearly 100 singers registered for a weekend of singing with Jeff Douma, punctuated by convivial mealtimes and post-dinner frivolity.



Leading the Friday night rehearsal in Jeff's absence was Arianna Abela, Jeff's 2009-10 associate conductor and a 2010 recipient of an MM degree in choral conducting from the School of Music. She will also serve as assistant conductor for the Alumni Chorus June journey to Turkey, Georgia, and Armenia.

Joining the Festival weekend group were twenty or so high school age singers from the Boston City Singers, a chorus of young people from some of Boston's "under-served" neighborhoods. This select chorus was raising funds for the July concert tour in Cape Town, South Africa.

The group is led by Jane Money, a New Zealand native who came to the US after studying music in college and graduate school in Auckland. Her further graduate education—in engineering—was at Stanford and BU. She has served as organist and choir master in the Boston area and cofounded this city singing program, for children 4-18, in 1995.

The kids led off the concert with three songs prepared for their tour. They were followed by the YAC/YGC aggregation's performance of several works being prepared for the Alumni Chorus June tour, including three movements from Ralph Vaughn Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* and several spirituals.



We were blessed with powerful soloists. Kyle Pruett's rich baritone carried Williams' poignancy perfectly, while new YAC member Alexandra Desaulniers brought her clean and clear soprano to Fenno's "My Lord, What a Mornin'" delightfully.

The concert concluded with a joint performance of "Ride the Chariot," which the Boston City Singers had learned. Mike "Biggie" Moore and Rebecca Blum ensured that brothers and sisters alike were ready for the journey.

Consistent with our growing Alumni Chorus tradition, audience and singers were wonderfully generous supporting our co-performers' concert tour. Nearly every one of the Festival Weekend participants said they wanted to continue this collaborative "outreach" effort in future March weekends.

And so we will.

In Senior Year . . . YGC President's Note

Emily Howell, President 2010-11

What a perfect year to be YGC president.

When I wrote my note for the winter *Fol-de-Rol*, the Yale Glee Club's 150th Reunion hadn't even happened yet. Now that magical weekend in February seems like years ago, and we're in the middle of our epic summer tour (be sure to follow international tour on the YGC blog!).

We began the second half of our 150th year with a domestic tour in January that took us to Chicago, Cleveland, Ann Arbor, and Washington, D.C. in a series of exciting concerts, concluding with one in D.C.'s Strathmore Hall, where we shared the stage with other talented groups, including a chorus of YGC alumni.

Then, of course, came the reunion, which many of you attended. About 700 YGC alums descended on the Elm City in mid-February to "laugh and sing and merry be." The reunion concert was a night to remember, with stellar performances from alumni and the premiere of alumnus Lew Spratlan's "City Song," a setting of a text by Elizabeth Alexander. And then came what had to be Glee Club's largest-ever singing dinner, in Commons, transformed for the occasion from a college dining hall into a palatial ballroom (we danced into the early hours of the morning). Finally, the weekend concluded with a moving Sunday morning service of celebration in Sprague.

While at the time, the reunion seemed like the climax of the year, it was just the first of a series of amazing concerts this semester, each one different. In late February we sang in a concert of French music under Simon Carrington, a former Yale professor of choral conducting and a founding member of the King's Singers. One of the songs we performed was Berlioz's "Le ballet des ombres"—possibly the first time the Glee Club has sung about a ghost dance party.

In April, in a shared concert with the YSO in Woolsey, we premiered Ted Hearne's "Partition," rewarding not just because it's a thrilling piece of music, but because we worked so hard to learn it. At the same concert, and with some recent alumni joining our ranks, we performed Ralph Vaughan Williams's "Dona Nobis Pacem," the kind of great choral-orchestral work where the Glee Club shines. But that wasn't all—we got to do it all over again the next weekend in Carnegie Hall, plus a sampling of the works the Glee Club has premiered over the last few years. As Jeff explained, the reunion was about looking back, but this concert was about looking forward to the Glee Club's future. Or in other words, as the (glowing) *New York Times* review noted, Jeff "didn't settle for an evening of chestnuts."

Another adventure for the Glee Club was our mid-May concert in San Francisco. About half of the Glee Club sang in a concert of Mahler's 2nd *Symphony* with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, then left the next day for the West Coast. There, we sang in a benefit concert for an anti-bullying charity, with the San Francisco Girls Alumnae Choir, the Yale Duke's Men, and Darren Criss, known for playing Blaine on TV's *Glee*. (By the way, have you heard? The *New York Times* thinks the YGC is to *Glee* what "the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions are to 'American Idol.'")

On the way back from San Francisco, the Glee Club's flight was canceled due to a mechanical failure, and everyone was rebooked on different flights. But could this break the Glee Club's spirit? No. A few songs, one game of *Encore*, and about forty coffees later (Starbucks was literally the only food provider outside security in our terminal), we had hotel and meal vouchers, procured by the hard work of Jeff



YGC's 2010-11 Leadership Teams

Officer Corps, 2010 – 2011

President:	Emily Howell
Manager:	Rachel Wilf
Stage Manager:	Dylan Morris
Social Chairs:	Eli Mitchell-Larson and Jenny Witthuhn
Wardrobe Manager:	Ben Robbins
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	'04 Charlie Billington
	'05 Jen Catena Davis
	'06 David Gershkoff
	'07 Rebecca Blum
	'08 Matthew Dell
	'09 Casey Klippel
	'10 Nicholas Clemm

and Sean. Those of us who didn't manage to find flights later that day enjoyed our bonus time with the Glee Club. Bravo to tour managers Arshia Chatterjee '11 and Abigail Droge '12 for handling the situation with their usual grace and calm.

I know this note is longer than usual—it's not my fault: the semester was so packed with events, each one more wonderful than the last! And as I wrap up my career as YGC President, I want to say thank you—to my Glee Club friends from the class of 2008 through the class of 2014, to Jeff and to Sean, and to all of you, YGC alumni, for making this amazing year—every one of my amazing four years in the Glee Club—possible.

One of the highlights of the 150th reunion for me, and something I've heard about from every other Glee Clubber at the Sunday morning service, was hearing Randall Thompson's "Alleluia" sung by an entire roomful of alumni. It was beautiful, and it reminded me of how music brings us together and will always bring us together, which is what this year was all about.

As soon as tour ends, I'll officially join the alumni ranks (maybe I'll even get this very newsletter in the mail), and it gives me heart to know that I will always be able to be a part of the Glee Club family. Like friendship, it lasts when youth must fail.

With gratitude,
Emily Howell '11

Director Jeff Douma's View

Musings from Hendrie 201



Dear friends in song,

I write to you today not from my usual perch in Hendrie 201, but from San Francisco, where we complete the final leg of a coast-to-coast domestic tour that began in early January in Chicago. Tonight, forty members of the Glee Club and I will be performing to a sold-out house at a benefit concert for anti-bullying charities, together with the San Francisco Girls Choir, the Duke's

Men of Yale, and Darren Criss, star of the wildly popular TV phenomenon "Glee." (I can't help but believe that at least some of the great media attention we've received for the 150th anniversary this year has been thanks to that word we happen to share with the TV show!). We're looking forward to a fun show tonight.

It has been a semester to remember. After our tour concerts in Chicago, Ann Arbor, and Cleveland, we continued east to the DC area, where our standing-room-only performance at Strathmore Hall with the Whiffenpoofs, Whim 'n Rhythm, and pianist John Eaton garnered a great review in the *Washington Post*.

Our reunion weekend in February was one of the largest gatherings of Glee Club alumni ever, with over 600 flocking to campus for the three-day celebration. We saw the premiere of an inspiring new documentary film, *Raising Voices*, the release of a wonderful new history, *Louder Yet the Chorus Raise: An Illustrated History of the Yale Glee Club* by Timothy DeWerff '92, and a spectacular concert in Woolsey Hall featuring the premiere of *City Song* by Lewis Spratlan '62 and Elizabeth Alexander '84, a moving solo rendition of *Barty's Pretty Saro* by Stowe Phelps '39, and even a surprise appearance by the Yale Precision Marching Band. Among the many, many personal highlights for me was the chance to share conducting duties of the alumni choruses with my talented predecessor David Connell. The events of the weekend were widely chronicled in the national media, from a feature article in the *New York Times*, to delightful radio segment by our own Naomi Lewin '74 that aired on NPR's "Weekend Edition."

After the reunion, the Glee Club and I spent a few rehearsals delving into the music of Berlioz and Franck for a concert of French music with the Yale Camerata, Schola Cantorum, and guest conductor (and former colleague) Simon Carrington, before returning in earnest to the music for our 150th Anniversary Gala Concert in Carnegie Hall on April 8. Joined by the always stellar Yale Symphony Orchestra, we performed several recent Glee Club premieres, Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and a brilliant

new major work for choir and orchestra entitled *Partition*, composed for the Glee Club by Ted Hearne. The students rose to the occasion and gave a moving performance of a very challenging program. The critic from the *New York Times* called the concert "exciting," "beautifully sung," and "powerful," dubbing the Glee Club "one of the best collegiate singing ensembles, and one of the most adventurous" and writing that we "sang with clarity, rhythmic precision, and passion." All of us are still glowing from the experience.

After commencement, we will embark on our tour of Europe (Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Czech Republic, and France, all stops on the Glee Club's inaugural international tour in 1928), ending our anniversary season with a grand concert with the Yale Alumni Chorus in Istanbul.

This year has given me many opportunities to reflect on our history, and on the remarkable succession of devoted young singers who have seen the Glee Club through decades of "time and change." The Glee Club is what it is today because of our alumni, people who defined the Glee Club while they were students and have sustained the Glee Club in the years after. It is thrilling to think of what the coming years hold, and how the Glee Club will continue to grow.

And so we look to next year and to the 151st Yale Glee Club—to Beethoven's *Symphony #9*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*; to a concert tour to California and Hawaii; to the inaugural Yale International Choral Festival in June (stay tuned—there will be many ways for you to be a part of it!); and most of all, to raising our voices again as generations have before us.

With gratitude,

Jeff



YGCA Board Met in New York in April: front row (L-R): Marv Berenblum, Sandra Davis, Naomi Lewin, Charlie Kaufman, Lee Davis; middle row: Rita Helfand, Ying Hsu, Cariann Chan, Lisa Kant, Kathy Neijstrom; back row: Mark Dollhopf, Sean Maher, Jeff Douma, Peter Sipple, Jeff Freeman, Steve Billings, Ed Greenberg.

And Then Into The World We Come . . .

YGCA President Clay Kaufman '84



Dear alumni choristers:

What a remarkable 150th anniversary year it has been. Many of us were able to attend and participate in the anniversary concert in Washington DC at Strathmore Hall, revel in the reunion weekend, and witness the Glee Club's triumphant concert in Carnegie Hall—and some managed all three! Those events were truly inspiring.

The high quality of the music was appreciated by our devoted core of alumni, but also in reviews in several newspapers. If you have not done so already, be sure to read the featured articles in the *Washington Post* (Dec. 31) and the *New York Times* (April 8) about the Glee Club, and the rave reviews of Jeff Douma and the Glee Club that appeared in both those newspapers after the respective concerts. Jeff has done an extraordinary job of taking the Glee Club to new heights, building on the foundation set by his remarkable predecessors. The reunion singers certainly appreciated the opportunity to sing under Jeff and his predecessor, David Connell.

With a extraordinary tour of Europe this summer, the year's festivities are not over, of course. Not only will the Glee Club recreate the 1928 tour, it will join forces with the Yale Alumni Chorus for a major concert in Istanbul, which will also launch this summer's YAC tour.

This anniversary year is also about the future. The Glee Club concert at Carnegie Hall featured several recent commissions, demonstrating Jeff's commitment to new works. He also has exciting plans for an international choral festival in New Haven next year. At the recent Yale Glee Club Associates board meeting, your humble delegates discussed extensively how this anniversary year can help build the future for Yale, the Yale Glee Club, collegiate singing and singing in general. We look forward to an exciting future, and are heartened by the current Glee Club singers, who have already started talking about the 175th and 200th reunions!



What can you do to help move us forward? You can help organize or participate in singing gatherings of alumni all over the country, like the ones AYA helped organized over the holidays last year. In Washington DC, alumni singers rehearse for and sing in the concert whenever the Yale Glee Club comes to town. Maybe you are the right person to organize that kind of fulfilling event in your city. Whatever keeps us singing enriches our lives, as we all know.

Yours in song,

Clay Kaufman



Yale Glee Club Associates Leadership 2011-12

Officers

Clay Kaufman '84, President
Ying Hsu '98, Vice President
Jeff Freeman '57, Treasurer
Cathy Neijstrom '98, Secretary

Directors

Term expires 2012

Sonya Baker '87
Jonathan Bush '53
Jeff Freeman '57
Marion Hanold '83
Ying Hsu '98
Lisa Kant '06

Term expires 2013

Jim Kingsbury, '56
Stephen Billings '63
Roy Byrd '67
Naomi Lewin '74
Harriet Goren '83

Term expires 2014

Sandra Cashion '92
Lee Davis '05
Sarah S. Heath '73,
Carl Kaestle '62
Daniel Kim '99
Cathy Neijstrom '98

Ex Officio Members

Marvin B. Berenblum '56, Pres. 2006-09
David H. Connell MusM'83, DMus'91,
Director 1992-2002
Mark Dollhopf '77 Pres. 2001-2003
Jeffrey Douma, Director, 2003-
Conner Fay '51, Pres. 1977-80
Rita Helfand, MD '83, Pres. 2003-06
Charles Kaufmann '66, Pres. 1974-77
Richard Kimball '52, Pres. 1980-85
Kyle Pruett, MD '65, Pres. 1985-89
Rev. Peter Sipple '62, Pres. 1995-2001
Kenneth Wood, Jr. '50, Pres. 1989-95
Ed Greenburg '59, YAC President

Georgia Whitney, Administrative Assoc., Ret.
T. Sean Maher, Administrative Associate

Linus Travers '58 MAT'59, Fol-de-Rol Editor

Yale Glee Club Conductors

Gustave J. Stoeckel, 1868-1873
Thomas G. Shepard, 1873-1905
G. Frank Goodale, 1905-1921
Marshall Bartholomew, 1921-1953
Fenno Heath, 1953-1992
David H. Connell, 1992-2002
Jeffrey Douma 2003-

YGC Shares Stage with "Glee's" Darren Criss at May Anti-Bullying Benefit in San Francisco

By Marisa Karchin '14, Publicity Chair

On Saturday night, May 14, the YGC sang at the Yale Glee Club and Glee's Darren Criss Gala Benefit to End Bullying. After spending the morning exploring sunny San Francisco, we arrived at the Marines Memorial Theater in time for our rehearsal. We walked up ten flights of stairs to get to our dressing room, and then began our sound check.

We were so fortunate to be singing with the lovely San Francisco Girls' Choir, the Duke's Men of Yale, and of course, Glee's Darren Criss. Before the concert started, we got the chance to explore the hotel, and look at the library and museum of U.S. Military and Veterans memorabilia.



Glee's Darren Criss

The concert began with the San Francisco Girls' Choir and Alumni, who sang three selections, including a beautiful rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." The Duke's Men belted out a few of their classics, and then sang (and danced) backup for Darren Criss in Katy Perry's "Teenage Dream."

The Glee Club sang our set, which included some of our favorite pieces—"Red River Valley," "Weep You No More" (Gilbertson), "Raise Your Voices" (Douma), "My Soul's Been Anchored" (Hogan)—along with a few traditional Yale songs.



San Francisco Girls' Choir

Darren Criss was up next, singing and accompanying himself on the piano. His soothing, lightly gruff voice flowed effortlessly as he riffed around the vocal lines, impressing the audience (including several

teens shrieking "Marry me Darren!") with his musicality, skill, and charm.

Meanwhile, the YGC, waiting backstage, was invited into a party in the next room, which was being held for the Cal Veter-

ans Association. We nearly danced the night away and sang "Shenandoah" for the veterans and their families, until we were called for our next entrance.

We then returned to the stage for the grand finale of the concert. Darren Criss performed his song "Not Alone," with the YGC, SFG, and the Duke's Men all on stage and scattered throughout the aisles singing the soulful backup arrangement (for which the stage manager repeatedly told us to "Be Fabulous").

We walked backstage after the concert to find Darren Criss and Jeff Douma reminiscing about their days at the University of Michigan (and snapped a few photos, of course.)

Then YGC Blog got the chance to talk to Darren ourselves. He pulled us into the corner of the room backstage to talk privately before he was hounded by fans, and was brimming with excitement from the momentum of the concert. When asked why he got involved in this benefit, he responded, laughing, "I was asked."

But his devotion to the issue was obvious; he continued, "It seems like a no-brainer... It's nice to be in a position where you can not only do something you love, but help out with something you care about." The conversation moved from the benefit concert to his years at Michigan, where he briefly joined an a capella group, then left to work on his own musical projects.

He didn't do much choral singing, but he enthusiastically told us about some of his favorite pop arrangements- Robin Wiley's arrangement of "I Thought She Knew," and "O Holy Night," sung by N'SYNC. He also said he was going to apply to Yale if he hadn't been able to get work by the time he was 25 (oh well), "Just for Pepe's!"



Yale's fabled Duke's Men

Even in the midst of the concert excitement, it was impossible to forget the real reason we were all singing at this benefit. Whether it was recalling the latest episode of "Glee," in which Darren Criss' character stands up to heartbreakingly cruel bullying, or being surrounded by memorials to the Marines memorials and a crowd of returning veterans (who welcomed us to their dance party), or standing on stage, singing with over a hundred other young singers who all shared the same love for music, the same devotion to creating music that leads to changes in thought and in action, we all felt a sense of community, security, and mutual support for this universal cause.

Backstage before the concert, Jeff said to us, "I'd go out on a limb and say that everyone here's been bullied, because, well most people are, and we sing in choirs." This may be true, but we're so lucky to be able to use choral singing to raise awareness for the cause. To quote Jeff Douma one more time, "It's all about the love."



Another of a traveling, singing year's joys

Reunion Weekend: "We Meet Again Tonight, Friends" Indeed!

by Abigail Droge '12

I realize now that "once a glee clubber, always a glee clubber" is an understatement. The sense of community and friendship that I experienced this weekend are like nothing I have ever seen before. The whole weekend was one of the highlights of the year for me, but there are a few moments that especially stood out:

Friday, February 11

2:00 p.m.—I'm standing in Hendrie 201 with a smile on my face and my brand new lapel pin clipped to my sweater. As the amazing Reunion Chair Jasmine Dyba '11 explains the registration process to me, alums pour in, excitedly examining the contents of their registration packets, donning name tags, hugging old friends, and pointing at the rows and rows of photos behind us. These thousands of sepia-tinted faces with bangs, buzz cuts, center parts, or mutton chops (depending on how far back you go) have gazed at me for three years, but I have never seen them come alive as they do now, as the glass reflects real eyes eagerly searching for the year when such-and-such happened on tour and, oh my gosh, do you remember when..?

Back in October, I must confess that these photos seemed rather daunting to me. I volunteered to help out with the commemorative book written by Tim DeWerff '92, and my task was to put together a comprehensive roster of everyone who has ever sung with the Glee Club. When I walked into rehearsal after first starting my research I remember looking up at the solid wall of tiny faces and thinking, "You all have names, and I have to find out what they are!" But now, with "Louder Yet the Chorus Raise!" in hand, I scan the wall again and feel like I am smiling at old friends, many of whom now appear, in the flesh, streaming through the door.

6:00 p.m.—Hundreds of alums and current glee clubbers sit in Sprague Hall, captivated by the first screening of the new documentary film, "Raising Voices." Cheers go up from the classes of '09 and '10 during the Brazil and Argentina scenes, and everyone claps as the faces of beloved alums light up the screen. The sound of old recordings fills the hall and as we see photos of Old Campus with different trees, we recognize buildings decades younger and imagine where fences full of singers used to be.

Those guys sitting on the fence and singing is one of the elements that sticks out most to me. A proud Hounie, I lived in Bingham my freshman year and remember well the first time I saw the plaque on the College Street side commemorating the site of the old fence. That was move-in day, freshman year. Little could I have imagined that a few days later I would make 80 instant friends in the Glee Club and that a few years later I would make 800 more instant friends at the reunion and all because of the men who sat on that fence, pushed their bowler hats rakishly to one side, looked out at the carriages rolling by, and decided to sing together.



Saturday, February 12

5:00 p.m.—Woolsey is packed. I am sitting on the side, looking out over

the heads of current glee clubbers at a stage brimming with 70 years of alums as the first notes of "Shenandoah" mesmerize the audience. I can hardly keep from crying when the crowd rises in unison to give a standing ovation to Stowe Phelps '39, after an incredible solo performance of "Pretty Saro."

The YGCA Mixed Chorus touches our hearts with "The Lamb" and brings the house down with "Ride the Chariot."

When we take the stage ourselves,



"City Song" is particularly memorable, as alums stand in both side balconies to join us—what a special gift to be able to sing about a city that we all share, no matter how far flung our roots or current homes.

When we get to the Yale songs, I realize that the "Football Medley" is ten times more fun when the whole audience knows all of the words and there is a surprise appearance of the band (!), and during BCY, singing chickens flutter as nearly every hand waves a handkerchief.

9:00 p.m.—The dance floor is packed as glee clubbers old and new twist and shout and think to themselves, what a wonderful world. I hardly recognize Commons with streamers and twinkling lights draped from the ceiling and tables gorgeously set with tulip center pieces and cloth napkins.

Just after the salad, we sing "We Meet Again Tonight Friends" (my favorite), and I cannot keep from smiling, remembering the first time that I sang it at glee club retreat freshman year, leaning over someone's songbook around the campfire, trying to hold the flashlight and turn the pages at the same time, and fumbling through the soprano line. Tonight I sing it with confidence, no song book needed (though I open mine just to see it lie flat with its new spiral binding!) and realize how appropriate the lyrics are: "We meet again tonight, friends, with mirth and song." That just about sums it up.

Faces of the 150th



YGC Reunion Coordinator Jasmine Dyba '11



Naomi Lewin '74 and former YGC president and current Assistant Secretary for Health at HHS Howard Koh '73 '77MD



Three Douma generations in Commons: clockwise from top left: Erika, Jeff, Sofia, Denney, and Susan Douma; William slept.



Reunion weekend kickoff "US Choral Singing" panelists; (L-R) School of Music faculty member Marguerite Brooks, YGC Director Jeff Douma, retired

St. Olaf Choir conductor Bob Scholz, former Harvard Choral Director Jim Marvin, and former Westminster College Choir Director Joe Flummerfelt



AYA Executive Director Mark Dollhopf '77. Jeff Douma, and Kyle Pruett MD '62

Saturday morning Sprague Hall "Alumni Reminiscence" panelists (L-R) Dan Kim '99, Ellen Marshall '71, Mark Fittipaldi '72, moderator Naomi Lewin '74, Stowe Phelps '39, Linus Travers '58, and Casey Klippel '09



NYTimes Reviewer Captivated By YGC's Carnegie Triumph

In its April 12, 2011, edition, the New York Times published Zachary Woolfe's laudatory review of the prior evening's concert at Carnegie Hall. The article was headed, "Turning 150, but Youthful as Ever."

Since its founding in 1861, the Yale Glee Club has become one of the best collegiate singing ensembles, and one of the most adventurous. This is the kind of glee club that has been conducted by Krzysztof Penderecki; it is to the television show "Glee" approximately what the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions are to "American Idol."

On Friday the group celebrated its 150th anniversary with an exciting, beautifully sung concert at Carnegie Hall. Its director, Jeffrey Douma, didn't settle for an evening of chestnuts: the program consisted almost entirely of recent works written for the ensemble. From Dominick Argento's sensitive "Dover Beach Revisited" and James MacMillan's heartrending "Nemo Te Condemnavit" to Michael Gilbertson's eloquent "Weep You No More" and Robert Vuichard's exuberant "Zephyr Rounds," the group sang with clarity, rhythmic precision and passion.

Ted Hearne's thoughtful "Partition," first performed two weeks ago, focuses on Yale's uneasy relationship with the diverse city of New Haven. Shimmering, seething orchestral textures underlie fragments of Edward Said's writings on separation and reconciliation and long lists of businesses passed as you drive through New Haven to the university. (The progression from "Libreria Cristiano" to "Bikram Yoga" tells the story.) The piece ends with choral lines falling in and out of harmony, punctuated by beats in the double basses that finally settle into unison.

Accompanied by the excellent Yale Symphony Orchestra, the ensemble closed the concert with Vaughan Williams's antiwar cantata "Dona Nobis Pacem." Walt Whitman's Civil War poetry, which forms the heart of the piece, was being written just as Yale's glee club was formed, and the group's powerful performance did justice to a long tradition of excellence and experimentation.

NPR's Lewin Heralds 150th

Naomi Lewin '74 put together a wonderful piece about the 150th for NPR's "Morning Edition" on Sunday, Feb. 6. Here's a part

My freshman year in college, someone asked me my major. My immediate response was "Glee Club." At Yale, Glee Club is an extracurricular activity, but I continued to "major" in it all through college. The group celebrates its 150th anniversary this year, and next weekend, decades' worth of Glee Club alumni will head to New Haven, Conn., for a reunion.

Singing has always been a big part of life at Yale, no matter what you're studying. The Yale Glee Club dates back to 1861, and over time has attracted a diverse crop of future luminaries. Vincent Price and William Sloane Coffin both spent time in Glee Club, as did Cole Porter, who penned Yale's fight song as an undergraduate.

Another alum is Richard Brookhiser, who is now senior editor at the *National Review*. In college, he was already active in conservative politics, so he enjoyed the wide cross-section of people he met in the Glee Club.

"These were people who weren't into politics, or didn't share my politics necessarily," Brookhiser says. "But when you were singing, that didn't matter, because you were all focused on the music."



When It Comes to Carnegie Hall, Who Can Be Blasé?

by Adam Fishman '13

When I was little, my dad loved telling the same old joke: a lost tourist on 57th street in Manhattan stops Jascha Heifetz on the street and asks him how to get to Carnegie Hall, to which Heifetz replies, "Practice, practice, practice."

At New Years, my mother was talking to her friend whose daughter recently graduated from music school and had just played in Carnegie Hall. This friend had flown out from Chicago to New York to see the concert because, well, it's Carnegie Hall. My mother looked at me with a smile and said, "Well, Adam. When you play in Carnegie Hall, I'll fly out to see it too." I then said, "Oh! So you'll be flying out in April?" I had forgotten to tell my parents about the concert, which, to a Midwestern family of musicians, is certainly the most important concert of my life thus far. Whoops. They bought two plane tickets.



John Rouse MD '72 and Sonia Baker '86 in their "Chariot" roles

So how did the Glee Club get to Carnegie Hall? There are several answers to that question. With a lot of help. By bus from New Haven. To my family and to me, though, we got there through a lot of history, talent, and (of course) practice.

When we first walked on stage for rehearsal, all I could think was, "ohmygohmygohmygod."

After that brief freak-out, I started singing. The acoustics in Carnegie Hall are beyond belief. Not only could I hear my neighbors, but also I could hear the performers on the other side of the hall. When the orchestra began to play, I could pick out individual instrument parts. It was as if everyone was playing a personal concert to me. I might be exaggerating a little bit, but after all, it's Carnegie Hall; why wouldn't I exaggerate?

After the group left for dinner, I stayed to listen to Derek Tam '11 practice his piano accompaniment. Seemingly out of nowhere, a security guard with a thick accent (and a thicker frown) appeared and said, "Can you please take your water bottle off the 100,000 dollar piano." Derek grumbled and removed the empty disposable bottle from the music stand.

The concert itself was amazing. I sometimes forget how much of a privilege it is to be able to perform with such talented people. I was particularly moved by the professionalism of the Yale Symphony Orchestra. Granted, my understanding of orchestral music is far more underdeveloped than my appreciation for it, but still, I love every moment of their performance. These choral orchestral works are by far the best moments of the year. Not only do I get to listen to amazing musicians weave together beautiful music, but I also get to help. That is the real privilege.

I don't exactly know what was responsible for our performance on Saturday being so darn good, but whether it the space, the practicing, or the excitement, I felt we sounded better than we ever have. Although I'll probably never get to sing in Carnegie again, this was everything I dreamt it could be and will be a concert I remember forever.



Don Abbott '63 and former YGCA President Rev. Peter Sipple '62, leader of the Sunday Celebration Service

More Faces of the 150th



Music School Dean Robert Blocker



Jeff Douma and Yale Vice-President Linda Lorimer



YAC Outreach Chair Toni Liebman and Ken Liebman '56

Elizabeth Alexander, Yale Prof. of African-American Studies, whose poem "City Song"



was set to music by Lew Spratlan '62 and premiered at Reunion

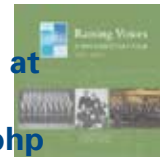


Music School professor and Jeff's colleague in the conducting program Marguerite Brooks

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Louder Yet the Chorus Raise
Tim DeWerff's award-deserving coffee-table YGC history



The Yale Songbook, this time spiral bound



Former YGC director David Connell led the mixed 150th reunion chorus.

DC Reviewer Lauds YGC's "Flawless Intonation"

Alfred Thigpen of the Washington Post reviewed the YGC's January 7 Strathmore performance.

What? No Charles Ives? For its sesqui-centennial concert at Strathmore, Yale's Glee Club might have cited the name of the famous Yale composer or rationed out more than a passing fight song. Even so, Friday's sellout audience heard an opera-length concert featuring jazz pianist John Eaton, Whim 'n Rhythm, the Yale Whiffenpoofs, alumni singers and, finally, the Glee Club itself, which broke the mold decades ago with the inclusion of women - clearly the right choice.

Under the direction of Jeffrey Douma, sopranos sang as one instrument and with flawless intonation. There was uniform vowel placement and the proscription of vibrato, which can sound like the choral equivalent of uneven pavement. Without this discipline, the contemporary sacred works of James MacMillan and Robert Vuichard would have fallen like bad souffles. Instead, their treacherously clustered semitones and contrapuntal subtleties became otherworldly, transcendent even.

In an evening laced with truly commendable performances, the only standing ovation - scattered but richly deserved - went to senior Whiffenpoofs member Nathan Calixto for his performance of "Salley Gardens." Jokingly referred to as the group's "cash cow," Calixto, with his Rostropovich-like high baritone, momentarily erased the infamy that was 2010. This is Yale's rising star.

Friday's concert was the final stop on the glee club's U.S. winter tour with an eight-city international schedule this summer. We can only hope that the Mayans were wrong about impending doom in 2012. With the backing of Yale's prowess and ambassadorship, clearly Douma is taking his group into a strongly viable third century.

Nation Treated to Account of Elis' Choral History

"It's Yale Glee Club's Year to Look Back, and Ahead" was the headline over Kathryn Shattuck's April 7, 2011, story in the New York Times, providing us with a nicely encapsulated history to share.

They came in bow ties and crimson gowns, spry of step or aided by walkers, their college memories more or less intact. On Feb. 12, nearly 650 members of the Yale Glee Club, past and present, poured into Woolsey Hall on the university's campus in New Haven with a singular purpose: to celebrate the ensemble's 150th anniversary. And naturally, to sing.

Sing they did, from the stage and the balconies: the full-throated men's alumni chorus with its boyish 93-year-old soloist, Stowe Phelps, and yodelers from the class of '62; the mixed alumni chorus, 450 strong in rafter-rattling spirituals; and the 84 tender undergraduate voices of the glee club itself.

After the boola boolas died down and the rivalry dimmed ("We'll leave poor Harvard behind so far, they won't want to play us anymore"), after the last white handkerchief—waved high to the strains of "Bright College Years," the unofficial alma mater—was tucked away, the choristers wedged themselves at long tables in the cavernous Commons, their reminiscences interrupted by outbursts of glee club favorites. Some were certain they heard the ghosts of alumni like Cole Porter, Charles Ives and Vincent Price singing along.

Harvard can breathe easy on Friday when the Yale Glee Club performs at Carnegie Hall in a concert intentionally devoid of old school standards. Intended instead to highlight the ensemble's contemporary role in collegiate choral music, the program will feature Vaughan Williams's "Dona Nobis Pacem" and works by Dominick Argento, James MacMillan, Robert Vuichard and Michael Gilbertson, commissioned by the glee club's current director, Jeffrey Douma.

"This 150th-anniversary year has been primarily about looking back," Mr. Douma said, "but I wanted there to be one event that really looked to the future."

Ted Hearne's "Partition" will receive its New York premiere, accompanied by the Yale Symphony Orchestra. It was based on a text by Edward Said "in which he discusses music's power to transcend boundaries that we otherwise wouldn't be able to cross," said Mr. Hearne, who earned a master's degree in composition. It explores the relationship between Yale students and greater New Haven, a city he called "as studied in segregation as it is segregated."



"There is a certain kind of academic focus on these issues that,

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Douma: "The glee club has always been at the vanguard of new choral music in the United States."

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even while aggravating the socioeconomic divisions within a city, nonetheless serves to strengthen them," he wrote in the program notes for "Partition."

"Do you sing?": the question is barked out each year at the Freshman Bazaar, where students are lured into extracurricular activities, including more than a dozen choirs. But perhaps none of the others can claim the devotion of the glee club, the third-oldest such group in the nation, behind Harvard (which isn't about to let Yale forget it) and the University of Michigan.

Some loves never fade away. In 1937 Prescott Bush — the father of George H. W. Bush and the glee club alumnus Jonathan Bush, and a grandfather of George W. Bush—forged the Yale Glee Club Associates, whose official capacity is to advise the undergraduate ensemble.



Other graduates loath to give up the bonhomie of the college a cappella experience formed the Yale Alumni Chorus in 1998.

"There's something really spectacular about singing together, about creating harmony," said Clay Kaufman, the associates' president. "It's similar to being on a sports team, to accomplishing something as

a group that you can't do on your own."

Born in 1861 on the Yale Fence where 13 crooners serenaded passers-by, the club became an international sensation under Marshall Bartholomew, its director from 1921 to 1953. In 1928 the American collegians embarked on their first European tour, bowling over audiences with folk songs and spirituals collected and arranged by the director they called Barty.

In 1939, on the choir's fourth tour, the men sailed to and from Europe on the Queen Mary, crossing the continent on trains whose shades were drawn by soldiers in Germany so that military preparations were not visible. In Oslo, their escorts were ladies-in-waiting to the Queen of Norway; in Helsinki, they drank tea with the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius at his home.

"We were aware that Hitler was feeling ambitious and had invaded Czechoslovakia," said Mr. Phelps, the 93-year-old, but "at 21 or 22, we were not terribly concerned."

During World War II, the club's compass was pointed toward South America, thrilling Brazilians with "Away to Rio!" and inspiring the formation of a choir in La Plata, Argentina. Returning to Europe in 1949, it edited German works out of its programs after audience members found the songs too painful.

In 1969, during Fenno Heath's four-decade tenure as conductor, the club emulated the Beatles and the Rolling Stones

and appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show." That year, the university went coed and the next year so did the group. The backlash from alumni, who were met with a sound and a repertoire that were distinctly different, was enormous.

"I was not altogether overjoyed but



knew it was obviously inevitable," Mr. Phelps said. "It's not that I didn't like girls. It was the opposite: I loved them. It's that I felt that a men's chorus had a particular strength, a particular resonance that was unique."

In the fall of 2003, Mr. Douma, now 39, became only the seventh director in the ensemble's history: a legacy that sometimes causes him to gulp, he said, as he walks between portraits of Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Heath hanging on either side of his office door in Hendrie Hall. "The glee club has always been at the vanguard of new choral music in the United States," Mr. Douma said. "We think of Barty's arrangements now as old standbys, but when they were produced, they were new and fresh."

Though he is not a composer like Mr. Heath, who turned out works like "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" and "Beat, Beat Drums!," Mr. Douma is intent on making his own imprint.

"When we've commissioned new works, that's about trying to shape what the repertoire is going to look like for collegiate choirs in the 21st century," Mr. Douma said. He's established the Emerging Composers Competition, which seeks new choral work, and the Fenno Heath Award, for new Yale songs from current students.

He has also built on a choral festival with New Haven high schools, begun by his interim predecessor, Timothy Snyder. And he has carried on the mission of the Yale Alumni Chorus in taking music to underprivileged youths in places like Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

"The alumni chorus was inspired by the glee club, but now the work of the alumni chorus is filtering back to the students," Mr. Douma said. In June the glee club will retrace much of the 1928 inaugural European tour; it will also perform with the Yale Alumni Chorus in Istanbul.

"The glee club has absolutely been the core of my undergraduate experience," said Emily Howell, the reigning president. "And of any particular memory, I would probably say the reunion was the highlight of the last four years: sharing the traditions that we still celebrate, and seeing how they've maintained the social dynamic that is just as much a part of glee club now as it was then."

Recently, Ms. Howell and a few of her fellow choristers made some resolutions. "One of them was, in 25 years to be able to afford to go to the 175th reunion," she said. "And in 50 years to be able to walk onstage for the 200th."





What's Next? The 2012 Yale International Choral Festival

The 2012 Yale International Choral Festival is a new venture that promises to carry the Yale Glee Club's long tradition of international choral exchange into the twenty-first century.

A collaboration between the Yale Glee Club, the Yale School of Music, the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, and the Yale Alumni Chorus, the festival will bring four choirs from four continents—along with the Yale Alumni Chorus—to Yale's campus for five days of singing, learning, and exploring the connections that choral music fosters between people.

The festival will be held June 19-23, 2012, and all activities will take place on Yale University's campus. Each evening will feature a formal concert in Yale University's renowned Sprague Hall by one of the visiting choirs, and each day will be filled with lectures, conducting masterclasses, and workshops. The festival will culminate in a concert in Woolsey Hall featuring the Yale Alumni Chorus.

There will also be a two-day symposium—Choirs Transforming Our World—organized in association with the International Federation for Choral Music's Conductors Without Borders network and the American Choral Directors Association.



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