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FOCUS
CHORAL SINGING FOR ALL

BUILDING CHORAL COMMUNITIES
BEHIND PRISON WALLS

FACILITATING THE EMPOWERMENT
OF TRANSGENDER VOICES
THROUGH SINGING

SPIRITUS MUNDI
MUSIC ON TROUBLED GROUNDS

INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL



EMILY KUO VONG

President

Singing is a highly pleasant and accessible avenue for achieving cultural exposure as we can sing songs from various cultures. Therefore, a diverse programme of choral music is important.

In general, we consider diversity in choral music to encompass classical and Western European styles on the one hand and all other types of music on the other. Some choral music educators believe that diverse repertoires must always come from foreign countries, particularly from areas that are hidden from the world choral map. However, I don't believe that diverse choral music can only come from faraway lands, as the idea that diversity is the same as world music is misguided. To quote an article by an American choral professor, performing songs that represent women or Native American communities is also considered to involve choral diversity. In other words, diversity can be found in our surroundings.

Secondly, diversity in choral music does not mean avoiding classical styles; rather, it means seamlessly including all styles. We should always think in terms of inclusivity instead of in terms of the exclusive 'our' music and 'their' music. The inclusion of a variety of musical styles can help to increase solidarity in our choirs, because a diverse repertoire displays uniqueness without promoting styles as 'ours' or 'theirs', 'better' or 'worse', 'right' or 'wrong'. Cultures intermingle in the world while preserving their identities.

Finally, diversity in choral music is best appreciated when the repertoire is genuinely equal. Singers should be able to see themselves in the programmes. Through singing and studying music from varied sources,

everyone learns more about their own sense of musicality and cultural awareness.

In conclusion, there is a great deal of music ready and waiting to be explored if we think in terms of globalisation and we play a positive role in our local choral community. Choral diversity may not take us around the world; however, it can bring more of the world to us!

Edited by Kelly Harrison, USA

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CATHERINE ROMA

DMA, conductor, USA

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I WAS ASKED TO WRITE ABOUT INCLUSION. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERSTATE THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING OUR INCONVENIENT ASSUMPTIONS THAT KEEP US FROM INVOLVING MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE INCARCERATED IN THE ARTS AS WELL AS IN OUR LIVES. I AM WHO I AM TODAY BECAUSE OF THIS WORK. I KNOW WHAT THE BENEFITS HAVE BEEN FOR ME AND AS I SHARE SOME OF THE RESPONSES FROM THE MEN AND WOMEN INSIDE I HOPE TO ILLUSTRATE THERE IS NO BETTER POPULATION TO INCLUDE AS WE REVAMP OUR THINKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION AND PREPARE CONDUCTORS TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD.

Over the last 31 years I have been privileged to teach academic courses and build choirs inside a number of prisons in southwestern and central Ohio. In the early 1990s, when I was on the music faculty at Wilmington College, a Quaker school, the Dean of Correctional Education asked me to start a chorus as part of our Fine Arts curriculum at Warren Correctional Institution for men. I founded UMOJA Men's Chorus in 1993 with seventeen singers and continued to conduct that choir until 2016.

UMOJA was the first chorus of its kind in the nation, although now, prison choirs led by outside choral professionals have become more common. To date, I have founded two other men's choirs in addition to UMOJA, UBUNTU Men's Chorus at London Correctional (2012) and KUJI Men's Chorus at Marion Correctional (2016), and a women's choir, HOPE Thru Harmony, at Dayton Correctional Institution (2014). This work has changed my life.

People who are incarcerated must be included in our world of music-making. Though these singers are imprisoned, they are creative human beings, with open hearts and

ballads, rhythm and blues, and other popular styles. Then my eyes were opened to hip-hop and rap, adding to my appreciation and understanding of culture and tradition. We programmed our choral concerts with a theme we crafted together, but never would I have guessed that powerful story-telling from the musical theatre repertory and extended, narrated choral works would lead to the deepest engagement from my inside singers.



1996 Umoja Men recording CD © Randy Sarvis



2015 Dayton Correctional Institution Women performance © Becca Schall

minds receptive to learning, growing and changing. Working with these men and women has allowed me to challenge my stereotypes and assumptions about who is incarcerated. My singers inside would agree that the transformative power of music and choral communities encourages spiritual and emotional development, fosters artistic expression, and teaches us how to build community and cooperation.

This work has been important to me in several ways, including my self-interested desire to further my own education – about race, racism, poverty, mass incarceration, about the prison industrial complex that touches all of us, and about what happens to human beings in this devastating and singular culture of punishment our country has perfected.

I never thought I would say that some of my most profound musical experiences have happened inside prison walls. Over these many years I brought in everyone I knew—voice coaches, composers, musicologists, historians,

hundreds of singers in other choruses I conduct – and as men and women have gotten out of prison, I have included these singers in my ensembles. The inclusion of returning citizens in my church choir and in my community choirs has enriched everyone. Cross-cultural exchange happens and communities are built as musicians from the outside go inside prisons and when formerly incarcerated singers join choruses I conduct on the outside upon release. This is vital to our understanding of the resilience of imprisoned musicians and how the arts connect us to self-expression and to emotional healing.

When I began, I focused my repertoire selection primarily on music by African American composers and arrangers and on music from the African diaspora, because the majority of singers who participated were African American. I brought in choral professionals and composers to teach their works. Soon we were singing compositions the men composed themselves. I soon became familiar with the genres used by the men, such as gospel,



2017 Dayton Correctional Institution Quartet of Women, OJPC © Becca Schall

My appreciation for the oral/aural tradition expanded and also added to my awareness of the change needed in our music education system. My listening skills improved quantifiably along with my appreciation of the power of a compositional process that allows marginalized and silenced voices to sound their truth. It made me take to heart the meaning of the Quincy Jones song: 'What good is a song if it doesn't inspire, if it has no message to bring, if it cannot lift you higher...'

I'd like to share reflections written by women from MUSE, Cincinnati's Women's Choir, a group I founded in 1983. Members of MUSE went inside Warren Correctional in 2010 and joined UMOJA to record the African-American spiritual *Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child* for a projected CD.

- This was one of the most spiritually inspired experiences ... to be standing next to men that society has deemed 'unworthy', 'bad people', and to hear the hair-raising, angelic voices singing next to me brought tears of joy to my eyes. The bond was incredible, and I will forever be grateful for the experience.
- There is a real sense of transcendence when making music with people who are not free. You look at the faces of these men and wonder how they got here – if they will ever get out.
- It was moving to see incarcerated men in a setting so unlike what you see in the media. Expressive, passionate, creative. It was also heartbreaking.
- Going through security and making the walk to the room where we recorded triggered thoughts of how it must be to keep your humanity behind bars. Then we started singing together and the emotion and

creativity poured out. I felt privileged to use music to send positive energy across all kinds of barriers and find that on the other side, people are more like me than not like me.

The next section of this essay includes reflections and responses from men and women who are incarcerated as they reflected on three recent programs we've done to illustrate the power of inclusion when inside and outside singers collaborate. I introduce this section with words by Guy Banks from KUJI as we worked to craft a mission statement for the choir:

'The KUJI Men's Chorus serves the inside and outside community through musical art. Our ideas of healthy community, freedom, unification, and spirituality are reflected through our music and personal relationships with one another.'

LES MISÉRABLES

In 2017, my longtime tenor friend and voice professor, Dr. John Wright (Salisbury University), who has come into prison with me many times to work vocally with my various choirs, suggested that he bring six of his student voice majors from Salisbury to sing the lead parts of *Les Misérables*, with UBUNTU and KUJI choirs singing the choruses at their respective institutions. Together we chose six songs the men would sing and John selected the necessary songs to tell the story in truncated form.

I prepared the choirs at London and Marion prior to John arriving with his students. After six hours of rehearsal together in each prison, we performed our abridged version of *Les Mis* before large audiences of combined inside and outside attendees. Here are some reflections by choir members:

Les Mis has been an experience. It took me to a time not too long ago when family members were on this type of chain gang. Of course, they don't use chains anymore: they have OPI (Ohio Prison Industries) now, where they use slave labor. Guys work all day for pennies on the dollar. So I sing not only for me, but for the voices past, present and future. This song brought out a range of emotions. (KUJI)

So many men who were in the packed audience said that they had never experienced anything like this at all. People who have the hardest exterior were moved to tears by the songs and the emotions that filled the air. In all my 21 years in prison, never have I seen or felt the hearts of so many being affected. The power of the human spirit was on display that night. There was harmony, love and unity and learning and vulnerability. (UBUNTU)

The music was different than anything I've ever experienced. It opened my mind to a whole new world of expression. It was relatable, funny, heartfelt, serious, and weird. I had a wonderful time. (UBUNTU)

*A week before our performance, I was erroneously and unceremoniously thrown in the hole under investigation. Although I know I've done no wrong, there was a sense of despair. The Work Song took on new meaning. I felt like my fellow choir members were at the barricade and I was unable to join the fight. I wanted my freedom. Do You Hear the People Sing also took on new meaning. Humorously, I sang several of the *Les Mis* songs to inspire me and keep my sanity. (UBUNTU)*

I have been involved with musical theatre from my teenage years but always as a violinist in the orchestra pit. This time, I got to experience it as a vocalist on stage. In this environment, it can be daunting to open up and show emotions that are evoked by the musical theatre style; however, surrounded by these wonderful people, I couldn't hold myself back. They made us feel comfortable and special. (UBUNTU)

In an environment where it is commonplace to be regarded as state property rather than people, it was absolutely refreshing to be treated like human beings. (UBUNTU)

HEARTBEAT OPERA'S PRODUCTION OF BEETHOVEN'S *FIDELIO* (2018)

Perhaps the quintessential example of inclusion was the invitation extended to all three of my Ohio choruses, as well as three other prison choruses from Kansas, Minnesota and Iowa, to sing the Prisoners' Chorus from Beethoven's only opera *Fidelio*.

Heartbeat Opera in New York City, a small repertory opera company, is known for reshaping classical literature to engage with contemporary issues. *Fidelio*, for example, was transformed and reimagined for the

era of Black Lives Matter. Directors Ethan Heard and Daniel Schlosberg came into the prisons, recorded and videotaped rehearsals, and stitched the material together. The video was then projected onto the back wall of the theatre during the live performance. 'The most powerful scene was the prisoners' chorus, which was performed by 100 incarcerated men and women and 70 volunteers from six prison choirs. They were seen on pre-recorded video as well as heard, and their amateur but committed music-making brought real life into the theatre.' (The Wall Street Journal, May 7, 2018, Heidi Waleson)

Singing the Prisoner's Chorus feels like I am telling a part of my own story through theirs. I try to put myself in that moment and transfer that energy and emotion through my voice. (UBUNTU)

I've not been introduced to anything of this magnitude before. It's like I went from a cheeseburger to the best quality of steak. Being included makes me feel validated as a human, as a woman, as a being with emotions, flaws and imperfections. (HOPE Thru Harmony)

Fidelio, to me, is a story of a man buried in the prison system. The only one worried about him is his wife. As someone who has been buried and forgotten in this system it offers light to one of the

The Hamilton Project © Kyle Long



positive programs in the penal system, and brings us to consciousness for people who might never think of us otherwise. (UBUNTU)

When asked what it was like to learn the music in German, one choir member said:

When love is the foundation it transcends language. The German language became my language, even if just for a moment. Singing this music spoke to my present condition and what my family goes through to share love. KUJI is a family in an environment that doesn't teach family. (KUJI)

THE HAMILTON PROJECT

After performing *Les Mis*, the men in KUJI Men's Chorus felt so good about their success that they became excited about the possibility of doing *Hamilton*... and it happened.

The men chose 23 of the 46 songs, with the accompaniment available on line. The singers more or less fell into or chose the roles they would play. Seven women from my choirs outside joined KUJI: three played major roles (Eliza, Angelica and Peggy) and the others added to the chorus.

This was one of the most life-giving, mind-expanding programs I have ever done. We performed four sold-out concerts with 700 outside guests, including family members, in November 2019.

After the performance, a selection of the KUJI and audience members wrote these reflections:

I don't possess monetary wealth, but I have vision, intelligence and talent that I am supposed to be using to bring integrity into this world for the next generations. My legacy will consist of what I do for others. I also realize I must find balance between family and passion. Alexander Hamilton missed that opportunity, and I can learn from his experience. (KUJI)

We often say that inmates are our harshest critics, but they pale compared to the COs [correctional officers], who are normally a standoffish and detached ilk. I was privy to conversations with COs and cast members after the performance, interestingly initiated by COs, that included the words: 'I had no idea you guys were that talented, you crushed it. I was glad I saw it twice.' (KUJI)

This was my first experience inside a prison. The aggressive inertness of that vast building, surrounded by chain link and barbed wire, staffed by impassive personnel was overwhelming to me at times. The men in the cast soared out of there on the wings of the stories of the founding fathers and mothers. I am forever changed and grateful. (Outside audience member)

This musical displayed the marred, but still amazingly beautiful American core. It showed how, even in all its flaws, America is about fight, freedom, growth, and change – all these beautiful things. (Incarcerated audience member)

Never could I have imagined the impact that the Hamilton Project would have on my kith and kin and all who came to invest their time with us. I'm absolutely speechless. If only for 85 minutes of my life, I was no longer 'civilly dead'. I can proudly say, with my head up and my shoulders back, that I was an addition to my community. (KUJI)

I believe in an expansive music education system that crosses imagined chasms to include musical artists inside as well as those who have been released.

I believe music is the currency of hope and resilience. In the carceral setting, this was my experience born out every rehearsal and every performance. In this dark, desolate, and isolating environment, inclusion is the means for a moment of transcendence and freedom.

Edited by Katie Sykes, UK



CATHERINE ROMA has been founding and conducting prison choirs in Ohio for 30 years: UMOJA Men's Chorus, 1993 at Warren Correctional; UBUNTU Men's Chorus, 2012 at London Correctional; HOPE Thru Harmony Women's Choir, 2014 at Dayton Correctional; and KUJI Men's Chorus, 2016 at Marion Correctional. She finds talented, invisible singers, hungry to find their voice and glean all they can about music and choral singing, connecting expressive music to the lives they lead. A founding member of the Ohio Prison Arts Connection, Roma is passionate about the arts as transformational and empowering for all, especially residents of Ohio's 28 prisons.



FACILITATING THE EMPOWERMENT OF TRANSGENDER VOICES THROUGH SINGING

ALEXANDER PULLINGER

United Kingdom

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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LONDON-BASED COUNTERTENOR, SINGING TEACHER AND LGBTQ+ ADVOCATE ALEXANDER PULLINGER WAS FUNDED BY YOUTH MUSIC CHARITY SOUND CONNECTIONS TO RESEARCH A PRESSING ISSUE WITHIN CLASSICAL MUSIC, ONE WHICH HAS PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISED SINGING AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF HIS PAPER, 'FACILITATING THE EMPOWERMENT OF TRANSGENDER VOICES THROUGH SINGING: A CASE FOR THE REMOVAL OF CISGENDERED EXPECTATIONS IN WESTERN CLASSICAL SINGING, AND THE CREATION OF TRANS-POSITIVE SINGING SPACES'.

Key terms:

Cisgender (or '**cis**'): anyone who is not transgender (from Latin *cis*, meaning 'same')

Transgender (or '**trans**'): anyone whose gender does not match the gender they were assigned at birth (from Latin *trans*, meaning 'on the other side of')

Sex: often refers to a person's body type or anatomy; can describe their hormonal make-up

Gender: an individual experience of maleness, femaleness, a combination of both, something else entirely, or none of the above

Assigned at birth: the process of a doctor declaring a baby's gender based on its external genitalia (a working definition of sex)

Non-binary: anyone whose gender is not exclusively male or female

Gender expression: how a person outwardly expresses their gender (e.g., clothing, hairstyle, makeup, mannerisms, etc depending on societal or cultural contexts)

Voice type: 'a group of voices with similar vocal ranges, capable of singing in a similar tessitura, and with similar vocal transition points'*; mostly the product of sex hormones

*(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voice_type)

Singing is well known to help with mental health issues, social isolation, and a sense of disconnection from the body. These difficulties disproportionately impact the transgender population. In my work as a freelance singer, I have seen that transgender people encounter significant barriers to accessing singing, originating primarily from entrenched, cisgendered expectations about voice type ('men sing low, women sing high'). For instance, in choral singing, we frequently hear of 'men's voices' (tenors and basses) and 'women's voices' (sopranos and altos). These expectations lead to highly gendered and/or cisgendered singing environments, in which voices are both divided along gendered lines, and expected to belong to people with a particular body type. However, voice type is mostly a product of sex hormones, and is not defined by gender, so assigning a gender to the voice does not make logical sense – even if it might seem simpler to do so. As a result of these expectations, an activity that could really benefit transgender people is largely unavailable to many of them. Those who do manage to access singing may find the environment to be inhospitable or unsafe, to the point where they have to leave and do not return.

There are examples of openly transgender singers who are highly successful, but these are rare. Recently, BBC News described transgender opera singer Adrian Angelico as 'one of the few trans male opera singers in the world'. He revealed that opera helped him to realise he was transgender (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-57275103>). This is a testament to the tremendous potential of singing to empower transgender people. However, the rarity of openly transgender classical singers in prominent positions, coupled with the available evidence, does indicate that there is not yet widespread acceptance among the public or within singing institutions. A significant number of those who achieve success, such as Adrian Angelico, have only come out after becoming established. During that time, they were perceived to be cis by the institutions that trained them. He and other transgender opera singers such as Lucia Lucas (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQF5WqkNHAw>) and Holden Madagame (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTtk-DIJ22c>) recall their initial concerns that transitioning would end their careers. Crucially, this highlights the fact that many

transgender people are not out, because of fear of discrimination and attack. Therefore, there may be many more transgender people in our choirs and having singing lessons with us, who do not feel able to be open about who they are, and understandably so. As we can see, cisgendered expectations within the genre can and do have a significant impact on whether or not transgender singers feel they can work without facing negative consequences. Such expectations also prevent many transgender people from accessing singing lessons, auditions and organised singing environments in the early stages, opportunities that would provide the encouragement and experience needed to reach the top level. It is not possible to tell if someone is transgender by looking at them, so singing spaces need to be made trans-inclusive regardless of any assumptions about who is present. This will not only improve trans access to singing, but will also have a positive impact on cisgender singers as rigid expectations around gender are eased.

Below are some practicable strategies to make singing environments more trans-inclusive:

1. Raising awareness in singing teachers and music directors

It is vital that singing teachers and music directors develop trans-awareness, and do not place a burden on the transgender student or colleague for education about gender identity. A key resource is *The Singing Teacher's Guide to Transgender Voices* (Jackson Hearn and Kremer). The high price of this text (around 120 euro) may be prohibitive for many individuals, so it falls to institutions to obtain copies for their libraries.

2. Use of language

The use of gendered language in rehearsals immediately dictates how the group relates to voice types. To cisgender singers with higher voices, being referred to as 'ladies' will probably not be noticeable to those who do identify that way. But for those who do not, for example transgender men, it can be profoundly distressing and invalidating. The same applies to transgender women with lower voices being referred to as 'men'. Further to this, choirs described as 'for men' or 'for women' have the potential to deter non-binary singers altogether, as well as those who have a voice type more typically associated with a different gender. All this can be avoided by referring to singers by voice type or grouping, eg sopranos/tenors/upper voices/lower voices, etc.

3. Concert dress codes

Concert dress codes are typically divided along binary, gendered lines (eg black trousers and jacket for men, black skirt and blouse for women). This can be distressing and alienating for many transgender people, who might not conform to cisgendered expectations; by definition, a binary, gendered dress code excludes non-binary identities, and those who don't feel comfortable in dresses or trousers. One solution is to have the same clothing options, without indicating that any particular combination is for men or women. This gives singers the freedom to choose clothing that is appropriate and comfortable, while adhering to the dress code.

4. Audition

At present, auditions largely take place under the assumption that auditionees of a certain voice type will also be a certain gender. This is a potential barrier to transgender people who will often have a voice type the audition panel might not be expecting. As CN Lester suggests, members of the panel may also have absorbed prejudices against transgender people, as held by wider society. To minimise the impact of these prejudices, blind auditions for the first round would be a helpful approach (<https://www.nationaloperastudio.org.uk/news/taking-to-the-stage-life-as-a-trans-opera-singer>). I should stress that singing spaces must be made accommodating to transgender people *before*, and not after, they have been encouraged to apply. This is because, otherwise, a well-intentioned openness to transgender applicants could unwittingly invite them into the transphobic, and potentially unsafe, environment they sought to avoid in the first place.

To some, the idea of overhauling all classical singing environments for the benefit of a small minority might seem extreme. However, removing oppressive restrictions on the most vulnerable benefits all of us. It will bring diversity of lived experience (meaning richer musical offerings), and foster greater compassion. Ultimately it will allow all of us the freedom to express



ourselves without being bound to rigid gender norms about what we can wear, whose voices can be heard, and whose stories can be told.

The full paper can be found here:

<https://www.sound-connections.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Trans-inclusion-article-FINAL.pdf>

A condensed version is available here:

<https://britishmusiccollection.org.uk/article/empowering-transgender-voices-through-singing>



ALEXANDER PULLINGER was a choral scholar at New College Oxford (2007-10), where he was also LGBT Officer. He completed a Master's in Voice at Trinity Laban (2014) and since then has been singing freelance in the UK and internationally. Over the course of his singing career, Alexander has found that his trans and non-binary colleagues and mentees have encountered major obstacles to accessing group singing, voice lessons, and singing as a profession. He has worked to raise awareness within institutions (BBC Symphony chorus, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Cathedral Organists Association and others) and is dedicated to working for practical change within the world of classical singing. He acted as vocal consultant on a film about gender transition and singing (*Down There The Seafolk Live*, BFI Flare 2020). He recently presented 'Empowering Young Transgender Voices Through Singing' at the Music and Drama Education Expo in London (September 2021), based on his earlier research for Sound Connections. www.alexanderpullinger.co.uk www.instagram.com/alex_pullinger/ – @alex_pullinger



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HENRIK MELIUS

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ABOUT SPIRITUS MUNDI: SPIRITUS MUNDI, AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOUNDED IN SWEDEN IN 2003 BY MUSICIAN AND ENTREPRENEUR HENRIK MELIUS, CREATED 45 PROJECTS IN 20 COUNTRIES BETWEEN 2003 AND 2017. THE PROJECTS WERE BASED ON CULTURAL EXCHANGES, MUSIC, ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND EDUCATION; SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS IN THE TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EACH OTHER'S WAY OF LIFE, MUSIC AND TRADITIONS.

Many of our projects were groundbreaking. When you try something new that hasn't quite been done before, it can be like walking on virgin ground. Or on thin ice.

When I think about our work with young musicians from Israel, Palestine, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and South Africa, in our 6-year platform *Music on Troubled Grounds*, I marvel at how it all was possible.

We created *Music on Troubled Grounds* originally as a platform for musicians in the Holy Land, young Israelis and Palestinians, to learn how to play and compose music together. But not only to simply be

on stage together. What we aimed for was to give them a serious chance to talk, to start "the impossible" dialogue, to really get to know one another. The music was the link, a shared component that would hopefully facilitate a practical experience of togetherness among parties that have been taught to live in fear of each other. Music can help make that change in any part of the world.

We didn't aim for the planned concerts just to be "for show": we hoped the participants would take a leap of faith and see if they could build lasting friendships, love. This required time; years, in fact. It also meant that each project needed to include a number of activities that weren't "only" rehearsing and composing music. We wanted everyone to feel safe sharing experiences of war, fear and occupation. This was not an easy task. It required conflict resolution workshops and lots of carefree activities like cooking together.

We needed to carefully staff the project with interested musicians and competent facilitators from both sides. Being Scandinavians, we represented the neutral ingredient. We invited Swedish, Norwegian and Danish musicians to participate.



Music on Troubled Grounds, session in Malmö, Sweden © Henrik Melius

After meeting my long-time friend, musician Avishai Yaar, in Jerusalem at a global music conference he produced for the International Music Council, I was inspired to explore how such a project could become reality. He encouraged me to put my dream into action. *Music on Troubled Grounds* came to include a number of activities for the participants from 2009 to 2013. They worked, lived and performed together in Sweden, Estonia, the Holy Land and, finally, rural South Africa. Concerts were planned at the end of each project in each country. After hard work (including overcoming fear, diligent rehearsals, challenging discussions and tears, but mostly, I would say, joy) their joint efforts were presented on stage.

The stories of *MOTG* are many. For this article I have focused on sharing some memories from the concerts in Sweden, Estonia and South Africa.

It was nerve-racking to introduce the unlikely orchestra to the city of Malmö. The quality of the music was magnificent. The arrangements and performance were of a very high standard. But it was much more than that.

John Lennon would have been happy
to know that his words
WAR IS OVER IF YOU WANT IT
ring true.

Early in the project's first days, I had asked if the 13 young musicians would consider a moderated discussion before the concert, a personal presentation of their journey for the Swedish audience. They had their own process of deciding whether or not to do that. They said it would need to be a decision from a unanimous jury. They didn't make up their minds until the day before the concert. They agreed on what they wanted to talk about, and who would do it. The four who were chosen would represent and speak for the others.

It was a courageous discussion. They spoke with unprotected hearts and with consideration for each other. I was overwhelmed. Proud.

They performed Jewish and Arabic songs. The music seemed to flow from the same source. Senior citizens in the audience left their crutches and got up to dance. Critical people from different denominations had, prior to the event, informed me that they would indeed attend the concert. Their intentions were to make sure that criticism of Spiritus Mundi and the project was justified. After the show they approached me. They looked surprised when the words that came out of their mouths weren't the ones they had planned. Instead of accusations like anti-Semitism or normalisation of occupation, they expressed something closer to appreciation.



Concert at the Palladium in Malmö, Sweden © Henrik Melius

Something happened as a result of the young Israeli, Palestinian and Scandinavian musicians' performance, something difficult to describe in words. A force of a kind was brought to life: only for a few moments, yet with compelling effect. The force was not of a religious nature. Rather, it came from a different place, before religion of any kind. It seemed to reveal a place that we had never left, just simply forgotten we all belong to. Israeli participant Nimrod suggested that the recording of the concert ought to be played at every Israeli checkpoint. Israeli facilitator Danny looked at him in astonishment and said, "How do you think Palestinians abused by our military police would feel about that?"

The journey with *Music on Troubled Grounds* continued, in a new suit, to a different country.

This time I introduced them to an international audience in Estonia. The dream of the Holy Land continued. I stepped up on stage in front of a well-rehearsed, unlikely orchestra, with the sound of a trumpet added to the musical arrangements.

I knew it would be difficult for me to again find the words to describe the programme. It was never "just" a show. The hard work of making the concerts possible included personal transformation by many of the participants. I couldn't begin to explain all the details of how they had made that possible.

I began by describing my grandpa's fascination for the Holy Land. A quote from artist Youssou N'Dour about how music changes the world seemed appropriate. I linked his words about *Music and Social Change* to a more intimate perspective. From fear to love. From what is unreal to that which can only be real. A few words on how reconciliation transforms.

I concluded with an appeal to the audience:

If I can ask you to imagine the journey this unlikely orchestra is on. If you would for a moment close your eyes and look for a place within yourselves where everything is possible. A place where forgiveness may not even be necessary, because there never was condemnation.

Please, let me introduce: Dalia on trumpet, Mai on vocals, Mohammed and Khaldoun on vocals and darbouka, Nir on guitar, Petter on piano, Dror on guitar, Anne-Marte on bass guitar, Tal on vocals...



Concert at the Palladium in Malmö, Sweden © Henrik Melius

A year later we were all together again, in a new suit, in a different country. South Africa.

The concert was to begin at 6:00 pm.

Singer Manar was waving her Palestinian flag.

Stav had dressed in tribal South African clothes. South African participant Rhoda danced through every number.

Palestinian rapper Samm was wearing sunglasses and *gangsta* clothes.

Scandinavians Petter and Anne-Marte stood proudly on Mama Africa's ground. They were together again with the unlikely orchestra for the third public concert.

Danish drummer Matias looked like he had turned into *Animal* from the Muppets.

Nir from Tel Aviv struggled to hear his guitar in the monitor.

It was wonderful chaos. I thought again of John Lennon and how the boys must have felt at Shea Stadium in New York.

Seshego was different. The chorus of colours on stage spoke a new language. They were moving in unison with the crowd. In fact, they had become an integral part of the crowd.

When music touches infinity, it doesn't matter who is on stage and who is in the audience.

As with many projects Spiritus Mundi undertook, we faced challenges. We tackled disapproval, obstruction and journalistic activism. There were those who questioned my sanity for initiating projects like *MOTG*.

A talking head from Swedish national television expressed the following thoughts to me privately:

Why the hell are you going into war zones? Who do you think you are? Nothing you do will make a difference!

One of our South African facilitators, Zola, said recently:

The content of the project was incredible. Books should be written about it. You pulled off something unimaginable.

Words I am reminded of, thinking back on the *MOTG* years, are:

Yes, it is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

I often get questions like:

What happened next? How did you measure the impact of the projects? Do you think it has done any good? I don't see peace!



Beit Jala, a Palestinian Christian town in the Bethlehem Governate of the West Bank © Henrik Melius

The benefits, I believe, were everyone's personal experiences: the musicians', educators', facilitators', colleagues' and my own. Stories pop up still, years later, about new little encounters that happen as a result of *MOTG*. I would argue that it has inspired almost everyone who contributed to the journey.

Recently I heard about the continuing journey of Israeli participant Stav and Palestinian participant Manar. It takes a lot for them to cope with the conditions they live under, especially Manar. They sometimes meet and sing together, despite it being considered impossible. Some would call it a fraction of an unsolvable puzzle. I disagree.

Reconciliation is timeless, no matter how small. It is more powerful than war and horrific memories of the Holocaust. What else can transform evil but love and atonement?

I see the terrible situation my Palestinian friends live under. I deeply support them in their desire to live and move freely in their homeland. They call it apartheid and I can understand why.

I also see the necessary journey of Avishai's family to safety and peace.

The stories about the South African truth and reconciliation process gave all other participants essential perspectives.

The dream can change. Holocaust survivor Eva Mozes Kor showed how. She chose to forgive: a path to harmony beyond evil. She freed herself from forever darkness. The second she did, the dream was transformed. Her journey revealed that the holiest place, where an old hatred becomes a living memory of unlimited love, is within reach. The Forgiven World is real...

Music on Troubled Grounds was born in Jerusalem and for us concluded in rural South Africa. A wise parent will leave their baby to learn how to walk on her own. The participants did the work. They were the makers of change. Music can help facilitate this in every corner of the world, wherever change is needed.

Edited by Karen Bradberry, Australia



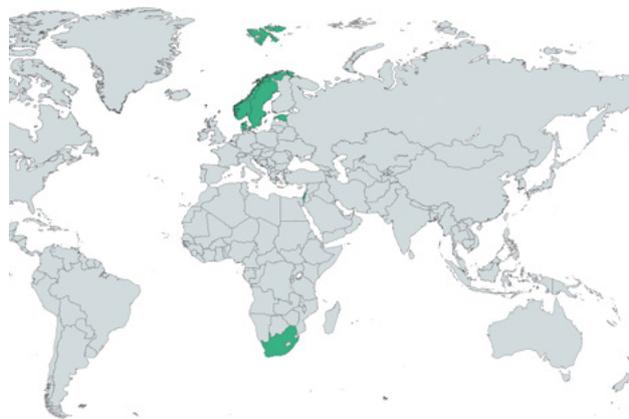
HENRIK MELIUS has seen leadership, intercultural communication and social entrepreneurship defined numerous ways over the years. Are they charisma and positive thinking? Decisiveness? Is it all about the situation? Are they meant only for the chosen few or is there a different story? Or are they possibly all of the above?

With more than two decades of real-life, in-the-trenches innovation in cultural communication, social entrepreneurship, music and education, sales and project management, his view is radically different. Henrik knows that leadership for intercultural communication sales and trade is a moment-to-moment choice and is not about title, education or position. Leadership is for everyone, every day.

Henrik – a Swede by birth – is respected for his ability to create, manage and complete challenging intercultural programs. He brings out the best in people, and is known for his practical and diplomatic skills and his empathetic style.

He has served on the executive board of UNESCO's International Music Council. He is a musician by trade: he served the music industry for many years in Los Angeles, including management and promotion for major record labels. He composed a hit song for US radio and produced several musical and theatrical events internationally.

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YOUTH CHOIR IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT: THE QATAR YOUTH CHOIR

ALENA PYNE

Conductor, Qatar

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As with any choir, the Qatar Youth Choir (QYC) has had its share of triumphs and challenges. That said, QYC's home in multicultural Doha, Qatar means that some of QYC's experiences are truly unique. From its founding in 2013 as the first community-based youth choir in Qatar, QYC enjoyed six exhilarating years of rehearsals, concerts, international travel, collaborations with other wonderful choirs, prizes and recordings, as many youth choirs experience. And just as for choirs around the world, Covid-19 put a stop to many of the fundamental

aspects of the choral experience our young singers. However, as the world begins to open up and we can participate in normal life again, we are gifted with a fresh appreciation of what a choir brings to our lives and to the universality of its reach. We are reminded that diversity and inclusivity are two cornerstones of what choir means to the singers of Qatar Youth Choir and singers everywhere.



Today, Qatar has a population of 2.9 million. Qatar nationals represent less than 15% of this figure. Viewing this statistic in terms of my home country, how differently would Ireland be if less than 15% of the population were Irish born? Coming from Ireland, a country with comparatively little diversity in terms of ethnicity, religion and culture, Qatar is immediately and obviously so much more diverse. People from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh represent 50% of the population, and around 250,000 Philippine nationals comprise another sizable chunk of it. This is reflected in the demographics of Qatar Youth Choir, as today around 65-80% of our singers come from South-East and South Asia.

In relation to the population of Qatar and how it impacts our choir, retaining singers after every summer has been a challenge. Every year a large proportion of employment contracts come to an end and those employees – along with their families – will leave for pastures new. Each year we are faced with dealing with the impending departure of a large cohort, and consequently, the imperative of finding new singers

to replace them. To illustrate this, in early 2014 we had 43 singers, and by September of that same year, we had 13. Although 2014 was particularly severe in this regard we can expect at least 20% turnover every year. As such, the possibility of having a repertoire of songs that can be pulled out of our backpocket, which is a normal standard for most choirs, becomes a challenge. However, Qatar Youth Choir is used to challenges, and strives to meet them head on, which translates into our approach to diversity and inclusivity.

One major challenge that we have experienced as a choir, which originally perplexed me, was the difficulty of recruiting Arabic singers in significant numbers, and specifically Qatari singers. Although we have Arabic singers in choir, they are more difficult to reach than singers from other cultures. This can be for many reasons, including that the number of choirs across the Middle East is small, which in turn lends an absence of appreciation for choral art. Singing is certainly less common in Gulf-Arabic culture, and as a music teacher in school, I encounter a reluctance to sing among children of Arabic heritage simply because they do not tend to sing in their home environment. Yet once they try, and realise they can be successful, they become naturally more open to singing. One way we tackled the problem of recruiting Arabic singers is by expanding our repertoire of Arabic songs, and illustrating that we can perform them authentically. However, an ongoing challenge for us is how to bring our performances into more local environments. When we have done so in the past we received increased interest, but such opportunities are less common. By continuing to expand our Arabic repertoire and performance locations we hope to demonstrate that choir is an inclusive space for Arabic singers too.

From a conductor's perspective I have a duty to ensure the repertoire reflects the multicultural make-up of our choir. Teaching the singers the great western classical songs is of course important, but for the choir's demographic, repertoire selection must also be diverse and inclusive. Unlike most other choirs we are unable to perform sacred music in public concerts. This has obliged me to really trawl the publishers, seeking enough quality secular repertoire for all levels of ability, and has informed me also to see choral music outside of the traditional association with the church. In doing so, we have discovered a broad repertoire from previously unfamiliar languages, cultures, and sounds. From Spanish, Arabic, German, French, Czech, Hungarian, Estonian, Latvian, Croatian, English, Portuguese, and many more, perhaps Chinese is the only major language that we have yet to master in song! As a choral leader in an extremely diverse environment, I actively seek out those songs that will connect with everyone in the choir



and that we can perform authentically. I have learned the hard but valuable lesson of also choosing repertoire that is *relevant* for singers today. These singers are growing up as global citizens, and are aware of global issues such as the growing number of refugee children in the world. Last year we learned a programme of beautiful music on this theme and the singers truly felt these songs emotionally and recorded them with intense feeling. With an eye towards competition I would welcome any mixed repertoire recommendations from readers of this article – my contact details are in the bio.

Choir should be a safe space, and protecting it as such is critical. From the beginning I worked hard to make everyone feel included in the choir, sharing their personal successes in their own lives, and creating a social diary of events so they could bond even better. I created the normal leadership roles so that more senior members can grow in their responsibilities. I have become more sensitive to some of the challenges that a diverse environment brings. We are all different and we have different value systems, aspirations, priorities and ways of expressing ourselves. All of these factors create a potential for disruption of a common community spirit. Thankfully we have never had any negative experiences in this regard but the potential is always there and part of the way to deal with it is to be aware. We have discussed this issue altogether about how the choir can best support every singer in this regard. But we must also remember the fact that opening up to a figure of authority can be a daunting task. As a result we have adopted a code of well-being and appointed one male singer and one female singer as alternatives to speak to for singers who may struggle to speak with an adult about such matters.

The education system in Qatar is somewhat different to how many of us experienced it growing up. Private schools are more common than public schools, however the funding level for each individual one and how it spends its money is not consistent. The far too common victim of underfunding is the music department, meaning that many students in Qatar develop little appreciation for the study of music. Parents of these students seeking to give their children an opportunity to study music will find it lies outside of the mainstream curriculum. One's voice is the cheapest instrument, it is a one time purchase without refund! Similar to elsewhere in the world, choir therefore presents as a very affordable method of providing a musical education for children from all socio-economic groups in Qatar. As a choir, we are proud of our ability to provide musical education to children in Qatar, and we see a real opportunity for Qatar to embrace our work and create a national choir school. We are actively working to make the music scene in Qatar more inclusive to singers from all walks of life. Personally, one of the most rewarding aspects in this choir's story, and of my journey as conductor, is when choir members choose to study music at third level, having gained all their subject knowledge through choir.

Now that we are finally back in the rehearsal room I can feel that old energy returning, that total commitment to the choir is reappearing. The diversity of our community here in Qatar may result in extra challenges, but it is also what gives our choirs so much resilience, adaptability and courage to embrace the new. May I never again take an in-person choir for granted. I am so grateful for every day I lead choir. In a recent ChoralSpace Academy lecture by the incredible Dr. Walt Whitman he said, "There are two great days in a person's life: the day we were born and the day you discover why". Since that day when I chose choral conducting, I have never looked back.



Irish conductor and Founder Director of Qatar Youth Choir (2013) and Qatar Junior Choir (2015). ALENA PYNE is also deputy conductor of Qatar Concert Choir. Formerly she worked as Director of Music at King's College Doha. Currently she leads choirs at the Swiss International School of Qatar and is a MYP Music teacher under Qatar Foundation. She is a founding member and first chairperson of Sing Qatar, the Association for Choral Singing. Alena offers choral workshops and has experience leading large-scale choral singing festivals like the annual Qatar Choral Festival. Alena is often invited as a choral competition jury member nationally and internationally, most recently for the Rovdo International Choir Competition in Minsk, Belarus when she also presented the lecture "Approaching Arabic Choral Music".
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COLLECTIVE SINGING FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION: A MORE THAN 10-YEAR JOURNEY FOR LEBANON'S FAYHA CHOIR

BARKEV TASLAKIAN

Conductor, Lebanon

SOME NUMBERS ABOUT THE POPULATION OF LEBANON

According to World Bank data, Lebanon's population was estimated at 6,825,442 at mid-year 2020. This number includes more than 479,537 Palestinian refugees registered at UNRWA and 1.5 million Syrian refugees, according to the Lebanese Government (only 865,500 registered at UNHCR). These numbers show that Lebanon has the highest refugee ratio in the world, according to the EU.

The country is also known as a multi-cultural area since it has 18 different religious branches.

Having all these cultures together in the same area can be very enriching on a cultural level but very challenging in terms of social cohesion.

FAYHA CHOIR AS ENTITY TO REPRESENT ALL OF LEBANON

"It is a sample of Lebanon," said Jacques Vanherle (late president of Polyfolia International), in gathering youth from all social, religious and geographic affiliations of the country. The choir was established in 2003 in Tripoli. It is located in one of the poorest areas in the Mediterranean, with a history of civil war and internal conflicts. It has grown to have two other branches in the country and a branch in Egypt. It became the world's first Arab choir to represent Arab music in a cappella with polyphonic arrangements. After touring the world and winning

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Children of Syria

international prizes, Fayha Choir became the best image of the country for the Lebanese people. The choir represents the entire population and shows the humanity of Lebanon and the Arabs. This is especially positive since the bad news of the region seems to get more press time.

COLLECTIVE SINGING AS TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

According to the *Sing Me In Project*, "collective singing is a social act: it is about singing together. And singing together can create a strong, emotional and happy connection, even between people with very different ways of life." Everything started after the 2007 conflict between Fatah al-Islam, an Islamist militant organisation, and the Lebanese Armed Forces in Nahr El Bared, a UNRWA Palestinian refugee camp near Tripoli in northern Lebanon. The UNDP approached Fayha Choir to propose the Lebanese Palestinian Choir project. The project aimed to rebuild peaceful relations between Palestinians coming back to the camp after the reconstruction and the Lebanese community from the five villages surrounding the camp.

Although the project lasted only two years, the results were surprising in terms of the individual and collective evolution of the group. "The Lebanese Palestinian Choir was the crossway that changed my life 180 degrees," says Mubadda Yunes, a Palestinian singer in the choir at that time. He is still a member of Fayha Choir today, like many others who started out in the project but continued as members of Fayha Choir.

An the same time, we received a proposal from the UNESCO regional office in Beirut to establish a children's choir of students from public schools and Palestinian camps from around Lebanon. More than 10,000 children were involved, and some of them are still singing in Fayha Choir today.

Nadia joined the UNESCO choir when she was 19 years old. She is now 29 and still a singer in Fayha Choir. Nadia says: *"Joining the UNESCO choir changed my life and made me the person I am today. From a refugee child who struggled a lot, to an effective citizen in her community that learnt all of her life and work skills from the choir."*

These projects were very successful and showed big achievements not only on a musical level but also on social and psychological levels. For the first time in their lives, youth and children performed their Arabian songs on the biggest stages in the country. For the majority of them, that was a dream that would have never come true without the choir. Fayha Choir continued establishing choirs around the country with local and international organisations such as War Child Holland, Norwegian Refugee Council, Beit Atfal Assoumoud, SOS Children's Villages, GIZ – German Cooperation, European Union and many others. Later in 2015, international



Children of Syria

organisations started focusing on Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and many new associations were established in the country targeting youth and children in camps all across the country.

According to the UNHCR, "the total number of registered Syrian refugees in the Bekaa area in Lebanon stood at 339,473 individuals. The Bekaa hosts the largest number of registered refugees in the country at 38.6% of the total"

In this area, Fayha Choir launched two choirs for children from different camps for Syrian refugees: Sonbola Choir with more than 500 singers from 2014-2019, and Children of Syria Choir with more than 300 since 2014.

Jihan from Sonbola Choir was 12

years old when she said: *"Rehearsal is the only place that reminds me of my childhood in the streets of Syria. When I come back from rehearsal, the only way to stop hearing the sound of bombs in my head, is to sing what we learned in the choir."* Also, during our project with Sonbola, under the Create Syria project, we trained ten young and adult Syrian refugees from different associations in conducting children's choirs to help them establish their own groups in the different target areas.

One of the major achievements we noticed about these children was the difference in their behaviour towards others. When we first met them, they were very chaotic, violent, aggressive and they had no interest to their physical appearance. During the breaks they were fighting all the time, throwing rubbish everywhere and bullying each other. Very soon after starting rehearsals, we could see the progress they made: they stopped fighting and shouting all the time, they played together, they cleaned up the area before leaving, they even had showers before coming to rehearsals and dressed beautifully.

Naghm Choir is also one of Fayha Choir's social projects. It is a project aimed at gathering youth from two areas in Tripoli that have historical political and religious conflicts.



Naghm Choir, Lebanon

Edited by Karin Rockstad, USA



Sonbola Choir

For some of these projects, Fayha Choir won the IMC Music Rights Award 2015. Fayha Choir has several similar projects that you can check out on the website, and also in partnership with international cooperation projects for refugees such as *Sing Me In*. You can also find documentaries about these projects on our YouTube channel.

<https://www.fayhachoir.org>
[youtube.com/c/FayhaChoir](https://www.youtube.com/c/FayhaChoir)



Fayha Choir



B A R K E V T A S L A K I A N is a Lebanese conductor born in Anjar, Bekaa in 1964. He is the founder, artistic director and conductor of the world's most famous Arab Choir, Fayha Choir, a winner of many international competitions. Taslakian is considered the godfather of Arab Choral music. He was the first to promote polyphonic a cappella singing in Arabic and created a new school of choral singing by performing Arab music with new arrangements on an international level. He is a member of many national and international music and choral associations: the International Federation for Choral Music, the European Choral Association, the Arab Choral Network (founding member), the Lebanese Choral Association (founder and president). He also founded many choirs around Lebanon as projects for psychosocial support and social cohesion for children, youth and refugees, for which he won the Five Musical Rights Award from the International Music Council. Email: contact@fayhachoir.org



War Child Choir

"THIS IS WHAT COMMUNITY LOOKS LIKE:" DEAI* Efforts in United States Choirs

SHEKELA WANYAMA

Conductor, USA

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THE UNITED STATES IS IN THE MIDST OF WHAT SOME MEDIA OUTLETS HAVE CALLED A “RACIAL RECKONING.” THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT, INITIATED IN 2013, HAS RAISED NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS OF THE MURDERS OF BLACK PEOPLE AT THE HANDS OF POLICE. UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF PEOPLE ARRIVING AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER OF THE UNITED STATES ARE TESTING THE UNDER-RESOURCED IMMIGRATION SYSTEM, AND HIGHLIGHTING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANTS ONCE THEY ENTER THE COUNTRY. THE PRESIDENCY OF DONALD TRUMP UNLEASHED A RISE IN HATE SPEECH AND VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS, ASIAN, LATINX, AFRICAN, AFRICAN AMERICAN, MUSLIM, AND JEWISH PEOPLE. STATES ARE PASSING VOTING RIGHTS LEGISLATION THAT WILL HAVE A MASSIVE IMPACT ON THE ABILITY OF BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN, INDIGENOUS, AND LATINX COMMUNITIES TO VOTE IN ELECTIONS.

In the midst of this all, the murder of George Perry Floyd, Jr. by four police officers in May 2020 set off an uprising that began in the streets of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and spread around the world. Here in Minneapolis, protests are continuing daily and in numerous ways. At George Floyd Square, neighbors are maintaining the space and memorial to George Floyd as a site of radical community inclusion. One can find mental and physical health support, weekly cookouts, a library, clothing exchange, a community garden in the summer and a fire to stay warm in winter – all provided by volunteers and free to anyone. During one of my visits to the Square, a leader shouts out, “Show them what community looks like!” A group of supporters answers: “THIS is what community looks like!” I often wonder what our global choral art would look like if we practiced such radical hospitality.

Many choral conductors and educators in the United States are questioning our teaching and

conducting practices and learning our role in systems of oppression in this country and abroad. We are learning more about the U.S.’s devastating legacy and continuing practices of racial and ethnic genocide, violence, and discrimination. We are gaining a deeper understanding of how our field can be more welcoming to all people. This article will attempt to provide a brief overview of these efforts.

Equal access to education in the United States is a centuries-long struggle. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, educators often practiced the idea of multiculturalism. Among music educators, this concept aimed to broaden curriculum to include genres and musicians from around the world. Community and religious choirs followed the lead of music educators and began programming music beyond the Western classical music canon. As a consequence, music arrangers and publishers flooded the market with so-called “multicultural” music often arranged by composers and conductors who usually had little or no contact with musicians from the cultures that inspired the music. This resulted in the proliferation of cultural appropriation in choral music, whereby musical elements were taken out of cultural context and misused. The profits from the sale of these often popular arrangements went primarily to the publishers and arrangers, almost never to the original artist or community that gave birth to the music.

More recent efforts seek to remedy this flawed process. Many educators, conductors, and choral ensembles are seeking out experts in non-Western classical music genres to work directly with students and singers, or studying with experts that will allow them to share music from a variety of cultures with more respect and a deeper understanding of the music and the performers and composers who make the music. The decline of the multicultural era has coincided with recent efforts toward diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

The terms diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) rest on the belief that to create a truly equal society, all people must have equal opportunity and access to resources. These resources include education,

* Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion

healthcare, safe shelter, nourishing food, and cultural connection. Although race is the focus of this article, DEAI work encompasses efforts to support individuals from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, physical and intellectual abilities, sexual orientations, genders, economic status, and religions. The work is complex, time-consuming, never-ending, and necessary as the United States becomes an increasingly diverse country. DEAI work is not without significant opposition, however many school, religious, and community leaders – including choirs and their conductors – are undertaking this work.

True DEAI work must be done by the individual and organization at the same time. Systems of oppression are built and maintained by individual attitudes and perspectives. For example, DEAI work related to race

includes not only learning about the peculiar history of race in the United States, but also identifying one's own personal history and beliefs, and then working to change them. Organizational planning and restructuring around DEAI can prove fertile ground for renewed vitality, more impactful engagement, and a broader reach among audiences and musicians. This intense and multi-year process requires the willing participation of all organization members, a high degree of trust in leadership and one another, and a commitment to stay the course when times are challenging.

Fortunately, organizations and individuals seeking to do this work are not alone. Available resources include books, discussion groups, podcasts, and workshops. A small selection of resources for DEAI work in the U.S. context is at the end of this article.

Everyone's journey through DEAI work will be unique to them. My own work remains complex, challenging, and enriching. I am a biracial Black woman with one white and one Black parent. One of my parents is also an immigrant. These facts alone determine many things about my life and position within the U.S. socio-racial-economic hierarchies. In many ways, I am faced with challenges that most of my colleagues in our largely-white profession aren't aware of now, or weren't before 2020. Likewise, facets of my identity mean I possess a degree of privilege that has and continues to give me advantages in society and in our profession. When I can name my challenges and privileges, and put them into a socio-historical context, I can more clearly see how I can contribute to positive change in my spheres of influence, including how I can better serve my singers and the choral profession at large.

Undertaking DEAI work is more than professional development. It changes the way I interact with everyone I meet. I have learned to speak more openly with my students about resources available to them if they are experiencing social, emotional, physical, or financial difficulty. I am learning to be a better listener, both in rehearsal and in everyday life. I am developing the stamina to discuss and tackle difficult topics and problems, improving my communication skills, and – perhaps most importantly – experiencing more empathy and patience as I interact with colleagues, students, and neighbors. DEAI work teaches one to see the worst parts of humanity, and then to build a life that reflects the best in humanity.

The United States and the world need energetic, engaged, dedicated, caring, informed, and courageous people now more



George Floyd Square, Minneapolis, USA © Shekela Wanyama

than ever. As choral practitioners, we are well-versed in building and sustaining communities. DEAI work, whether you are in the U.S. or in another country, will enable our profession to continue flourishing for generations to come.



George Floyd Square, Minneapolis, USA © Shekela Wanyama

SELECTED RESOURCES FOR DEAI IN THE U.S. CONTEXT

Books

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color-Blindness*. New Press, Anniversary Edition, 2020.
- Bartholome, Sarah J. *World Music Pedagogy, Volume V: Choral Music Education*. Routledge, 2019.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. One World, 2015.
- DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for*

White People to Talk About Racism. Beacon Press, 2020.

- hooks, bell. *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2014.
- Howard, Karen. *First Steps in Global Music*. GIA Publications, 2020.
- Johnson Reagon, Bernice. *If You Don't Go, Don't Hinder Me: The African American Sacred Song Tradition*. University of Nebraska Press, 2001.
- Kendi, Ibram X. *How to Be Anti-Racist*. One World, 2019.
- Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands*. Central Recovery Press, 2017.
- Muhammad, Ghouly. *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*. Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2020.
- Oluo, Ijeoma. *So You Want to Talk About Race*. Seal Press, 2019.
- Paris, Django and H. Samy Alim, eds. *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World*. Teachers College Press, 2017.
- Schippers, Huib. *Facing the Music: Shaping Music Education from a Global Perspective*. Oxford U. Press, 2009.
- Waziyatawin, PhD. *What Does Justice Look Like? The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland*. Living Justice Press, 2008.

Podcasts

- All My Relations with Matika Wilbur, Desi Small-Rodriguez, and Adrienne Keene
- Bearing Witness with Anthony and Georgia
- The Choral Commons with Emilie Amrein and André de Quadros
- Classically Black Podcast with Dalanie and Katie
- Into America with Trymaine Lee
- Our Body Politic with Farai Chideya
- Undistracted with Brittany Packnett Cunningham

Online Resources for Organizations

- Chorus America <https://chorusamerica.org>
- Courageous Conversation <https://courageousconversation.com/>
- Intercultural Development Inventory <https://idiinventory.com/>
- Learning for Justice <https://www.learningforjustice.org>
- Of/By/For/All <https://www.ofbyforall.org/>

Edited by Clayton Parr, USA



SHEKELA WANYAMA is a DMA student in conducting at the University of Minnesota and associate conductor of VocalPoint Chorus in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

Her teachers include Kathy Saltzman Romey and Elizabeth Schauer. Shekela taught choir for students ages 11-18 for ten years and has sung in professional and semiprofessional choirs in Minneapolis, Tucson, Seattle, Berlin, and Washington, D.C. Email: wany0004@umn.edu



WOMEN WARRIORS: THE VOICES OF CHANGE

A celebration of global activists who are fighting for social justice

MADARA BOKA

Conductor, Latvia

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

“WOMEN CAN MAKE PEACE. WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD, AND WE HAVE THAT POWER WHEN WE ARE NO LONGER AFRAID TO SPEAK OUT. THAT IS THE ESSENCE AND MISSION OF ITS DEEPER EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE,” SAYS AMY ANDERSSON. SHE IS A CONDUCTOR, PRODUCER, DIRECTOR AND WRITER OF *WOMEN WARRIORS: THE VOICES OF CHANGE*, A GROUNDBREAKING CONCERT THAT HONOURS THE STRENGTH AND HEROISM OF GLOBAL ACTIVISTS FIGHTING FOR HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS, LGBTQ RIGHTS, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES, MINORITY RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND FOR THE RIGHT OF EVERY GIRL TO AN EDUCATION. TWO YEARS SINCE THE PREMIERE, IT HAS BECOME AN AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT FILM THAT IS NOW REACHING GLOBAL AUDIENCES WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUBTITLES.

Women Warriors first premiered as a live-to-picture symphony concert in collaboration with the Orchestra Moderne NYC, the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir TIARA, conductor Aira Birziņa, and celebrated composers Nathalie Bonin, Miriam Cutler, Anne-Kathrin Dern, Isolde Fair, Sharon Farber, Penka Kouneva, Starr Parodi, and Lolita Ritmanis. Premiered at the Lincoln Center in New York City on 20th September 2019 to a sold-out house and standing ovations, critics welcomed the courageous choice of subject matter. “This concert event should be required viewing at the UN General Assembly [...] and it should be screened in every high school and college domestically and worldwide,” wrote Frank Daykin in a review on *New York Concert Review Inc.* (22nd September 2019).

The vision for creating *Women Warriors: The Voices of Change* came to Amy after she read about the life of voting rights activist

Fannie Lou Hamer. Because of her activism, Ms. Hamer suffered death threats and was beaten and jailed by police in 1962 in Mississippi, USA. In 1964, she appeared on national television and publicly testified about her abuse. “Her speech impacted me deeply. I watched her on *YouTube* many times and was riveted by her incredible strength and courage. I promised myself never to forget her story,” said Amy. “For two years I researched the lives of women who had fought for equality and human rights and discovered hundreds who had been forgotten or ignored by history. I began reconstructing the lineage of activists over an 800-year period using archival photos and footage, creating a silent film. As I began to view the film, I started hearing music.”

Amy then invited eight extraordinary composers to score the nineteen tracks needed to accompany the silent film. After synchronizing to

picture, a live-to-picture concert production was born. Divided into twelve chapters, this moving and inspiring musical achievement gives testimony to the strength and creativity deeply connecting concert audiences to the strength, resilience and contributions of womenkind.

In February 2020, Amy Andersson traveled to Riga, Latvia with composer Lolita Ritmanis and engineer Mark Mattson to record the entire soundtrack for the documentary *Women Warriors* with a seventy-five-piece orchestra of distinguished musicians from several Latvian orchestras and ensembles. Released in February 2021, this sixty-five minute soundtrack CD encompasses musical styles ranging from intimate strings and harp only pieces, such as *Tender Dismay* by Nathalie Bonin, to large-scale symphonic landscapes as in Lolita Ritmanis' *The Long Road*, Penka Kouneva's *Honor Her*, and Sharon



Lolita Ritmanis and Amy Andersson © Sanita Sparāne

Farber's *Say Their Names*, among others. A number of composers perform on the album as well. A pop style song called *Rise Until We Stand* by Isolde Fair and Starr Parodi, features Isolde Fair on vocals, and Starr Parodi on piano, while Nathalie Bonin is the featured violin soloist on Penka Kouneva's *Build Peace*. The final piece of the concert is *We Rise* by Lolita Ritmanis, with lyrics by Amy Andersson. With conductor Aira Birziņa, artistic director of TIARA at the helm, TIARA was filmed during the audio recording. This film was then synched to the music, enabling soloist Gillian Hassert to perform virtually with TIARA. Through the use of modern technologies, the cities of Riga and New York (which are almost 7,000 km apart) were able to unite through the power of music in a live concert.

Lolita Ritmanis, an American born with Latvian heritage and an Emmy-Award winning composer, wrote three compositional pillars of the concert performance. *Prologue* opens the concert and advocates for the right of every girl to an education; *The Long Road*, the most complex part of this

project and nearly eight minutes in length, traverses women's history from the 13th century to the 1960s; and the final piece *We Rise* is for the full orchestra, soloist and the girls' choir with lyrics by Amy Andersson. The heart of the lyrics to *We Rise* is based on the Chinese proverb "Women hold up half the sky". This moving song pays loving tribute to those upon whose shoulders we stand, while advocating for women to use their power and voices to change the world.

Lolita introduced Amy to the idea of recording with TIARA, as she has recorded and worked with orchestras and choirs in Riga over many years. The result is an intimate, yet powerful performance of *We Rise* by TIARA that literally brought the audience in New York City to a standing ovation. Both the documentary and soundtrack have now achieved sensational success, winning more than eighteen international awards in 2021. *Women Warriors: The Voices of Change* is on a humanitarian mission to inspire, educate and give hope to women and girls, as the ones who changed the course of history. Within this framework of symphonic music and film, I believe we can invoke change and do good to the world," says Amy Andersson.

Edited by Charlotte Sullivan, UK



MADARA BOKA (1993) graduated from the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music with a BA in music and choral conducting (2017, under Andris Veismanis) and a MA in musicology (2019, under Baiba Jaunslaviete). Since 2015 she has been the choirmaster of the female choir DZINTARS, and the project manager of the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir TIARA since 2017. Madara Boka has been the producer of several music projects including the Latvian premiere of Imants Raminsh's opera *The Nightingale*, which was nominated for the Latvian Grand Music Award 2019 in the category "Production of the year".



Women Warriors first premiered as a live-to-picture symphony concert



Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir TIARA, cond. Aira Birziņa © Madara Boka



Orchestra Moderne NYC © Derek Brad

...on a humanitarian mission to inspire, educate and give hope to women and girls, as the ones who changed the course of history.



Amy Andersson and Aira Birziņa © Una Ståde

E POI LE PAROLE: INCLUSION

Artikel auf Deutsch Artículo en español Article en français

If it feels all right when you close your eyes, then it's also all right when you open them.

Dinant Krouwel, Sheet music shop manager, Broekmans & van Poppel, Utrecht, The Netherlands

IFCM was started in 1982 with the intent of building bridges between cultures, using choral music as the catalyst. From the beginning, there were no constraints – everyone was welcome. This is, and has been, vital to world peace, now more than ever.

Michael J Anderson, Past IFCM President, Chicago, IL, USA

Each voice is included in a chorus; each chorus makes music; music is part of society. So when we sing, we are closely connected to our society. Life, love, health, hope, connectedness, and peace – these can all be messages for our society, as well as motivations for singing.

Tsutomu Matsumura, Conductor, Yokohama City, Japan

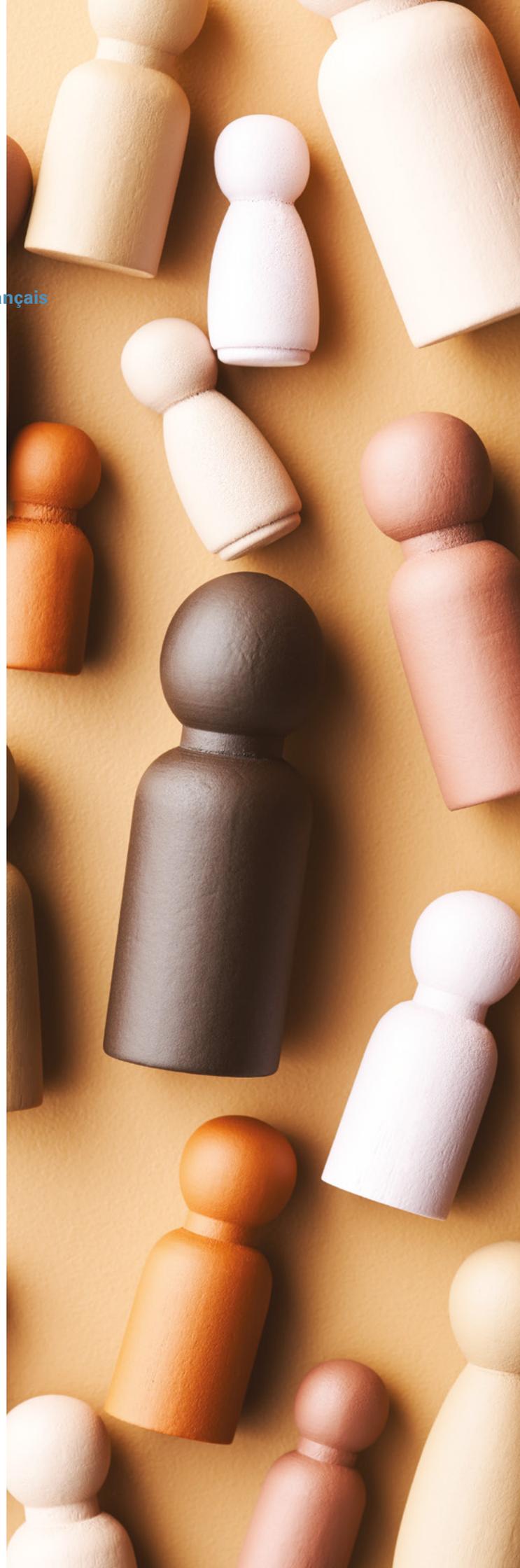
For us, integration is synonymous with education, with building one's life's work, with creating a common cultural and social life. Integration is sharing a concern for the common good.

Henri Mandeng, Association "Amis du Chœur Madrigal du Cameroun", ("Friends of the Madrigal Choir of Cameroon"), France/Cameroun

We view intergration as the mixture that comes from different groups interacting with and being transformed by each other. The final result is one group formed out of the strengths of the two principal components.

Mamie-Wivine Kabengele, director of the Bel Canto vocal ensemble, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Edited by Anita Shaperd, USA





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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
Emily Kuo Vong

**WORLD CHORAL EXPO IN LISBON, PORTUGAL
PRESENTATION OF THE INVITED CHOIRS**

**WORLD CHORAL EXPO IN LISBON, PORTUGAL
(3-7 SEPTEMBER 2022)**
Ki Adams



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



EMILY KUO VONG

President

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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Dear friends,

In early 2020 we began communicating in a new way due to the health concerns caused by COVID-19. After two years of online meetings, we were seemingly used to this kind of virtual communication. However, when the opportunity arose to get together in person, we were overjoyed and realised how exciting it would be to have a physical meeting!

All the ExCom members, the rest of the Board members and IFCM staff were thrilled because, at long last, we were able to hold IFCM ExCom and Board meetings at the end of October 2021. I am very proud of the huge amount of work we got through in a limited amount of time. The meetings were productive and effective as we discussed many of IFCM's projects and made significant decisions regarding the future development of our federation. And as we knew that online meetings were no substitute for meeting in person, we cherished the opportunity more than ever.

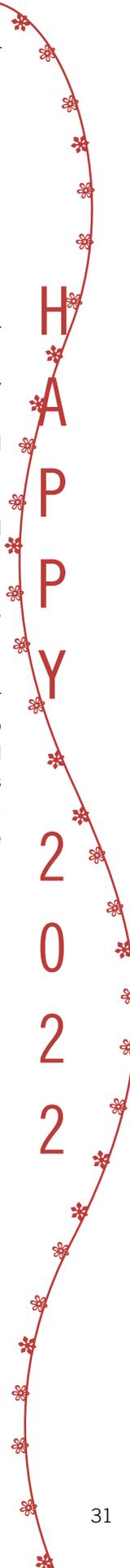
After the Board meetings, the Board members began getting involved with various IFCM projects, all with their special parts to play. I believe their leadership and efforts will help all these projects achieve their goals. In fact, we expect all IFCM members to join us in taking part in the projects they are interested in. Our wonderful strength comes from working together, and this will help our federation prosper in future and benefit the global choral community as a whole.

In the new year, we will look for new ways to expand our membership and our efforts will serve the interests of our members. Meanwhile, we will plan and launch more valuable projects in various countries and regions, helping the local choral community develop choral education and careers and benefiting more choral singers.

2022 is a special year for IFCM: we celebrate the 40th anniversary of our federation and take the World Choral Expo back to Portugal, a great way to celebrate the occasion. The exciting programme for the IFCM World Choral EXPO 2022 will involve lots of outstanding singers, choirs, vocal ensembles and choral conductors, who have been invited from around the world to join this international choral event in the beautiful city of Lisbon as we celebrate the joy and privilege of singing together again!

My dear friends, as we begin 2022 we have lots of reasons to be hopeful. I sincerely wish you and your families happiness and good health, and here's to a bright future for IFCM!

Edited by Christopher Lutton, UK



WORLD CHORAL EXPO IN LISBON, PORTUGAL (3-7 SEPTEMBER 2022)

KI ADAMS

IFCM Vice President (North America)

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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IN EARLY SEPTEMBER 2022, IFCM WILL HOST ITS SECOND WORLD CHORAL EXPO (WCE) IN LISBON, PORTUGAL. BUILDING ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE INAUGURAL WCE IN MACAU SAR (2015) AND THE SUBSEQUENT WCE IN LISBON (2019), WCE 2022 PROMISES TO BE THE BEST WCE YET WITH NEW COMPONENTS BEING ADDED AND REGISTRATION FEES FOR CHOIRS AND INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS DRAMATICALLY REDUCED.

WCE 2022 is an international choral event which provides an opportunity for the global choral community (singers, conductors, composers, educators, scholars, and researchers) to interact with and learn from each other as well as world-renowned choirs and their conductors. WCE 2022 will highlight three focus areas: choral music education, choral performance, and choral masterclasses (both for conductors and singers wishing to learn more about singing in professional choirs). The inaugural WCE masterclass component for conductors and singers will be led by internationally renowned maestro Frieder Bernius, with Kammerchor Stuttgart, one of the foremost European vocal ensembles. For those interested in singing and song, Lisbon is the place to be 3-7 September 2022!

The main venue for the World Choral EXPO 2022 will be [Centro Cultural Belém](#). Located in the western parish of Belém, Centro Cultural Belém is Lisbon's core facility for cultural and leisure activities. The complex is situated near the waterfront and just steps from Jerónimos Monastery, the Tower of Belém, and the Monument to the Discoveries.

The World Choral EXPO is a key IFCM project that is built on the foundation of choirs and singers meeting other choirs and singers. To that end, WCE provides opportunities for invited and participating choirs to truly learn from each other, singing for and with each other, and to take part in various programs designed to provide networking and collaborative opportunities. Unlike IFCM's signature project, the World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM), WCE is meant to encourage all forms of collective singing (professional and amateur) and, through special programs and workshops, to support choirs, singers, conductors, and choral enthusiasts in exchanging of experience and knowledge. WCE is a smaller-scale event (5 days) that



Centro Cultural Belém, main venue of the World Choral EXPO 2022

includes the Colourful Voices program for children and youth choirs, as well as workshops and seminars for all participating choirs and individuals with international choral specialists. In partnership with the Singing Network, the EXchange! program offers the opportunity for an intimate gathering of international scholars, performers, conductors, pedagogues, and composers to exchange, connect, create, share, and explore a wide range of topics related to collective singing.

The IFCM WCE 2022 committee has planned an exciting international program with ensembles from five continents. Here is the full roster of confirmed choirs selected to enrich your WCE 2022 experience: [Aarhus Girls' Choir](#), conductor Birgitte Næslund Madsen (Denmark); [Cantemus Youth Choir](#), conductor Denis Ceausov (Moldova); [Collective Singers](#), conductor Ponti Dikuua (Namibia); [Incantare Coro Femenino](#), conductor Natalia Vadillo (Argentina); [Maze](#), conductor Merel Martens (Netherlands); [Mosaica Singers](#), conductor Nedy Muna (Jordan); [Portland State Chamber Choir](#), conductor Ethan Sperry (USA); [Shalloway Youth Choir](#), conductor Kellie Walsh (Canada). We are also thrilled to announce the two professional ensembles which will be participating in WCE 2022: [Kammerchor Stuttgart](#), conductor Frieder Bernius (Germany) and [Ordinarius Vocal Group](#) (Brazil). A regional committee of Portuguese choral conductors has been created to focus on the participation of local choirs and vocal ensembles.

In the context of the 5-day WCE, each invited choir and vocal ensemble will perform in one gala concert (approximately 20 minutes), one evening concert (approximately 30 minutes), and two afternoon concerts (approximately 30-40 minutes each). As part of the choral education component of WCE, invited choirs will take part in two morning workshops – one artistic workshop with another invited choir, during which the two choirs will rehearse several joint works to be performed in an afternoon concert, and one pedagogical/ demonstration workshop with participating choirs and delegates. In addition, conductors of invited choirs have been invited to offer workshops for individual participants. Registration for individuals includes access to all components of the WCE.

Choirs, vocal ensembles, and individuals from all over the world can now register to participate in the education and exchange program of the WCE. Don't miss the opportunity to join this exceptional choral cultural exchange festival!

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION FOR CHOIRS AND VOCAL ENSEMBLES

Option to perform **two 30-minute concerts** (free choice of repertoire).

Common workshops with other participating/invited choirs and the opportunity to meet, exchange, sing, and perform in some of the most extraordinary venues in the historical city of Lisbon.

All travel, accommodation, and meal expenses during the WCE are the responsibility of the choirs and vocal ensembles.

Participation fees:

Choirs (15 singers and more): **350 Euros** for the entire choir, conductor(s), accompanists, staff, and chaperones.

Vocal Ensembles (from 2 to 15 singers): **250 Euros** for the entire ensemble.

Special offer for choirs and vocal ensembles from Portugal: FREE participation!

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION FOR INDIVIDUALS

For conductors, singers, and choral enthusiasts who want to join all segments of our festival:

Full access to the entire [WCE 2022 program](#)

Participation fee: **150 Euros** per person

All travel, accommodation, and meal expenses during the WCE are the responsibility of the individual participants.

Special offer for students:

Participation fee: **100 Euros** per person. Proof of student status will be requested.

Special offer for individuals and students from Portugal: 50% discount!

For more information regarding the conditions of participation and the registration forms for choirs and vocal ensembles as well as individual participants, visit www.worldchoralexpo.com.

And last but not least, WCE 2022 will include the celebration of IFCM's 40th anniversary with a special exhibition dedicated to IFCM 40-year history in the Palacete of dos Condes de Monte Real and the launch of a 40th anniversary publication. Choirs, vocal ensembles, and individuals are invited to join the international choral community to celebrate the joy, and privilege, of singing together again!

Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to work with celebrated choral personalities, to interact with like-minded choral musicians from around the world, and to experience some of the finest choral singing on the planet. Vemo-nos em Lisboa!

Edited by Taylor Ffitch, USA

WORLD CHORAL EXPO IN LISBON, PORTUGAL (3-7 SEPTEMBER 2022)

Presentation of the invited choirs

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

FOR THE SECOND TIME SINCE ITS CREATION IN 2015, THE IFCM WORLD CHORAL EXPO (WCE) WILL BE ORGANIZED IN THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF LISBON, PORTUGAL. HERE IS THE FULL ROSTER OF CONFIRMED CHOIRS SELECTED TO ENRICH YOUR WCE 2022 EXPERIENCE.

THE PROFESSIONAL CHOIRS:

KAMMERCHOR STUTT GART, GERMANY

Kammerchor Stuttgart is considered one of the leading ensembles of its kind. Founded over 50 years ago in January 1968, Frieder Bernius has established an exceptional choir that is celebrated by audiences and music critics alike. The choir's repertoire spans the 17th century to the 21st century, and the choir's special intention is to be a specialist for choral music from all époques and genres.

The choir receives invitations from all major European festivals and has given concerts in numerous renowned concert halls. Kammerchor Stuttgart was invited to three World Symposia for Choral Music (Vienna, Sydney, and Seoul), as well as to the 12th WSCM in Auckland in 2020. Regular concert tours to North and South America, Asia, and Israel reflect the worldwide reputation of Kammerchor Stuttgart. Of the choir's 100 CD recordings, 45 have been awarded international prizes, such as Edison, Diapason, and ICMA.

<http://musikpodium.de>

ORDINARIUS VOCAL GROUP, BRAZIL

Ordinarius offers a varied repertoire, using the voice as its primary instrument and the Brazilian percussion as its perfect complement. The group's original and exclusive arrangements are the work of Augusto Ordine, musical director and founder. The ensemble's repertoire includes pieces by Ary Barroso, Antônio Carlos Jobim, Vinícius de Moraes, Rosa Passos, Joyce, and other outstanding Brazilian composers. The arrangements are a cappella as well as with guitar, ukulele, and percussive instrumental accompaniment. Brazilian rhythms such as choro, baião, samba and ijexá are explored by the septet in a modern representation of a timeless Brazilian culture.

Ordinarius Vocal Group's first album, Ordinarius, was considered to be one of the best CDs of Brazilian music in 2012 by the music site O embrulhador and resulted in their tours in Brazil and Europe. The group's music videos have more than 300,000 viewings on YouTube and include fans from all over the world. The Ordinarius version of "As long as you love me", originally performed by



the Backstreet Boys, was recommended by the American group itself on Twitter and Facebook, drawing increased international recognition and exposure.

Ordinarius' goal is to offer quality vocal music that draws on many styles and sources. Their performances offer the audience the opportunity to sit back and enjoy the best that vocal arrangement can offer, as well as a chance to sing along and join the fun!

<https://www.ordinarius.com.br>



THE INVITED CHOIRS:

AARHUS GIRLS CHOIR, DENMARK

Aarhus Girls Choir (Aarhus Pigekor) consists of 30 young female singers from Aarhus Music School (Aarhus, Denmark). Founded in the 1940s, the choir changed its name in 2002 to coincide with a shift in direction and goals, which included a higher musical ambition. Since then, Aarhus Girls Choir has toured internationally, including Europe, USA, South Africa, China, Argentina, and Canada. At home, the choir collaborates regularly with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra and The Danish National Opera. During the past two decades, Aarhus Girls Choir has participated in numerous prestigious international choral competitions, winning gold medals and first prizes at International Choral Kathaumixw (Canada), Let the Peoples Sing (European Broadcast Union), and World Choir Games (Latvia and South Africa).

Helle Høyer Vedel, a prominent and highly-acclaimed conductor in the Danish choral community, initiated the choir's change in mission in 2002. Under her leadership, the choir achieved its many successes at competitions while also performing at large events across Denmark, recording several CDs, and commissioning many pieces for the choir. The choir has enjoyed a long and significant collaboration with choreographer Panda van Proosdij, leading to the development of a special focus on musical expression using movements to support musical ideas. In 2021, Birgitte Næslund Madsen became the conductor of Aarhus Girls Choir.

<https://aarhuspigekor.dk>



CANTEMUS YOUTH CHOIR (MOLDOVA)

Cantemus Youth Choir was established in 2007 near the Centrul de Activitate Extrașcolară ("Curcubeu") and Liceul Teoretic "George Meniuc" (secondary school) in Chișinău, Moldova, by the founder and present conductor, Denis Ceausov. Comprised of singers, ages 10-20, who enjoy choral music, Cantemus performs repertoire by European, American, and Moldavian composers from the Renaissance through the 21st century. The choir has participated in many radio and TV recordings and has performed concerts in the prestigious concert halls of Chisinau. Cantemus has been awarded various prizes at international choral competitions in Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and Ukraine. In addition, Cantemus has been invited to perform at various prestigious choral festivals, including: Cori d'Europa (Udine, Italy), International Choral Festival en Provence and International Choral Festival en Aveyron (France), and IFCM World Symposium on Choral Music (Barcelona, Spain), where they received the title of 2017 IFCM Ambassador for their performances during the 11th WSCM.

<https://www.facebook.com/ChoirCantemus/>

COLLECTIVE SINGERS, NAMIBIA

Collective is a group of musicians who, using their God-given singing talents, have created an impressive ensemble. This group of passionate individuals works collaboratively to harness their collective efforts and produce sweet, memorable choral performances. Founded in 2015 by Ponti Dikuaa, this dynamic group consists of diverse and talented young singers from various well-known Namibian choirs. Collective performs various genres of music, including gospel, contemporary, classic, and Namibian traditional music. They are proud of and believe in their local Namibian composers and support them by making their music an integral part of their repertoire. Since 2018, Collective has been reaching out to

serve several orphanages and other charity organizations by performing benefit concerts or simply by collecting necessities on their behalf. The conductor of Collective Singers is its founder Ponti Dikuaa. https://youtu.be/qMNICjB_EDw

INCANTARE, ARGENTINA

The female choir INCANTARE was founded in April 2016 in Córdoba, Argentina, with Natalia Vadillo as conductor.

Its first programs were one with Basque contemporary composers and the other was about Argentinian folklore arranged by Cordovan composers. This was the repertoire in their first international tour (Uruguay, 2016). In 2017 they performed "Los Juegos" (Argentinian folk rhythm songs) with music by Norberto Ambrós,



lyrics by Hamlet Lima Quintana and arranged by Carlos Alberto Flores. In 2018 they performed a Baltic music concert and the premier in South America of the "Misa Folk" by Laura Jekabsonė. In 2019 they offered the concert "De pájaros y flores", dedicated to composers from all times ranging from the Renaissance to the present. In 2020, they prepared the following concerts: "De Película" (pieces from films of all times), "Por Amor" (commissioned works composed or arranged especially for Incantare),

“Canticum Novum” (sacred pieces from the 20th and 21st century) and “Concierto V Aniversario” (works by Basque contemporary composers). Currently, the choir is rehearsing online preparing the concert “Por Amor” that will be broadcasted via streaming and it will be a world premiere of all its works. (Translated from Spanish by Vania Romero, Venezuela)

<https://www.facebook.com/CoroFemeninoIncantare>



MAZE, THE NETHERLANDS

Get ready for some a capella! MAZE is a vocal group located in Rotterdam which is comprised of 20 talented singers from across the Netherlands. Led by award-winning conductor Merel Martens, they have been singing a mix of original songs and extraordinary covers since 2016. Within the ensemble there is ample room for improvisation and artistic contribution from its members. MAZE functions under the principle of Vocal Leadership, a unique method of singing that helped MAZE win the BALK TOPfestival in 2017, a prestigious a capella gathering in the Netherlands. In 2018, MAZE took the top prize at the SingStrong's ACA-Idol Competition in New York. Later that same year, MAZE was named 'best choir of the Netherlands 2018' and, in 2019, the ensemble embarked on its first theatre tour. The vocal group is often invited as a guest performer with other artists and has performed with brass bands, pop singers, big bands, and a dance and theater group. MAZE is always up for a challenge; they think 'outside the box' and do things a bit differently. All that creativity leads to visually- and musically-interesting performances. <https://mazevoices.com>



MOSAICA SINGERS (JORDAN)

Mosaica Singers is an award-winning choral group that aims to enrich lives through choral music by uniting people from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, ages, professional/musical experiences through their love of music. Just as a mosaic takes different pieces of colored glass or stone to create a work of art, so does Mosaica, bringing together diverse people to create a beautiful sound. The choir offers members a welcoming environment for musical and personal growth, as well as the privilege of being part of the creation of high-quality musical performances. As part of its mission, singers are exposed to different kinds of choral music, helping to expand their musical and cultural horizons. The choir's objective extends to their community, as the ensemble is dedicated to the growth and enrichment of the cultural scene in Jordan, particularly influencing future generations and instilling the love of music in them. <https://www.mosaicasingers.com>

PORTLAND STATE CHAMBER CHOIR, USA



Classics Today called the Portland State Chamber Choir "amongst the finest choirs in the world." Since its founding in 1975, the Chamber Choir has performed and competed in venues across the United States and around the world. The ensemble has earned over 30 medals and awards in international choir competitions, including being

the only American choir to have won the Seghizzi International Competition for Choral Singing in Italy (2013) and participating in the Bali International Choral Festival in Indonesia (2017). The Chamber Choir has performed multiple times at national and divisional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association for Music Education and, in 2014, hosted the national conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization. In February 2011, the Chamber Choir collaborated with Portland-born composer Morten Lauridsen who described their singing as "an absolutely top-notch superb display of choral artistry." The Portland State Chamber Choir is conducted by Ethan Sperry. <http://www.psuchamberchoir.com>



25 de Abril Bridge, Lisbon, Portugal



**SHALLAWAY YOUTH CHOIR,
CANADA**



Shallaway Youth Choir is an internationally-recognized and celebrated organization that is dedicated to exploring, developing, and celebrating cultural expression through choral music. Shallaway's mandate is to foster independent

musicianship and leadership, empowering young people to become the next generation of active leaders and artistic innovators in their communities. Through their commitment to artistic excellence and the preservation of their

rich folk culture, the choristers learn the value of independence, discipline, and confidence while also gaining a sense of pride and identity – as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians – and as global citizens. Shallaway Youth Choir consciously seeks to connect with other cultures in a developmental way and has established an active program of intercultural outreach and exchange. While Shallaway moves widely in the world, its core vision of community is a grounded and empathic one that embraces leadership and citizenship as dynamic co-creators of an open, supportive, yet questioning society. Shallaway believes that the very nature and setting of choral music offers the powerful possibility for transformative community building.

<https://www.shallaway.ca>

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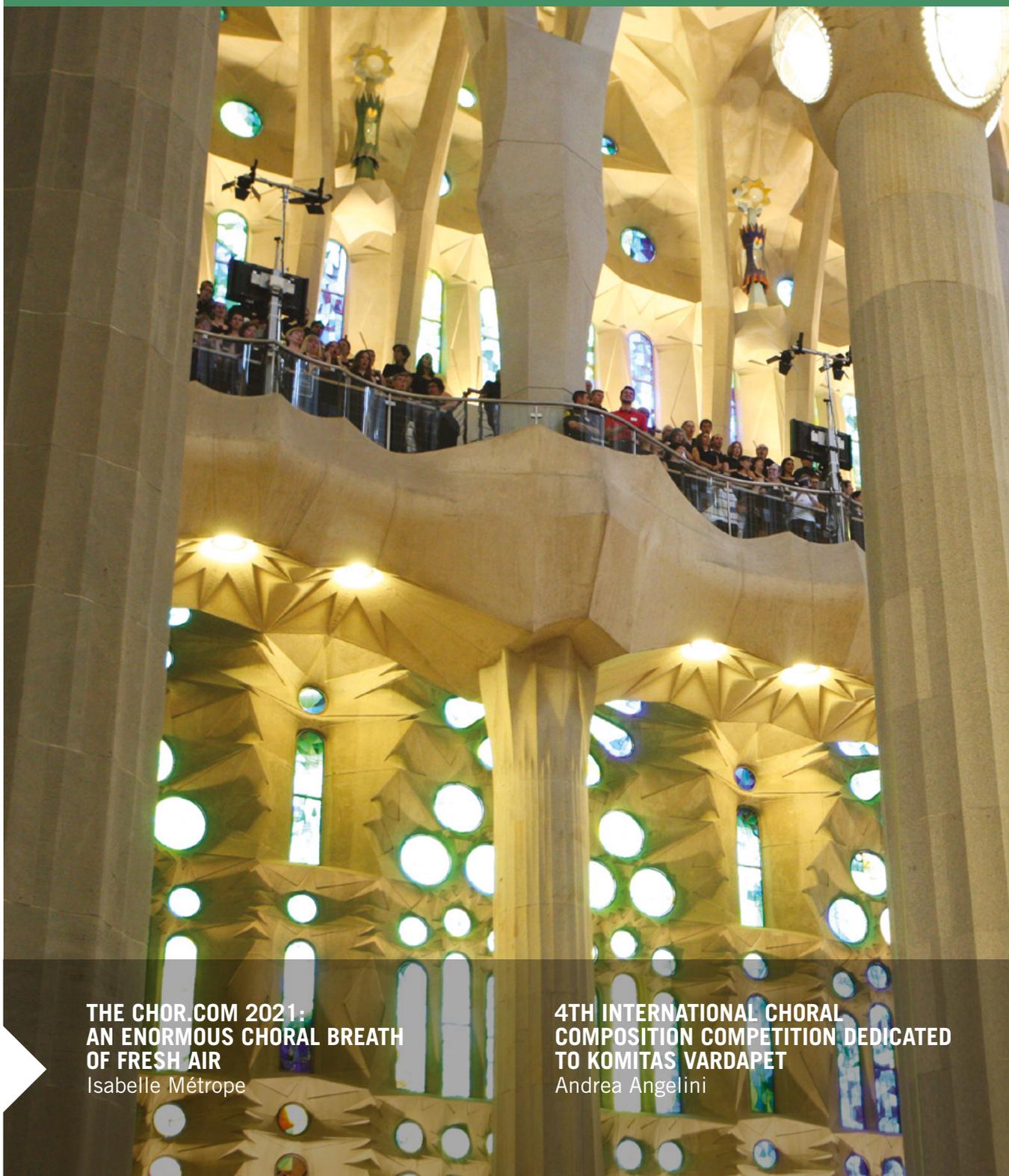
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CHORAL WORLD NEWS



**THE CHOR.COM 2021:
AN ENORMOUS CHORAL BREATH
OF FRESH AIR**
Isabelle Métrope

**4TH INTERNATIONAL CHORAL
COMPOSITION COMPETITION DEDICATED
TO KOMITAS VARDAPET**
Andrea Angelini

THE CHOR.COM 2021: AN ENORMOUS CHORAL BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Hanover, Germany, 23-26 September 2021

ISABELLE MÉTROPE

ICB Managing Editor

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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In September 2021 I was able to experience an event that had been eagerly awaited by the whole choral scene: **Chor.com**. This takes place biennially, and the last meeting was in September 2019, just a few months before the outbreak of the pandemic. **Chor.com** is organised by the German Association of Choirs and is the largest Europe-wide specialist convention for choirs. Almost 1000 participants travelled to Hanover – a UNESCO City of Music since 2014 – to meet and assess the impact of the last 24 extraordinary months.

PROGRAM

Since the first convention – held in Dortmund in 2011 – **Chor.com** has established itself as an important event

for musicologists, choir directors, choir managers, music publishers and more. Hot topics in choral music are debated. The focus may be on repertoire – this year it was Nordic choral music, which, though no longer an unknown rarity, continues to be popular with choirs and their audiences; or on historical performance practice – how to perform ancient music when the composers left no instructions; genre-mixing issues like environmental sustainability for choirs¹; or LGBTQA+ issues in the choral world. Indeed, the breadth of topics raised is reminiscent of the wonderful

¹ See our Focus in ICB 2021-3, July 2021



ACDA National Convention organised by our American colleagues. These conventions are vital in keeping the choral scene alive. Not every topic can be included, and some musicians may feel that no-one apart from themselves is interested in a particular issue; if ten people are enthusiastic about a new composer, an emerging topic, or a particular new idea, but live 1000km apart, they may not have found like-minded people to talk with. But it is at specialist conventions like **chor.com** that interest groups spring up, and projects are initiated which further enhance the choral scene. Incidentally, thanks to the large number of lecturers at the convention who run seminars in English, it is quite possible for non-German speakers to attend.

EMOTION

I was especially moved and happy to see my colleagues in person again, and I know I speak for all of them when I say this. At last, we could have live conversations. At last, we could talk about something other than “How long is this going to go on?; “Are you allowed to

rehearse?; “What is the best software for online rehearsals?” At last, members of the choral scene had the opportunity to have the live conversations that they had wanted for so long – and some that they had not actively wanted but which turned out to be very lively, simply because they were new and unexpected. For many of them it felt like a breath of fresh air after 2 years spent indoors.

Of course, there was emotion of the musical sort in this year’s **Chor.com**. The 4-day convention offered several top-quality concerts, as well as the workshops and conducting master classes. The Covid rules in Germany had varied from state to state, although all of them had banned live concerts. But in summer 2021, musical life cautiously restarted, with social distancing, masks, QPR registering, contact-tracing forms and limited audience numbers. At **Chor.com**, the churches and concert halls could only be half filled (this also applied the workshop spaces, and here we must offer grateful thanks to the staff of the German Association of Choirs,

who put in place unprecedentedly complicated arrangements in order to make the event possible.) Yes, there were queues, and entry to the concerts was by ticket only, but the event took place, providing the opportunity for ensembles from different countries to meet other participants in person for the first time in 2 years. Hearing of the difficulties my colleagues had dealt with, I felt privileged when I sat down at what promised to be the best concert of the whole event. And so it turned out to be. The sounds produced by the Norwegian Soloists’ Choir, directed by Greta Pedersen, had me spellbound in my seat for the whole hour, and I was powerfully reminded of how worthwhile all the complicated arrangements had been - the many hygiene measures, the purchasing of hundreds of testing kits, the careful measuring of the spaces between the orchestra seats. I feel eternally grateful to have been at that concert, and at other ones by Barberpapas and the Collegium Vocale of Ghent. My heart was gladdened by the warmth and the music in Hanover.





has not succeeded in silencing choral music and that during this time choral organisations have not been idle – quite the contrary. Here at the IFCM we are hoping, as you all are, that the developments in the pandemic will mean that it will not again prevent events like ours. Certainly, September 2022 is already firmly in our calendar, when the World Choral Expo will take place in Lisbon, and where the IFCM will mark its birthday – with much celebration, emotion and inspiration.

Translated by Caroline Maxwell, UK

INSPIRATION

Like so many of the meetings of our choral associations, **Chor.com** is much more than just an annual event in the calendar. It inspires a wonderful mix of conversations in corners and corridors, watching our colleagues in action, brainstorming on relevant topics, listening to top choirs, discovering the unexpected, and rummaging eagerly through music publishers' lists in search of new material.

Almost 1000 people went home from this event not only fulfilled, but inspired with new motivation, and reassured that the choral music scene is still alive, that the pandemic



All pictures in this article © Rüdiger Schestag



ISABELLE MÉTROPE is a singer, a conductor and the managing editor of the *International Choral Bulletin*. She studied applied languages and music management, as well as conducting, singing and pedagogy, which is the cause as well as the result of a compulsive curiosity naturally leading to a strong interest in systematic musicology. Apart from singing solo and in several professional choirs, her favorite activities includes page setting, translating, baking cakes, taking pictures and travelling around the Mediterranean. Email: icb.editor@ifcm.net

4TH INTERNATIONAL CHORAL COMPOSITION COMPETITION DEDICATED TO KOMITAS VARDAPET

The song that rises above the snowy peaks of Armenia

ANDREA ANGELINI

Choral Director, Composer, Music Journalist

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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This article was first published on the blog DIRIGO (at www.dirigo.cloud) of the Italian Choral Directors Association.

It is not at all easy to talk about Armenia and Armenians.

As with all peoples pummelled by history, one always swings between a certain reverential awe, with the risk of falling into the easily rhetorical, and compassion.

Furthermore, it is no mean undertaking to attempt to understand a people and its past in the space of a week's visit, and what comes out is always a mixture of expectations, feelings, and a tourist's eye that can never be separated from the history still so freshly felt. When you are squeezed between such historically powerful neighbours (Armenia is encompassed by Turkey, Iran and Azerbaijan, and has been engaged in a conflict with the latter which has dragged on for over twenty years), you don't have much of a

choice: either you succumb, or you develop a dignity that allows you to maintain a balance, albeit precarious, between events greater than yourself.

The Armenians have repeatedly been on the verge of succumbing, that is, of being entirely wiped off of the global map. The result of enduring such threat – of surviving it – is that everything becomes identity, everything is meaning, and everything is a testimony to your existence and your history.

That said, for those of us who practice choral music, there is a positive story to tell!

At first glance, Yerevan does not appear to be a city where choral music can occupy an important place in the national culture. But those who, know The Armenian Little Singers, as I do, will understand that this is not the case. Chaotic yet fascinating, rich in history and emotion like few others, the cradle of Christian



Armenian Little Singers performing the final concert

civilisation, Yerevan, reveals some remarkable choral gems on closer inspection. The first: I have often wondered what impetus, what love could motivate its director, Tigran Hekekyan, to devote a good part of his life to this incredible choir. From my privileged point of observation (I spent a few days elbow to elbow with him) I can say that what he does is not far from self-sacrifice. Tigran can handle two phone calls at once, each ear having its own device. While doing so, he can also answer my questions or drive (even in the dust cloud trailing an ambulance) in the hectic traffic of the capital. Secondly, his choir: The Armenian Little Singers are more than a choral outfit, they are primarily a family that adores its teacher and director. Tigran is strict in conducting rehearsals, he wants absolute rhythmic precision and beauty of sound. He is then, however, able to address the girls (and the two boys) as the most loving of fathers addresses his child.

Such a fertile substratum is clearly conducive to the emergence and flourishing of excellent choral activity. One of such emergences is the *International Choral Competition*, now in its fourth year and dedicated to Father Komitas, born Soghomon Gevorki Soghomonyan, in Armenian **Սողոմոն Գևորգի Սողոմոնյան**) on 26 September 1869 (Gregorian calendar 8 October 1869), who died on 22 October 1935. He was a religious man, a composer, a musician and a musicologist, as well as being considered the father of modern Armenian music. The competition, which began before the pandemic, was part of the celebrations in honour of the 150th

anniversary of his birth. In the first stage, 27 composers from all over the world took part. The choral scores had to be composed with The Armenian Little Singers in mind (i.e. equal voices, SSA or SSAA). The preliminary jury, composed for the occasion by Oscar Escalada (Argentina), Jennifer Tham (Singapore), Andrea Angelini (Italy), Damijan Močnik (Slovenia), Arthur Aharonian (France), Vahram Sargsyan (Canada), Davit Haladjian (Switzerland) and Tigran Hekekyan (Armenia), selected three pieces for the final stage which would take place almost two years later, due to Covid-19 restrictions. With great determination, the final stage was eventually reached on 18 October 2021. During this performance, held during a superb concert, The Armenian Little Singers performed the three final pieces in front of the jury once again including myself, as well as David Haladjian (Switzerland), Vagharshak Zakaryan, Ruben Asatryan, Yervand Yerkanyan, Grigor Danielyan, David Zakaryan and Tigran Hekekyan, all from Armenia. In the end, the following results were unanimously decided: first prize to Sevan Gharibyan (Armenia) for the song 'Nazan-Nabiko', second prize to Sarah Shoham (Israel) for the song



Andrea Angelini and Tigran Hekekyan



An old Christian Church

'Waiting at the Window' and third prize to Mel McIntyre (England) for the song 'A Railway Carriage'.

One cannot fully understand this country without paying homage to *Tsitsernakaberd*, the Armenian Genocide memorial. And this is where we went the next day: myself, with perhaps a more historical approach, and Tigran with pain in his soul. It is a huge and impressive building inside which you can lay flowers around a fire that burns continuously. Next to it you can see two pillars, one symbolising Western Armenia (used to refer to an area currently in Turkish territory) and Eastern Armenia. On the night of 24 April 1915, the horrendous and systematic extermination of the Armenian people in the territories of the Ottoman Empire began. In just one month, more than a thousand intellectuals, including journalists, writers, poets and even parliamentary delegates were deported to the interior of Anatolia and massacred along the way. In the death marches, hundreds of thousands died of starvation, disease or exhaustion. Ultimately, about one and a half million Christian Armenians were massacred. The visit was very moving and, as far as I am concerned, was the real turning point in my understanding the determination in which drives the Armenian people in everything they do, including choral music. Outside, on the large esplanade from which I looked northwards, towards the summit of Mount Ararat, a strong wind seemed to be impregnated with harmonious sounds. Tigran then explained to me that a little further on is the *Garden of the Righteous*, and it dawned on me with full clarity that beautiful people always sing from the heart.

Edited by Sam Hemsworth, UK



Jury of the final step



Born in Bologna, Italy, ANDREA ANGELINI studied piano at the Conservatories of Rimini and Ferrara, where he graduated with distinction. He later obtained a master's degree in Choral Music and Choir Direction at the Conservatory of Music in Cesena. He studied Renaissance choral music in England and in Rome. He is the artistic director of the professional group Musica Ficta Vocal Ensemble. For many years, Andrea Angelini conducted concerts with the choir Carla Amori, in Italy and abroad. He has also conducted, as guest conductor, many important choral groups. He has been a jury member in numerous international choir competitions in Italy, Europe and Asia. He often conducts choral music seminars in Italy and abroad. (Hungary, Malaysia, Russia, China, Moldova, Romania, Croatia, Indonesia). Mr. Angelini is also the artistic director of the Rimini International Choral Competition, Claudio Monteverdi Choral Competition, Festival and Choral Competition Queen of the Adriatic Sea and Liviu Borlan Choral Festival. He was the editorial director of the International Choral Bulletin (ICB), the magazine of the IFCM (International Federation for Choral Music) and is now the editorial director of Dirigo, the magazine of the ANDCI. He is currently President of AERCO, the Regional Association of Choirs of Emilia-Romagna. Email: thechoralconductor@gmail.com





CHORAL TECHNIQUE



CONCERT DESIGN
Astrid Vang-Pedersen

CONCERT DESIGN

ASTRID VANG-PEDERSEN

Conductor, Denmark

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BACKGROUND

During studies at The Royal Danish Academy of Music, I became curious about the many conventions concert performances entail, and I became motivated to investigate what would happen if we developed a wider perspective on the concert event. This marked the beginning of my research. In 2018 I completed my Ph.D.: "Concert Design – an investigation into the potential of Classical Concerts as creatively designed events".

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project investigated how "design" can performatively change the familiar concert setup through theatrical devices, interdisciplinary dramaturgies, and site-specific interventions. Through combining academic research with studies of alternative concert productions and my own exploratory concert cases, the research demonstrated how a meaningful present-day concert may be designed as a unified interdisciplinary event.

Essentially, the contribution of the research is my concept of **Concert Design**. The Concert Design Concept consists of a Concert Design Model, a Concert Design Process and Concert Design Methods, which have also proved to be useful beyond the classical music scene including a variety of musical genres.

The Concert Design Model prescribes how the musical repertoire and the three *performing aspects* (Performers, Audience and Performance Space), may

constitute flexible relationships in a performance through the creative engagement with six Concert Design Principles:

1. Story
2. Structure
3. Sensory
4. Surprise
5. Specificity
6. Shared

CONCERT DESIGN METHODS

While the Concert Design Principles are useful when conceptualizing an event, the execution of concepts rely on the skills of the performers.

Performer Development focuses on the performer's responsibility and desire to engage an audience through reflections on and development of own performance. Basically the core question we as performers must ask ourselves is "why" should an audience come to this performance, "what" experience do we aim to give them, and "how" can we underline our musical message through performance?"

The research points to the following areas:

1. Performers Development: *The embodied perspective*
2. Creating a scene: *The aesthetic, visual and spatial perspective*
3. Concert Design Concept: *The holistic perspective*

1. Performers Development: The embodied perspective

As musical performers, our instruments are naturally linked to our bodies. We produce sound as singers and as musicians we internalize awareness on musical elements such as rhythmical patterns, singing on pitch,

developing diversity in sound and expression and consequently externalizing the interpretation of the musical material.

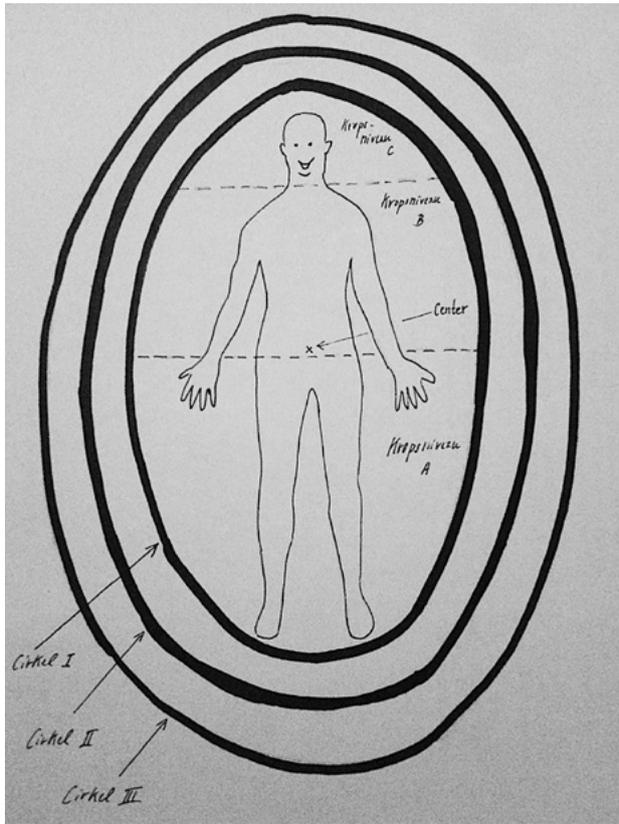
Historically, there has been little focus on developing the expression and perception of the performing body when performing classical music. Being an ensemble singer or musician is conventionally perceived as a neutral role, that does not require "performing" in a dramatic or communicating way – the music "performs" on its own. Hence the natural starting point for Performers Development is a restored awareness of the body as an expressive and communicating performer.

A simplistic model of the body divided into three levels may work as a guideline:

- Level A – From hips and down (Grounding, primal power & vertical focus)
- Level B – Torso (Heart, emotion & horizontal focus)
- Level C – Head (Intellectual, ethereal, spiritual & vertical focus)

The levels provide tangible tools to use when articulating common intentions, for instance: "'what' are we communicating right now, and from 'where' is this communication deriving?" The levels may also be helpful when speaking practically or metaphorically about the common *sound* we as an ensemble are pursuing. Working practically on body awareness involves incorporating physical exercises in the beginning and during rehearsal to keep the focus present. A greater awareness of the body enables

variety in how to position singers and musicians on stage as well as the potential of incorporating movement or choreographies.



Model: Bodily levels, center and Stanislavskij's circles of attention, Illustration: Astrid Vang-Pedersen

An Image of Me in the World

Russian actor and teacher Konstantin Stanislavskij (1863-1938) developed a technique for teaching actors, which involved the "Four circles of attention". Each circle symbolizes a point of attention, where circle one is attention on one self, circle two out towards others around you nearby, circle three includes the rest of the world and circle four the universal aspect of being.

"You may always, anytime during a show, in front of thousands of people looking at you, pull yourself back to the solitude (of the small circle), just like a snail recedes to its shell" (Stanislavskij 1988, p.136)

The circles represent another useful tool in verbalizing where focus is while performing a certain section of a piece, not as a drama or an act, but as a direct or indirect communication between performers and audiences.

- Circle 1 (Me, also referred to as "Home")
- Circle 2 (Me and my immediate group)
- Circle 3 (Me, my immediate group and everyone else, including audience)
- Circle 4 (Me, and everything I can encounter, and the universal aspect of being)

2. Creating a Scene: Staging & Choreography

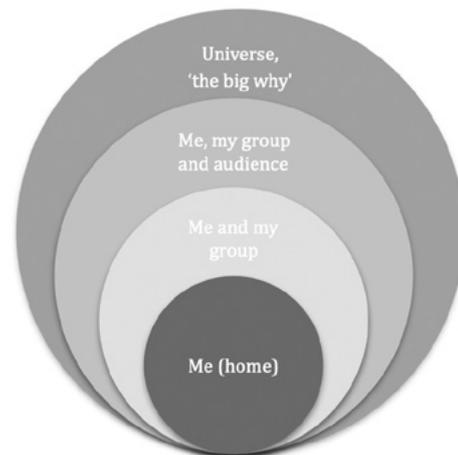
When staging a scene – a musical piece – in the rehearsal room, the primary focus is on the potential visual expression of the embedded musical qualities. Oftentimes I begin by constructing *possible* ways of staging a piece by drawing on a piece of paper. I mark the performers with x and their movements with arrows. Sometimes one piece requires many drawings that match the sections of the music. I bring the idea to rehearsal, where I try out the staging with the performers. Through repeated rehearsals, adjustments are made and bodily expressions and circles of attention are added to the performance.

The staging of a piece is a combined embodied, visual and spatial act. The music may call for certain spatiality, due to its composition or in the technicality of its performance. But the space also informs the staging just as the performers do. Sometimes a **Concert Design** is created with a specific space in mind, like a "site-specific," and sometimes it is developed purely on the basis of the music and the performers, and must be adjusted accordingly in the performance space.

3. Concert Design: A holistic approach to the performative event

Put in simple terms, a concert is a number of "scenes" put together into a rundown. This is where the musical pieces are lined up in a *narrative* or a dramatic curve shaping the performance. It is this part of the Concert Design Process that invites engagement with the Concert Design Principles.

The overarching Concert Design Principles are: *Story* and *Structure*, where *Story* is what guides the staging of both specific pieces and overall rundowns. *Structure* places the event in between a *before* and *after* – adding the perspective that the overall experience includes what happens right *before* and right *after*. The



Circles of attention/communication applied in Concert Design, inspired by Stanislavskij's acting method.

principles of *Sensory* and *Surprise* are incorporated in how the space informs the design, and how it inspires choreography, clothing, lighting, scenography etc., while *Specificity* and *Shared* focus on *who* we are as performers, *who* our audiences are and what we share.

To summarize **Concert Design** is the creative and reflective act of viewing the entire event as a holistic experience, where visual, embodied and spatial elements influence and underline the musical message and the engagement of audiences.

For further reading, rehearsal exercises and examples of Concert Design visit:

www.concertdesign.dk

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Edited by Patricia Abbott, Canada



Dopplers NORD © Chad Tyler Charlton - CTC Photography



Astrid Vang © Jim Hjernø - o barré à la danoise



ASTRID VANG-PEDERSEN has developed the concept Concert Design, through her doctoral work titled: *"Concert Design – an investigation into the potential of Classical Concerts as creatively designed events"*. The Concert Design concept consists of 6 Concert Design Principles that enable inspirational, innovative, relevant and unique musical performances. Astrid is the artistic director of Vocal Ensemble Dopplers, which emphasizes Concert Design in their performances. She works as a freelance educator and performance coach facilitating master-classes and workshops. Astrid has created an international choral collaboration UbuntuSong promoting cross-cultural understanding through singing. www.concertdesign.dk – www.dopplers.dk www.ubuntusong.com



COMPOSER'S CORNER



**2021 CENTENARY OF TWO ARGENTINE COMPOSERS
ASTOR PIAZZOLLA AND ARIEL RAMÍREZ**
Oscar Escalada

2021 CENTENARY OF TWO ARGENTINE COMPOSERS

Astor Piazzolla and Ariel Ramírez

OSCAR ESCALADA

Conductor, Argentina

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#) [Artículo en español](#) [Article en français](#)

1921 was a significant year in my life, as it was the birth year of three influential people who, in the course of their lives, made a strong impression on my profession as a musician: my mother, Astor Piazzolla and Ariel Ramírez.

Of my mother, I can say it was she who supported me in the critical moment of decision between medicine and music.

Piazzolla, in particular, has been influential in that my contact with the academic world was largely through him. We also share the same record production company and some television programs.

As for Ariel Ramírez, my initial introduction was through singing his *Misa Criolla*, followed by later years in which, on repeated occasions, I conducted the piece with him at the piano.

Piazzolla was born in Mar del Plata on March 11, and while he was still a child, his parents emigrated to the United States where they settled in Brooklyn.

This fact is not insignificant because his characteristic rhythmic style following the 3+3+2 formula (Fig. 1) emerged as a result of the influence of a childhood friend from a Jewish family who lived in the same building. Both families held shared gatherings in their homes where the young Astor heard that same rhythm.



Fig. 1

Ramírez was born in the City of Santa Fe on the 4th of September of the same year.

Like Piazzolla, he experienced events outside his country that had a definitive influence on his compositions.

While traveling through Germany, he met two nuns at the Mariannahill Convent in the city of Würzburg where he stayed. Both told him that a nearby house operated as a concentration camp where those detained would be sent to their deaths.

The nuns had found a hole under the surrounding defenses where, each night, they left a package with food that disappeared the next morning. They did this every night until the year in which they found it untouched.

The episode had a great impact on Ariel's spirit and sowed in him the desire to compose a religious piece in tribute to these nuns who had risked their lives to help people they never met.

With the advent of the Second Vatican Council, great changes have taken place in the Catholic Church, including the use of the local language in liturgical song.

Ramírez's college classmate in Santa Fe, who became Bishop Catena, suggested that he compose a mass in Spanish. Ariel was inspired and finally wrote the piece, basing it on his deep interest in telluric influences, which led him to use musical forms with roots in folklore.

The *Misa Criolla* was dedicated to the Mariannahill nuns, Sisters Elizabeth and Regina Brückner.

It is interesting to see how both composers drew on their musical traditions as a basis for the subsequent development of their works. In Ramírez's case, the Bishop was key, and in Piazzolla's, Nadia Boulanger.

The connection between the composers' works and choral singing, however, is not an outcome of their own efforts. In the *Misa Criolla*, R. P. Segade was responsible for realizing the choral version, and those of Piazzolla's works also belong to third party arrangements, except in the case of the opera, *María de Buenos Aires*.

Both composers created comprehensive, fully developed works wherein Ramírez, in addition to the *Misa Criolla*, composed *Navidad Nuestra*, *Los Caudillos* and *Mujeres Argentinas*, which includes the world-famous *Alfonsina y el Mar*.

For his part, Piazzolla was inspired by Antonio Vivaldi to compose the *Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*, a group of four tangos for each season with the addition of the term "Porteño"¹. He also composed *La Serie del Ángel* and the aforementioned opera, *María de Buenos Aires*.

There are differences between the compositional techniques of each composer. In the case of Piazzolla, being a student of Alberto Ginastera

1 Inhabitants of Buenos Aires

and also obtaining his scholarship for study with Nadia Boulanger endowed him with an excellent facility with the orchestra, acquired through the former, and great compositional training via the latter.

Nadia was, by Piazzolla's own definition, the most important woman in his life, second only to his mother, in that Boulanger provided him with the impetus to make his own music against all adversity.

And, oh, how he did! Tango traditionalists believed he had destroyed tango. To the contrary. In my opinion, what he did was ground his work in the most traditional aspects of tango while giving the form wings to fly without limits. He did not deprive himself of the use of the sonata form or fugues or of expanding it harmonically, or of adding improvisations and even doing a 3/4 tango.

I believe that his Libertango is a dramatization of what I've mentioned above. In the first place, it is noteworthy that, as a name, he used two words that represent topics of the highest value for him: freedom and tango. Hence, Libertango.²

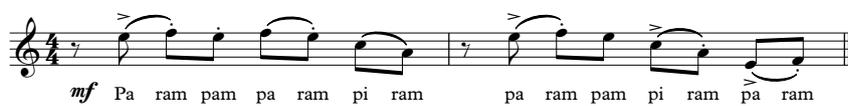


Fig. 2

It is a very interesting composition based on a consistent ostinato (Fig. 2) that remains present throughout the work, sometimes complete, sometimes segmented, but always active.

I feel a sense of freedom when it reaches the bridge. (Fig. 3) I don't believe he used the ostinato for its own sake. Rather, I believe that he was looking for a way to express his ability to emerge victorious over a disparaging reiteration, one that tethered him to a tradition seeking its own path of development. And when he found it, he produced that marvelously liberating profusion that, while still preserving traditional roots, enriched them without discarding them.



Fig. 3

² The attached examples are from the arrangement I made for SATB with the permission of Neil. A Kjos, Music Publishers, and of the Gloria by Warner/Chappel Argentina.

Ramírez is more measured in his creation because, although he had the virtue of generating comprehensive works in the field of Argentine folklore, the internal structure offers beautiful melodies and a broader harmony with great beauty and, in some cases, engages in a nonobservance of form for the benefit of the text. But he maintains full control of the work. He adds no improvisations, nor are his harmonies that disruptive.

For example, the Credo declares that it is a "truncated *chacarera*". In fact, it is not, neither due to its form nor because of its distribution of accents³.

Of course, he could never have stayed with the *chacarera* form because the long text of the Credo would not have allowed it.

But the use of the *chacarera's* lively rhythm is very apt for the expression of the Credo. An interesting detail is that the work is in the minor mode but changes to major at the moment in which the text talks about the resurrection of Christ. This type of logogenesis⁴ has been used by other composers, but it is remarkable that it has served him in fulfilling his purpose of "Mettere il testo in musica" [put the text to music] as Zarlino used to say.⁵

In the Gloria, he suitably alternates between the *carnavalito* (Fig. 4), which is a free dance in binary form, and a slower *yaraví* (Fig 5), a sweet and melancholic song from the Andean highlands. The work uses an introduction with a charango

³ The *chacarera* is a choreographed dance. If it does not maintain the form, it cannot be danced. It is truncated when the rhythm concludes on the third beat of the 3/4 time signature.

⁴ Logogenesis comes from the Greek: *logos* – word – and *genan* – give birth, origin. It is the relationship of the text to the music.

⁵ Gioseffo Zarlino, Italian composer, music theorist of the Renaissance

Carnavalito ♩=88

Tenor: en las al - tu-ras paz a los hom-bres Paz a los

S.: *p* Glo-ria a Dios y en la tie-rra paz a los hom-bres paz

A.: *p* Glo-ria a Dios y en la tie-rra paz paz

T.: *p* Glo-ria a Dios y en la tie-rra paz paz

B.: *p* Glo-ria a Dios y en la tie-rra paz paz

Fig. 4

Tenor: *ad lib.* Se-ñor, Hi jo ú ni co... Je su cris to...

S.: *ad lib.* U

A.: *ad lib.* U

T.: *ad lib.* U

B.: *ad lib.* (b.c.)

Fig. 5



OSCAR ESCALADA is a teacher, composer, conductor, writer and editor of choral music. He is also President of the Argentine Association for Choral Music "America Cantat" (AAMCANT), a former member of the Board of Directors of the IFCM and a member of the Argentine Federal Organization of Choral Activities (OFADAC). He has given lectures for such events as ACDA conventions, IFCM symposiums and Europa Cantat as well as given workshops and seminars and adjudicated throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia. Escalada is the founder of the Children's Choir of the Opera House of Buenos Aires, the Coral del Nuevo Mundo, the Seminar of the Conservatory of La Plata and the Youth Choir at the University of La Plata. The Argentine Senate awarded him for his work in the choral world and for his essay "Music and National Identity". He leads the Latin American Choral Music series at the Neil A. Kjos Music Company in California, and he is an honorary member of the Associazione Nazionala Direttori di Coro Italiani. Email: escalada@isis.unlp.edu.ar



– a small chordophone from the altiplano – the melody of which will be reused in the yaraví by the choir *a bocca chiusa*, perhaps representing the winds of that plain surrounded by mountains.

The choice of both musical varieties is very successful since the *carnavalito* is a happy dance appropriate to the text, "Glory to God in the highest...", etc., and the slow *yaraví* appropriate to the introspective song of "Lord and only son, Jesus Christ ...", etc.

Astor Piazzolla wrote works for the orchestra, such as the *Concierto for bandoneón*, and more than 30 orchestral arrangements. He also wrote for various groups and for tango orchestras for his most cherished tango, *Adiós Nonino*, dedicated to his father who, as Piazzolla was told while on tour in New York, had passed away.

But his volume of production is enormous, reportedly more than 2000 compositions and innumerable arrangements for each of them.

Also prolific was Ariél Ramírez, who was President of SADAIC, the Argentine Society of Music Authors and Composers, as well. Although his work was more intimate, always linked to telluric rhythms, he has made very important contributions. Of these, I highlight his production of comprehensive and extensive works because, until his arrival, folklore was limited to brief works, characteristic of the style.

Astor Piazzolla passed away on July 4, 1992, and Ariel Ramírez on February 18, 2010.

Thank you Astor and thank you Ariel for having been able to enter that so-exquisite world from which moments of beauty and emotion can be offered to the delight of your fellows.

Translated by Joel Hageman, USA



- 39▶ Choral Canada - Podium 2022
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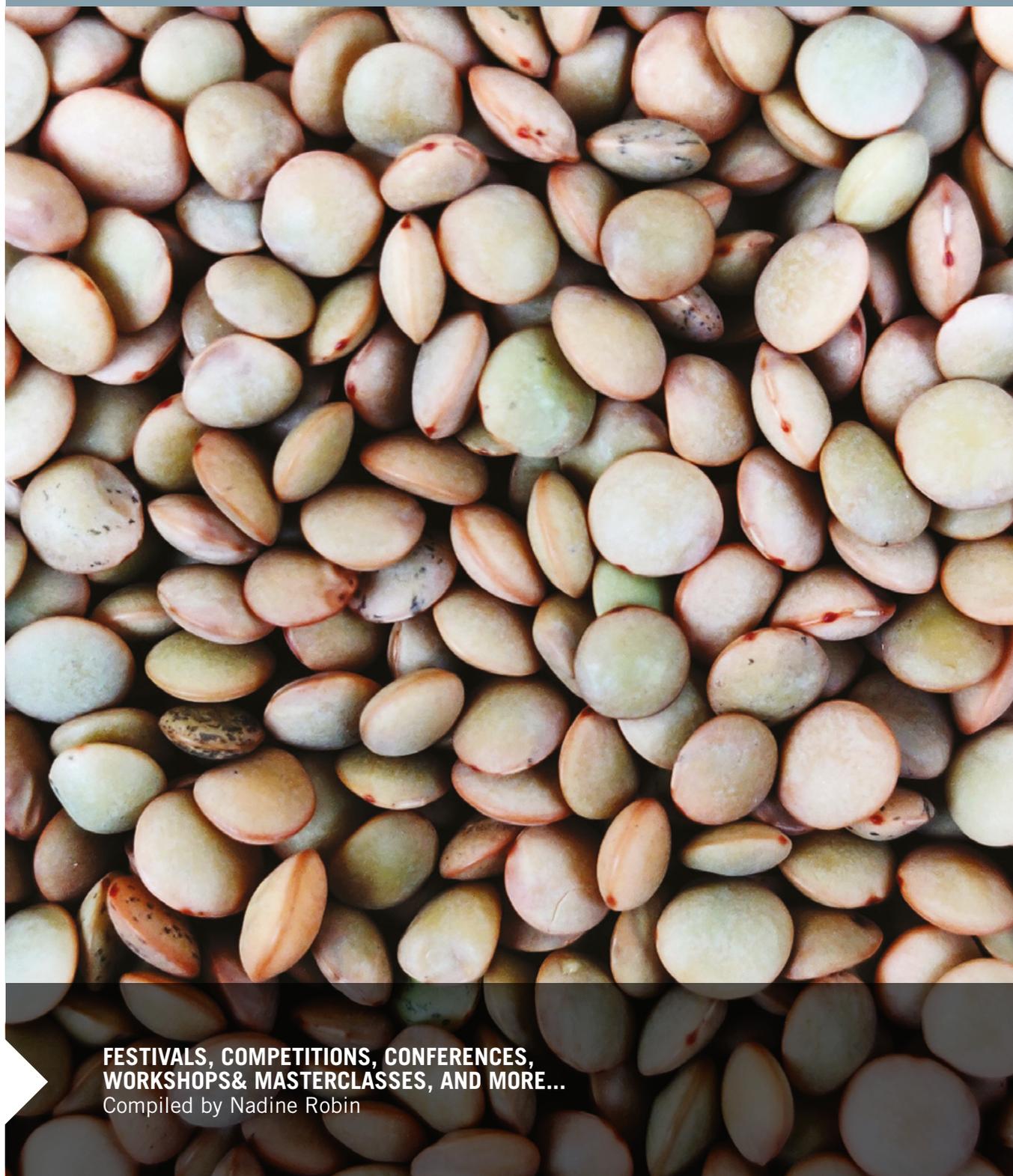
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CHORAL CALENDAR

CHORAL CALENDAR



**FESTIVALS, COMPETITIONS, CONFERENCES,
WORKSHOPS & MASTERCLASSES, AND MORE...**
Compiled by Nadine Robin

Although we thrive to update this choral calendar with new dates for postponed festivals, we haven't been able to check the status of all these festivals listed here below. Many of them also opted for an online event. So please visit their website and show them your interest and your support. Thank you!

Singing in Castara, Trinidad and Tobago, 20-27 Feb 2022. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: lucy@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

ON STAGE in Israel, Israel, 9-13 Mar 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Fingal International Festival of Voices, Dublin, Ireland, 10-13 Mar 2022. Contact: Fingal International Festival of Voices, Email: manager@fingalfestivalofvoices.com - Website: <https://www.fingalfestivalofvoices.com>

10th International Gdansk Choir Festival, Poland, 11-13 Mar 2022. Contact: mail@gdanskfestival.pl - Website: <http://www.gdanskfestival.pl>

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Rome, Italy, 17-21 Mar 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <https://home.music-contact.com/>

Discover Puerto Rico and its Choral Music, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 18-21 Mar 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Corsham Voice Workshop, United Kingdom, 20-25 Mar 2022. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 23-27 Mar 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

ON STAGE in Verona, Italy, 24-27 Mar 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Verona International Choral Competition, Verona, Italy, 30 Mar-2 apr 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://www.music-contact.com/>

Voices & Wine Alba, Italy, 7-11 Apr 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Vox Lucensis, Lucca, Italy, 9-13 Apr 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

16th Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del Garda, Italy, 10-14 Apr 2022. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Slovakia Cantat, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 21-24 Apr 2022. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Dartmouth Music Week, United Kingdom, 24-29 Apr 2022. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

15th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 27 Apr-1 May 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

15th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 27 Apr-1 May 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

67th Cork International Choral, Ireland, 27 Apr-1 May 2022. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

20th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 27 Apr-1 May 2022. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival, United Kingdom, 28 Apr-2 May 2022. Contact: Rob Elliott, Festival Director, Email: rob@cimcf.uk - Website: www.cimcf.uk

22nd Statys imkus Choir Competition, Klaip da, Lithuania, 12-15 May 2022. Contact: Klaipeda Choir Association „AUKURAS“; Email: aukuras@ku.lt or simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com - Website: <https://www.aukuras.org/simkus>

We Are Singing Cracow International Choral Festival, Poland, 13-15 May 2022. Contact: - Website: <https://www.wearesinging.org/festival-we-are-singing-cracow>

International Choral Competition Ave Verum 2021, Baden, Austria, 13-15 May 2022. Contact: Wolfgang Ziegler, chairman, Email: aveverum.baden@gmail.com - Website: www.aveverum.at

SING FOR GOLD, The World Choral Cup, Calella/ Barcelona, Spain, 14-22 May 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Ambleside Music Week, United Kingdom, 15-20 May 2022. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: lucy@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

12th International festival of choirs and orchestras, Venice, Jesolo, Italy, 18-22 May 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: post@musikreisenfaszination.de - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

ON STAGE in Florence, Italy, 19-22 May 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

13th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 24-29 May 2022. Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: info@ejcf.ch - Website: www.ejcf.ch

Meeting of Children's and Youth Choirs, Thuir, France, 25-29 May 2022. Contact: , Email: Alix.Bourrat@Orange.Fr - Website: <https://choraethuir.wixsite.com/chanterie-cantilene/festival-jvm-2022>

CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 26-29 May 2022. Contact: CantaRode, Email: info@cantarode.nl - Website: www.cantarode.nl

Dublin & Belfast Choral Festival 2022 with John Dickson, Ireland, June 2022. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

17th International Chamber Choir Competition Marktoberdorf, Germany, 3-7 June 2022. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: <https://www.kammerchorwettbewerb.org>

ON STAGE in Albania, Tirana, Albania, 8-12 June 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Bratislava Choir Festival, Slovak Republic, 9-12 June 2022. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

2021 Choral Festival in Ireland with John Dickson, Belfast and Dublin, Ireland, 11-16 June 2022. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

Beethoven Choral Festival, Vienna, Austria, 12-16 June 2022. Contact: Music Celebrations International, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <https://beethoven250.org/choral-festival/>

Dublin Choral Festival, Ireland, 15-19 June 2022. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <http://dublinchoralfestival.org/>

Krakow International Choral Festival, Poland, 15-19 June 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

25th Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, 1st GREEN EDITION, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy/Austria, 15-19 June 2022. Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival Office, Email: info@festivalpusteria.org - Website: www.festivalpusteria.org

Grieg International Choir Festival and NINA Solo Competition for Young Singers, Bergen, Norway, 16-19 June 2022. Contact: Annlaug Hus, Email: post@griegfestival.no - Website: www.griegfestival.no

International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 16-20 June 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

49th International Competition Florilège Vocal de Tours, France, 17-19 June 2022. Contact: Florilège Vocal de Tours, Email: contact@florilegevocal.com - Website: www.florilegevocal.com

Montréal Choral Festival 2022 with Rollo Dillworth, Canada, 18-22 June 2022. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

Italian Alpine Choral Festival, Dolomites, South Tyrol, Italy, 22-26 June 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <https://home.music-contact.com/>

Rome Choral Festival, Rome, Italy, 22-26 June 2022. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <http://romechoralfestival.org/>

International Festival Verona Garda Estate, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, Vicenza, Italy, 23 June-11 July 2022. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu - Website: www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu

Per Musicam Ad Astra, International Copernicus Choir Festival and Competition, Toru , Poland, 25-29 June 2022. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

20th Nordic Choral Directors Conference, Reykjavík, Iceland, 27-29 June 2022. Contact: FÍK - Félag íslenskra kórstjóra, Email: conference2022@nordklangkorfestival.org - Website: <https://conference.nordklangkorfestival.org>

Salzburg Choral Festival Jubilate Mozart!, Austria, 29 June-2 July 2022. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <https://salzburgchoralfestival.org/>

6th International Choir and Orchestra Festival, Budapest, Hungary, 29 June-3 July 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: post@musikreisenfaszination.de - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

18th Nordklang Festival 2022, Reykjavík, Iceland, 29 June-2 July 2022. Contact: FÍK - Félag íslenskra kórstjóra, Email: nordklang2022@nordklangkorfestival.org - Website: <https://nordklang.nordklangkorfestival.org>

International Cantus Music & Culture Festival – Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria, 30 June-3 July 2022. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

28th Béla Bartók International Choir Competition and Folklore Festival, Debrecen, Hungary, July 2022. Contact: Fonix Event Organizing NP LLC., Email: info@bbcc.hu - Website: www.bbcc.hu

Festival of Voices, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 1-14 July 2022. Contact: Festival of Voices Tasmania, Email: info@festivalofvoices.com - Website: <https://festivalofvoices.com/>

2022 Choral Festival in Ireland with Rollo Dilworth, Prague, Czech Republic, 1-6 July 2022. Contact: Klconcerts, Email: info@klconcerts.com - Website: www.klconcerts.com

1st Competition for Choirs Directors, Preveza, Greece, July 2022. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Prevesa, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

15th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 1-6 July 2022. Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

57th Barcelona International Choir Festival goes online!, Spain, 4-10 July 2022. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: fcec@fcec.cat - Website: www.fcec.cat

12th World Choir Games, Gangneung, Gangwon, Korea (Democratic People's Rep. of), 4-14 July 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

40th International Choir Festival of Preveza, 26th International Choir Competition, Preveza, Greece, 4-10 July 2022. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Prevesa, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

5th Seminar for Choir Conductor, Preveza, Greece, 4-6 July 2022. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Prevesa, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

International Choral Kathaumixw, Powell River, Canada, 5-9 July 2022. Contact: Powell River Academy of Music, Email: info@kathaumixw.org - Website: www.kathaumixw.org

International Youth Music Festival I & Slovakia Folk, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 6-9 July 2022. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Istanbul International Chorus Festival and Competition, Istanbul, Turkey, 6-10 July 2022.

Contact: Istanbul Harman Folklor, Email: istanbul@istanbulchorus.com - Website: <http://www.harmanfolk.com/avrasya.htm>

International Choir Festival InCanto Mediterraneo, Milazzo (Sicily), Italy, 10-16 July 2022.

Contact: Associazione Corale "Cantica Nova", Email: festival@festivalincantomediterraneo.it - Website: www.festivalincantomediterraneo.it

International Boys and Men's Choral Festival, Flagstaff, Arizona, USA, 12-19 July 2022.

Contact: IBMCF, Email: IBMCF@internationalchoralfestival.com - Website: www.internationalchoralfestival.com

International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 13-16 July 2022.

Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: info@choralfestival.org - Website: www.choralfestival.org

11th Musica Eterna Roma International Choir Festival and Competition, Italy, 16-20 July 2022.

Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

European Seminar for Young Choral Composers, Aosta, Italy, 17-24 July 2022.

Contact: FENIARCO (Italian Federation of Regional Choir Associations), Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

Chanakkale International Choir Festival and Competition, Chanakkale, Turkey, 19-24 July 2022.

Contact: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Email: info@canakkalekorofestivali.com - Website: <http://www.canakkalekorofestivali.com/>

International Youth Music Festival II and Bratislava Cantat I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 25-28 July 2022.

Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Leading Voices, Utrecht, Netherlands, 27-31 July 2022.

Contact: Stichting Europa Cantat Utrecht, Email: info@leadingvoices.nl - Website: <https://leadingvoices.nl>

1st Classical Music Summer Festival, Vienna, Austria, 5-8 Aug 2022.

Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: office@concerts-austria.com - Website: <http://www.concerts-austria.com/summer-festival-vienna>

13th International Youth Chamber Choir Meeting, Usedom Island (Baltic Sea), Germany, 12-21 Aug 2022.

Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: info@amj-musik.de - Website: <https://www.usedom.amj-musik.de/en/>

Europa Cantat Junior Festival, Vilnius, Lithuania, 15-24 July 2022.

Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, Email: info@EuropaCantatJunior.org - Website: <https://europacantatjunior.org/2022/>

Riga Sings, International Choir Competition and Imants Kokars Choral Award, Riga, Latvia, 17-21 Aug 2022.

Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Brighton International Festival of Choirs, Brighton, United Kingdom, 2-5 Sep 2022.

Contact: Brighton International Festival of Choirs, Email: festival@brightonifc.com - Website: <https://www.brightonifc.com/>

IFCM World Choral Expo, Lisbon, Portugal, 3-7 Sep 2022.

Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: info@ifcm.net - Website: <https://www.worldchoralexpo.org>

Trogir Music Week, Croatia, 4-9 Sep 2022.

Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

EXchange!, Lisbon, Portugal, 5-7 Sep 2022.

Contact: The Singing Network, Email: Canada - Website: <http://www.singingnetwork.ca/exchange/>

Al Sole della Sardegna International Choral Festival, Sant'Antioco, Italy, 7-23 Sep 2022.

Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: info@festivalalsoledellasardegna.eu - Website: www.festivalalsoledellasardegna.eu

ForEverYoung International Choral Festival, Budapest, Hungary, 8-11 Sep 2022.

Contact: ForEverYoung Choral Festival, Email: info@fey-festival.com - Website: <http://www.fey-festival.com/>

ON STAGE in Lisbon, Portugal, 9-12 Sep 2022.

Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

4th Kalamata International Choir Competition and Festival, Greece, 22-26 Sep 2022.

Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**10th International Choir Festival & Competition
"Isola del Sole", Grado, Italy, 25-29 Sep 2022.**

Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Cracovia Music Festival 2021, Cracow, Poland, 28 Sep-2 Oct 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

16th International Choir Contest Flanders, Genk, Belgium, 30 Sep-1 Oct 2022. Contact: International Choir Contest Flanders, Email: ikv.vlaanderen@gmail.com - Website: <https://www.ikv-genk.be>

Internationales Chorfest, Magdeburg, Germany, 5-9 Oct 2022. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Sing'n'Joy Bohol, Tagbilaran City, Bohol, Philippines, 5-9 Oct 2022. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 6-9 Oct 2022. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Choral Workshops for International Oratorio choirs, Lake Garda, Italy, 13-16 Oct 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <http://choral-workshops.com>

We Are Singing Ljubljana International Choral Festival 2022, Slovenia, 21-23 Oct 2022. Contact: - Website: <https://www.wearesinging.org/festival-we-are-singing-ljubljana>

10th Canta al Mar International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 21-24 Oct 2022. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

ON STAGE in Prague, Czech Republic, 10-13 Nov 2022. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 1-4 Dec 2022.

Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

32nd International Franz Schubert Choir Competition, Vienna, Austria, 16-20 Mar 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

PODIUM 2022: Reimagine, Rebuild, Reconnect, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 19-23 May 2023. Contact: Choral Canada, Email: podium@choralcanada.org - Website: www.podiumconference.ca

Sound Waves Linz International Choir Competition & Festival, Austria, 7-11 June 2023. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choir Festival, Oakland, California, USA, 9-15 July 2023. Contact: Piedmont Choirs, Email: info@goldengatefestival.org - Website: <https://www.piedmontchoirs.org/golden-gate-festival>

13th International Choir Competition, Miltenberg, Bavaria, Germany, July 2023. Contact: Kulturreferat des Landratsamtes Miltenberg, Gaby Schmidt, Email: kultur@LRA-MIL.de - Website: www.chorwettbewerb-miltenberg.de

20th EUROTREFF 2021, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 6-10 Sep 2023. Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: info@amj-musik.de - Website: <http://www.eurotreff.amj-musik.de>

In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda & Arco, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Adriatic Pearl International Choir Festival & Competition, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 27-31 Oct 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com



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