

# MADISON



## FINE ARTS ACADEMY

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For immediate release Wednesday, February 20, 2019

Madison, IN: Madison Consolidated High School Fine Arts Academy to host the 81st annual Ohio Valley Choral Festival.

On Tuesday, March 5, 2019, Madison will host the 81st annual Ohio Valley Choral Festival in the Connor K. Salm Gymnasium beginning at 7 p.m.



Founded in 1937, by Mr. Bill Rothert of Madison, IN, the Ohio Valley Choral Festival is the oldest festival of its kind in Indiana. According to historical archives, Mr. Rothert described the festival “as a way to promote friendly cooperation in the advancement of music among southeastern Indiana schools”. Deeply rooted in this region, the founding committee members also included Ellen Beebee of Lawrenceburg, Paul Rigsby of Rising Sun, Martha Banister of Vevay, Clare B. Ulen of Scottsburg, Frances Cory of Jeffersonville, and Bertram C. Heckel of New Albany.

### History of the Ohio Valley Choral Festival

The first festival was held on May 20, 1938 in the Brown Memorial Gymnasium in Madison where nine choirs performed individually. The original schools included Aurora High School, Rising Sun High School, Lawrenceburg High School, Vevay High School, North Vernon High School, Jeffersonville High School, Madison High School, and New Albany High School. The Hanover College Choir also performed under the direction of Max Poland.

It was quite the event with the Rotary Clubs of Madison, Vevay, Lawrenceburg, and New Albany distributing 5,000 souvenir programs. The festival accompanist was Laura Bach, a private piano teacher and organist for the Madison Presbyterian Church. WHAS Louisville did a live remote broadcast of the performance and the Madison Courier noted “how lovely all the students looked dressed in navy and white, and of the delightful dinner” shared by the directors and principals at the Hillside Inn prior to the concert.

In 1948, George Krueger of Indiana University began his tenure as the annual conductor and continued for the next 25 years as the festival mass choir conductor until his retirement. It was Mr. Krueger who instituted the still long-standing tradition of concluding every festival with Wilhousky’s stirring arrangement of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

Since 1980, the festival has hired nationally known conductors to prepare the festival choir. Each member school has the opportunity to host this prestigious event and Madison Consolidated Schools is proud to be your 2019 host. Mrs. Teresa Grayson, Madison Fine Arts Academy Choir Director would like to invite our community to join us for this unique celebration of music. “My hope is we will fill the gymnasium and enjoy a wonderful evening of music. These students and instructors have worked very hard to prepare their pieces for the enjoyment of our audience,” shared Grayson. “We would love to invite our choral alumni come and join us for the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* at the conclusion of the evening’s program.”

General admission tickets are \$5.00 and will be available at the door.