



86° Partly Cloudy  
Forecast » Weather Alert!

# Review: The Crossing choir in new setting, new work

David Patrick Stearns, *Inquirer Classical Music Critic*

POSTED: Wednesday, June 26, 2013, 1:08 AM



So many artistic collaborations came together in Part 2 of the Crossing choir's Month of Moderns festival that it's hard to think of the group as simply a new-music chorus.

Sunday's concert began a new relationship with the Crane Arts Center in Northern Liberties, specifically in a former industrial refrigerator known as the IceBox, now a plain white room and an ideal tabula rasa for such ambitious collaborations as the new Chris Jonas piece *The Gulf*, which made up the program's first half.

The basis of the festival's theme, "The Gulf (between you and me)," is a lengthy poem by Pierre Joris, "Love at First Sight," that uses the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill as a means of looking at what human relationships have come to. Projected across one of the huge IceBox walls were Dan Cole visuals of abstracted swamps and Mississippi Delta terrains that morphed into darker colors as the disaster progressed.

Jonas' five extended musical movements focused more on personalities, especially that of driller Dewey Revette, killed in the platform explosion, in accounts drawing partly from interviews with Revette's wife. Musically, Jones used a panorama of 21st-century choral-writing techniques, starting with David Lang's brand of postminimal text-splintering, which quickly evolved into all manner of descriptive effects including an effective Tower-of-Babel moment with the choir reciting masses of unsynchronized words.

Such sophisticated music, combined with the meditative visuals, created a package that was hard to fully fathom on one encounter; too bad no repeat performances are scheduled. The convergence of elements created a near-seamless total effect that brought you infinitely closer to the Gulf disaster, and its implications, than news reports ever could.

After that, Gabriel Jackson's tonal, chordal *Song (I Gaze Upon You)*, an emotionally unguarded declaration of love,

SHARE:

Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Email, 0 COMMENTS

Share with friends. Facebook, Twitter, Email, Plus. Powered by Post.

FEATURED MATCHUP  
Braves vs. Phillies  
Fri, Jul 5 7:05 PM vs. ATL Tickets Promotions  
Sat, Jul 6 7:15 PM vs. ATL Tickets Promotions  
Sun, Jul 7 1:35 PM vs. ATL Tickets Promotions  
VIEW FULL SCHEDULE »  
phillies.com

Advertise Here

## Travel Deals



\$1009 -- All-Incl. 4-Star Cancun Beachfront Trip from Philly

See all travel deals »

LISTED BY TRAVELZOO  
\*Some taxes, fees additional

## Latest Videos:

came as much-needed relief for its emotional frankness and simplicity. Concluding the program were two Baltic-authored pieces that took my ears places they'd never been. Lithuanian composer Juste Janulyte's 2007 *Aquarelle* was built on minimalist compositional tools, but with fast, narrow repetitions that created two separate pulsating textures, treble and bass, interacting almost in the style of sacred medieval music.

Santa Ratniece's *horo horo hata hata*, based on a lullaby of the indigenous Ainu people of Japan, evolved into huge masses of sound that felt like weather fronts, mixed with enigmatic whistling and animal calls that had a way of resolving with an elegance unknown in nature.

---

Contact David Patrick Stearns at [dstearns@phillynews.com](mailto:dstearns@phillynews.com).



**How to Win a Date With Kristen Bell**

Kristen Bell is offering a platonic date with her to the Fourth Estate Leadership Summit for charity. The 32-year-old is helping raise money for "Invisible Children."

[Get More Celebrity/Gossip Videos](#)



Gossip and Celebrity Video

**FREE 7-Day Trial!**  
**FREE Credit Score!** [Learn more](#)  
**FREE Instantly!** TransUnion

*Latest Entertainment Stories:*



Rapper 50 Cent denies kicking ex-girlfriend



Nothing 'Wicked' about Philly adaptation



Former Eagle Nnamdi Asomugha marries 'Scandal' star Kerry Washington

*Also on Philly.com:*

NEWS:



Philly celebrates the nation's birthday

BUSINESS: