



Conductor's Note

Dear RCS Alums,

RCS and I are having a wonderful time so far this year! At our annual joint retreat with the Harvard Glee Club in Hingham, we welcomed twenty-three new women, had a lot of fun getting to know each other, got in some great rehearsals, and sang in Sunday morning services at the First Baptist Church (where we were once again generously hosted by Rev. Gary Ludwig) and at the Old Ship Church.

On Halloween evening, we presented a joint concert with the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum in Sanders Theatre. RCS sang beautifully from start to finish, and I could not have been happier with how we sounded and executed our program. We performed early music by Josquin, Victoria, and Praetorius; secular pieces by Schumann and Barber; and folksong settings by Kodály and Copland. The Friends of RCS once again presented every woman (and me!) with a red rose before the concert, and it was fun to see the surprise in our new members' faces. All of us greatly appreciated this gesture. I cannot think of a better way to spend the moments before taking the stage than to receive good wishes from our past members. Thank you, Friends of RCS!

Now, we look forward to singing a holiday concert with the Glee Club on December 5 in Sanders and are preparing works by Mendelssohn,

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Jameson Marvin Retirement Celebration

Come and celebrate the amazing 32 year Harvard career of Dr. Jameson Marvin with the Radcliffe Choral Society, Harvard Glee Club, and Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum! The celebration will take place April 30th - May 2nd, 2010 at Harvard University. The weekend will begin Friday evening with Jim's farewell concert, featuring the three groups individually and together performing a commissioned cappella

work by Robert Kyr, written especially for the occasion. Saturday will include seminars, and group sings and will end with a gala banquet in honor of Jim. Sunday will feature an RCS alumnae banquet, which we earnestly hope you will attend to meet up with your fellow classmates and singers! Registration is required; please contact marvin@tingbonggoo.com to make sure you are on our mailing list for more information about the weekend!

From the President

Dear Alumnae,

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to write to you all as the President of the Radcliffe Choral Society for the 2009-2010 academic year. After welcoming 23 new members to our community in September, we were excited to put on a very successful fall concert with the Collegium at the

end of October. The quality of the music we produced was of the highest caliber, and the energy we generated was invigorating! I am very proud that RCS has come together as a choir so well in such a short amount of time. We are now looking forward to learning new repertoire in preparation for our

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Spring Tour 2010

This March, the Radcliffe Choral Society will be touring to Washington DC, Philadelphia and New York City for five sure-to-be-amazing concerts! We know many of our alumnae live near these cities, so mark your calendars! Our itinerary is as follows:

Washington, D.C.

Saturday, March 13, 8PM

Concert at the **Universalist National Memorial Church**

Monday, March 15, 7PM

Concert at **Walt Whitman High School**

Philadelphia

Wednesday, March 17, 8PM

Concert at **The Church of the Holy Trinity**

New York City

Thursday, March 18, 2PM

Concert at **St. Paul's Chapel**

Friday, March 19, 8PM

Concert at the **Broadway United Church of Christ**

In addition to serious bonding time on the bus, touring national monuments, singing, shopping and bringing joy and laughter to these cities, we're also counting on being able to spend time with the numerous wonderful alumni who live in and near these cities. We hope to see you in the audience of at least one of our concerts, so definitely put us on your calendars!

We are also planning a series of post-concert receptions for alumnae. Teams of local alumnae in each city are spearheading this effort, and we

annual Christmas Concert with the Glee Club.

We are also looking forward to the rest of the coming year, including our spring tour to New York, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. We are hoping to use this spring tour as an opportunity to reconnect with you- our wonderful alumnae- and to strengthen our relationships with those of you that live in the areas to which we are traveling. On a bittersweet note, at the end of the year we will say goodbye to our beloved director, Dr. Jameson Marvin. We are excited to join with HGC and HRCM at the end of the year to perform a new, commissioned work

and to celebrate with our alums, Jim, and the Harvard community as we bid farewell to Dr. Marvin after 32 years. We hope that you will join us as we celebrate Jim's tenure as the conductor of the Holden Choirs in a fun-filled weekend!

I am eager to see what this coming year will hold for RCS, and I hope that you all will join me in helping to make this year a great one for the choir. I cannot wait to share all the music and memories of the coming year with you.

Warmly,

Emily Pierce '10

President, Radcliffe Choral Society

Conductor's Note (cont.)

Anton Heiller, Gustav Nordqvist, and Virgil Thomson as well as music to celebrate the season. Hope you can make it! We are also very much looking forward to seeing and meeting many of you during our exciting Spring Break tour to Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia (my hometown!); and New York City.

I am thrilled to be working with RCS again this year and can hardly wait for all the music and fun that lie ahead of us! We hope to see you at our concerts and will enjoy reconnecting with many of you on the tour!

Best wishes,

Kevin

are still looking for support of many kinds. If you are able to help with a monetary (or edible!) donation, by hosting a reception in your home, or by helping with planning, please contact Deepa Dhume at dhume@post.harvard.edu.

Of course, the best way to get to spend quality time with RCS is to house RCS-ers while we are in your city. Our fantastic tours could never be possible without the generous housing from our alumnae. Please,

please let us know if you are willing to host us.

For more information about tour, or to provide tour support in the way of advice, housing or a donation, please contact our tour manager, Joan Xu: tour2010@radcliffechoralsociety.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,

Joan Xu and the rest of the Tour Team

From the Director of Choral Activities

Dear RCSers,

Since writing to you about a year ago, the RCS has grown in terrific ensemble singing, and pride and passion for what they have accomplished. They sound warm, clear, and richly communicative. Over the course of last year and this we will have sung some 40 *a cappella* works from Hildegard through O'Regan (12th to the 21st centuries), performed some 10 concerts on two spring tours (the American Southeast, and Northeast), hosted our 4th Festival of Women's Choruses (12 treble choruses: youth, high school, college, adult; 4 publishers 6 composers), joined with the Collegium and Glee Club to perform Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, and this spring the Holden three will premiere Robert Kyr's *Song of Awakening*, commissioned and composed in honor of my 32 years as Director of Choral Activities at Harvard.

Song of Awakening is a deeply thoughtful, expressive, and beautiful *a cappella* work of about 15 minutes in length for four choirs: RCS, HGC, HRCM, and all-Holden. Robert and I talked at length over a six-month period of time about his work. Above all, I asked him to write a piece with considerable polyphony and counterpoint, using the four choirs and their diverse vocal ranges as a mosaic of colors and contrasts, resembling in spirit the great polychoral masterworks of the late Renaissance/early Baroque. Wow, did we pick the right composer to do that!

Already we have spent considerable time on *Song of Awakening*. The text is in Latin, primarily biblical, and ranges in mood from sorrow to joy. Robert

asked me to name my "favorite choral works", and he has incorporated brief melodic, harmonic, textural details sprinkled throughout his work. Most importantly he knows exactly what the Holden Choirs can do, because he heard RCS, HGC, HRCM in concert many times at Harvard while he was a student here in the mid-1980s completing his PhD in Composition. [Bev Taylor commissioned several works from Robert in the '80s for RCS]. He is currently Chair of the Composition Department at the University of Oregon.

Beethoven's *Missa* performance last spring was I believe the finest major-work performance the Holden Choirs have given in my 32 years at Harvard. It is not possible for me to grasp 32 years, however it is abundantly clear to me that my life with the students of Harvard and Radcliffe has been indescribably enriched. In particular the past 15 years as principal conductor for the Choral Society, the pleasure I have felt in working with them runs very deeply. The EC leadership has been visionary and inspiring. RCS's rehearsal tenacity and hard work at perfecting has been extremely rewarding, and their personal warmth, laughter, empathy, and joy have offered me immensely satisfying personal and musical rewards.

Above all that I have been able to accomplish at Harvard, I leave knowing that the three Holden Choirs hold up mirrors of excellence in choral performance for each to emulate, through which they feel a deep bond of parallel accomplishment, and by which they are bathed in considerable joy and satisfaction. Despite 16 close harmony groups, more than 55



musical-dramatic productions each year, we maintain our traditional "60 singers", and they feel enormous pride in their choral community of kindred spirits.

The sense of Holden well-being is a tangible catalyst for equal leadership, choral musicianship, and inspired concert projects. We have now 6 choirs that constitute the whole of the Choral Program: RCS, HGC, HRCM, the Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus, Choir-in-Progress, the Holden Chamber Ensembles, as well as four student-directed ensembles with independent concert schedules that provide a wellspring of experience for student conductors, many of whom choose to go into the choral field.

The direction of the Choral Program would not be possible were it not for Kevin Leong, Associate Conductor of the Harvard Radcliffe Choruses, who shares with me (at 1/3rd time) the leadership of the Holden three and who conducts the Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus, now numbering more than 200 singers. Choir-in-Progress (Skills for Singing), prepares singers for HRC and the Holden Choirs, and the Harvard Chamber Ensembles offers one-on-a-part singing for students in RCS, HGC, or HRCM.

Along with the Associate Conductor, each Holden Chorus thrives under the direction of their

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From the DCA (cont.)

professionally trained Assistant Conductors, who offer invaluable continuity for the ensembles and conduct many rehearsals and concerts each year. Beth Willer is in her second year as Assistant Conductor of RCS. She is a phenomenal musician possessing one of the best ears I have seen. She is warm and incredibly funny, and also demanding and respectful. Her personal style and musicianship offers just the right touch for RCS. Stacey Hanson is Manager – amazing grasp of detail, sensational in organization, and most importantly Stacey always goes the extra mile and in so doing is consistently reliable. She is a blessing, and so is Emily Pierce, a warm, smiling, level-headed, easy-going leader, and President of the Radcliffe Choral Society. Emily will represent RCS on the DCA Search Committee.

In this wonderful framework, RCS is thriving and singing incredibly well. I hope you will join RCS for our Christmas Concert with HGC, our Junior Parents Weekend Concert, and our final concert at which each of the Holden Choirs will sing *the best of their 2009-2010 a cappella repertoire*, and Robert Kyr's *Song of Awakening*, April 30, 8PM, Sanders Theatre. We and I would love to see you there.

Sincerely and warmly,
Jim
November 12, 2009

The Friends of the Radcliffe Choral Society (FRCS) is dedicated to the support of the Choral Society's current activities and the strengthening of bonds among its past and present members. Read on to learn more about our current projects!

Alumnae Concert Seating: At RCS' fall and winter concerts local alumnae have been sitting together in reserved seats in Sanders Theater. The next time you're in town for a concert, keep your eyes out for signs or ask an usher if you'd like to sit with other RCS alumnae. The next concert will be the Junior Parents Weekend Concert on March 6, at 8PM in Sanders Theatre.

Winter 2010: FRCS is planning a post-holiday singing event in the Boston area for the benefit of nursing home residents. If you're a local alum who would be interested in gathering to sing past repertoire for others, e-mail Cara Ferrentino at ferrentino@post.harvard.edu, or write to FRCS at the address below.

Spring 2010: Between the Spring Tour concerts and alumnae receptions in DC, Philadelphia, and New York City in March, and the many alumnae events surrounding

A Note from the Friends

the Marvin Retirement Celebration in Cambridge starting April 30, we look forward to reconnecting with many of you in the coming months!

Please also note that FRCS is always seeking to expand our membership in order to best support RCS and our alumnae community. We have also incorporated phone conferencing into our meetings so that all of our alumnae can participate. If you would like to be involved in FRCS at any level, please get in touch with us. Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 28, at 7pm.

In addition, if you're not currently receiving the semi-annual RCS electronic newsletter and would like to, please contact the RCS historian at historian@radcliffechoralsociety.org.

And lastly, we want to hear from you! Send us your memories of RCS or the latest news about what you are doing. Also, please let us know if your phone number or mailing address has changed so that we can keep in touch with you. Thank you for your continued support of RCS.

*Write to FRCS, c/o RCS Historian
Holden Chapel
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138*

