

**POTSDAM HIGH SCHOOL**

*Canta Sera  
Chamber Singers*



*NYS American Choral Directors Association  
Fall Conference  
Saturday, October 22, 2011*

Linehan Chapel  
Nazareth College  
Rochester, New York

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## *Potsdam Central Schools Music Department*

**Potsdam High School** is located in the village of Potsdam, New York, a rural community in St. Lawrence County. Potsdam is nestled in the foothills of the Adirondacks near the St. Lawrence River. The village has a population of approximately 10,000 people and is proud to be the home of SUNY Potsdam and Clarkson University. The district serves approximately 1500 students in grades Pre-K through 12.



Potsdam Central Schools was designated one of the Best 100 Communities for Music in the United States in 2009 and 2010 due to the hard work of its students, the excellence of its music staff, and the high level of support received from parents, staff, administration, PCS Music Friends, and the broader community. The presence of the famed Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam offers our students and residents a myriad of performances by local and world famous musicians which enrich the cultural life of our students and the community. The district would like to thank the PCS Board of Education for their support of the music program.

PCS offers a wide array of music courses. Elementary music provides a strong foundation where students receive music instruction twice every six days. The active general music curriculum continues throughout secondary school with class guitar, music appreciation, and music theory. Instrumental instruction begins in the fourth grade and the middle school and high school each have two bands, two choirs, and an orchestra in each building. A. A. Kingston Middle School has been designated as a *School to Watch* by New York State for its varied curriculum and creative teaching strategies. Through performance ensembles and a strong general music curriculum, students learn about the role music plays in their own lives, world culture, and civilization throughout history. Potsdam students meet and exceed state and national standards in the arts through creating, performing, listening, and analyzing varied genres of music. Each year, Potsdam music students are well-represented at county, regional, and state music festivals. The Potsdam HS Wind Ensemble, Concert Choir, and Cantata Chamber Singers are Level 6, Gold and Gold with Distinction performing ensembles.

Potsdam students have gone on to attend the most prestigious music education schools and conservatories in the country. Graduates play in the Philadelphia Orchestra, sing in the a cappella group, *Rockapella*, teach at major universities, serve as organist for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, perform on Broadway, and have flourishing careers as freelance musicians, teachers, and composers.

Our students are talented, highly motivated young people who are committed to excellence in music and seek opportunities in school and beyond to pursue their passion. They absolutely understand what music-making is about—that technical skills must be mastered so the joy of the aesthetic values of music-making can take center stage. Their commitment to turning notes on the page into something greater is what gives meaning and fulfillment to each of us who work with them.

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POTSDAM HIGH SCHOOL

*Canta Sera Chamber Singers*

*Tammara Madeja, Director*

*Carol Strome, Accompanist*

My Spirit Sang All Day

Text by Robert Bridges

Music by Gerald Finzi

I Love My Love

Cornish Folk Song

Arranged by Gustav Holst

Sing Me To Heaven

Text by Jane Griner

Music by Daniel Gawthrop

If Music Be the Food of Love

Text by Henry Heviningham

Music by David C. Dickau

Elijah Rock

Traditional Spiritual

arranged by Moses Hogan

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## *Canta Sera Personnel*

### **Soprano**

Savannah  
Bondellio  
Emily Deon  
Ariana Frascatore  
Aubrey Grudowski  
Rukan Khondker\*  
Cassie McCormick  
Elinor Pacific  
Carrie Potter  
Elaine Rava\*  
Jenny Tardelli

### **Alto**

Shea Conley  
Holly Dresser  
Abby Gruneisen  
Rhea LaFleur  
Eleanor Rubio\*  
Shannon Smith  
Olivia Stitzer  
Kelsey Travis

### **Tenor**

Joe Bartlett  
Lee Buchanan  
Matt Cincinnati  
Michael Hobbs  
Ivan Jukic  
Spencer Neaton\*  
Troy O'Brien  
Ben Purvis

### **Bass**

Tyler Belleau  
Noah Chichester  
Devon Dashnaw  
Nathan Gingrich  
Michael Jadlos  
Jacob Moose\*  
Taylor Prosper

\*NYSSMA All-State Singers



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## *About Cantata Sera Chamber Singers*

Serving approximately 475 students, Potsdam High School is located in Potsdam, NY, home of The Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam. The music department offers three choirs, two wind bands, orchestra, music theory, class guitar, and Music in Our Lives. Cantata Sera Chamber Singers is the premier vocal ensemble. Members are selected by audition and rehearse one evening a week. Both Potsdam High School Concert Choir and Cantata Sera Chamber Singers have consistently been awarded ratings of Level Six Gold and Gold with Distinction at New York State School Music Association Major Organization Festivals. Notable performances by Cantata Sera include conferences of the New York State Board of Regents and the New York State School Boards Association as well as performances of the Beethoven *Choral Fantasia*, Haydn *Te Deum*, and Handel *Messiah* with The Orchestra of Northern New York under the direction of Kenneth Andrews. In 2009 and 2010, Potsdam Central Schools was named one of the Best 100 Communities for Music Education in the United States thanks to support received from students, school staff, administration, and the broader community.

## *About the Conductor*



Tammara Madeja holds BS and MS degrees in Music Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. For the past twenty years, she has been the choral director at Potsdam High School where she conducts Concert Choir, Treble Choir, and Cantata Sera Chamber Singers and teaches music theory and Music in Our Lives. As a vocalist, Mrs. Madeja is a frequent soloist and has performed lead roles with the Illinois Opera Theater. She was a finalist in the Chicago Monastero Bel Canto Competition. Mrs. Madeja has been an adjunct voice instructor at St. Lawrence University and has taught graduate music education courses at SUNY Potsdam. She has served as choral conductor and member of the voice faculty for the Crane Youth Music Camp since 2000. Mrs. Madeja is a certified NYSSMA All-State voice adjudicator and has conducted All-County and Area All-State honor choirs throughout the state. From 2004 to 2010, she served on the NYSSMA Executive Council as zone representative. Currently, she serves as president of the St. Lawrence County Music Educators Association and voice chair for the NYSSMA winter conference.

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## *Program Notes*

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***My Spirit Sang All Day*** by Gerald Finzi

Finzi was an English composer from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1901-1956). This is the third piece in Finzi's song cycle based on poems of Robert Bridges. The unbridled joy of first love is characterized through expansive dynamics and the emotive text. The shifting meters express the nervousness and excitement of falling in love while the beautiful text by Robert Bridges communicates pure joy with the rousing climax as true love is professed. The strong dissonances create dramatic intensity while resolving to release the tension. Some authors feel this love song was written for Finzi's wife, Joyce.

***I Love My Love*** by Gustav Holst

Gustav Holst (1874-1934) is, of course, another famed British composer. *I Love My Love*, a Cornish folksong, was arranged for SATB chorus in 1916-17 along with *I Sowed the Seeds of Love*, "There was a Tree", and "The Song of the Blacksmith." The piece tells the touching story of a woman housed in Bedlam (an asylum) while she waits for her lover to return from sea. Each verse conveys a different emotion through text, tone, and expressive markings. The song is based on a six-stanza poem titled, "A Maid in Bedlam." The haunting Dorian melody conveys the steadfastness of the maid's love while the repetitive phrase reflects her mind being unable to think of anything but her love returning to her.

***Sing Me To Heaven*** by Daniel Gawthrop

*Sing Me To Heaven* was commissioned in 1990 by Voce, a community choir in Virginia. The song is through-composed and young choirs find the piece very appealing and quite accessible. However, there is much to interpret in the piece. The piece is in four distinct sections each of which should be sung with different color in the sound. Gawthrop (b. 1949) is a full-time composer who composed primarily for choirs. He is frequently asked to compose pieces on commission and has his own publishing company.

***If Music Be the Food of Love*** by David C. Dickau

David Dickau (b. 1953) holds degrees from Northwestern University and the University of Southern California. He is the director of choral activities at Minnesota State University in Mankato, Minnesota. The text is by Col. Henry Heveningham, although he quotes Shakespeare's line from *Twelfth Night*, "If music be the food of love, play on." The primarily through-composed piece alternates between a cappella and accompanied sections requiring the choir to pay careful attention to blend, balance, and intonation. The piano accompaniment enhances the flowing vocal lines and harmony.

***Elijah Rock*** by Moses Hogan

A prolific composer in his brief life, Moses Hogan (1957-2003) revived the tradition of singing the great American musical form of the spiritual. *Elijah Rock* provides many challenges and rewards for high school students. The wide soprano range, large amount of divisi, syncopated rhythms, and thick texture require careful preparation. On the other hand, the ostinati patterns, vibrant rhythms, and building musical excitement make it a joy to sing. The story of Elijah riding the chariot up to heaven is reflected musically through rising melodic lines, dynamics, and layered texture building to a dramatic conclusion.



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Some information for program notes taken from ***Teaching Musical Performance Through Choir, Vol. 1 and 2*** compiled and edited by Heather J. Buchanan and Matthew W. Mehaffey

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# Potsdam Central School District

29 Leroy Street  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
315-265-2000

## *PCS Music Staff*

Mrs. Debby Nikkari	Elementary General Music
Mrs. Laura DiMatteo	Middle School General Music and Chorus
Mrs. Jill Rubio	Middle School Instrumental—Band
Mrs. Jill Savage	Middle/HS Instrumental—Orchestra
Mrs. Tammara Madeja	Middle/HS General Music and Chorus
Ms. Theresa Witmer	Middle/HS Instrumental—Band

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## *Acknowledgments*

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