

Samantha Dennis

On-Campus Review

Academy of the Arts Choral/Vocal - Senior Year, Semester One

Troy Vocal Music Fall Concert 2020

Troy High School's Virtual Fall Choral Concert, led by Troy Choral Director Mr. Mark Henson, included many pieces performed by their Concert Choir, Ladies First, and Vocal Ensemble groups. Each song included either a picture of each student in the choir, videos of each member singing, images of sheet music, lyrics, or pictures related to the song, or a video of a live performance. Although each song was relatively short, the students' abilities came through clearly and the editing communicated the title and composer of each piece. The concert included a whopping 16 pieces despite learning everything virtually and having limited opportunities to rehearse together in person.

I greatly enjoyed Vocal Ensemble's set of three pieces, with the most creative, challenging, and unique pieces of the night. They began with *Viver lieto voglio* by Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, which was a playful yet advanced song. I loved the echo and response of the piece and although the group sounded together despite everything being virtual, they could have had a lot more fun with this piece. Their second piece was *Adoramus Te* by Jordan Bennett and I was incredibly impressed by their blend throughout the piece and execution of chords meant to cause tension. The tenors and basses provided a very rich sound and I greatly enjoyed their commitment to the piece. Lastly, they performed an acapella version of *Take On Me* in which they included beatboxing and other vocal effects to mimic the beat of the song. I was impressed that their rhythms remained together throughout, as it would be incredibly difficult to practice this during distance learning. This piece certainly caught the audience's attention; however, it could have been enhanced with better commitment, as they sound somewhat timid and could have more fun with it to make it more entertaining.

Overall, Troy High School's Choral Program produced a well-put together concert with many different types of music. They included classical pieces, choral pieces, and even performed acapella. I loved the variety of pieces and purpose of each choir. Their Vocal Ensemble took on the more challenging pieces while their Concert Choir performed shorter, more simple pieces. In contrast, Ladies First included choreography in their performances, providing another element for the audience to enjoy in addition to just the vocal performance. Each choir brought something special to the concert, which made it unique and entertaining.