



Silk'N Sounds Chorus

Uplifting the Community through Song



Silk'N Sounds is a local all-women's auditioned chorus founded in 1998, currently directed by Kia Lampe-Onnerud. The chorus is a member of an international organization called Harmony Inc. Silk'N Sounds' chorus is separated into the four-part vocal style. They have leads who sing the melody, tenors who sing the highest notes, basses singing the lowest notes, and baritones who go between the leads and basses. Their repertoire has varied throughout the years, having songs ranging from Broadway to pop, and they mainly perform acapella.

When speaking with Deanna Rozak, Publicity Chair for Silk'N Sounds, she explained what went into making the music. "Our songs are usually suggested by our director, Kia," who will then present them to the music committee made of up a representative from each of the four sections. They all get together and discuss the possible songs. Once the decision is made, the music is then presented to the entire chorus, then issuing the written version of the music. "If you're a member of the chorus you will not only be issued the music but an audio recording for your part. So each person will have the opportunity to practice that on their own." Then, they begin their practice together. "We work pretty closely with our section leaders and then when we have the opportunity to be together, that's when we'll start trying to pull the song together," Rozak says.

together, you feel better." Deanna also added, "It was really hard last year, very stressful for everyone, and so I think everyone was really motivated for that reason as well. Everyone was happy to work as hard as they could to continue to sing together." Even during the hardships of COVID, in 2021, Silk'N Sounds welcomed five new members to their chorus. "I think it's a testament to the spirit of the chorus, that people are so motivated to be together..." Rozak says.

The future holds a lot of hope for new performances for Silk'N Sounds. Their next projected performance is in June, where they will be at Temple Beth Shalom in Hamden. "We're really excited to get back to singing for a live audience." Once a year as well Harmony Incorporated sponsors a contest, first a local competition which then culminated into an international contest, usually taking place in November. The local competition runs in April." Deanna states, "We are continuing to prepare music in the event that we are able to compete."

Recently meeting together has proven difficult, but Silk'N Sounds continue to try new ways to continue practicing. "It's really a group effort, but Kia's really our driving force and has been really instrumental in allowing us to continue to sing together during COVID. Many choruses have suspended rehearsals because they couldn't sing in person," Rozak mentions. Some of the ways they continued to sing together involved virtual vocal exercises on Zoom, outside practices at the North Haven Middle School and high school in many different weather conditions, and even trying car rehearsals. Nevertheless, the chorus was dedicated to keep performing despite the circumstances. "We had a group of women who really missed being together and were very motivated to do whatever it took to sing together. I think singing was such a huge therapy and bond for all of us...when you get finished singing



We were so happy to have the group perform at last year's Winter Wonderland. They were wonderful.

Silk'N Sounds also supports another local organization called New Reach. New Reach supports people affected by homelessness and poverty in the Greater New Haven area, serving women and children. "It seemed to be a good fit," Deanna says, "We wanted to be women supporting women." The chorus also conducts pro bono work, including the Hamden Community Supper last year at Grace and St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Hamden. In December, Silk'N Sounds sang at the Winter Wonderland, a drive-through holiday event located at The Landing of North Haven, where they sang Christmas carols for the cars that went through, "It was really fun."

While Silk'N Sounds are not formally based in North Haven, as previously stated, the organization holds its practices on the North Haven Middle and high school grounds. "We've gotten to know North Haven very well." The chorus has performed at the town library, holiday concerts, and other events in town. Rozak said North Haven was a welcoming community for Silk'N Sounds, especially during COVID when they were not able to use their home base in Hamden anymore. For these last two years, they have spent a lot of time rehearsing and performing here in town, "We feel like we're at home in North Haven now."

Silk'N Sounds have proven that music can connect people in ways many of us have not thought about before. Their music is determined to uplift both those who listen and the singers themselves. "We're just a group of women that enjoy each other's company in addition to singing together." Through the hardships of the last two years, they have remained resilient and resolute on practice and performing, reminding all of us just how powerful the connection of music can be.