



October 2024 IFCMeNEWS — So many good news!

IFCM Online Café “Choirs for Ecocide Law” with Merzi Rajala, Finland

Saturday, 12 October 2024, online, 2pm CET

In this online café, Merzi Rajala will present the Choirs for Ecocide Law project. This project raises awareness of the need for an international criminal law to protect nature and the planet. Merzi will offer ways to contribute to this project through singing.

This year, [World Choral Day](#) will be dedicated to the same mission, and together we aim to reach as many countries as possible in a unified effort to promote a safer environment.

Register to the Online Cafe with Merzi Rajala [here](#).

Memorandum of Strategic Cooperation Agreement signed to take WSCM to... Beijing in 2026!

On 8 September 2024, a significant meeting occurred in Lisbon, Portugal, at the Palacete dos Condes de Monte Real, headquarters of IFCM. IFCM President Emily Kuo Vong met with Li Jinsheng, Chairman of China Arts and Entertainment Group (CAEG), to discuss an exciting possibility for the next World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM) in 2026. Mutually committed to the goal of promoting international cultural exchange through the development of choral music, IFCM and CAEG agreed to expand their time-honoured partnership based on the principles of “resource sharing, complementary advantages, brand interaction, and mutual development.” IFCM and CAEG signed a Memorandum of Strategic Cooperation Agreement which aims to present the 14th WSCM in Beijing, China, in 2026 in collaboration with the 18th China International Chorus Festival (CICF).

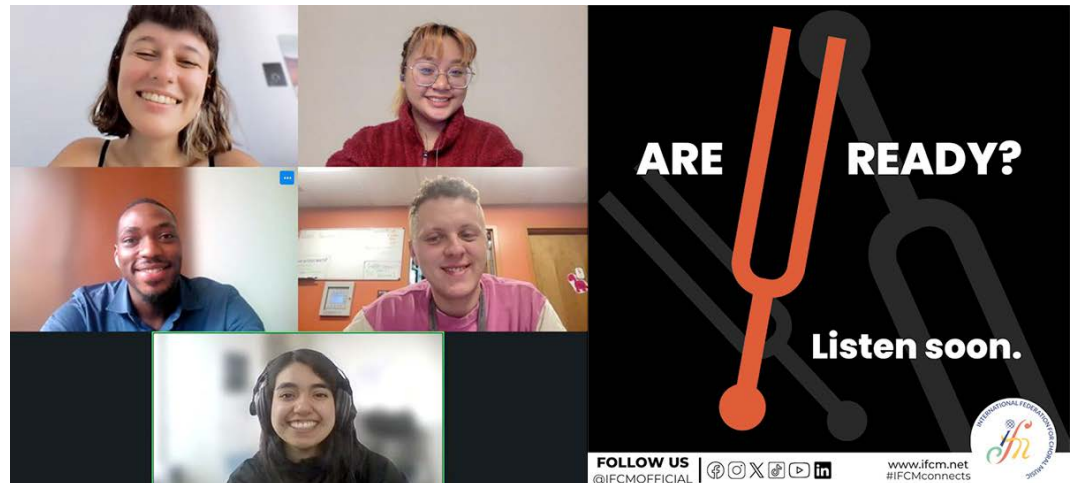
[Stay tuned](#) for updates.



The new IFCM podcast 'Unison' is about to start!

Unison aims to bring together diverse voices and experiences with a dedicated online platform that provides the opportunity for IFCM to reach as many corners of the globe as possible. Through **Unison**, IFCM seeks to celebrate the global diversity of choral music and to gather voices from around the world in a common online space. The podcast content will focus on issues related to professional development and choral traditions from distinct regions. Podcast listeners will learn from and be challenged by experienced voices within international choral community.

In its first season, **Unison** will present eight episodes, each featuring a guest from a different part of the world. To launch the podcast, a pilot episode will introduce members of the IFCM YOUNG Committee, the producers of **Unison**, and reveal more details about YOUNG and its exciting new project. **Unison** producers have prepared some surprises to encourage you to listen to the podcast when it is released. Stay tuned to [IFCM's social networks](#) to find out about this new podcast and more!



Online webinar: "Creating Choral Music: Talking about the Requirements of Choral Repertoire"

Saturday, 23 November 2024, online, 8pm CET

The Webinar "Creating Choral Music: Talking about the Requirements of Choral Repertoire" will focus on the art of choral composition. Three well-known composers will share their ideas on how to create choral music for ensembles today, using their own compositions as illustrations. To develop this theme, IFCM invited composers from different regions of the world:

- [Marie Herrington](#) (USA). Marie is a Ukrainian-American soprano, composer, and conductor. The winner of the IFCM Composition Competition 2023-2024, she will present her winning



piece *A Jelly-Fish* along with two other choral works.

- [Jaakko Mäntyjärvi](#) (Finland). Jaakko is a professional freelance translator and composer as well as an amateur/semi-professional choral singer and conductor. He is one of Finland's internationally, best-known composers of choral music with a catalog of 150 works published to date.
- [Eva Ugalde](#) (Basque Country, Spain). With an intimate relationship with the choral world, Eva began writing music for raw voices, encouraged by Javier Busto, one of the pioneers of the new wave of composers that flourished at the end of the 20th century. She is regularly invited as jury member in international composition competitions around the world.

Register [here](#).

This Webinar is part of the [Choral TIES project](#) coordinated by the [European Choral Association](#) and co-funded by the [European Union Creative Europe programme](#) and organised in cooperation with IFCM.



Conductors Without Borders becomes Conductors Beyond Borders

At its summer board meeting, IFCM Board of Directors approved a new name for its international conducting project: **Conductors Beyond Borders (CBB)**. In view of the program's many initiatives that facilitate connections between conductors from different geographical regions and/or between conductors and singers from neighboring countries, the new title is more appropriate and descriptive.

In 2025, certain CBB sessions will be linked with the European Choral Association's Peer-to-Peer Exchange Program. As a result, these CBB sessions will receive some financial support from the [Choral TIES project](#) which is coordinated by [European Choral Association](#), co-funded by the [European Union Creative Europe programme](#), and organised in cooperation with [IFCM](#). A call for choirs interested in this program will be launched soon. Stay tuned!

World Youth Choir Summer Session: An unforgettable journey!

Joining forces with the National Youth Orchestra of Germany – [Bundesjugendorchester](#) (BJO), the [World Youth Choir](#) (WYC) performed 11 breathtaking concerts across three different countries (Germany, the Netherlands, Italy) under the masterful direction of **Tan Dun** (USA) and **Jörn Hinnerk Andresen** (Austria) in August and September 2024.

Did you miss the choir's final performance in Bonn, Germany, on 7 September? You can watch it [here](#)!

The concert featured Ludwig van Beethoven's masterpiece *Symphony No. 9* and *Choral Concerto: Nine* by Tan Dun, who conducted the Bundesjugendorchester and the World Youth Choir for this performance at the Bonn Opera House. *Choral Concerto: Nine* was commissioned for the WYC-BJO session as a complementary choral/orchestra work to be paired with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. Plan ahead and program this new, exciting 'choral concerto'



during 2027 which marks the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's death.

Follow the [WYC website](#) and [social media](#) for upcoming news about the 2025 session, an extraordinary international opportunity for singers ages 17-26 (on 1 August 2025).

Tribute: Nobuaki Tanaka (1 January 1928 – 12 September 2024)

Nobuaki Tanaka, longtime leader within the Japanese choral world, Conductor Laureate of the Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus, and a Person of Cultural Merit, has died at the age of 96.



Born in Niigata Prefecture, Japan, Nobuaki Tanaka was a junior high school music teacher prior to entering the vocal music department of Tokyo University of the Arts. After graduating university in 1956, he founded the Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus with his fellows sharing the same values, becoming its permanent conductor and developing the ensemble into one of Japan's preeminent professional choral groups. Nobuaki Tanaka devoted himself to the creation of Japanese choral works, commissioning various composers and premiering 460 choral works. He served as choral conductor for numerous performances by the Berlin Philharmonic, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and others. At the same time, he was actively involved in teaching amateur choirs and was selected as a Person of Cultural Merit in 2016 in recognition of his achievements. An active conductor through his life, his last stage performance was at the "Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus Special Concert - with Nobuaki Tanaka - Tokon All Stars" held on 31 August 2024 at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre.



Maestro Tanaka had a special connection with IFCM through the World Youth Choir (WYC). He was the conductor of the 1997 WYC summer session in Japan, the 1999-2000 WYC winter session in Belgium, and the 2009 WYC 20th anniversary concert in Sweden. Maestro Tanaka had the ability to truly engage the singers in their interpretation of demanding Japanese repertoire. The choir's performance of Hikaru Hayashi's "Mizu o Kudasai" (Give Me Water)



All portraits and picture © Michael Zaugg

in Hiroshima is remembered by those present (singers and audience alike) as a moment of unforgettable emotional impact. The choir had visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum where the singers witnessed the horror of the atomic bomb. However, it was Maestro Tanaka who unearthed deep understandings of text and music within the singers with his words: "Create your own music and, at the same time, create it together as a group."

[Here](#) are some reflections from singers in the 1997 WYC session in Japan.

European Choral Association

Online Webinar "Safe(r) Space in Collective Singing - Practical Approaches"

16 October at 5pm CEST

Do we want everyone to have access to the psychological, physical, social, and educational benefits of collective singing? Do we want everyone to be able to advance their skills and achieve the highest possible level of artistic quality?

If we are serious about our aims, then making our spaces safer must be a priority for choirs, conductors, and organisations. A welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone is fundamental, not optional.

But how do we make our spaces safer? This webinar seeks to bring practical answers to that question, drawing on the knowledge, skills, and expertise of its speakers:

- **Henrike Schauerte** (Germany) from Deutsche Chorjugend will present the project "Children's Choirs as Safe Spaces"
- **Minnakaisa Kuivalainen** (Finland) will share the practical approaches being implemented at the Tampere Music Festival and show how they are putting social responsibility into practice
- **Sophie Dowden** (France/United Kingdom) will present the European Choral Association's actions in the field of inclusion

Join this essential discussion to make collective singing spaces safer for everyone.

The [webinar](#) is open to everyone and participation is free. Register [here](#). Help us to spread the world and share the [event](#) on Facebook!

This event is organised in the framework of the [IGNITE](#) project co funded by the EU

The graphic features the European Choral Association logo at the top left. The main title "SAFE(R) SPACES IN COLLECTIVE SINGING" is in large, bold, orange letters, with "PRATICAL APPROACHES" below it. The date and time "Wednesday 16 October 2024 | 5 pm CEST | Online" are listed. Three circular portraits of the speakers are shown: Henrike Schauerte, Minnakaisa Kuivalainen, and Sophie Dowden. At the bottom, it says "an initiative of IGNITE" and "Co-funded by the European Union". The background is a soft-focus bokeh of orange and pink lights.

EUROTREFF 2025, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 3-7 September 2025

Announcing the 21st [EUROTREFF](#) to be held 3-7 September 2025 in Wolfenbüttel, Germany. Over 500 young choristers of choirs from all over Europe will come together to create lasting memories through music. The official motto is for this year is "Together".

[Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend \(AMJ\)](#) invites your choir to apply to be part of the event.

An international team of conductors will lead the workshops:

Children's choirs (small groups): Maria Emma Meligopoulou (Greece) and Joachim Geibel (Germany)

Mixed youth choirs: Vivianne Sydnes (Norway) and Erik Sohn (Germany)

Girls' Choir: Merel Martens (The Netherlands) and Johannes Dewilde (Belgium).

In addition to the rehearsals and concerts, participants will also have the opportunity to explore the medieval town of Wolfenbüttel and to connect with new international colleagues.

[More information](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Instagram](#)



Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corals: Catalunya Prizes for Choral Compositions 2025

The 10th International Prizes "Catalunya" for Choral Composition of the [Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corals](#) (FCEC) is open until 31 January 2025. Composers can enter compositions based on Catalan texts and harmonizations of traditional Catalan songs in two categories: mixed voices and equal voices.

The [Orfeó Català](#) is also holding a choral composition competition with the same deadline. The winners will be announced in July 2025. The winning pieces will be published by the FCEC and distributed to members of choirs and to others by request. These works will also be performed at the Choral Music Fest on 1 March 2026 at the Palau de la Música Catalana.

Register [here](#).



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.