



Scotland Tour Choir 2025

Madison Youth Choirs
Wisconsin USA

70 voices • Ages 10-19

Aberdeen • Stirling • Edinburgh

ENTRY BY DONATION

18 JUNE / 19:00 (CDT)

SENDOFF CONCERT

LIVE STREAM • MADISON, WI

22 JUNE / 19:00

FOUNTAINHALL CHURCH

ALBYN PLACE • ABERDEEN

24 JUNE / 19:30

ST. GILES' CATHEDRAL

HIGH STREET • EDINBURGH

25 JUNE / 19:00 • with NYCOS Stirling

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

6 ALBERT PLACE • STIRLING

26 JUNE / 20:00 • with NYCOS Edinburgh

GREYFRIARS KIRK

CANDLEMAKER ROW • EDINBURGH

PROGRAM

Magno Gaudens Gaudio

(sung in Latin)

Anonymous, c. 1180-1220

*Rejoicing with great joy, let our company of boys
Celebrate with song and dance this anniversary feast!
In honor of the Innocents let harps and drums sound.
Let songs and instruments bear witness to a happy mind.*

*[Refrain:] Rightly festive, with the court of heaven
Let us rejoice and be merry. Eya!
Let our family of boys be made up of games and gladness,
Laughter, peace, and grace, to eternal glory. .*

*Let us rejoice, boys! Herod is dead!
We have conquered, our enemy is overcome.
Suffering eternal torment, he will not rise again,
And we shall follow the immortal Lamb wherever he may go.*

We know that this song was sung by boys because of its opening lyrics. We also know the occasion: the Feast of Innocents (December 28) which marks Herod's massacre of children to destroy the Christ Child. Did the boys dance to it? Sing it in processional? We can't know for sure. But we do know that these boys, far from their families and hometowns, growing up in a monastery or cathedral school, certainly formed their own little "family" characterized by "games and gladness, laughter, peace, and grace."

Laudamus Te (from Gloria)

(sung in Latin)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you.

Exultate Justi in Domino

(sung in Latin)

Lodovico Grossi da Viadana (1560-1627)

*Rejoice in the Lord, you who are just;
Praise befits the upright.
Praise the Lord with the lyre;
Make melody to him on the ten-stringed harp!
Sing to him a new song;
Play skillfully with loud shouts of joy. (Psalm 33)*

We Are Weaving Our Lives

Alexa Sunshine Rose

Skye Boat Song

traditional Scots, arr. Althouse

From *Songs of Travel*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
text by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Bright is the Ring of Words
The Vagabond

Boswell (world premiere)

Randal Swiggum

In 1773, the young Scotsman James Boswell persuaded his older friend, Dr. Samuel Johnson, to leave London and travel with him around Scotland, a country which Johnson disdained and considered wild, remote, and uncivilized. Johnson was just curious enough to say yes, and the two embarked on an 83 day journey, starting in Boswell's native Edinburgh and including Aberdeen and Stirling (also highlights of our tour). Both wrote best-selling accounts of the tour, Johnson's in 1775 and Boswell's in 1785, both still considered among the best travel diaries ever published.

One detail in Boswell's journal from October 2 shows him a "expert noticer" (in the MYC tradition). After a dinner in Armadale, Isle of Skye, everyone danced. The dance was called "America" and Boswell had an insight: he saw the dance as a metaphor for emigration, the movement of families, even whole villages, from Scotland to the American colonies. It's a beautiful reminder of a time when America welcomed thousands of refugees and immigrants--even often destitute Scots--with open arms.

Ave Maria

Franz Biebl (1906-2001)

Kin

Timothy Takach
text by Michael Dennis Browne

*you are all my kin
in the small hours
I claim you*

*set out in your shadow boats
let us meet
arriving
by sail, by paddle, by oar*

*on a vastness of water
however wild it may be
all of you my kin
and I claim you*

dominic has a doll

Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)

Persichetti's setting of E.E. Cummings' poem about the wistful memory of childhood is based on several small music ideas, or motifs: one focused on the intervals of the perfect fifth and major/minor third and a recurring rhythmic motif that refers to the poem's namesake, Dominic. These small musical building blocks work together to evoke a child-like melody supported by a more adult-sounding piano accompaniment.

Helplessly Hoping

Crosby Stills and Nash, arr. Home Free

Between the Wars

Billy Bragg, arr. Gendel

Billy Bragg, English singer, songwriter, and political activist, wrote this classic folk/punk anthem in 1985. Inspired by the 1984-1985 miner's strike in the UK, Bragg donated a portion of album sales to the striking miner's fund. "Revolutions do not start in record shops. But if you write a song like 'Between the Wars', you have to come up with the actions to meet it."

Now is the Cool of the Day

Jean Ritchie, arr. Swiggum

Jean Ritchie was one of America's most beloved folk singers. As part of the 1960s folk music revival, she introduced a new generation to the mountain dulcimer and the rich singing tradition of her native Appalachia. However, this song was not (as many suppose) an old folk song, but a completely original composition, saturated with melodies of her childhood in Kentucky.

The Cuckoo

traditional American, arr. Hugh

Barb'ry Allen

traditional, arr. Shenk

Barb'ry Allen is one of the oldest and well-known folk ballads in the English language, with origins in England or Scotland and a long history in Appalachian America. Its tale is nearly identical in each of its hundreds of versions: hard-hearted Barbara Allen, who is called to the bedside of a former lover, called either Sweet William or Jimmy Grove, to provide solace to him in his death. Instead she scorns him because of a perceived slight in the past and he dies of a broken heart. Hearing the funeral bells, Barbara Allen is filled with regret and dies of heartbreak herself.

Johnnie Cope

Ken Johnston

The martial music, with its fanfares and marching beat, was composed in 2001 by Scottish composer Ken Johnston for the National Youth Choir of Scotland. Ken has become a good friend to MYC, and we're big fans of his work, especially this piece!

Nda Wana

(sung in Venda)

traditional South African, arr. Barrett

*I found the children playing
while the birds were singing
by the river (mulambo) as they resisted sleep*

The Fox

traditional American, arr. Swiggum

Homeland

Mick Hanly, arr. Swiggum

The longing for home, the deep need for a homeland, seems to be universal. Although the homeland in this song is Ireland, the sentiments described are familiar to each of us; this is an example of the specific in a work of art actually making it universal.

A real challenge is singing something which might sound naive or insensitive in its nationalistic fervor, at a time when many displaced people are far from their homeland, not because they want to be, but because they felt they had no other choice. For the vast majority of immigrants and refugees, leaving their homeland is a decision full of grief.

ABOUT MADISON YOUTH CHOIRS

Madison Youth Choirs (MYC) is dedicated to inspiring youth with a choral experience that fosters creativity, reflection, and the exploration of diverse ideas, while welcoming singers of all ability levels, annually serving hundreds of young people, ages 7-18, through a wide variety of choral programs in our community. Cultivating a comprehensive music education philosophy that inspires a spirit of inquiry leading students to become "expert noticers," MYC creates accessible, meaningful opportunities for youth to thrive in the arts and beyond.

Our Scotland tours embody this work in the most powerful ways and are among the most treasured MYC experiences for our students, families, and staff.

ENORMOUS THANKS TO

Amanda NicLeòid, Travel These Ways

Tamsin Raitt

Alec Thompson-Miller, ACE Voices

Amy McNeil, Susie Huse, and the music students of Broughton High School, Edinburgh

Mark Evans, and the NYCOS Stirling and NYCOS Edinburgh choirs

Our wonderful hosts at

Music Hall, Fountainhall Church, Aberdeen

St. Giles' Cathedral, Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh

Holy Trinity Church, Stirling

Audio for the Arts, Madison WI

Our amazing and indispensable chaperones and staff

Our tour families

The generosity of our Scotland tour donors who made this trip possible for so many

Our beloved Scottish friends and audiences, new and old,
for always welcoming us with warmth and enthusiasm.

You are the reason we always come back.



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