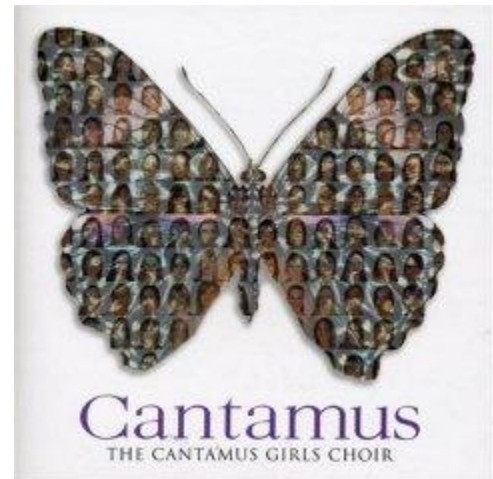


**Gabriel Crouch, School of Music**  
**“Cantamus Girl's Choir: Everybody's Got To Learn Sometime”**  
**Nationally televised performance, Parliament Square, London. Conducted**  
**December 19, 2005.**  
**Reviewed by Orcenith Smith and Cleve Johnson**

As is often the case in life, the outside world often finds occasion to celebrate the most unlikely achievements in our careers, because something we've done suddenly strikes a chord with a larger audience and offers us those proverbial 15 minutes of fame. The accomplishment we've chosen today to observe among the many recent successes of our humble new colleague, Gabriel Couch, is seen by him, I believe, as just such a moment of fleeting recognition. Nevertheless, the moment of celebrity I'll describe in a second, is by no means the last time this talented young musician will find himself in the spotlight, for he is one of the rising stars in the School of Music.

In the summer of last year, Gabriel Crouch was asked to write some vocal arrangements for CANTAMUS, a community girls' choir from an industrial part of northern England. CANTAMUS had recently been crowned 'Choral Olympic Champions' in Bremen, Germany, and on the back of this accolade had won a recording contract from recording giant EMI. Gabriel, whose professional background includes performing nearly one thousand concerts and for dozens of recordings with The King Singers, England's premiere vocal chamber group, was enlisted to contribute some 'crossover' arrangements, and to coach and conduct those pieces that he had arranged.

Just before coming to DePauw, Gabriel and CANTAMUS completed the recording of what was to become the 'single' release from the album - a recording of the old Korgis' hit 'Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometime', most recently heard in a version by Beck on the soundtrack for 'Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind'. In late November, word reached Gabriel that this track was attracting a lot of attention in the British music press, and that betting shops were starting to place odds on it becoming the UK's 'Christmas number 1'. At one point, the odds fell to 18/1 - which at that time made it at least second favorite.



As you would expect, recording giant EMI sprang into action, organizing lots of media appearances for the CANTAMUS girls on national television and radio. By the time Gabriel returned to the UK in mid-december, the odds had lengthened a little and it became clear that the song would not reach number 1, but the choir was, nevertheless, invited to give a special performance of the song on

Parliament Square, right outside the House of Commons (near Big Ben), on Monday 19th December. Once again, Gabriel was asked to conduct the performance, and to prepare the girls in advance. After Big Ben struck 6 p.m. the performance started. In the audience was Leader of the House of Commons, Geoff Hoon, and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, - both senior cabinet members of Tony Blair's government. The performance was broadcast by several news networks, including the BBC. In the end, the song didn't get to the top of the charts... but for a classical ensemble competing in the pop world... it was a reasonable effort! [play excerpt]

Professionally, Gabriel promises many great things. He remains active as a composer and arranger, working often with specific vocal ensembles on their special recording projects and concert performances. Although, his days of whirlwind global touring, like those he sustained during his tenure with the Kings Singers, have been traded for a career in musical academia, he remains extremely active as a performer. Most notably, he has just founded a new a cappella 'supergroup' as he describes it. The members of this quartet are former members of four of the world's leading vocal ensembles (The King's Singers, Chanticleer, Anonymous 4 and The Tallis Scholars) and they will launch their new career together in an inaugural performance scheduled for this summer in Washington DC .

Gabriel has come to DePauw and helped our vocal ensembles create a beautiful choral sound. Students appreciate him, respect him and enjoy his company and perspective. His golf talents are becoming legendary, and the students of the women's rugby team have sought his expertise on scrum. Our only sadness for him is that his beloved Tottenham Football Team (through a suspect food-poisoning incident), finished fourth in the national standing in England , knocking them out of competition in the finals for advancement to the World Cup. I am certain, however, that he'll rebound from this tragedy, perhaps by taking advantage of increased international enrollments at DePauw to establish our first cricket team.

With all that he has accomplished this year as a first year faculty member, while maintaining simultaneously his prominent reputation abroad, Gabriel Crouch truly gives us something to celebrate this afternoon. Whether it is reveling our local music community with Bach motets or Mozart masses, or reminding popular audiences that "everybody's gotta learn sometime," Gabriel Crouch, already a DePauw treasure, has brought the recognition of the world to DePauw while also sharing DePauw with the world.

Cleve Johnson, May 11, 2006.