



takin' it to the streets with new release

Running around with a busy college quartet, spreading the sound of barbershop.



MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY

April 2005

Chance meeting at Alexandria HarmOnizers rehearsal leads to formation of New Release.

May 2005

Competes in college prelims and qualifies for international college contest.

July 2005

Finishes second in MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Competition in Salt Lake City. Quartet posts a 77.5 average score, sufficient to have qualified it for The Big Show.

Since winning silver medals in last summer's college contest, **NEW RELEASE** has been on the journey of a lifetime. "We feel the Society's most critical initiative is perpetuation of our Society through youthful membership," says the quartet. In service of that mission, the quartet has toured extensively. Come with them...

September 23, 2005

To Florida for Hillsborough County Youth Harmony Workshop.

While there, we had the opportunity to work with some of the greatest advocates for the youth program. Our leadership team for the weekend consisted of Rick Spencer, Collegiate Development Representative for the Barbershop Harmony Society, and Debbie Connelly, SAI Queen and lead of The Buzz quartet. Under their amazing direction and awe-inspiring knowledge of technique, we were able to put together an astonishing performance consisting of 180 high school boys and 200 high school girls. New Release had the privilege of working with the boys throughout the day teaching them not only their parts for the big chorus numbers, but also vocal techniques they can apply to their music groups back at school.

October 13, 2005

Back to Florida for Citrus County Youth Harmony Workshop.

LOTS OF FUN — LOTS OF LEARNING take place when the new breed of barbershop hotshots get together. The workshop included New Release plus college champs Men In Black plus Footnotes (Sweet Ads Rising Star Champs.) Men In Black also has been keeping busy with barbershop shows and schools, "flying the flag" for college programs .





“*At every college we would visit, the initial reaction was one of amazement. It was as if they were expecting a different sound, or perhaps less sound.*”

October 20-21, 2005

Collegiate Quartet Tour, Atlanta.

Visited: West Georgia U., Georgia Tech, Kennesaw State U., and Georgia Perimeter College.

This was one of the first times the Society has attempted such a tour, and we weren't sure what to expect. Rick Spencer from the Society staff has really aided New Release in becoming a more proactive and youth supportive quartet, and we were glad to have him lead us on this tour.

Our first college stop proved to be a great experience. Rick immediately sprang into action and captivated our audience from beginning to end. After some breathing exercises, some vocalizing, and a bit of humor, New Release took the floor and performed a set for the students. As with every college we would visit, the initial reaction was one of amazement. It was as if they were expecting a different sound, or perhaps less sound.

At this point, Rick and New Release began working together providing examples of different techniques. We demonstrated how important vowel matching, turning sounds together and general voice tuning is by giving them both pleasant and not-so-pleasant examples to listen to. We closed out our experience with this

school by opening the floor to questions and also giving a brief history of barbershop that Rick produced.

We visited several other colleges on Thursday, but I think we all enjoyed Georgia Tech the most. Here we found choruses made up entirely of engineers who all love to sing. And amongst their ranks we even found some Barbershoppers.

What made this school an instant success was the perseverance and fidelity their music teacher had for all forms of music. We went through the same shtick as previously mentioned, but were also entertained by a newly formed barbershop quartet. We worked with the guys for some time, teaching them some techniques and drills that would better attune themselves to our style.

We noticed time and again that many of these male groups has one thing in common: they brought too many of their choral style singing techniques into their barbershop music. The problem is choral music sometimes lends itself to hard consonants and shorter vowel sounds. A direct violation of barbershop chord worshiping!

After getting these guys on the right track we packed things up and went out for a dinner that we'll never forget.

One evident benefit of wearing barbershop medals: you meet interesting people. Very interesting people.



During our continued college tour, we came across one particular college that was not very supportive of barbershop. In fact, four students had formed a quartet, and the school would not be affiliated with them in any way. We were a bit nervous as what to expect from this bunch. Once again we did our same routine with Rick and then opened the floor to questions. Surprisingly, the professor that originally was against our attendance was sincerely asking questions about our style and what techniques she could explore with her students. After the questions session, some of the guys asked if we would listen to them sing so that we could provide suggestions, and we happily obliged. We were simply amazed at their talent. Here we have the best sounding group we've heard all day, and it was at a school that didn't promote or advocate barbershop!

Rick stepped up to the challenge here and coached these guys for quite some time, teaching them subtle nuances of barbershop. He completely changed their sound in less than an hour, and they were very excited with what they were hearing.

We found this college to be a success because we felt as if the professor has "seen the barbershop light" and would seriously consider taking on a more active role in providing her students with access to barbershop.

"Usually we say there are no stupid questions. However, in this case..."

A few favorites from the road...

- "How does that little guy [referring to Shawn] make so much sound?"
- "You look like someone I know... do you know him?"
- "How the heck do you hold a note so long, do you take in air through your butt?"

"Think you can put together a college tour? Contact Rick Spencer, college@barbershop.org

October 22, 2005

Ultimate A Cappella Festival, Atlanta

We participated in the Atlanta Ultimate A Cappella Festival under the direction of Clay and Becki Hine. Their enthusiasm from these high school students was remarkable. After an exhausting day of nonstop barbershop fun, we performed on yet another show. The evening show was jam-packed with excitement and great music. In addition to New Release and the high school choruses, we were all entertained by the Zamboni Brothers (Dixie District Champs), Song of Atlanta Show Chorus (SAI), Atlanta Vocal Project, several high school quartets, a Georgia Tech a cappella Group, and the Georgia Tech Glee Club. What made this workshop unique was the joint song that all performers sang together, courtesy of Clay. It really made the show a special treat to see so many young people joined by so many



LINDSAY DURDEN

THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES: 150 high school singers combined with the Atlanta Vocal Project and the Song of Atlanta Show Chorus and performed "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better."

November 11-13, 2005

SoJam, Raleigh, N.C.

The largest a cappella festival in the region (learn more at www.sojam.net). New Release took the a cappella world by storm. Teaching a cappella lovers the fundamentals of tuning chords and tag singing, coaching the competing a cappella groups, and performing before a sold-out crowd on a show with other a cappella legends.

We honestly didn't know how the a cappella scene would respond to a barbershop group. We were concerned that our vastly different hobby would appear somewhat elementary or old-fashioned to others. Well, we were definitely wrong! These a cappella enthusiasts were so enthralled with the tight powerful harmonies of barbershop that they kept asking for more.

Probably the greatest thing New Release will retain from this weekend will be the performance element of the entertainment. One aspect Barbershoppers could learn from these groups is the way they commanded the stage and delivered unforgettable productions. What we left with them was the importance of "chewing" through their word sounds. A cappella groups are so rhythm-driven that they tend to pay less attention to the importance of the chords.

We also had the opportunity to teach two master classes. Our first 90-minute class was titled "Tune It or Die" and we instructed those in attendance in the ways of barbershop. Competing against so many other wonderful master classes, some I wish I could have attended, we didn't think our barbershop class would be widely attended. Again, they proved us wrong. We had more than fifty people in our class, and had to move into the theatre to accommodate them all.

We explained all the techniques we incorporate into our sound. We spoke about expanded sound, the importance of target vowels, energizing the breaths, singing through the end of phrases, phrase shaping, and much more. We sang through several examples of each technique and taught them exercises to help them incorporate our techniques into their own practice. Then we taught the group some tags, which they sang with surprising accuracy. After we would teach a tag, we would dissect it and go through the barbershop techniques and then have them sing it again.

Our second session was a bit more personal. We had the pleasure of coaching one of the female a cappella groups, Cocktails. These ladies were extremely talented and we simply helped them make music. We helped them make some better vowel choices, put emphasis on specific phrases, breathe with a purpose, and feel the passion of what they're singing. After 90 minutes of coaching, these ladies were making some serious music. We provided them with detailed notes so they could apply what we worked on to all their music. This was one of the highlights for our quartet. ■

by
Ryan Griffith,
tenor of New Release

