

# PROMUSICA

## HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL FESTIVAL

*Presented by Albany Pro Musica*  
with Guest Conductor Elizabeth Eschen Cacciola

**Saturday, February 14, 2026 | University at Albany**

Dear High School Choral Director,

Albany Pro Musica's annual [Pro Musica High School Choral Festival](#) is now in its 26<sup>th</sup> year – and you are invited! We are thrilled to host the 2026 Festival this year with a return to the **University at Albany**. This season's Festival brings exciting opportunities, challenging and interesting repertoire, and a world-class vocal educator as our guest conductor!

Highlights Include:

- **Full day of rehearsals, sectionals, lunch, and concert at the University at Albany**
- **Select Honor Choir of 16-24 students, who will rehearse and perform 1 selection during the concert**
- **NEW this year: an evening rehearsal two weeks before the Festival**

This year's guest conductor is the former Resident Conductor of the Radcliffe Choral Society and Director of the Holden Voice Program at Harvard University, **Elizabeth (Liz) Eschen Cacciola**. As a mezzo-soprano, Liz's singing career spans everything from new music (Lorelei Ensemble founding member) to opera (Boston Lyric Opera's 2016 *Carmen*) to musical theatre (Ensemble in the 2016 Studio Cast Album of *Hunchback of Notre Dame*), and she finds herself now enjoying a career in choral music and solo oratorio. Liz works with students of all ages and meets them wherever they are on their musical journey. Her students have earned entrance into top voice programs and Honors choirs across the country, and perhaps more importantly, have been inspired to make singing an integral part of their lives. Liz has chosen an exciting program of music for this festival, which will be announced to singers in December.

### **2025 FESTIVAL SCHEDULE, at a glance (*subject to change*)**

#### **Thursday, January 29**

6:30-8:30 pm      Pre-Festival music reading and sectionals

#### **Saturday, February 14**

8:40 am	Check-in table opens
9:00 am	Student arrival and welcome
9:15 am	Warm up and vocal technique session with guest conductor
9:45 am	Festival rehearsal with guest conductor
10:45 am	Break
11:00 am	Sectionals
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:45 pm	Festival rehearsal with guest conductor
3:15 pm	Break
3:45 pm	Festival dress rehearsal with guest conductor & Albany Pro Musica Chamber Singers
5:00 pm	Snack / break
5:50 pm	Call / line up
6:00 pm	Concert
	– APM Chamber Singers: 15 minutes
	– Honor Choir Ensemble: 5 minutes
	– Student Festival Chorus: 20 minutes
	– Combined Chorus Finale: 5 minutes

**Students must apply individually**, so choral directors are invited to share the Festival information with any of their students whom they feel would be interested and capable of preparing the music to sing at an exceptional level. Albany Pro Musica will review all applications with an eye toward school representation and balance, and will seek input from directors as needed.

### HONOR CHOIR

The Festival **Honor Choir** is an auditioned chamber group of 16-24 students who prepare a special piece to perform as a featured group during the concert under the direction of Dr. José Daniel Flores-Caraballo.

Please note the following mandatory dates and deadlines for Honor Choir applicants:

- November 1, 2025 Teacher [recommendation form](#) due
- November 5 & 6, 2025 Student auditions at UAlbany (6-8pm)
- January 29, 2026 Rehearsal with Maestro Flores-Caraballo at UAlbany (8:30-9:30pm)

### CHORAL DIRECTORS

Choral directors are encouraged to attend the festival to share in the experience with their students and serve as a chaperone. We will have volunteers and staff on site, but if you are unable to attend the Festival, please consider appointing another chaperone in accordance with your district guidelines if necessary. Directors are also invited to join **the guest conductor for a meet-and-greet session; lunch will be provided.**

### PARTICIPATION FEE

There is a **participation fee of \$25 per student** to be paid to Albany Pro Musica AFTER students are accepted. **This fee covers lunch and sheet music expenses.** APM is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience to students regardless of their financial situation. If the participation fee presents a hardship for any student, we encourage you to seek support from your school booster clubs or friends of music/arts organizations. Please reach out to APM Operations Director (Jared Shortmeier at [jared@albanypromusica.org](mailto:jared@albanypromusica.org)) if there is any further need for assistance.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Each student must fill out the [online application](#) form and submit by **Friday, October 24, 2025.**
2. High School Directors **must** submit a [recommendation form](#) for students who plan to audition for the Festival Honor Choir by **Saturday, November 1, 2025.**
3. Students applying for the Honor Choir must attend auditions on **Wednesday or Thursday, November 5 or 6, 2025.**
4. Application review will take place in November. During this time, teachers may be contacted for additional input. Please be sure to **check your email** for communication from Albany Pro Musica. Students will be notified by **Wednesday, November 26, 2025** about whether they have been accepted or placed on our waiting list.
5. Accepted students will receive access to their digital music & learning tracks by December 12, 2025.

We look forward to reviewing your [students' applications](#), and to making music with you and your students this year. Save the date now for Albany Pro Musica's High School Choral Festival on **Saturday, February 14, 2026!**

Sincerely,

**Dr. José Daniel Flores-Caraballo**  
Opalka Family Artistic Director