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NEWS FROM IFCM

IFCM AND THE QATAR NATIONAL CHORAL ASSOCIATION WORKING ON THE WSCM 2023/24

In a historical first for the Middle East region, the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) welcomes the choral world to Qatar! At the moment, when humanity is facing one of the biggest pandemics in more than 50 years, cultural events around the globe are on hold. Nonetheless, IFCM and its partner, the Qatar National Choral Association (QNCA), are working hard on the next World Symposium on Choral Music – the WSCM 2023/24! The world’s largest, non-competitive, international choral event will be held in Doha, Qatar. We welcome you to a land steeped in tradition, yet open to the world.

The signing ceremony of first agreement between IFCM and QNCA was to have taken place at this year’s 12th WSCM in Auckland, New Zealand. Sadly, as with so many other events this year, WSCM2020 had to be cancelled. However, in the spirit of moving forward and better days ahead, we are happy to share a short [video](#) of the online official signing of the contract between IFCM and QNCA. Plan now to join us!



QATAR NATIONAL CHORAL ASSOCIATION: THE FIRST NON-PROFIT, LOCAL NGO REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF QATAR

The Qatar National Choral Association (QNCA) is the first local non-profit association established in Qatar. This is more significant than it might seem at first glance. Despite being a base for many international non-profit organizations, home to an impressive array of state funded charitable and non-profit institutions, and even host to important international events, until now there has been no legal framework within which Qatar’s many grassroots communities could operate officially. The local choral community’s successful search for government support of a bid to host the 2023 WSCM prompted the government of Qatar to assist the QNCA co-founders, Giovanni Pasini and Jennifer Taynen, in their efforts to build the necessary legal framework to register the organization.

The creation of this association marks a huge step in the development of the choral community of Qatar and has resulted in a legal framework that can now be used by the country’s vibrant civil society and diverse grassroots organizations to register and gain legal status.



For any cynic that needs proof of choral music's power to change the world, point them to Qatar and let them absorb how the power of human voices raised in song, can literally rewrite the law books of a nation.



From left to right: Gabor Móczár, IFCM Vice-President; Giovanni Pasini, 2023 WSCM Committee Chairman; Jennifer Taynen, QNCA Director; and Emily Kuo Vong, IFCM President. The visit by the IFCM delegation to Qatar during the negotiations to register the QNCA had a profoundly positive impact on moving the process forward. Here the group takes a break from work to explore the sand dunes surrounding Qatar's Inland Sea.

IFCM PARTNERS WITH JEUNESSES MUSICALES INTERNATIONAL ON THE WORLD MUSIC DAY

Building on the long-standing partnership between IFCM and [Jeunesses Musicales International](#) (JMI) and the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat as the founding patrons of the World Youth Choir, JMI recently invited IFCM to participate in its [2020 World Music Day Pop-up Festival](#) (June 20-21).

Traditionally *Fête de la Musique / World Music Day* focuses on bringing music out onto the streets and making it accessible to the public. In response to the physical restrictions necessitated by the global pandemic, this year the JMI World Music Day Pop-up Festival/Conference was presented as a virtual exhibition space during which IFCM presented some of its projects.

The festival also included various other activities such as live performances of youth musicians from around the world, roundtable discussions, workshops and training sessions with practitioners and specialists from the cultural sector, online music practice, and more. Our deepest thanks to JMI for this opportunity!



IFCM INVITED TO SEVERAL VIRTUAL DIALOGUES

How to return to activities, a virtual conference organized by Coros Portugal

On June 19th, 2020, [Coros Portugal - Associação Portuguesa de Música Coral](#), organized a virtual conference on the theme, How to return to activities, with a panel of choral leaders from Portugal, Catalonia, Spain and USA. Paulo Lourenço, Coros Portugal President and moderator of this panel, invited IFCM President, Emily Kuo Vong, to speak about IFCM plans for the future. Emily presented an optimistic view of the situation, stating that the pandemic has provided an opportunity for IFCM to reflect on the past and to think about the future: to learn, to research and to create. IFCM is seeking innovative online possibilities to support its members as they explore and discover new ways to continue their projects and activities in a Covid-19 world. An online music education project is being developed to promote IFCM and to provide a platform for online academic content delivered by renowned international choral experts. These specialists will contribute video lectures, integrative workshops, articles, livestreaming, video conference courses and seminars, masterclasses both live and digital. The aim is to reach a large international audience, especially in the developing countries, with accessible, first-class educational resources and materials and to the latest information on the activities of the world choral community.



Sing Your Soul, an initiative of Saint Angela Choir, Bandung, Indonesia



June 18, 2020, was the second time that the [Saint Angela Choir](#), its conductor Roni Sugiarto, and its manager Nicholas Rio organized a dialogue with conductors from around the world. For this second SAC Talk, Naomi Faran, conductor and musical director of [Moran Choir](#) (Israel), was invited to speak about the power of choral singing as a means for developing people's potential in various aspects of life. The International Federation for Choral Music was invited to participate in the SAC Talk and was represented by Iva Radulovic, IFCM Operations Manager, who encouraged the virtual audience to keep on singing by any means, alone at home or together virtually, until on stage again.

[Listen to the SAC Talk.](#)

NEWS FROM IFCM FOUNDING MEMBERS

EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION - EUROPA CANTAT (ECA-EC)

Learning Doesn't Stop -- Upcoming ECA-EC Webinar

We might not be able to sing together for the time being, but it doesn't mean we also need to stop learning. ECA-EC is really excited to introduce you to July's webinar: *How to Audition for a National & International (Youth) Choir* with Josep Villa i Casañas.

Auditions can be pretty daunting sometimes. We know that! There are many things you need to consider and prepare. No matter how many times you press that record button, it just doesn't seem good enough! Does this sound familiar? If so, join the webinar on 9 July 2020, at 11:00 CEST and learn from another perspective: What is expected from you? What can you do better? How do you make your audition stand out?

[More info.](#)



Supporting Initiative to Help the Choral World

Online platform: Digital Stage

The most common question on social media after the lockdown was: *How can we do proper collective singing online?* The answer was usually, "Singing together is not possible with the current programmes we are using due to latency issues and the fact that most of the existing programmes are speech optimized rather than music optimized."

ECA-EC has therefore decided to become partners with a new platform developed during a Hackathon in Germany - [Digital Stage](#). The aim of this platform is to make it possible for the performing arts sector to rehearse and perform online during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond. The developers are still in the fundraising and testing phase, but it promises to become a tool we have all been looking for, with a low-access browser-based option being the most interesting one for the majority of choirs and vocal ensembles. Check the Digital Stage [website](#) for more information!

New US-based Covid-19 Study Supported by Performing Arts Organisations

You have probably been asking yourself: How safe is it to sing together? How can my choir eventually return to live rehearsals and performances? It has become clear that research is needed to provide decision-makers and choirs with answers that can help them plan their future. This is why a new US-based COVID-19 study has been launched, focusing on the effects of Covid-19 on the return to rehearsal rooms. Specifically, the study will examine aerosol rates produced by wind instrumentalists, vocalists, and even actors, and how quickly those aerosol rates accumulate in a space. As partners, ECA-EC will closely follow the process and help disseminate the results once they will be available.

Covid-19 Resources Document: consistently updated

We owe a big thank you to our whole network for contributing to ECA-EC's online [Covid-19 Resource Document](#). The document is being constantly updated and new information, tips, and ideas are added on a daily basis by all of its readers. If you know of any resources we've missed, please add them! By having all of us contributing, we can help each other find the best ways to navigate forward, together!

[More Info.](#)



AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION (ACDA)

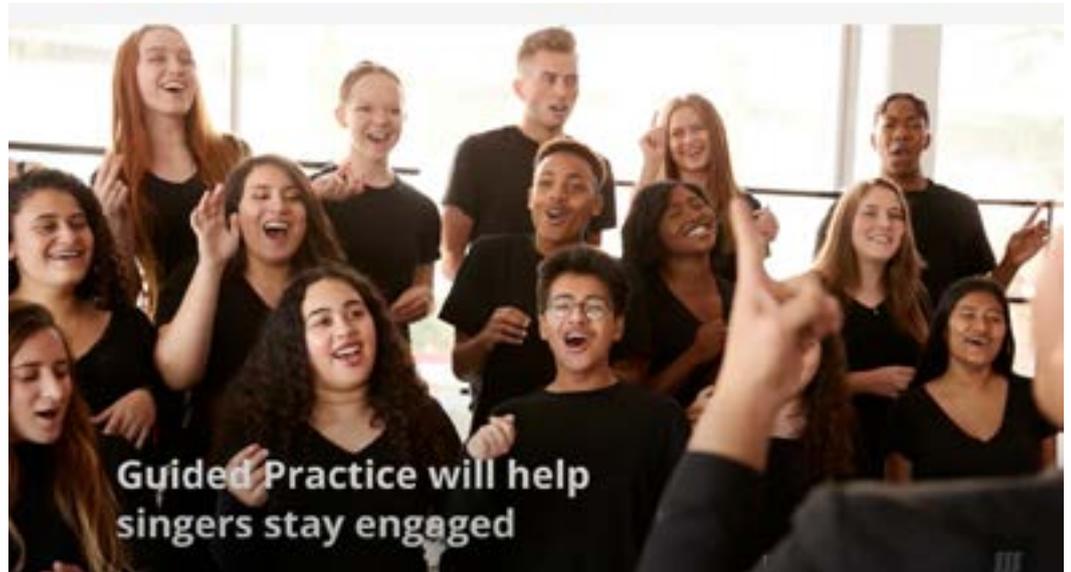
[The 2020 Symposium for Research in Choral Singing](#). In response to COVID-19, the 2020 symposium is virtual! Presentations, papers, posters, and performances from the symposium are available from 15 May to 25 July.

Save the Date: [ACDA National Conference - "Diversity in Music"](#). 17-19 March 2021 (Dallas, Texas).

[Resources for Choral Professionals During the Pandemic](#). ACDA has created a page of information, ideas, and tools especially for choral conductors and educators. Most are free and the page is updated regularly.

At the height of the quarantine period in the United States, T.J. Harper, Chair of ACDA's International Initiatives Standing Committee, and Tim Sharp, Executive Director, presented a series of webinars, entitled ACDA: Connecting with the World, in which they conversed with

choral conductors from different parts of the world. Countries included Kenya, China, South Korea, Sweden, and Cuba. Listen to these conversations on [ACDA's YouTube channel](#).



NEWS FROM IFCM MEMBERS

NEW ZEALAND STUDENTS CREATE SINGING BUBBLES



In the same week that the [New Zealand Choral Federation \(NZCF\)](#) and IFCM announced the cancellation of WSCM2020 (11-18 July 2020 in Auckland, NZ), NZCF also cancelled its major secondary schools choral festival, [The Big Sing](#). Each year, close to 10,000 young people from over 250 schools take part in The Big Sing regional festivals nationwide which culminate in The Big Sing Finale. As so many choral communities have done around the world, NZCF launched a virtual choir project for the students to work on during the country's lockdown. Singing from



their individual bubbles up and down the country, 180 secondary students joined their voices, and bubbles, to create extraordinary 'singing bubbles' floating over the islands. For 2020, The Big Sing became [The Virtual Sing](#) in the performance of an energetic waiata, [A te terakihi](#) (The Cicada).

NEWS FROM THE FUNDACION SCHOLA CANTORUM DE VENEZUELA

The [Fundacion Schola Cantorum de Venezuela](#) and its members share a video project to demonstrate their resilience, hope, and faith in the fraternity that choral music builds in the whole world. On 6 June 2020, under the slogan *We are much more than two*, the Fundacion Schola Cantorum de Venezuela premiered the video, [Te Quiero](#), a composition by Alberto Favero based on the poetry by Mario Benedetti and arranged by Liliana Cangiano. This composition is an emblematic song for the Venezuelan Choral Movement and for many choirs in Latin America. For this virtual performance, the Fundacion gathered 300 voices from 27 countries on five continents. The singers joined virtually to offer a message that finds an echo in all hearts and helps us feel close so that our singing continues to be heard. [We need your solidarity!](#)



NEWS FROM THE SINGING NETWORK

The [Singing Network](#) has compiled a compendium of [Covid-19 Resources](#) from 20+ regional, national, and international organizations. The goal is that this site can become a one-stop-shopping resource for everyone with promising practices in one handy location. The list will be updated regularly. [Send](#) any recommendations for Covid-19 resource lists to be added.





COVID-19 Resources

www.singingnetwork.ca/covid-19-resources/

A compendium of Covid-19 resource lists



AAMCANT INVITES YOU TO JOIN A VIRTUAL CHOIR HOMAGE

The **Argentine Association for Choral Music AAMCANT** invites singers from all over the world to join a virtual choir project conducted by Oscar Escalada, to honor Ariel Ramírez and Astor Piazzolla and celebrate the 100th Anniversary of their birth.

Info: secretaria.aamcant.centenario@gmail.com



WHAT'S ON IN JULY AND AUGUST IN THE CHORAL WORLD

We invite you to visit the **Calendar of Choral Activities** published by the European Choral Association — Europa Cantat and the American Choral Director Association ACDA's Network **ChoralNet** to check on the choral events planned in the coming months.