



# Take Note

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Fall 2009



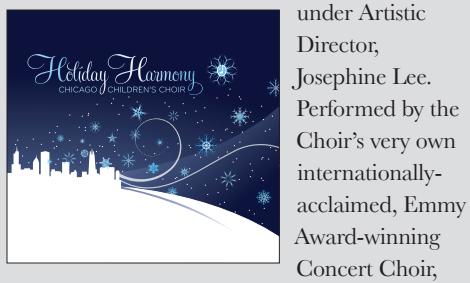
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## New CD! – *Holiday Harmony*

On November 14, 2009, Chicago Children's Choir released a new CD, *Holiday Harmony*, marking the Choir's fourth studio recording under Artistic Director,



Josephine Lee. Performed by the Choir's very own internationally-acclaimed, Emmy Award-winning Concert Choir, the 15 tracks feature Christmas, Chanukah and seasonal music in the range of genres for which the Choir is renowned. With the new album, the Choir hopes to reach a broad audience base in Chicago and beyond, building upon the success of the Concert Choir's national and international tours and the annual holiday concert, *Songs of the Season*, performed at the Harris Theater in downtown Chicago to capacity audiences every winter.

Josephine Lee and Associate Director, Judy Hanson, led the recording group of Concert Choir singers along with five recently graduated alumni soloists featured on select tracks. Thank you to Anthony Fett, Peter Frank, Tramaine Parker, Nora Richards and Isaiah Robinson for bringing their voices back home to the Choir!

(see inside for more)

## High Profile South America Tour Sets Tone for 2009-2010

July 28–August 9, 2009, the Concert Choir experienced its first South America tour, exploring the cultures of Argentina and Uruguay. Forty-nine singers performed for thousands in the cities of Buenos Aires, Rosario and Tandil in Argentina, as well as the cities of Montevideo and Punta Del Este in Uruguay. Performances were presented by the world-renowned Mozarteum Argentino and Centro Cultural de Musica in historic venues such as Teatro Solis (Montevideo)—pictured below—and Teatro Gran Rex (Buenos Aires).

*La Nación*, a leading Argentine newspaper, gave the Choir's performance at Teatro Gran Rex five stars and a review of "Excelente." Critic Juan Carlos Montero wrote, "The performance of Chicago Children's Choir was a wonderful experience for the large audience in attendance, not only for the high musical quality of the group but also for the innovative presentation of the musical program." (continued inside)



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## High Profile South America Tour Sets Tone for 2009-2010 (cont.)

As with every Choir tour, cultural exchange was paramount. Singers had the opportunity to meet with and perform for young people from the Uruguayan-Argentine Institute (Montevideo) and De la Sierra School (Tandil), as well as with children at Fundación Don Pedro (Montevideo), an organization providing free programs in impoverished neighborhoods (pictured above). Additionally, singers had the opportunity to stay in the homes of host families in Buenos Aires.

The high profile performances throughout the tour set the tone for many of the incredible workshop and performance opportunities this fall for the Concert Choir. Recent highlights included a workshop in September with Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey In The Rock, and a run-out concert in October downstate in Champaign Urbana with the renowned Black Chorus of the University of Illinois. Additionally, the Concert Choir is invited to perform with five-time Grammy Award-winning soprano, Kathleen Battle, for an all-spirituals concert in her debut at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance on Friday, December 18, 7:30pm (tickets available through the Harris Theater).

## In-School Program Part of Citywide Initiative



PHOTO BY KENNY KIM

Due to the longstanding work through our In-School Program that brings high quality music education to more than 2,000 children in 45 schools, Chicago Children's Choir became involved in The Chicago Arts Learning Initiative (CALI). CALI is a community-wide, collaborative effort to ensure equitable and sustainable access to arts learning for all Chicago Public School (CPS) students. By maximizing and leveraging existing community assets and collaboratively approaching emergent activity, CALI seeks to build and sustain a more innovative, better aligned and more effective arts education delivery system to enhance learning for every student in CPS.

"It is so wonderful that the Chicago community has come together behind this tremendous effort to improve the lives of our city's school children," said Helen Eaton, Choir President and Executive Director. "The Choir is truly honored to be a part of CALI."



PHOTO BY KENNY KIM

For 2009-2010, 29 of the 30 new Concert Choir members, known as "promotees", have come from our Neighborhood Choir Programs, including *DiMension*. The "promotees" became official members of the Concert Choir when they earned their red jackets in a special ceremony during *Singathon* on Saturday, November 14.

The high numbers are attributed to the success of *DiMension*, a unique program for young men whose voices are in the process of changing, as well as the Neighborhood Honors Choir, featuring select members from each Neighborhood Choir. Both ensembles have numerous opportunities to rehearse and perform with the Concert Choir, inspiring them to aspire for the highest levels of excellence. Last year, these opportunities included *Songs of the Season* at the Harris Theater, the spring concert at the Ravinia Festival, Men's Festival as well as the Target Community Concert Series.

In recent years, Chicago Children's Choir has been able to expand its programming in the eight diverse neighborhoods of Albany Park, Beverly, Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Hyde Park, Lincoln Park/DePaul, Pilsen/Little Village and Rogers Park. These programs help fulfill the goal of bringing together singers reflecting Chicago's diversity.

## Holiday Harmony (cont.)

Multicultural repertoire combined with the musical excellence of the Concert Choir makes *Holiday Harmony* a professional-level album that cannot be compared to holiday recordings of other children's choruses. Track highlights include arrangements, several new, of popular favorites such as "Winter Wonderland", "Let It Snow", "Jerusalem of Gold", "Cool Yule" and "The Christmas Song"; classics such as "Silent Night", "Carol of the Bells", "Sviven" and a movement from Vivaldi's *Gloria*; and the popular spiritual "Go Tell It on the Mountain".

Plus, the Choir's commitment to World Music and the future of song is ever present with "Lizela"—a South African Xhosa song brought to the Choir by Madrigals Director and alumna, Mollie Stone—as well as the bonus track "One Voice"—a commissioned work by W. Mitchell Owens III, the young Choir alumnus and Composer in Residence—already a favorite among fans of the Choir. Also on the recording are "Snowfall", "With a Christmas Heart" and "O Come O Come Emmanuel".

The new recording will be available at the Choir's concerts throughout the year and will also be distributed through online portals and digital music retailers. Audio samples and the most current information on where to purchase and download *Holiday Harmony* are available at [www.ccchoir.org](http://www.ccchoir.org).

## Chicago Children's Choir Welcomes New Board Members

At the Choir's Annual Meeting in June, 2009, the Board of Directors welcomed three new members: Keith Cardoza, Nim Chinniah and Melodie Kern. Keith is Chief Investment Officer, Principal and Partner of Brownson, Rehmus & Foxworth, Inc. and also serves on the Boards for The Joffrey Ballet and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Nim is Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer of the University of Chicago and also served on the Boards of Boys and Girls Clubs of Middle Tennessee and the Girl Scouts Council of Cumberland Valley while in Nashville, TN. Melodie, co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Kern Podiatric Group, is the Parent Representative on the Board with three of her children singing in the Choir over the past 10 years. On behalf of the Board, staff, and singers of Chicago Children's Choir, we are thrilled to have them join our team!

## SINGER PROFILE: Thomas McNeal



A freshman at Marian Catholic High School, Thomas McNeal is in his sixth year with Chicago Children's Choir. Beginning in the Beverly Neighborhood Choir, Thomas moved up to *DiMension* when his voice changed, and is now in his second year with the Concert Choir. This past summer, Thomas was thrilled to be a part of the recording group for the new CD, *Holiday Harmony*, as well as to have his first opportunity to leave the country while on the Concert Choir's tour of Argentina and Uruguay. He has also been named a "Rose Ann Grundman Singer" as part of the Choir's Honor Program.\*

"My closest friends are here in the Choir," says Thomas. "I feel safe and comfortable knowing that no matter what our background, we are all here for the same reason—to sing. I don't know where else I could experience that feeling." For that reason, Thomas hopes to one day teach music and dance for children at a community music center.

\*The Honor Program is an opportunity for donors to support the Choir's mission of making programs available to all qualified singers regardless of their families' ability to pay, while at the same time creating special recognition for their family or someone close to them. Longstanding Board member Rose Ann Grundman, named by an anonymous donor, is the first person to be honored in this program.

# chicago children's choir



78 East Washington Street, 5th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60602  
312.849.8300  
[www.ccchoir.org](http://www.ccchoir.org)

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## Upcoming Events

### **Thanksgiving Day Service**

**Thursday, November 26, 11:00 a.m.**

Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave.

The Hyde Park Neighborhood Choir performs at this annual ecumenical service on Thanksgiving Day—a Chicago Children's Choir tradition!

### **Songs of the Season featuring the Concert Choir**

**Sunday, December 13, 3:00 p.m.**

Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St.

Celebrate the season with the Concert Choir, Neighborhood Honors Choir and special guest alumni soloists. You and your family will be inspired by songs from around the world and live performances of selections from the new CD, *Holiday Harmony*!

PREMIER SPONSOR: **LATHAM & WATKINS LLP**

These are but a few of our upcoming events open to the public. For more information visit [www.ccchoir.org](http://www.ccchoir.org) or call 312-849-8300. If you receive duplicate mailings, or wish to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Rachel Trudel at [rtrudel@ccchoir.org](mailto:rtrudel@ccchoir.org) or 312-849-8300 ext. 23.

**Become a fan on** 

Chicago Children's Choir has launched a fan page on Facebook! Sign up to keep up with the latest Choir news, pictures, concerts and events. Most importantly, the fan page is a great way to spread the word about the Choir to all of your friends. You can also view several Choir videos on our new YouTube channel ([YouTube.com/user/CCChoir](https://YouTube.com/user/CCChoir)). For more information on Chicago Children's Choir online communities, visit [www.ccchoir.org](http://www.ccchoir.org).

**SAVE THE DATE!**

### **Target Community Concert Series**

**Sunday, February 21, TBA –  
Rogers Park**

**Thursday, April 8, 7:30pm –  
Pilsen/Little Village**

**Thursday, May 6, 7:30pm – Beverly  
Thursday, June 3, 7:30pm – Albany Park**

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