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Dossier Choral Music in Czech Republic



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This year marks the four hundredth anniversary of the death of Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa (1566-1613), better known as Gesualdo da Venosa, that excellent composer of madrigals and sacred music. He characterizes in a very particular and eccentric way the musical life of the time; his style, original and oriented towards experimentation, shows him already leaning towards a genre soon to arrive in the history of music: opera.

Carlo Gesualdo was born in a noble family, owner of the feudal territories of Gesualdo and Venosa. His mother, Geronima, was the sister of St. Charles Borromeo. The young Carlo studied in Naples with the Jesuits and showed a particular aptitude for music; already a skilled musician at 19 years of age, he came to prominence with the composition of madrigals which, although in the style of Monteverdi, already had original features.

In 1586 he married his cousin Maria D'Avalos, considered the most beautiful woman in Naples, four years his senior; she later fell in love with Fabrizio Carafa, Duke of Andria, becoming his mistress. The year 1590 marked the dramatic turning point of Gesualdo's life; on October 16 the two lovers were caught in adultery, and then brutally murdered. Carlo for some time took refuge in the inaccessible Gesualdo castle, then moved to Ferrara, where in February 1594 he married Eleonora d'Este. Carlo remained in Ferrara for some years where he composed the Third and Fourth Book of Madrigals for five voices, then he decided to return to Naples where, still fearing the vengeance of the Avalos and Carafa families, he retired permanently to Gesualdo castle.

Isolation, guilt, and atonement inspired intense compositional activity; the pages of his music are full of melancholy and intimate anguish, and this period was certainly the most prolific at a musical and cultural level. The castle was frequented by distinguished intellectuals, including Torquato Tasso and Giovanni Battista Marino. The three collections of sacred music and the Fifth and Sixth Book of Madrigals, composed at this time, are very important works.

Even the thematic choices are in contrast with Arcadian imagery and with the poetry of Petrarch, much in vogue at the time; Carlo Gesualdo drew on texts by contemporaries such as Tasso and Marino, and in his writings showed his feelings and his experience: loving sorrow in its various facets and the thought of death. The style, characterized by abrupt changes of tone and by an intense emotional drive, surprises in the originality and modernity of certain harmonic solutions.

Suggested score:

O Vos Omnes (from Responsoria Sabbato Sancto)

Score: <http://goo.gl/dLgu8>

YouTube: <http://goo.gl/uqfnW>



Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy ●

Cover

Photo by Karel Kašák: the preparatory choir Lentilky, Český Krumlov Children's Choir.

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▲ Kühn's Children's Choir Prague

Dossier

Choral Singing in the Czech Republic

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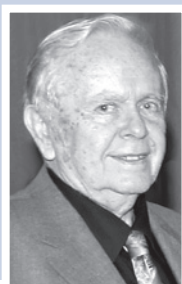
Choral Singing in the Czech Republic

The art of choral singing, be it in the realm of composition or of interpretation, has always ranked among the national treasures of Czech culture, amongst the strongest musical traditions in our country. In this context we might mention the world famous works of B. Smetana, A. Dvořák, V. Novák, L. Janáček, J. B. Foerster or B. Martinů, as well as the riches of our contemporary choral literature, represented by the compositions of P. Eben, I. Hurník, Z. Lukáš, K. Slavický, O. Mácha, J. Hanuš and many others. Their creation has exerted very considerable influence on the artistic achievements of Czech choirs, among them, in the past, the internationally renowned vocal associations of male and female teachers from Prague and from Moravia (PSPU, PSMU), or a number of choirs founded in the postwar years, which regularly won – and still win – the highest marks at international choral competitions and festivals. Standing for all children's choirs we might name Kühn's Children's Choir Prague, the Bambini di Praga or Severáček Liberec, who are well known even abroad, and among the women's choirs Foerster's Chamber Choir Association Prague, Iuventus Paedagogica Prague, the Choral Association of Female Teachers of Ostrava, as well as the excellent academic choirs, mixed choirs as well as women's choirs.

From 1969 the choirs of the entire region of the Czech Republic have been united and represented by the Association of Czech Choirs (UČPS). At the time of writing, the UČPS is looking after nearly 1100 choral groupings, among them a number of 'choir schools' with several preparatory departments, concert choirs, and, attached to them, youth choirs and sometimes also mixed choirs consisting of parents, offering them professional assistance and support in the organisation and realisation of choral festivals and competitions (in the course of the year, these amount to around fifty nation-wide and fifteen international events) and with the development of cultural life in the regions. The UČPS dedicates particular care to the choral singing of children and young people (the annual festival of mixed grammar school choirs *Gymnasia Cantant*, which by now has taken place sixteen times, has already raised the standards achieved in this category to the excellent European level). By organising composers' competitions and disseminating information about new works by contemporary composers, the UČPS strives to support new Czech choral creativity. It also co-operates with foreign institutions, setting up contacts between Czech and foreign choirs, keeping detailed records about the entire Czech choral movement (choirs, choral conductors, choral festivals, choral competitions, choral concerts, etc), and maintaining the comprehensive informative website *České sbory* and the professional magazine *Cantus* with its regular sheet music inserts.

The UČPS supplies the suggestions for the awards of nation-wide prizes for choral conductors (the B. Smetana, F.Lýsek, and F. Vach prizes, as well as the UČPS "Junior Choral Conductor" prize) and for the similar regional awards which serve to acknowledge outstanding, meritorious and successful activity as a choral conductor. ●

Jiří Kolář was born in 1932; he is a graduate of the Pedagogical Faculty of the Charles University (1953) and of the Pedagogical University in Prague (1962). From 1964–2001 he taught in the Pedagogical Faculty of the Charles University in Prague (choral conducting and aural training). From 2001–2005 he was an external lecturer of choral conducting within the church music section. In 1981 he received a doctorate in pedagogical aspects of music; in 1991 he was awarded a further qualification and was named senior lecturer in choral conducting. In 2000 Mr. Kolář was appointed professor of music education and conducting. In 1967 Mr. Kolář founded the female choir "Iuventus Paedagogica". Until 1999 this choir received 10 prizes in prestigious European choir competitions and many other awards. Under Mr Kolář's leadership the choir performed more than 800 concerts at home and abroad. He is the author of many publications, among them university textbooks on intonation, aural training, and conducting. From 1989 to 2005 he worked as editor in chief of the magazine "Musical Education". Mr Kolář is honorary president of the Association of Czech Choirs, president of the Union of Choir Conductors in the Association of Musical Artists and Scientists and a member of advisory committees for choral singing and of juries at national and international competitions at home and abroad.



Prof. Jiří Kolář
Honorary President of
the U PS

Stanislav Pecháček
choral conductor and
teacher

Choral singing has played a very important role in the life of Czech society since medieval times and has been connected mostly with Christian liturgy for hundreds of years. It was not restricted just to performance of Gregorian chant, as its repertory also included various forms of polyphonic music. The vocal polyphony flourished especially in our country during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in the practice of 'literátská bratrstva' (brotherhoods of intellectuals), the townsmen's organizations responsible for music in churches. The most important composer of the time was Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdrůžic (1564–1621), the author of the Mass *Missa quinis vocibus*, a parody based on a *cantus firmus* from Luca Marenzio's madrigal *Dolorosi Martir*.

Churches remained the main location for music performances until the end of the eighteenth century, which is why most of the vocal-instrumental pieces were connected with liturgy. There is an enormous production, represented by different kinds of Masses, Vespers, Litanies, Psalms and other pieces on liturgical texts (*Salve Regina*, *Magnificat*, *Te Deum* etc.). Music was also produced at noble residences. The rich nobility built their own orchestras, mostly from musically talented servants. They concentrated on instrumental music which would be heard not at concerts but at everyday or special occasions, such as weddings, funerals, dancing and feasting. The productions had very little in common with the character of concerts where music is performed exclusively for listening and there is no participation by the audience. The repertoire also included secular cantatas, composed for birthdays, name-days, marriages, deaths, or births of children in the family of the employer.

Czech composers who lived in Bohemia were mostly connected with churches. Adam Michna z Otradovic (1600–1676), poet and outstanding composer of the early Baroque, was the town organist in Jindřichův Hradec. He became famous for his simple vernacular hymns *Česká mariánská muzika* (Czech Marian music), *Svatoroční muzika* (Music for the liturgical year) and *Loutna česká* (The Czech lute). At the same time, Bohuslav Matěj Černožorský (1684–1742) worked as an organist at St Jakub in the Old Town of Prague, and also for some years in Assisi and Padua (Italy). His offertory, *Laudetur Jesus Christus*, is considered today to be one of the best works of Czech polyphony. František Xaver Brixi (1732–1771) was appointed Kapellmeister of St Vít Cathedral in Prague and thus attained the highest musical position in the city. His tremendous output of approximately 500 works contains about 120 masses. Josef Seger (1716–1782) was appointed organist of the Týn church in Prague. His numerous compositions, comprising Masses and other liturgical pieces, reflect stylistic features of late Baroque.

A special group of Czech musicians was made up of country teachers, whose duty was also to organise music for the churches. Among them, the best known are Jakub Jan Ryba (1765–1815), the author of the very popular Christmas Mass *Hej, mistře*, and Karel Blažej Kopřiva (1756–1785), who belonged to the group of teachers, musicians and composers in the small village of Citoliby.

Many Czech musicians found employment abroad. Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679–1745), the major Czech composer of the late Baroque, was a double-bass player, conductor and composer in the Roman Catholic Royal Chapel in Dresden. His works include about twenty Masses and many other liturgical pieces. Josef Mysliveček (1737–1781) lived in Italy, František Xaver Richter (1709–1789) in Germany and France, Antonín Rejcha (1770–1836) in Paris. Many Czech composers worked in Vienna, the capital of the Austrian empire where a number of them made a notable career: Leopold Koželuh (1747–1818), František Ignác Tůma (1704–1774), Jan Křtitel Vaňhal (1739–1813), Antonín Vranický (1761–1820), Pavel Vranický (1756–1808).

The beginning of secular choral singing in Bohemia dates only from the 19th century; at this time secular choral compositions began to appear for these new choirs. After modest beginnings, the great composers appeared in the second half of the century. Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884), the founder of Czech national music, was the first among them. He was the author of several pieces for male-voice choirs: *Tři jezdci* (The Three Riders), *Rolnická* (Farming), *Píseň na moři* (Song of the Sea), of three pieces for female-voice choirs, still very popular are *Má hvězda* (My Star), *Přiletěly vlaštovičky* (Return of the Swallows), *Západ slunce* (The Sunset), and of a cantata *Česká píseň* (Czech Song). His successor Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) enriched Czech choral music with many compositions written to accompany folk poetry, such as *Moravské dvojzpěvy*, (Moravian duets) and with several spiritual and secular cantatas: *Stabat mater*, *Requiem*, *Te Deum*, *Svatební košile* (The Spectre's Bride), among others.

Czech choral singing reached a new qualitative level at the beginning of the twentieth century thanks to the choral teacher associations in which artistic quality took precedence over the prevailing social function, and the new technique appeared also among choral works. The very numerous works of Josef Bohuslav Foerster (1859–1951) can be named as a typical example.

Leoš Janáček (1854–1928) focused with his male-voice choirs on the poems by Petr Bezruč *Kantor Halfar* (Halfar the Schoolmaster), *Maryčka Magdónova* and *Sedmdesát tisíc* (Seventy Thousand), which dealt with social and national problems in Silesian in a very realistic way. His cantatas, especially *Glagolská mše* (Glagolitic Mass) belong to the most important Czech compositions of that time. Josef Suk (1874–1935), especially with his cycle *Deset zpěvů* (Ten Songs) for female-voice choir, and Vítězslav Novák (1870–1949) are other important composers who lived between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

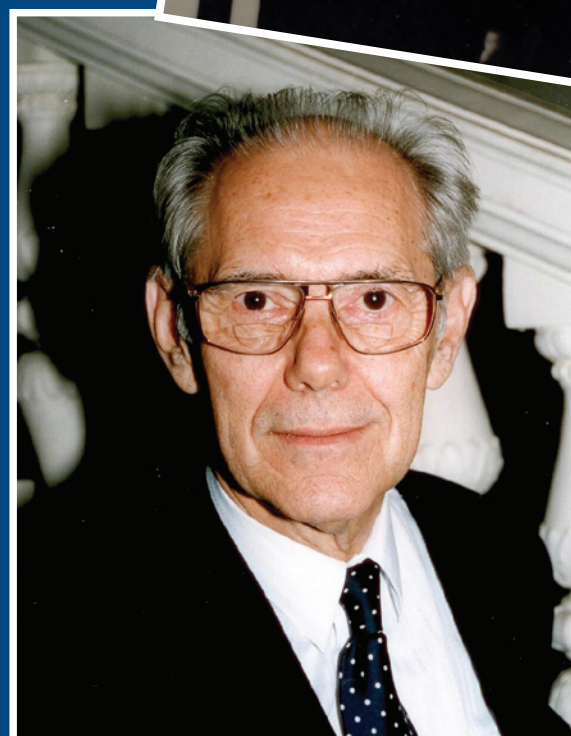
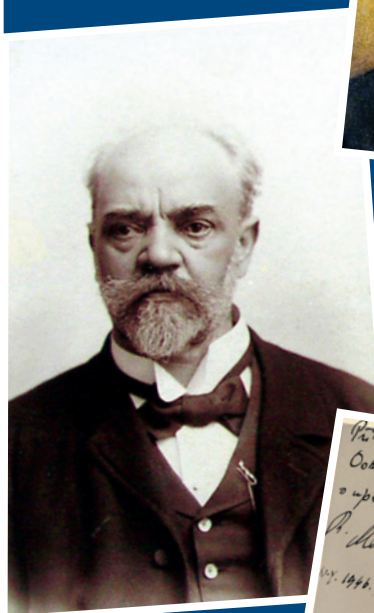
Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959) is the most famous Czech composer, world-wide, of the first half of the twentieth century. Although he spent most of his life abroad (France, USA, Switzerland, Italy), the majority of his choral compositions were written on Czech folk poetry, such as *Česká říkadla* (Czech Nursery Rhymes), three cycles of *Czech madrigals* and others. He also composed cantatas inspired by biblical and ancient texts and passages from modern world literature. The tendency to use short

Bedřich Smetana ▼

Antonín Dvořák ▼

Bohuslav Martin ▼

Petr Eben ►



pieces and a chamber formation are typical of Martinů's cantatas as well, examples include *Kytice* (Garland), *Polní mše* (Field Mass), *Hora tří světél* (Mount of Three Lights), *Gilgameš* (The Epic of Gilgamesh). His chamber cantata *Otvírání studánek* (The Opening of the Wells) is one of the most popular compositions in twentieth-century Czech music.

Among modern Czech composers Petr Eben (1929–2007) stands out. His large output was inspired partly by folk songs, their arrangements and his own pieces on folk poetry, for instance *O vlaštovkách a dívkách* (Swallows and Maidens) for women's choir or *Láska a smrt* (Love and Death) for mixed choir, and partly by ancient and medieval texts, e.g. *Řecký slovník* (Greek Dictionary), *Cantico delle creature*, *Apologia Sokratus*, *Pragensia*, *Pocta Karlu IV* (Honour to Charles IV). He also wrote many pieces for children's choirs, e.g. *Zelená se snítka* (The Spring in Leaf) or *Deset dětských* duet (Ten Children's Duets). The most

important inspiration for him was his deep belief in God which is manifested in many Masses and other liturgical pieces, including *Posvátná znamení* (Sacred Symbols). Also, compositions by Zdeněk Lukáš (1928–2007) are very popular among Czech choirs of every type and level. Lukáš very often sets folk poetry to music, like *Jaro se otvírá* (The Spring Begins) for male-voice choir, *Věneček* (The Wreath) for girls' choir. He also was inspired by ancient and medieval texts and wrote several liturgical pieces (Requiem, *Missa brevis*). Among composers of the older generation we must mention also Antonín Tučapský (1928), who lived for many decades in London, Otmar Mácha (1922–2006), Ilja Hurník (1922), Zdeněk Šesták (1925) and Jiří Laburda (1931).

At the beginning of the new millennium choral production by Czech composers was very rich. One of the most important reasons is that choirs have a tendency to perform new compositions, both by foreign and Czech composers, unlike instrumental groups whose repertoire is mostly based on classical music. This is why many choral composers come from the middle and younger generation.

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Stanislav Pecháček, Ph.D. graduated from Faculty of Philosophy in Olomouc in 1974. He taught at the Pedagogical Grammar School in Prague for nine years, where he became interested in choral singing and became the conductor of the school's girls' choir. From 1985, he taught at the Music Department of Charles University; from 1998, at the Faculty of Education in Prague, as a senior lecturer and since 2012 has taught as a university professor. In 2001 he held the office of Deputy Head of the Music Department. He has published four monographs about Czech choral literature and folk songs (one of them in Polish) and nine textbooks in the field of intonation, conducting techniques, didactics of music, and practical harmonization of folk songs for the piano and the guitar. From 1990 to 1995, he was the conductor of the women's choir 'Puellae Pragenses' and from 1995 to 2006 he led the children's choir 'Mládí' (Youth). In the 1990s he was engaged in choral organisations both in the Czech Republic (Presidium of the Association of Czech Choirs) and abroad (AGEC – Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Chorverbände). From 1993 to 2000 he was Editor in Chief of the Review for Choral Arts 'Cantus'. Email: pechacek.stanislav@seznam.cz



Edited by Will Masters, UK, and Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy ●



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The music education system in the Czech Republic is similar to the systems in other European countries, and so is the way in which choirs are organised. This brief text offers basic information about the specifics of music schools in the Czech Republic and also offers information about organisations providing protection to non-professional and semi-professional choirs.

Children devoted to music start by practicing very early on. There are elementary art schools in the Czech Republic, and the smallest students begin their studies at age four or five. They choose an instrument after one year, and in the best case scenario, they continue on it into adulthood. In this type of school, they study an instrument as well as music theory, and in better schools, there is the possibility of visiting with an orchestra or choir. There exist over 400 elementary music schools of varying levels. The schools are voluntary, so enrolment in them cannot be used to satisfy compulsory school attendance. Children only attend these schools in their free time. There exist state, private, and church schools. Only gifted children attend these schools, and they are paid to do so. This system has both a lot of advantages and disadvantages. Because of rather good donations by the state, the schools allow for one-on-one lessons. Talented children who pass the entrance exam have good private teachers. These children thus have perfect conditions for turning out very well, but some disadvantages also exist in this system. Because the elementary music schools are optional, there is a big rift between the children's elementary music school education and the normal music lessons at their current schools. The normal school system offers little in the way of creativity or spontaneous musical activities for less gifted children. It is nonetheless true, on the other hand, that some children from good elementary music schools will be well-prepared for conservatory entrance exams.

Martina Spiritová
choral conductor and
teacher

Conservatories represent the second level of music education in the Czech Republic. In order to pass an exam, one has to play an instrument very well. Conservatories are a part of the education system, so they may be used to satisfy compulsory school attendance requirements. Students undergo six years of study at the conservatories, and it is normal for students to begin their conservatory studies at age fifteen. Students take three lessons per week in their respective instruments and also take music history, music theory, and cultural history lessons. After four years, students are required to take the equivalent of an A-level exam, followed by two more years of study. There is currently a big debate about providing accreditation at conservatories in the same manner as schools with bachelor programs. These schools are currently ranked at the third educational level. This type of school is oriented towards practice, and conservatory graduates may play in professional orchestras or chamber ensembles, or continue with their own education. Because conservatory students tend to practice five or six hours every day, they are slightly lacking in compulsory education-based knowledge when they graduate, and this knowledge deficit has consequently led to some experimentation with music grammar schools.

There is now quite a new type of school. Those authoring the project are striving to fuse the compulsory curriculum with high-level instrumental musicianship. Although properly keeping up with grammar school studies while practicing an instrument for five hours a day is difficult, students from these schools are quite well-prepared for the study of music history, musical science, musical pedagogy, etc. Some of these students also study at academies. There are currently thirteen conservatories and two grammar schools in the Czech Republic.

After the A-level exam, it is possible to begin one's studies at a university. It is important to point out that universities have autonomous status in the Czech Republic, so the A-level exam does not guarantee free entrance to a university. Candidates are also required to pass an entrance exam.

There are three possibilities for studying music in the Czech Republic: First, it is possible to study musicology at a faculty of philosophy. This field of study focuses on music history, music theory, and musical science. The study program is of high quality, especially at Charles University in Prague. Secondly, there is the education faculty, with the music department focusing on music instructor education. This type of study is more practice-oriented, and there are many study subjects like psychology, music pedagogy, etc., but purely musical subjects also exist, of course. In the Czech Republic, one may study choral conducting at five of these institutions.

The third possibility for studying music is at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and at the Leos Janacek Academy in Brno (JAMU). These are the only schools in the Czech Republic for educating professional soloists. These are state-accredited, university-type schools of very high quality.

There are three levels of study with a music faculty: namely, the bachelor's, master's, and PhD programs. Students spend three hours a week studying an instrument (or voice, composition, conducting, etc.), as well as chamber music, interpretation, and several theoretical disciplines. The aim of these schools is to work on real virtuosity.

One can only study choral conducting at the Academy in Brno. In Prague, it is not possible to study choral conducting by itself, only as part of the study of orchestra conducting. There is also no choir at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts.

Schools are mostly public, but the Czech Republic has private and parochial schools, as well. In most cases, the public schools are of better quality than the private schools, but there are some exceptions among the private schools.

How is the music education system compatible with the organisational system

of amateur choirs?

There are three types of choirs in the Czech Republic: professional, amateur, and (a somewhat problematic kind with regard to their scope) semi-professional. Because of the economic crisis and problematic cultural politics in the Czech Republic, the number of professional choirs is going down. There are choirs for music theatres and opera halls, as well as some concert choirs, but the life of a professional choral singer is currently quite difficult. This situation makes it quite problematic for professional choirs to maintain their (historically very high) quality. Some of them have transformed themselves into semi-professional choirs. This consequently means that singers are paid to sing but also have other jobs (for example, teaching music and the like). It is very difficult to organise this type of choir, but paradoxically, this can also help their quality. The choir can have fewer contracts for concerts and can better prepare for their performances. Of course, the Czech Republic's need for professional choirs, coupled with a lack of money for cultural pursuits, is posing a threat to their existence.

Amateur singing has a long tradition in the Czech Republic and is still very much alive. At present, there are 1,102 registered choirs on the Czech Choirs Association web page. (There are eleven million people currently living in the Czech Republic). Some of the choirs are of very high quality and are sometimes

How is the music education system compatible with the organisational system of amateur choirs?

very well organised, too, but it is a very positive sign that there still exist very free 'singing clubs', with no organisational structure or professional leadership, as well as concerts that also include 'friends of music'. These very amateur singers have meetings (not rehearsals), and they sing for their own enjoyment. They make up one of the bases for better amateur choirs.

Classical amateur choirs are based in all types of schools. Choirs for children exist at some primary and secondary schools (depending on the focus of the school and the director, as well as the ability and enthusiasm of the music teacher) and at elementary art schools. Older children normally stay in bigger choirs at elementary art schools (with branches) until their teenage years. Some children's choirs can only be attended by children until age eighteen, because this is the cut-off age for state donations to elementary art schools. This is unfortunate, because a lot of good, well-experienced singers eventually leave the music world, and the quality of youth choirs is much lower than that of the children's choirs. Some school choirs exist for young people, especially at grammar schools. Some of them are quite good, but in general, children's choirs are better in quality and also better organised. Choirs at conservatories are perceived to be a big problem, because singing in a choir is a compulsory subject not only for students of singing but also for instrumental students. Because of the focus of conservatories as schools for soloists, choirs are very unpopular. Singers would like to sing big opera arias, and instrumentalists have no interest in vocal music. Due to this situation, the quality of conservatory choirs is not very good, and unfortunately this trend continues to exist up to the academy level. A better situation can be found at universities. With the exception of the education faculties, of course, the choirs are for students of subjects other than music, but some of the choirs do have top-notch singing. Some universities support their choirs, and some do not. Paradoxically, one of the best-supported choirs is the 'Musica Oeconomica Pragensis' from the University of Economics in Prague. Universities are willing to employ professional choirmasters, and this makes university choirs capable of becoming very good.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the Czech Republic was one of the Soviet bloc nations, and this interrupted the long tradition of church choirs. After the Velvet Revolution (in 1989), churches began to increase. Although Roman Catholic and Protestant churches are active in the Czech Republic, the country is

among the most atheistic in Europe. For this reason, the church music situation is not very good. In most cases, one can find church choirs with four sopranos, twelve altos, no tenors and two basses around age sixty. Despite this situation, there are some good Roman Catholic choirs, but they generally do not compare with the non-church choirs.

There are choirs that sing in other types of organisations, as well. For example, there are some corporate or recreational center choirs, but these are few.

Society in the Czech Republic is more focused on economics than choral singing, so there are currently few people founding choirs. Consequently, the best way to establish a new choir (especially an adult choir) is to find singers and register oneself as a community organisation. This is very easy to do and also affords artistic freedom for oneself. Money is certainly an issue, however, so it is necessary to find sponsorship for the choir, have paid concerts, or have the singers pay a certain amount toward the organisational structure of the choir. It is certainly true that finding money for concerts, professional soloists, a cooperating orchestra, and the like is very, very difficult in the Czech Republic, but most of the best choirs in the Czech Republic are organised in this way.

As stated above, the last type of choir is the 'singing clubs'. Without any organisation, professional conductors, or money, the choral music that they create may turn out better or worse. They are very important to the musical life of the Czech Republic, however, because they provide potential singers for better choirs and also make up the bulk of the audience at classical music concerts.

As also stated above, it is possible to study choral conducting at JAMU or at the five Faculties of Education. Choral conductors may have other professions, too. School choirs are led (for better or worse) by music teachers, church choir conductors (according to tradition) are organists, orchestra conductors lead some choirs, and sometimes singers are also found in choral director positions. Some of these people are actually very good conductors. It is true, however, that some well-needed ability is lacking in all these professions, and sometimes choirs led by such people do not sing at their very best.



Czech amateur choirs may be registered with the Czech Choirs Association. This is an organisation which organises some choir festivals, informs choirs about concert possibilities, is capable of supporting recordings and festivals, publishes a choir magazine, etc. It is important to point out, however, that the Czech Choirs Association suffers from a major lack of funds. The Ministry of Culture cannot provide much support to the Association. Consequently, the people working for the Association cannot be employed by it, and most of them also work for choirs in their free time. The current director of the Association is a lawyer, in fact. Thus choirs work more separately, but being a member of the Association is a major advantage. There is a contractual relationship between the Association and the OSA (an organisation related to legal authorship matters), and registered choirs are free from paying royalties for performances of pieces by living composers at non-profit concerts. This is a big help to choirs with a focus on contemporary music.

In conclusion, the Czech choral world has a lot of problems, especially in the area of financial support. But because of its long tradition and great enthusiasm the Czech Republic has many choirs. The quality of the choirs depends on the quality of the conductor, the choir members, the organisation, the choice of repertoire, and the motivation of the singers and conductors – not very different from choirs in other countries. In general, the situation is more positive for amateur choirs than for professional choirs.

Martina Spiritová is a graduate of the Faculty of Philosophy and Art, Charles University in Prague. She studied choir direction at the Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague, in the class of Prof. Miroslav Košler. In 2000, she won a scholarship to study at *Universidad Complutense* in Madrid. Currently, she is continuing her Ph.D. studies at Charles University. She was the choirmaster of the semi-professional chamber choir VOKS for ten years. Currently, she is the conductor of the mixed choir 'Musica Oeconomica' at the University of Economics in Prague (along with her husband Kryštof Spirit) and the choir of Jan Deyl Conservatory in Prague. When not conducting, she devotes herself to singing (as a member of Ensemble Hilaris, a choir focused on Renaissance music), teaching (leading a seminar on music theory for students of primary pedagogy at the Faculty of Education), and organising musical events (e.g., collaborating with the Swiss foundation Animato Stiftung on a concert tour of young musicians). Her thesis is focused on non-professional choirs and issues concerning singing pedagogy.
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Edited by Steve Lansford, USA ●



Presenting Some Good Czech Choirs

Kühn Children's Choir

The choir is also known as the Czech Philharmonic Children's Choir and was founded in 1932 by opera singer and radio director Jan Kühn. Since then it has been one of the most important Czech choral ensembles. Since 1947 the choir has regularly performed at the Prague Spring international music festival and in 1952 entered into institutional union with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. The choir won first prize at a number of international choir competitions (for instance, First International Choir Olympics in Paris in 1956, the International Choir Competition in Neerpelt 1968, Tolosa in 2008, Arezzo in 2010, the International Radio Competition in Wuppertal 2007). The choir also attracted the attention of composers and gradually initiated the creation of several hundred choral compositions, which it also premiered.

The extent of its repertoire is impressive. It includes works of all periods and styles with a strong emphasis on sacred music. For its interpretive quality the choir is invited to collaborate regularly with the National Theatre in Prague and foreign opera houses and symphonic orchestras. The choir has sung under leading conductors as Vaclav Talich, Rafael Kubelik, Karel Ancerl, Jiri Belohlavek, Seiji Ozawa, Serge Baudo, Eliyahu Inbal, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Vladimir Fedosejev, and Gennady Rozhdestvensky. Kühn Children's Choir has also received invitations to a number of international festivals and concert tours and has performed at prestigious international venues (Musikverein in Vienna, Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo, Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Carnegie Hall in New York).

Since 1967 the artistic director has been **Jiri Chvala** (*1933), professor of conducting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. The choir is the oldest Czech choir school: currently it operates in several departments with a total number of 550 children and young people.

www.childrenchoir.cz

Marek Valášek
choral conductor and
teacher



© Photos: Lubomir Mandys

▲ Kühn Children's Choir performance in Jesenice Rakovnik, Central Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic

The Český Krumlov Children's Choir

Český Krumlov entered the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1992. Our Music School has had a tradition of music education since 1780. The Children's Choir was established in 1995 and now comprises more than 250 singers aged from four to eighteen years in four different sections: three preparatory choirs Diblici, Lentilky and Brumlici, and the main choir Medvidata with the oldest group Krumbrumchor. During its existence, the choir has organized more than 450 public performances and over 1200 children have been part of it. The repertoire covers a wide range of folk songs and concert pieces from the Renaissance to contemporary pieces with emphasis on twentieth-century Czech composers (Bohuslav Martinů, Zdenek Lukáš, Petr Eben, Miroslav Raichl, Ilja Hurník et cet.), as well as spirituals and arrangements of popular music.

The choir has achieved numerous successes at festivals and competitions: the gold medal at national choir festivals *Zahrada písní* Prague 2008 and *Porta Musicae* Nový Jičín 2004 and 2008, first prize at the international competition in Neerpelt 2006, second prize in Llangollen 2009 and third prize in Cantonigros 2011. It has toured Germany, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Slovakia (2004, 2006, 2008). The *Medvidata Children's Choir* has already co-organized six *Vltavské Cantare Children's Choir* festivals. The choir has recorded five CDs, and cooperated with the publisher *Panton*.

Lukáš Holec has been the choirmaster from the beginning; the piano accompaniment is at present provided by *Olga Reichlová*.
www.zus-ceskykrumlov.cz/okna_sbory/sbory.html



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▲ Český Krumlov Children's Choir at an advent performance with Lukáš Holec

The Foerster Female Chamber Choir

Foerstrovo Komorní Pěvecké sdružení was founded in 1975 in Prague and soon became one of the leading Czech choirs. It has won many prizes at leading international choral competitions: *Arezzo*; *Cork*; *Debrecen*; *Klaipeda*; *Vienna 2006*; *Venice 2008* (winner of its category and winner of the *Grand Prix*); *Tours 2011* (third prize); *Rimini 2012* (winner of the *Grand Prix*) and has collaborated frequently with leading Czech artists on prestigious occasions.

The four CDs that the choir has recorded include only a part of its wide repertoire ranging from Renaissance polyphony to music of the twentieth century. FKPS pays special attention to contemporary music, through the works of many famous Czech composers including *Zdeněk Lukáš*, *Vadim Petrov*, *Vladimír Sommer*, which have been premièred by the choir. Since August 2009 the ensemble has been working under the leadership of *Jaroslav Brych*.

Jaroslav Brych (1964) studied conducting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague under *Václav Neumann*. *Josef Veselka* introduced him to the choral art. He intensified his expert skills at *H. Rilling's* master courses in *Stuttgart*. Since the beginning of his career *Jaroslav Brych* has worked with leading orchestras as well as with important choirs, such as *Charles University Choir Prague* (1984-1997), *Prague Philharmonic Choir* (1996-2005) and *Prague Chamber Choir* (since 2006). At present he works as a pedagogue at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Faculty of Pedagogics at *Charles University and Conservatoire of Pardubice*.

www.fkps.cz



▲ The Foerster Female Chamber Choir

Pueri gaudentes

The choir was established in 1990 by Mrs. **Zdenka Souckova** to satisfy the growing interest in boys' choirs. Since 2010 **Libor Sladek** has worked with the choir. There are three levels of education for boys aged from six to ten years and a concert choir for boys and young men aged from ten to thirty years. The boys sing compositions for SATB. The boys in SA have their own repertoire as well as the men TB. There are about 180 members in the choir. Boys remain in the choir after their voices have broken, progressing after the necessary pause to the men's choir.

The repertoire is very colourful; it contains different compositions for boy's, men's and even mixed choir voices. They sing religious and secular music, from Gregorian chant through medieval songs and polyphonic music to the works of contemporary composers.

The choir performs in the Czech Republic and throughout the world; it has visited *Austria*, *Belgium*, *Denmark*, *Estonia*, *Finland*, *France*, *Germany*, *Greece*, *Italy*, *Israel*, *Japan*, *Lithuania*, *Latvia*, *the Netherlands*, *Norway*, *Poland*, *Russia*, *Spain*, and *Sweden*. Our boys perform on a regular basis at the *Prague State Opera* in operas including *Carmen* and *Turandot*, *Boris Godunov*, and the jazz opera *Bubu de Montparnasse*.

Some of the choir's major successes include first place in *Neerpelt 1996*, first place "cum laude" in *Neerpelt 2006*, place in an international competition in *Preveze (Greece) 2000*, a place in an international competition in *Lindenholzhausen (Germany) 2005*. In 2006 the choir performed at the *Prague Spring Festival*. The choir has published five CDs and has made many recordings for *Czech TV* and *radio*.

www.pueri.cz

Vocal Ensemble Gentlemen Singers

This choir from Hradec Králové was established in 2003 and has become one of the most significant Czech music ensembles. The repertoire of the ensemble includes pieces ranging from Gregorian chant to arrangements of modern popular melodies, but the most important part of its repertoire is vocal compositions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Czech, Moravian and Slovak folk songs and contemporary compositions which were often arranged or even composed exclusively for the Gentlemen Singers.

The Vocal Ensemble Gentlemen Singers regularly appears at important festivals, and records music programmes for radio and television. Since its foundation in 2003 it has given more than four hundred concerts in four continents. In addition to its concert activity, the Gentlemen Singers together with the Hradec Králové Philharmonic Orchestra has, for five years, organized a concert series called Chamber Evenings with the Gentlemen Singers which presented top European ensembles and musicians, and also participates in the organization of Sborové slavnosti, the Czech Choir Festival which has become one of the leading choir festivals in the Czech Republic.

Among the recent accomplishments of the Gentlemen Singers are two first places both in the sacred and secular music categories for professional vocal ensembles at the Tolosa Choral Contest, Spain (2011) and first place in the popular music category at Busan Choral Festival & Competition, Republic of Korea (2010).



© Jan Hřebíček

▲ Vocal Ensemble Gentlemen Singers

www.gentlemensingers.cz

Bohemiachor

This mixed choir was founded in 1993 on the initiative of choirmaster Jan Staněk. Bohemiachor has about sixty members, mostly young people from all parts of the Czech Republic, who meet for four weekends during the year and one week in summer. Most singers are members, or even choirmasters, of various other choirs. During the rehearsal meetings, held in various towns and

villages, we also give concerts, sometimes together with local choirs or orchestras. The fundamental concept is to work with various excellent choirmasters. So far, several dozen Czech and foreign choirmasters have accepted the invitation. The repertoire comprises compositions coming from various epochs, but recently we mostly focus on contemporary music.

The choir has achieved some remarkable results, for instance at Jihlava National Choral Festival or Praga Cantat International Choral Festival. In 1997, Bohemiachor won first prize at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, and in 2004, it was awarded silver medals at the Choir Olympics in Bremen. In 2007, Bohemiachor was invited to the prestigious Cork International Choral Festival in Ireland. All of these successful performances were the result of the hard work and enthusiasm of the founding choirmaster, Jan Staněk. In 2008, we were awarded first prize at Canti Veris Praga, under choirmaster Libor Sládek, who spent almost eighteen years with the choir. In April 2012, Bohemiachor became the winner of both its categories at Slovakia Cantat in Bratislava and received the Grand Prix. The Jury also awarded the choirmaster **Michal Hájek** a special prize for Outstanding Choirmaster's Performance.

www.bohemiachor.cz



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▲ Bohemiachor

Musica Oeconomica Pragensis

The Musica Oeconomica Pragensis choir is one of the leisure-time activities of students and teachers of the University of Economics in Prague. It was founded in 2001 and originally led by Ota Friedl, who handed the leadership to **Martina** and **Kryštof Sprit** two years later. The choir fulfils the function of a school representative, but at the same time organizes its own events, and its members today (about forty singers) are students and graduates of the University of Economics and other Prague universities. The choir usually holds concerts in Prague, but the audience can hear it in concerts and festivals all around the country and abroad. The repertoire is wide, from Baroque music to contemporary music, not forgetting folk songs, spirituals and pop music. The choir collaborates with prominent soloists and instrumentalists (Jiřina Dvořáková – Marešová, Markéta Mazourová, Ondřej Socha to name only a few.)

Our successes: third place in Neerpelt 2002, first place *cum laude* in Neerpelt 2004, first place at the Praga Cantat choir festival, Czech Republic 2004, first place at the FONS festival of sacred music, Žďár nad Sázavou, Czech Republic 2008, silver medal in two categories at the Trnavské zborové dni international choir competition, Slovakia 2008, second place (gold medal) at the Europe and its Songs international choir competition, Barcelona, Spain 2011, gold and silver medals at the Sing'n'Joy Vienna international choir competition, Austria 2012.

www.sbormop.cz



© Musica Oeconomica

▲ Musica Oeconomica at Universitas Cantat 2009

Piccolo Coro & Piccola Orchestra

These ensembles are a combination of a mixed chamber choir and a chamber string orchestra, which rehearse and perform under Marek Valášek. The ensemble is based in Prague and has thirty-three permanent members. Since its establishment in 1996, it has given hundreds of concerts both at home and abroad.

The ensemble interprets compositions regardless of time period or genre. The line-up can vary according to the needs of individual music projects, be it chamber works or spectacular oratorios from the Romantic period. Both the choir and the string orchestra also perform their own separate programs on a regular basis. Works of sacred music prevail; many of them date from the twentieth century. The ensemble often premieres contemporary Czech compositions or records them for the Czech Radio.

At the Youth Stage Festival 2004, the ensemble was given the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Prize; at the International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music 2007 it won a major prize and received the Petr Eben Award. Piccolo Coro was the absolute winner of the International Choral Art Festival Jihlava 2011; at the prestigious choral competition in Spittal, Austria, the choir won first prize in the main category, third prize in the folklore category and the Special Jury Award for their interpretation of a contemporary composition.

The ensemble has recorded three CDs of sacred music - Marian music in Loreto (1998), Hear My Prayer (2000), Canticum delle Creature (2004) - and one with choral arrangements of Czech folk songs Hore Dolinami (2009).

www.piccola.cz



© Piccolo Coro & Piccola Orchestra

▲ Piccolo Coro & Piccola Orchestra

Marek Valášek, MgA., Ph.D. (born in 1969) teaches choir direction at the Faculty of Education at the Charles University in Prague and leads three of Prague Conservatoire's choirs. In 2004 he conducted the Czech première of the oratorio *Ecce Homo* by Czech composer Jan Hanuš at the Prague Spring International Music Festival, in 2005 he conducted Hanuš's *Requiem*. Between 2002 and 2006 he also worked as a choirmaster at the Prague State Opera. In 1996 he founded the Piccolo Coro & Piccola Orchestra chamber choir and string orchestra. Email: marek.valasek@pedf.cuni.cz



Edited by Louise Wiseman, UK, and Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy

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The Asia Pacific Youth Choir's opening concert for the ACDA Convention 2013 in Dallas ▲
Conductors from left to right: Li Feng Wu (China), Saeko Hasegawa (Japan), Jonathan Velasco (Philippines) and Prof. Hak Won Yoon (Rep. Korea)

International Federation for Choral Music

Second International Competition for Choral Composition

Report by President of the Jury, Graham Lack

Frank Corcoran (b. 1944)

Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area – Girona, 2012

Theodora Pavlovitch

Paul Wehrle and Eric Ericson:
Choral Trailblazers Who Changed Our Lives

The IFCM Has a New Image to Project to the World

Stephen Leek

An 'Isle full of noises'
The current state of choral music in the United Kingdom

Andrew Potter

Nordisk Korforum

A Co-Operating Organization for the Development of Choral Singing

Theodor Lind

21 Some competitions are like transatlantic long-haul flights; others resemble the short hop domestic connexion. The present competition was certainly in the former category. By the final submission date, 1st October 2012, no fewer than 637 works had been received by the competition office. The jury was hence confronted with a huge task. Out of fairness to the composers, I felt as Jury President the only route through this was to ask the jurors – Libby Larsen (US), John Pamintuan (The Philippines), Olli Kortekangas (Finland) and Paul Stanhope (Australia) to look at each work in turn and suggest candidates for the second round. Allotting, say, ca. 120 pieces to each juror might have meant less work for each individual at the outset, but might well have skewed the reading process, according to personal musical and stylistic preferences. From the start we relied on each other's views and opinions. Into the second round were customarily sent 139 compositions, ones which, in the opinion of the jury, merited further discussion. In the interests of transparency, I can tell readers that this stage took place in a cloud computing environment, although I can not of course reveal details of those virtual discussions. Thus, just 15 pieces went through to the final round, which was held as a lengthy Skype conference that initially connected the US with Finland, Australia with Germany, The Philippines with Italy (Rimini in fact, where the Competition Adjudicator, Andrea Angelini, was looking on and listening in) and, of course, everyone with everyone else. Marvellous when technology works; hideous when it does not...

From the outset consensus politics had been preached, and it was a most gratifying feeling when we realised that only three works were in the frame – our real candidates, our three prize-winners. After some discussion, which was informative, courteous and constructive throughout, the outright winner emerged: Francis (Frank) Corcoran (Ireland), for his *Eight Haikus*. He receives € 5,000 along with a Competition Diploma. The work will, as detailed in the rules, now be premiered by the Philippine Madrigal Singers, on 5th and 6th October as it turns out. As for the two Special Prizes, these were awarded to Itzam L. Zapata Paniagua (Mexico), whose *On Desire* functions, in the opinion of the jury, as an 'Original Sonic Landscape', and Rudi Tas (Belgium), whose *Pie Jesu*, again according to jury opinion, displays 'Notable Harmonic Originality'. The former work will be given a workshop and possibly premiered by VOCE8; the latter piece will also be part of a workshop with the Kammerchor Consonare Hamburg, and may well be premiered too. We hope the two composers will manage to attend.

It was decided to make a number of Honourable Mentions. These included Ivan Bozicevic (Croatia) in the category Suitability for Youth Choir for his *Yuku haru ya*; Xingzimin Pan (USA) in the category Suitability for Community Choir for his *Poem I*; Christopher Evans (UK) in the category Suitability for School Choir for his *Far on the Sands*; and Gaetano Lorandi (Italy), whose *Ave Verum* demonstrates good Repertoire Value in addition to being a Well-Crafted Manuscript. Simply put: congratulations to all seven composers.

To come back to the point about the sheer number of entries, we wondered what had precipitated such a phenomenon. First and foremost there had been a successful advertising campaign, and the news had got out to composers around the world, to conservatoires and academies and their composition teachers and professors, and to choir directors and to singers; secondly, this was a competition with no entry fee, and no restrictions like age limit, or nationality and country of residence, the works were just to be *a cappella*, scored in up to eight parts (SSAATTBB) for mixed voices, and no longer than eight minutes; thirdly, there was no actual theme to the competition, composers were free to set any text in any language (with English translation where appropriate and necessary), whether sacred or secular, whether old or new, whether published or unpublished (copyright clearance of texts not in public domain was the business of entrants prior to submission); and fourthly and finally the outright prize-winner was to receive a generous amount of money (a decision for which IFCM President Michael J. Anderson must be thanked) and the work selected would be premiered by a named ensemble.

Report by
President of the Jury,
Graham Lack

‘Haiku 3’, from “Eight Haikus”, Frank Corcoran, bars 30-36

The standard was high, certainly higher than was the case with the First International Competition for Choral Competition, held in 2010. It seems most composers had understood a few things: just how important range and tessitura are, that voice leading must create horizontal sense, that a work should maintain some sense of harmonic progression – or logic at least, how vital it is that music be made to match the text, and how necessary it is to write for the voice, each voice, every voice in an ensemble, and not sacrifice ‘singability’ on the altar of choral effect.

On a more, and I hope not churlish, note, it was disappointing to see how many composers were prepared to sign an affidavit of legal standing to the effect that a work had never previously been performed, where this was clearly being economical with the truth. A quick trawl of the Internet by the adjudication panel revealed much: the World Wide Web is a poor place to hide. Other works which actually had not been performed before the date of submission were found to have received premieres between that time and either before the final competition submission date or prior to the jury announcing its decision. The letter of the law may be seen to have been obeyed, but the spirit of the law – where for obvious reasons pertaining to the preservation of anonymity alone it is assumed the jury will be considering only unperformed works until such time as a decision is announced – had certainly been transgressed. In addition, the main prize included a premiere, which counts out such works.

A number of pieces along with their composers were thus disqualified. At best, and to give as many composers as possible the benefit of the doubt, some workshop renditions which had found their way onto various websites were clearly cases where the entrant did not classify these as performances proper, and did not see them as being in the public domain; at worst, there were a few cases where a work had received a world premiere, one given by a renowned ensemble in a concert hall very much part of musical life of a large city, with a press and PR campaign up front, and with several reviews

“On Desire”, Itzam L. Zapata Paniagua, Bars 8-10

“Pie Jesu”, Rudi Tas, bars 18-21

in well-known newspapers and trade magazines after the fact. This can only be interpreted as an attempt to obtain money by deception. And a dim view of this was taken. Whether or not the ICB is the right forum to air these views might be debatable, but there should be no taboo subjects, and I feel strongly enough about what was a parlous state of affairs as judging began.

Let me end on a more positive note: the work that gradually drifted to the surface and which began to percolate the minds of the jurors is a fine composition. It is not an easy sing. I shall make no bones about that. But the guidelines of the competition clearly announce a chief aim which is to “promote the creation and distribution of new, innovative, and accessible choral literature.” As for the last criterion, accessibility, well, I am sure there are enough choirs and smaller ensembles in the world whose singers will solve technically what might at first sight be perceived as an intractability of the rhythmic language in Frank Corcoran’s *Eight Haikus* and grasp immediately the arguably recondite nature of the beautiful if fleeting melodies,

based as they so plainly are on harmonical proportions. All in all it is a compositional tour de force and a great but not insurmountable musical challenge, one to which a number of groups around the world will certainly rise. And if the music proves a touch beyond that which one’s choir is capable of at the present time, directors can turn perhaps to the excellent works by Itzam Paniagua and Rudi Tas, or to the works of those worthy contenders who received an Honourable Mention in a particular choir category: Ivan Bozicevic, Xingzimin Pan and Christopher Evans. Finally, it was a pleasure to read around 30 works sent as MSS, these hand-written scores allowing the jury a different kind of insight into the musical processes at work within a particular composition. So we were glad indeed to single out one which is especially well crafted, that by Gaetano Lorandi.

We hope the International Competition for Choral Composition will go from strength to strength. The next one is the third – it is a biennial event – and is scheduled for 2014. Gosh, that is creeping up on us already. ●

Frank Corcoran (b. 1944)

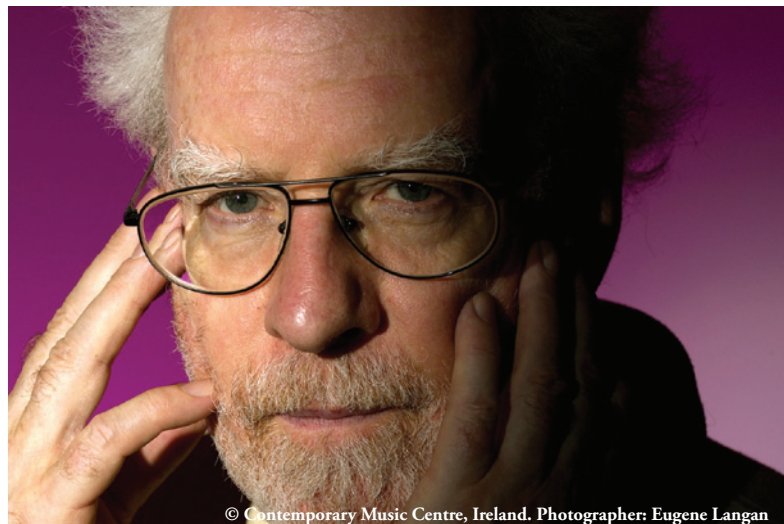
'I came late to art music; childhood soundscapes live on. The best work with imagination/intellect must be exorcistic-laudatory- excavatory. I am a passionate believer in "Irish" dream-landscape, two languages, polyphony of history, not ideology or programme. No Irish composer has yet dealt adequately with our past. The way forward – newest forms and technique (for me especially macro-counterpoint) – is the way back to deepest human experience.'

Frank Corcoran was born in Tipperary and studied in Dublin, Maynooth, Rome and Berlin (with Boris Blacher). He was the first Irish composer to have his ‘Symphony No. 1’ (1980) premiered in Vienna.

He was a music inspector for the Department of Education in Ireland from 1971 to 1979. He was awarded a composer fellowship by the Berlin Künstlerprogramm in 1980, a guest professorship in West Berlin in 1981, and was professor of music in Stuttgart in 1982. Since 1983 he has been professor of composition and theory in the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst, Hamburg. During 1989-90 he was visiting professor and Fulbright Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and he has been a guest lecturer at Princeton University, CalArts, Harvard University, Boston College, New York University and Indiana University.

His works have been performed and broadcast in Europe, Asia, USA, Canada and South America. He has been commissioned by NDR, RTÉ, the Arts Council, U.W.M., Sender Freies Berlin, W.D.R., Deutschlandfunk, North South Consonance New York, Dublin Living Music Festival, Cantus Chamber Orchestra Zagreb, Dublin Festival of Twentieth Century Music, AXA International Piano Competition, Wireworks Hamburg, Slí Nua, RTÉ lyric fm, Now U Know Washington, New Music Boston, Carroll’s Summer Music, Book of Kells U.W.M., Crash Ensemble, Hamburg Ministry of Culture, Tonhalle Düsseldorf, Stuttgart Bläserquintett, the Irish Chamber Orchestra and the National Chamber Choir of Ireland. Awards include Studio Akustische Kunst First Prize 1996 for his ‘Joycepeak Music’ (1995), Premier Prix at the 1999

Bourges International Electro-acoustic Music Competition for his composition ‘Sweeney’s Vision’ (1997) and the 2002 Swedish EMS Prize for ‘Quasi Una Missa’ (1999). He was also awarded the 1972 Feis Ceoil Prize, the 1973 Varming Prize and the 1975 Dublin Symphony Orchestra Prize. More recently he won the Sean Ó Riada Award at the Cork International Choral Festival 2012 for his ‘Two Unholy Haikus’. CDs of his music have been released on the Black Box, Marco Polo, Col-Legno, Wergo, Composers’ Art, IMEB-Unesco, Zeitklang and Caprice labels. Frank Corcoran is a founding member of Aosdána, Ireland’s state-sponsored academy of creative artists. ●



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Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area

Girona, 2012



▲ Left to right: Dolf Rabus, Montserrat Gual, Ariadna de Casacuberta, Roula Abou Baker, Barkev Taslakian, Pier Flippo Rendina, Marina Velázquez, Montserrat Cadevall, Martí Ferrer, Theodora Pavlovich, Fethi Zghonda, Stéphane Grosclaude

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Excellent examples of Spanish Gothic architecture, old fortifications, Benedictine churches and monasteries in early Romanesque style near neo-classical buildings with porches... These and many other breathtaking historic features rich in Mediterranean spirit can be found in the amazing city of Girona. Located a hundred kilometres north-west of Barcelona, it is one of the major Catalan cities and was chosen to host the Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area, October 12th – 14th, 2012. After four very successful events (from 2007 to 2011), the Fifth Meeting had an even more ambitious goal: to start preparation for the Mediterranean Voices Conference (July 29th – August 2nd 2013).

Having a unique position between three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia (the Middle East the Mediterranean Sea has), since ancient times been a cradle of different civilizations, a meeting point of rich cultures and an important route for merchants and travelers permitting trade and cultural exchanges between the peoples of the region. The history of the Mediterranean region is crucial to understanding the origins and development of many modern societies. “For three quarters of the globe, the Mediterranean Sea is similarly the uniting element and the centre of World History.” (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 87, Dover Publications Inc., 1956)

Parallel to all its cultural influences, the Mediterranean Sea also connects millions of people through music, and consequently the subjects in the field of music in this geographical area are endless. After four meetings showing a rich palette of scientific, musical and practical matters, the Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area focused attention on several important topics:

1. **Strategies and methods for the quantitative and qualitative study of choral practice in Mediterranean countries.** The topic included mapping choral life in different countries, giving the opportunity to know the real situation of choral practice in the area. This map will be an essential tool to define goals and choral policies in the short, medium and long term. This tool should also serve to know the dimension of choral life and assert the value of choral and vocal tradition in the countries of the region. It was also a good way to know first hand not only the results but also the methods used in each case.
2. **Drafting a Handbook of diplomacy and code of good practice for the organization of choral activities in the Mediterranean area.** The concept of this topic was based on the fact that the shores of the Mediterranean Sea are rich in traditions, cultures, customs, beliefs, religions and political systems. This rich diversity was a challenge in organising international events with participants (singers, conductors, musicologists...) from various places. Thanks to the presence of choral specialists from different countries and areas it was possible to define a code of good practice and a manual of diplomacy. This tool, which will remain open for future contributions and clarifications, should be the query tool for all those who organize international choral events in multicultural and multi-religious areas all over the world.
3. **Establishing the Mediterranean Choral FORUM** was a very important part of the meeting. The FORUM's general tasks were sharing ideas for innovative projects, looking for partners

Theodora Pavlovitch
IFCM Vice-President, choral
conductor and teacher

for specific projects, and promoting future choral activities in an international auditorium. And of course, to start building the general concept of the Mediterranean Voices Conference was the greatest challenge. From July 29th until August 2nd, 2013 Girona will be the hotspot, so to speak, for conductors, musicologists, singers, musicians or just lovers of choral music. Seven concerts of star-lights from the Mediterranean Area, twelve conferences, round-table discussions and exhibitions will show the rich diversity of choral and vocal traditions of the region. Partners in organizing this great event are the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat (through its Programme VOICE :Vision On Innovation for Choral music in Europe, supported by the Culture programme of the European Union), Moviment Coral Català – the host organisation – and the International Federation for Choral Music, patron and organizer of Voices Conferences for many years. Dynamic and intensive, the programme of the Conference will be entirely focused on Mediterranean musical heritage and modern trends, including daily Open Singing

with performances of unusual and specific songs from the region. The complete programme will soon be published in the International Choral Bulletin as well as on the websites of the three partners.

The excellent organisation (both technical and logistical), the wonderful opportunities for discussion and the high artistic and scientific spirit brought the Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area to valuable conclusions and a rich platform for future researches. Working surrounded by masterpieces of Picasso, Matisse, Gauguin, Monet, Rusinol – a part of the fantastic collection exposed in the halls of CaixaForum in Girona – was a great inspiration and an unforgettable experience for all of us, participants in the Fifth Meeting of Choir Specialists from the Mediterranean Area. *Moltíssimes Gràcies*, Moviment Coral Català and the Mediterranean Office for Choral Singing...*Adéu...*

Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy ●

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59^o Certamen
Internacional de
HABANERAS
y **POLIFONÍA**

TORREVIEJA
DEL 22 AL 28 DE JULIO 2013

DECLARADO DE INTERÉS TURÍSTICO INTERNACIONAL - MEDALLA AL MÉRITO CULTURAL DE LA GENERALITAT VALENCIANA

ESCALA ARQUITECTÓNICA DE TORREVIEJA
COMUNITAT VALENCIANA
GENERALITAT VALENCIANA
Costa Blanca
DIPUTACIÓ DE VALÈNCIA
IVM
HABANERAS

**59th INTERNATIONAL CHORAL CONTEST
HABANERAS AND POLIPHONY
TORREVIEJA (SPAIN)**

It will take place between the **22nd to 28th July 2013**.
During 7 days at dusk, the participants choirs will sing outdoors habaneras and polyphony in the wonderful auditorium "Eras de la Sal" in the coast of Mediterranean Sea.
Inscription deadline: 31st JANUARY 2013.

**19th INTERNATIONAL CHORAL CONTEST
HABANERAS AND POLIPHONY FOR YOUTH CHOIR
TORREVIEJA (SPAIN)**

Will take place between the **19th to 21st April 2013**.
Inscription deadline: 2nd JANUARY 2013.

19^o certamen
de **Juvenil**
habaneras
TORREVIEJA

Teatro Municipal
19, 20 y 21 de Abril 2013

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Paul Wehrle and Eric Ericson

Choral Trailblazers Who Changed Our Lives

The week of February 11, 2013 was emotionally difficult for the world choral community owing to the loss of IFCM Past-President Paul Wehrle followed by IFCM Honorary President Eric Ericson. We spent much of the week corresponding about the passing of these two gentlemen, not just mourning their loss, but reflecting on the enormous impact that they had on our choral lives, either directly or indirectly. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of IFCM, we share in the sorrow of the families, but we honor our colleagues for the insightful vision that helped to position choral music as a positive world-wide vehicle for peace.

I have asked Prof. Leon Tong, First Vice-President, and IFCM Board Member Mr. Fred Sjöberg to compile material that will help us better understand Paul and Eric as conductors, teachers, and visionaries, and as human beings. Through this, I hope the families will find some comfort in the knowledge that so many people all around the globe are with them in the time of grieving.

Dr. Michael J Anderson, IFCM President



Remembering Paul Wehrle

*Leon Shiu-wai Tong, First Vice-President, IFCM
President, Hong Kong Treble Choirs' Association*

Paul Wehrle was the founding Secretary General of Europa Cantat from 1963 to 1976. He followed his dream of bringing people together through choral music, founding the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) in 1982 together with other choral masters. He then became the very first president of IFCM. Paul was an encyclopedic person with a gift for careful planning. With his strong vision of choral music as a means for peace, he originated the idea of the World Choral Symposium, in which by cooperating with a national organization, institution or committee in a host country, a platform could be created for the world's most prestigious choral lovers to meet and share their music from their different parts of the world. Thus choir singers were enriched through the sharing of music; conductors improved their skills; and the world has become a better place. Paul's idea of enhancing the choral world with his belief in choral peace has made great progress.

Paul was a very tall man and he always called himself the 'Old Elephant'. To the choral music world he was also a great giant, not so much because of his height, but because of what he had established and what he had brought to the choral music world in his long life. I had the greatest respect for his considerable guidance to the younger generation and especially for his support for the Chinese Choral World. I had also received calls from him from time to time with his advice and encouragement to me about the development of choral music in China. At the age of 80, he was still very involved and very active in supporting choral festivals in

Hong Kong and China, and this is greatly appreciated. I also remember that the very last time he participated in a choir festival in Hong Kong and China, although he had cancelled all the touring part of the festival because it was too fatiguing, he still insisted on being present at all the important meetings and concerts to show his support. He was like a leader guiding and caring for us all the time whenever we needed support.

I am sure Paul would not mind if I mention here something about him that was, actually, very endearing. When he felt tired during a concert, Paul would put a piece of veiling over his head before falling asleep. But what I want to say is, even then, he would insist on staying until the end of the concert. I admired his persistent spirit very much.

Here I have also the tributes to Paul from the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, and from Royce Saltzman and María Guinand, representing lovers of choral music from Europe, America and Latin America .

Remembering Paul Wehrle, founding Secretary General of the European Federation of Young Choirs (which later became Europa Cantat and is now the European Choral Association)

Sonja Greiner, Secretary General, European Choral Association – Europa Cantat

(Also on behalf of the Board Association)

I met Paul for the first time in 1982 at the EUROPA CANTAT Festival in Namur, Belgium. His presence was impressive, not only physically – since he was a tall man and I am rather short – but also because when he stepped into a room it immediately became clear that he had to be somebody important.

During the following years I met him several times at different national and international events in Germany. Paul followed my professional development and it was also thanks to him that I am now one of his successors. Over the years we did not always agree, but we always kept in touch and we both supported our work and believed that singing together can contribute to a peace-building process. Paul's visions will continue living in our activities and he will not be forgotten!

Royce Saltzman, Past President, IFCM

Paul Wehrle was a tall man...not just in stature, but in ideas. He was someone you looked up to because he was a visionary, a person who had a global perspective of choral music that went beyond national boundaries. Paul believed that singing was a powerful force that could build bridges between people, regardless of differences in cultural background, spoken language, politics, religion, or race. His 'bridge building' brought people together through singing, whether in the classroom, a festival setting, or the concert stage. As a result, he was a driving force in the founding of IFCM, serving as its first president from 1982-85. The World Symposium was his idea. Over the years his 'reflection' has been mirrored in Vienna, Vancouver, Minneapolis, Kyoto, and Sydney, to name only a few of the great host cities. In like manner, Paul was a major influence in the early days of Europa Cantat (now the European Choral Association) which today represents the whole of the continent.

Paul Wehrle's life as an educator, musician, leader, and mentor converged to make a powerful statement about who he was. To those of us who knew him well, he will always remain tall... a person we looked up to. Thank you, Paul Wehrle.

María Guinand

*Artistic Director, Fundación Schola Cantorum de Venezuela
Advisor, IFCM*

Paul Wehrle was a very enthusiastic, idealistic and sincere man. His strong personality, which came through his ringing voice, will always remain in my memory. Every New Year's day, our phone would ring at 8am and there was Paul wishing us Happy New Year. His love for choral music made him a very special person, deeply devoted and generous in leading many international projects, laying the foundations of the International Federation for Choral Music.

I met Paul back in 1980 during the Choralies at Vaison la Romaine and later at Europa Cantat at Namur, in 1982, when IFCM was created. I admired his capacity for dreaming and being a visionary, but especially I admired his very positive attitude towards new projects and ideas that could help to spread choral projects. As first President of IFCM, Paul promoted together with his colleagues many new ideas and events such as the World and Regional Symposia, but he was also very concerned about finding ways to help the development of choral music in regions with less experience, such as Latin America.

He actively supported our initiative of the America Cantat Festival and the social work of the Andean Project. When he came to Caracas in the year 2000 for America Cantat III, Paul discovered our musical potential in both youth orchestras and choirs, and subsequently he continued to foster many international relationships and projects. We are all grateful for his legacy, which is based on solidarity, compassion, friendship and contagious enthusiasm in promoting the values of choral music. For Alberto and me, it was a privilege to live all these years of achievements close to him.

Many thanks dear Paul!

Paul's devotion to the development of choral music was unbelievable. He was awarded the Staufer Gold Medal in recognition of his life work in choral music. We, all the choral lovers around the world, will remember Paul as a pioneer with a firm belief in choral music as a means for peace and we shall rejoice in the memories and inspirations he gave us.

Writing this now, I realize that I never mentioned to Paul how greatly his spirit and vision had inspired me. But I do not think it matters as I feel sure he knows that I am telling him now, and I can imagine him looking up with a wistful smile. I wish that God may guide him all the way through.

Remembering Eric Ericson

Fred Sjöberg IFCM Board Member

Christian Ljunggren, Artistic Director at INTEKULTUR, Former IFCM Secretary-General

An era in Swedish and international choral life came to an end on February 16, 2013: the legendary choral conductor Professor Eric Ericson passed away at the age of 94.

The importance of Eric Ericson in modern choral life is almost inestimable. For choral directors from all over the world he symbolized the professional choral conductor and he made choral singing, especially *a cappella* singing, equal to other forms of art. He formed his Kammarkören in 1945 (in 1988 renamed Eric Ericson's Chamber Choir) and it became the model for the *a cappella* chamber choir not only in Sweden but throughout the world. In 1951 he became the leader of the Swedish Radio Choir and the same year was put in charge of choral conducting at Musikhögskolan, The Royal College of Music. 'Eric' from then on was the great maestro for all coming generations of Swedish choral conductors. Many of the internationally known Swedish solo singers have been choristers in his choirs, such as Elisabeth Söderström, Erik Saedén, and Nicolai Gedda, and later Anne Sofie von Otter.

In his choral work he collaborated with a new generation of composers in Sweden and abroad. His friendship with composers like Ingvar Lidholm, Sven-Erik Bäck and Lars Edlund resulted in many grand pieces of *a cappella* choral music. In the 1970s his international influence became greater, especially through the epoch-making recordings Europäische Chormusik. In the field of Baroque music there are numerous recordings with his choirs and the Drottningholm Baroque Orchestra, Stockholm, and Concentus Musicus, Vienna. His recording of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* was used in a film directed by Ingmar Bergman which was viewed internationally. His world-wide choir tours also included the famous male choir OD, Orphei Drängar.

Eric Ericson also held numerous courses and workshops. Many people all over the world who joined his educational activities were proud to proclaim themselves a pupil of Eric Ericson. He regularly conducted many top international choirs, including the Netherlands Chamber Choir, the RIAS Kammerchor, the BBC Singers, and Groupe Vocal de France. It is worth mentioning that his musicianship had no borders. His collaborations with jazz musicians such as Duke Ellington, Alice Babs, and Svend Asmussen are legendary. He was a good jazz pianist himself. In 1997 he was awarded the Polar Music Prize together with Bruce Springsteen.



Besides his importance on the élite level, Ericson met with and taught amateur choirs all his life. He had a great interest in the choral art as a lay activity and always emphasized the choral community as an ecological system where the top level should inspire the amateur choirs, and believed that wide-ranging choral singing constituted the pre-condition for the activities of élite choirs. That he was recognized as the patron of all choir singers, professional and amateur, is symbolized by the fact that he was the Honorary President of IFCM, and also the World Choir Games. For him, however, these titles were not only formal. In recent years, he kept himself up-to-date on what was happening in the choral world.

Eric Ericson must have been aware of his importance in the choral art of his times, but he was also a very humble man. This can be exemplified by what happened at the opening ceremony of the IFCM World Symposium in Stockholm in 1990. In the first part of the concert he conducted his Chamber Choir in Lars Edlund's Gloria and other advanced pieces. In the second part he only appeared once, in OD's choral piece *Lawn tennis* where he rushed on stage (as a ball boy in short trousers) responding to the command of the referee to 'Catch the ball, please!'

*María Guinand, Artistic Director
Fundacion Schola Cantorum de Venezuela*

Eric Ericson was one of the most important figures on the choral scene during the twentieth century. His innovative choral work was always a landmark for many musicians and conductors and his emphasis on performing the music of his fellow composers and colleagues created widespread interest in the new choral music of Sweden. Through his work, Eric was one of the best cultural ambassadors of his country. We met Eric in 1990 when we

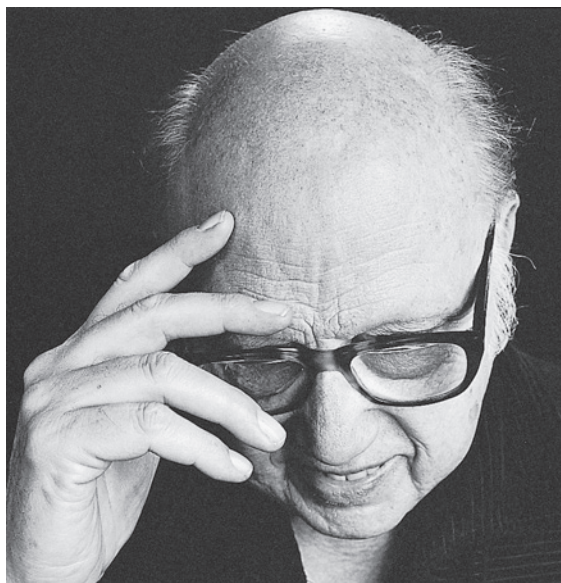
participated in the Second World Choral Symposium in Sweden with the Schola Cantorum de Venezuela. We were thrilled to listen to his choir in the opening concert, admiring the perfection and musicianship of his choir, and we also discovered his good sense of humor.

Eric came to Caracas in early January of 1991 to teach conducting, to work with the Schola Cantorum and to share with us the compositions of so many of his countrymen during an unforgettable week of music and friendly contact. Two of the most vivid memories I keep from this visit were his informal

'open' rehearsal of Swedish songs for Venezuelan conductors during a delicious dinner at the Swedish Embassy in Caracas (many 'shots' of Aquavit between songs) and his child-like delight when swimming in the Caribbean Sea for a whole afternoon in the month of January. He just could not believe it! Over the years, we met Eric on many occasions and always remembered these days.

But perhaps the most moving and personal moments we shared with him were in 2009, when he celebrated his ninetieth birthday, and our Youth Schola (integrated by 50 children from our Music and Social Programme in Venezuela) were invited to Stockholm to be part of the Eric Ericson Day. Our children sang for him in the open courtyard

of the Adolf Frederiks Skola on a freezing day, together with the choirs of Bo Johansson, and also took part in the concert in Berwald Hall together with the Radio Choir and the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir. The moment when Eric walked on stage and conducted all the choirs in the emblematic Swedish song *Kung Liljekonvale* will remain in our memories as the legacy of a man who had a profound love for music and a warm and humble heart. We thank you Eric for being part of our lives. ●



The IFCM Has a New Image to Project to the World

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INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION
FOR
CHORAL
MUSIC



IFCM

As a result of the IFCM Logo Challenge held last year, the IFCM now has a new and exciting logo that will lead the entire rebranding process of the IFCM over the coming year. It was encouraging to receive many exciting and interesting entries from across the world, ones which were able to capture the ideas, ethos and function of the IFCM in its international work.

The vast brief given to entrants included that the new logo should project professionalism, internationalism, artistry, creativity, diversity, global community, success, achievement, confidence, choral singing, music making at all levels, energy, vibrancy, participation and inclusion, intelligence, and most importantly, innovation. It was to be simple, timeless in style, yet contemporary, representative of all styles of choral music, cultures and ages, eye catching and immediately recognizable, and adaptable to lots of different settings and purposes. We believe the winning entry fulfills this brief perfectly.

The winner of the challenge was an entry selected by a team from within the IFCM board and membership, created by Lithuanian choral singer and graphic designer, Ernestas Šimkūnas (Graphic designer for UAB INTERGRAFIKA www.intergrafika.eu) and submitted on behalf of Klaipėda Choir's Association.

AUKURAS
K. Donelaičio g. 4, LT 92144 Klaipėda
E-mail aukuras@ku.lt

Congratulations to Ernestas and AUKURAS
for the new, exciting and visible image for the IFCM. ●

Stephen Leek
IFCM Vice-President,
composer and conductor



Launching A NEW CHOIR FESTIVAL in Örebro, Sweden:

Urban Youth Choir Festival

JUNE
14-20
2013



For the first time in Europe we are presenting a festival for young people, where the joy and feeling from the dancing floor or the cheering crowd on a football ground are tied with organized choir singing. Do YOU love music such as r'n'b, indie, singer/songwriter, hip hop, punk or some other form of music? Then YOU have the chance to experience something new. In June 14-20 2013 in Örebro, Sweden young people from different cultural background and varying musical level of skill will get together to experience and perform Urban Youth Choir Music! We provide challenges for YOU who is an experienced singer/performer with a band or from auditions. And YOU who is inexperienced but still want to sing and hang out with a cool crowd are equally welcome.

program, workshops
and a lot of more
information!

www.UrbanYouthChoirFestival.se

for young urban
smartphone
users

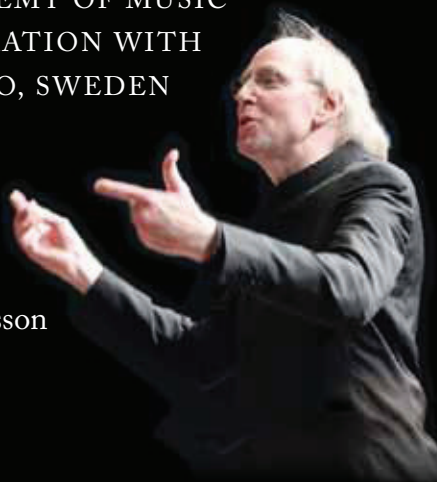


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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



An 'Isle full of noises'

The current state of choral music in the United Kingdom



▲ Picture taken at the Convention where *abcd* was founded in Oxford in 1986

In this occasional ICB series, the work of various national choral organizations is examined. The author is erstwhile Chairman of the Association of British Choral Directors.

Singing really is the *Zeitgeist* in the UK, but how does British choral music fare within the international context?

'The isle is full of noises

Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not'

Shakespeare's words from *The Tempest* resounded at the opening of the 2012 London Olympic Games and reflect the importance of music to the British. A wonderful variety of singers and songs was featured. These words, and the various Olympic ceremonies, also chime closely with the values of IFCM, which include **helping** to preserve choral music and promote cultural diversity.

British choral music has its deepest historical roots in a collegiate and cathedral choral tradition, where choirs of boys and men have sung and developed beautiful sacred music for more than half a millennium. There is a strong 150 year-old tradition of amateur and community music-making, and in the last half century British popular music and artists have taken a leading position in the world's repertoire.

Just over 25 years ago the Association of British Choral Directors (*abcd*) was formed to enable better training, networking and awareness. Bodies representing choral groups had been in existence for several decades, but none of them represented the conductor. Now with 700 members, *abcd* has developed an informative and interactive web site, various training programmes (often attended by colleagues from outside the UK) and an annual convention. The formation of *abcd* coincided with a blossoming of choral singing brought about by a televised Choir of the Year competition which showed a real broadening of choral music-making; it began to be recognised that choral leaders needed, to a large extent, to be 'technicians' whether in terms of the voice, the collective sound or interpretation.

Often the British can seem inflexible and even arrogant about their traditions. But it is also the British way to self doubt. We can not help feeling that our national football teams, no matter how well they start in the World Cup, will inevitably fail. It took us a few days into the Olympics to realise that we were going to have a successful games, even beyond our dreams. Maybe our strong tradition has simply prevented the development that we see in other countries. Is it a fair judgement to say that we are insular, defensive or complacent? The truth, as always, probably lies somewhere in between.

Andrew Potter
publisher & project
manager

I sounded out some key members of *abcd* who between them have a wealth of experience of choral music around the world. Collectively they have worked or participated in competitions and festivals in Northern, Central, Southern and Eastern Europe, North and South America, China, South Korea, Australia, Africa and Israel. Many British choirs have won the most exacting international competitions, as have a number of non-British choirs led by British choral leaders. But I soon realised how little I know in terms of defining and measuring ‘successful’ British choral development in an international context.

From my friends emerged a number of themes, the first of which was the lack of training in the UK. It seems that this is left to *abcd*, and we run a number of basic, intermediate and advanced courses each year attended by 80 individuals. A few universities also pitch in, but without any systematic or comprehensive national programme. (One friend illustrates how well training is resourced in South Korea where, for an annual week’s choral course, all the music to be studied, which usually is taken from recent publications, was assembled in one book with a CD.)

The lack of available training may partly arise because there are comparatively few paid posts. In the UK, choral directing is not a big ‘profession’. There are few salaried posts outside the BBC, the cathedrals and the college choirs of Oxford and Cambridge. Many of our best choral directors overstretch themselves in order to scrape a living, or complement their choral work with teaching in other music fields. Another inevitable reason for a lack of training may be lack of aspiration. Many amateur choirs are undemanding of their choral leaders, not realising how much better they could be under someone better trained and better travelled. One of the jobs of *abcd* should be to help choirs choose a leader who will take them to new heights, rather than just finding someone with whom they can work.

In the USA, South Korea and parts of Europe there is a strong and populous professional infrastructure, where universities employ choral professors for a wide variety of groups, and where substantial church budgets fund a director and other resources as a matter of course. A number of our best British choral leaders have moved away in order to take up key positions in other countries.

So if the funding of training and the infrastructure is a vexed one, then financing travel similarly falls into question. We see choirs from many other parts of the world with much better access to this kind of funding. Essentially (and ironically), in spite of there being excellent initiatives to bring foreign musical groups of interest into the country, there is little or no public

money available to enable UK choirs to travel abroad. Even our world-class National Youth Choirs and prize-winning amateur groups cannot generally access public funding. Rather, any choir wishing to travel has to find its own funding – from parents or businesses or events. Again, traditional collegiate choirs tend to be an exception because they often have wealthy foundations – some even have lucrative recording contracts – to fund extensive travel programmes.

Related to this issue is the one of accessibility. Travelling with choirs has become less of an option for young people or choral directors who are school teachers. There is a mismatch between our educational year and continental Europe – and the USA and Australia too. *To quote a friend working abroad: “Unlike the results/exam/curriculum-obsessed UK education system, the schools in Italy, Germany and other countries are far more relaxed about kids taking*

time out to experience opportunities in which they would otherwise be unable to participate.”

Parents have become less inclined for their children to spend so much time singing in case they fail to prepare well for essential exams. They want to be sure about exactly who is looking after their children, and they are less willing to accept home-stays for their children in other countries. With young people, singing competes with an increasing amount of other activities, not to mention our mounting petrol costs.

Many UK choirs treat their travel as a holiday, whereas others see it more as an opportunity for improvement by comparison. Tour companies thrive on choirs visiting pleasant locations, but not necessarily commanding audiences. A lesser number of choirs travel in order to share experiences, and they generally attend competitions or festivals, planning their itineraries and accommodation through networking with choral groups overseas. A few years ago *abcd* announced that it had set aside some money to fund individual choral directors to attend festivals in Europe.

There was no take-up. It is likely that many people are afraid of comparison and competition; organizations such as IFCM and *abcd* need to work hard to break this pattern and allow choral leaders and their choirs to see the benefits of travel broadening the mind.

Some of the UK’s most internationally recognised composers, such as John Rutter and Bob Chilcott, have gained particular recognition by being prepared to undertake a huge amount of travel throughout their careers, not just promoting their own music but listening hard to the repertoire of other composers too, and the choirs that sing it.



© Richard Batty

▲ *abcd* Vice Presidents John Rutter CBE, Pamela Cook MBE and Brian Kay cut the 25th Anniversary cake

So why do we need training and comparison? It seems that UK choirs have a lot to learn, particularly in terms of preparation and sound. We are rightly proud of our sight-reading but unfortunately this ability can engender a culture in which good sight-reading is equated with less rehearsal time. This flies in the face of the ethos of the best choirs who work hard over long periods to hone their performance skills. They do not see the rehearsal process as note-learning. Rather they recognise a need to work on the interpretation, the sound, the story and the cohesion. Comparison will also encourage us to improve our language skills. As an island nation, and with the wide general usage of the English language internationally, we are not incentivized to master other languages in the way that other countries do.

To quote once again my friend, *who works elsewhere in Europe*: “*In a sweeping statement, I would say that UK choirs often have a broader repertoire than European ones, but their standard of performance is often not as good. For me, choir hopping is another frustratingly bad UK habit – we all know the good sight readers who sing in two or three different choirs per week – and often do not seem too happy. When I talk to them about vocal colour, blend, ensemble, spiritual uplift, flow of text, etc., they look at me with incredulity. Generally speaking, where I work, folks will sing in one choir only – often with two rehearsals a week – and some of the performances can be amazing.*”

Finally, regarding our choral organisations: it is interesting that two colleagues, who have worked abroad for a significant amount of time, had not even heard of IFCM. The UK used to have a seat on the IFCM Board, but for some reason this ceased. In any case, *abcd* would have to fund such a seat. How much of a priority would this be over items such as the training programme or the web site?

And that, to me, articulates the key issue for *abcd*. To what extent is it prepared to support the idea that a wider window on the world would bring great benefits to the British choral movement? If the answer is yes, then we must find funders, and work with IFCM and our fellow bodies around the world to promote the idea of ‘improvement through movement’.

In the 1840s, the German poet Heinrich Heine toured England, and having soaked up quite a lot of the early Victorian cultural scene, he wrote: “These people have no ear either for rhythm or music and their unnatural passion for piano playing and singing is all the more repulsive. Nothing on Earth is more terrible than English music,” he opined, “except English painting.”

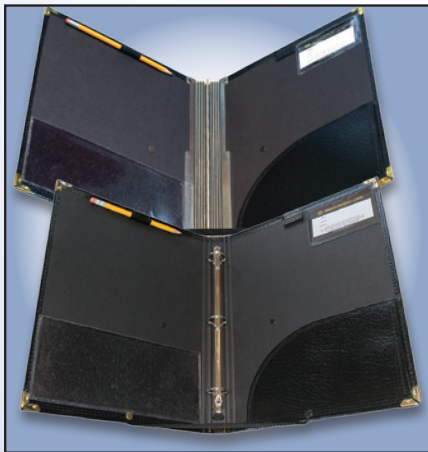
I will defend English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish music and music-making – our Island and its noises – to the end. But that does not mean to say that our choral singing can not be improved immeasurably by broadening its horizons.

Edited by Graham Lack Germany / UK ●

Andrew Potter spent most of his career as a music publisher, is one of the co-founders of the Association of British Choral Directors, and was its Chairman. He is also Chairman of Making Music – the National Federation of Music Societies.

An abcd Timeline

1985	Andrew Potter and John Rutter attend the ACDA Conference in Salt Lake City and wonder why the UK does not have an organisation for choral directors
1986	First Convention held at Christchurch, Oxford, funded by Oxford University Press Walter S. Collins, then President of ACDA suggests the neat abbreviation abcd
	Andrew Fairbairn, Chair of the British Association of Young Choirs, pays £20 as the first subscription
	Brian Kay appointed first Chairman and later Vice-President
1987	Sir David Willcocks appointed President
1988	first newsletter published
1989	abcd delegation visits its Swedish counterpart Föreningen Sveriges Körledare
1991	Anthony Philpot becomes first Honorary General Secretary
1994	abcd delegation to Hungary
1997	membership reaches 500
1999	First abcd training course takes place
2000	abcd delegation to Finland and Estonia First professional General Secretary appointed
2001	John Rutter Appointed Vice-President
2002	Pamela Cook appointed Vice President
2003	Chair and General Secretary attend ACDA convention in New York
2008	abcd appointed flagship organisation for the national ‘Sing Up’ campaign.
2011	abcd celebrates 25th anniversary at 25th Convention
	New choral work commissioned from young composer Kerry Andrew
	Gala concert, plenary session at conference with distinguished panel including all three Vice-Presidents
2012	the Members’ Area of the website (the Podium) launched with specially commissioned articles and over 100 archive articles from past editions of Mastersinger
	Partnership formed with Choir and Organ magazine
2013	First Advanced training course scheduled



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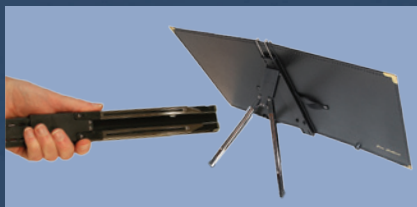


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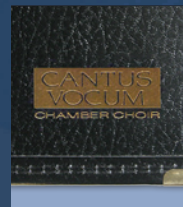
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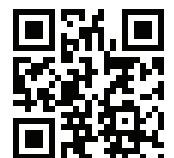
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Nordisk Korforum

A Co-Operating Organization for the Development of Choral Singing

© Hedmark Museum



▲ Kirsten Flagstad, Norway's famous opera singer, was born in Hamar. Her home is now the Kirsten Flagstad Museum

Brief History

Organized Nordic cooperation to develop choral singing began in 1951.

A number of reasons made it desirable to formalize co-operation:

- The need to find common ground for singers and conductors
- The need to get to know each other's choral and cultural traditions
- The need to learn - both for conductors and choir-members.
- Nordisk K rkomit  (now: Nordisk Korforum) has played a significant role in this context, and has contributed to a sense of cultural unity in the Nordic countries.

Theodor Lind
President of
Nordisk Korforum

From the beginning the conductors' symposia formed a very important part of the programme. The first symposium was held in 1952; up to 1999 there were sixteen conferences for conductors. The seventeenth conference took place in Aarhus, Denmark last year and was supported by Nordisk Korforum

The NORDKLANG festivals were planned in 1969, and the first festival took place in 1971. These festivals have since been the backbone of the co-operation. Every third year choristers and conductors meet to share knowledge, experience and social activities. Scores for the festivals were printed in a booklet for all participants to use in the common singing, and these now represent a cultural treasure for choral singing in all Nordic countries. The fifteenth NORDKLANG FESTIVAL will take place in Norway in 2013. See the Home Page at www.nordklang.no

Cultural-Political Judgement - Nationally, Regionally and Globally

Society has developed fast and in many ways since the 1950s. Means of transport have greatly changed and make it possible to travel quickly both within countries and between countries. The Internet provides a means of contact and of sharing both knowledge and repertoire, so very different from the times when we were dependant on the postal service and on meetings. And last, but not least – the economic situation in the Nordic countries has greatly changed over the last sixty years. Today we live in a global village – a world of change every day. In this world Nordisk Korforum and Nordic co-operation in the choral field must find a place and a reason to exist.

The board of Nordisk Korforum believe that there is an even greater need for close cooperation today than there was fifty years ago. The reason for this is fast on-going globalization. This development opens opportunities for cultural and political development, but represents at the same time a pressure on our Nordic cultural heritage – including our languages. Our “mother tongue” is an integrated part of our personality; to preserve it, we must meet and develop it in our way. Nordisk Korforum gives us an opportunity to influence political/cultural development, and to develop our field of choral music, nationally, regionally and in a global context – as a founding member of IFCM.

When re-organizing cooperation between the Nordic countries – finalized in 2005 – the main goal for Nordisk Korforum was expressed in this way: “The main goal of Nordisk Korforum is to contribute to strengthening choral life in the Nordic countries, and to develop cultural co-action and understanding across borders.”

Contribution to choral development in the Nordic Countries

Has Nordisk Korforum succeeded in moving towards the main goal? 37

Nordisk Korforum has had a positive development in recent years: NORDKLANG 14 in Aarhus, Denmark represented a renewal of the festival and was a success in terms both of organizing and choral singing - now also with the participation of youth choirs - and in education and in improving the quality of singing. The Nordic national conductors associations have recently become members of Nordisk Korforum, which strengthens co-operation for and with the conductors. Nordisk Korforum has worked very hard to reach the ears and minds of both political and administrative systems and persons in order to contribute to understanding and development in the field of choral music in the Nordic countries.

We are also happy that a formal forum for co-operation between the Baltic and Nordic countries was established in 2010.

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We look forward to developing this contact.

The board of Nordisk Korforum hold that it is important to meet the international family of choral singing, and we do this by taking an active part in IFCM.

Main Actions in the Immediate Future

In co-operation with a very competent local organizer, we are planning the NORDKLANG-festival in Hamar 2013. In connection with this festival, we also plan a symposium for Nordic conductors. We have started a process for establishing a Nordic youth choir within the next few years. And we also find it necessary to work in the political field to strengthen especially the economic situation for choral organizations.

Challenges

Though we live in some of the richest countries in the world, financing is a common problem for most organizations within the Nordic countries, and also for the Nordic co-operation in the field of choral singing.

We are competing all the time with other cultural activities – many of which are much more visible than choral singing, and are also able to make large sums of money. Lack of funding for

education will in general result in lower quality, whatever activity you take part in: this is true for individual choristers, conductors and organizations. In our view it is therefore of great importance to be seen and heard in public, to work steadily for higher quality and of course to show the importance of our culture to people in general, but, most important, to the political decision-makers. Nordisk Korforum will in this connection take the initiative for carrying out high-quality research on choral singing and the role of organizations – this will be a challenge for all of us.

Information and communication is the focal point of our effort to be seen and heard, and in this respect too we need resources: competence and financial support. Nordisk Korforum has to increase its efforts in this respect, also in order to reach young singers.

Nordisk Korforum is a democratic organization, and this must be preserved: we all have to be guardians of true openness, a platform of true values and true respect for each other.

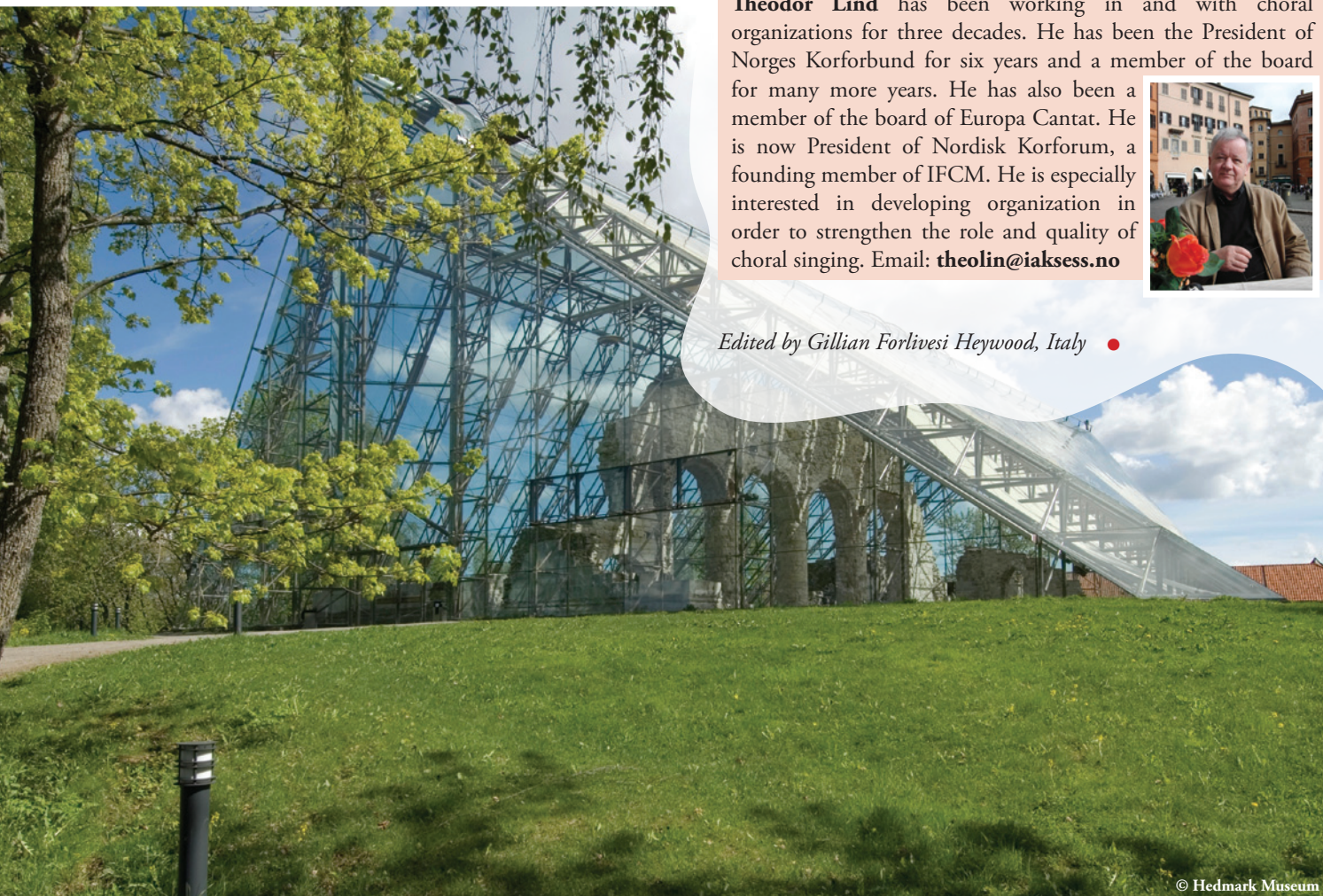
Norway was hit by terrorism on the 22nd of July 2011. One of the survivors said: “We swam and sang to survive.” Let people and nations sing!

More info at www.nordiskkorforum.org

Theodor Lind has been working in and with choral organizations for three decades. He has been the President of Norges Korforbund for six years and a member of the board for many more years. He has also been a member of the board of Europa Cantat. He is now President of Nordisk Korforum, a founding member of IFCM. He is especially interested in developing organization in order to strengthen the role and quality of choral singing. Email: theolin@iaksess.no



Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy ●



The Hedmark Museum is a medieval museum, where the glass structure covering the cathedral ruins is the main attraction

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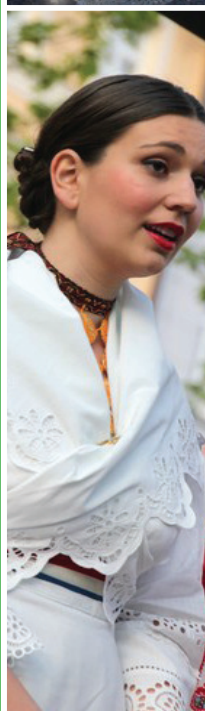
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Choral World News

Rokudan and Gregorian Chant Credo
Tatsuo Minagawa

Second Vietnam International Choir Festival and Competition
Hue, 12-16 December 2012
Henri Pompidor

Choral Festival of Bucaramanga and Zapatoca, Santander, Colombia
Oscar Escalada

Cantate Domino, Kaunas, 13-16 December 2012
Andrea Angelini

A Carol for Christmas
Graham Lack

The Development of Choral Singing in Malta
Joseph Vella Bondin

2012 Taipei International Choral Festival
Yu-Chung John Ku

An International Celebration of the Choral Art and Intercultural Friendship
Yin-Chu Jou

Foreword

It is generally assumed that Western music was introduced into Japan around the time that the nation opened up to the world at the start of the *Meiji* era in the second half of the 19th century. But in reality it had already appeared in Japan some four and a half centuries ago, at around the time that the missionary Saint Francis Xavier arrived at Kagoshima in 1549 and began to propagate the Christian faith. Christianity is a religion that places great importance on music, and the transmission of Christianity would inevitably have been accompanied by the introduction of Christian chants.

In 1552, three years after the arrival of Saint Francis Xavier in Japan, a Christmas Mass was celebrated and sung in Yamaguchi. Colleges of divinity were established throughout the country during the 1580s, and it was at these seminaries that education was provided not just in the Christian faith but also in music, with students being required to take practical lessons in singing and instrumental performance for one hour a day. Under these conditions it was only natural that the young Japanese men who studied in the seminaries should have become increasingly proficient at music.

In 1582, four young men, who had studied at the seminary at Arima in Kyushu, left on a visit to Europe as members of the so-called *Tensho* mission. They had already acquired a degree of proficiency in Western music within Japan, and astonished Europeans by undauntedly playing



▲ Kakure Kisیشان [clandestine Christians] chanting “Oratio” Prayers (Ikitsuki Island, Nagasaki)

large pipe organs in Europe. On the occasion of their visit to Venice, the organist of the church of San Marco, Andrea Gabrieli, composed a mass to welcome the mission.

The young men returned to Japan eight years later in 1590. One of the items they brought back from Europe was a printing machine. This machine enabled them to print a considerable quantity of Christian literature, an example of which was the *Manuale ad Sacramenta Ecclesiae Ministranda*, printed in 1605 at Nagasaki, which includes nineteen Latin chants along with the musical notation thereof. However, the gradual trend towards the importation of Western music came to a decisive end as a consequence of the prohibition placed on Christianity from 1614 onwards. Along with churches, musical instruments and notation were destroyed and burnt as symbols of heretical religion, and even performance of Western music was likely to place the performer’s life at risk. The only historic musical record that survived in this context is the *Manuale ad Sacramenta*.

The barrier that rises up before historians attempting to investigate Western music during the early Christian (*Kirishitan*) era in Japan, is the complete lack of historic musical materials and the uncertainty and vagueness as to what materials exist. These were the conditions under which I published a study entitled *Yougaku toraikou: Kirishitan ongaku no eikou to zasetsu* [A Study of

Tatsuo Minagawa
musicologist

the Introduction of Western Music in Japan: The Glory and Collapse of *Kirishitan* Music] (The Board of Publications - The United Church of Christ in Japan, 2004), in which I examined the *Manuale ad Sacramenta* and also links between Latin hymnody and the 'Oratio' prayers still handed down today among the descendants of the former clandestine Christians ('*Kakure Kirishitan*') on Ikitsuki Island in Nagasaki Prefecture.

However, having conducted further detailed investigation thereafter, it became necessary to review many of the issues that I had tackled in my earlier study, in particular the links between the *koto* piece *Rokudan* and the Latin Credo.

Links between the koto piece Rokudan and the Latin Credo

The Credo is the third item in the Ordinary of the Mass in the Catholic Church and constitutes a declaration of faith on the part of the believer. The Credo was performed constantly in Japan during the *Kirishitan* era, some four centuries ago. The doctrinal text *Orasho no hon-yaku* [Translation of the *Oratio*], printed in 1600, includes the following statement: "Of the various prayers, the *Paaterunausuteru* [Pater Noster, the Lord's Prayer], *Abemaria* [Ave Maria], *Keredo* [Credo] and the *Madamento* [Ten Commandments] should be specially memorized". This indicates that it was considered essential for Japanese Christians, at the time, to memorize and sing the Credo.

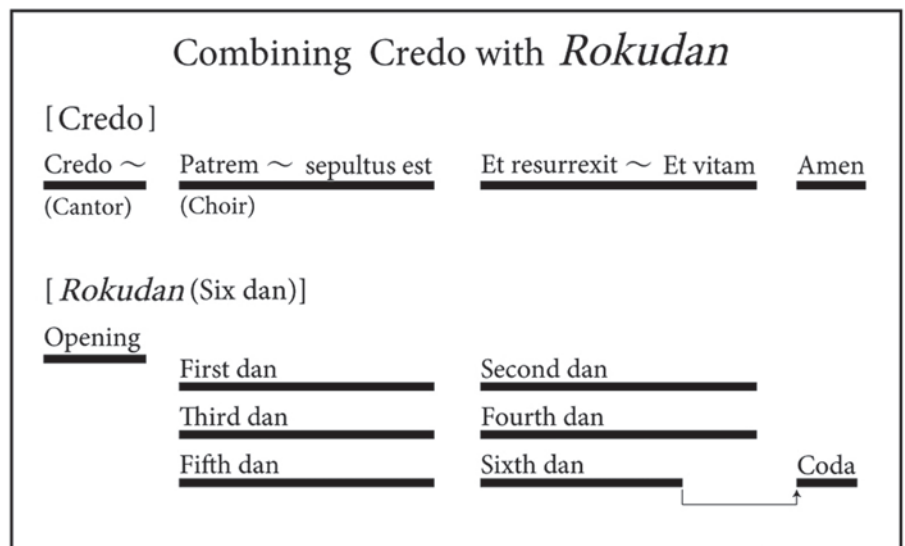
The Credo chant begins with the opening phrase of the cantor (*Credo in unum Deum*) and then a two-part structure in the performance by the choir (*Patrem omnipotentem* and *Et resurrexit tertia die*), and comes to an end with a final *Amen*.

The *koto* piece *Rokudan* [Six Sections] is one of the most well-known and popular pieces of Japanese traditional music.

Combining the Credo, with its structure as indicated above, with *Rokudan*, the opening phrase declaimed by the cantor (*Credo in unum Deum*) can be seen to correspond to the opening phrase of *Rokudan*. The first and second halves of the following sections sung by the choir correspond to the first and second *dan* [section or variation] of *Rokudan*. The

ensuing textual repetition corresponds to the third and fourth *dan*, and the further repetition to the fifth and sixth *dan*. Part of the concluding section of the chant (from *Et expecto* onward) is then omitted, and the final *Amen* corresponds to the coda of *Rokudan* (see the diagram).

In other words, repetition three times of the Credo results in the same structure as that of *Rokudan* and an exact correspondence between the two pieces. It is not merely the overall structure of the pieces that coincides. Each of the breaks between the sections of the Credo corresponds to those of *Rokudan*. It seems highly unlikely that this correspondence is entirely fortuitous (see example 1).



Credo and Rokudan

There is another interesting matter that should be noted in this connection. In *Rokudan*, the sections corresponding to words in the text of the Latin Credo that are particularly important from the standpoint of Christianity and the Catholic faith, such as the opening ‘Credo’, ‘Jesum Christum’, ‘Descendit de caelis’, ‘Et resurrexit tertia die’, ‘Et in Spiritum’ and ‘Confiteor unum baptismam’, are all accented or include semitonal changes, in other words are emphasized in the music. The composer of *Rokudan* thus clearly understood the meaning of the Latin text of the Credo.

The current collection of the Gregorian chants contains six melodies dating from the 11th and 17th centuries. Despite those melodies being based each in a different mode, they all employ the same texts and same melody lengths and sectional divisions.

It is not certain which melody, in which mode, from among the six Latin Credo chants may have served as the basis for a new piece for the *koto*. I would myself regard the main contender to be the Credo No.1 in Hypophrygian mode, which is regarded as the most authentic melody.

The name of the composer of *Rokudan* is also not clear even now. The composer in question may have lived either before the suppression of Christianity, in the latter half of the 16th century, or around the middle of the 17th century, when the suppression of Christianity had begun in earnest. He may have been named *Kenjun* (1534? - 1623?) or possibly *Yatsushashi* (1614 - 1685), or the composer may have been another *kengyo* (the highest rank of performing musicians in the guild of the blind).

Whatever his name may have been, it seems likely that *Rokudan* came into being as a consequence of this master of the *koto* executing a fantasy-like paraphrase of the melody of the Latin Credo chant and attempting to create a set of variations, in the manner of the Spanish *diferencias*.

Had the music in question been vocal and employed a Christian text, it would most likely have been destroyed during



▲ Synchronized performance of Rokudan and the Latin Credo on July 2012, in Rome

the era of suppression of Christianity. Composing such a piece might well have been a life-threatening endeavor as well. However, since this was an instrumental piece, without any sung text, it managed to escape the persecution of Christianity and to find its way down to the present day. The *koto* piece *Rokudan* is one of the great legacies of Japanese culture, and it would provide evidence of a

musical legacy shared between Europe and Japan.

(English translation: from my article of the CD ‘Rokudan and Gregorian Chant ‘Credo’ [VZCG-743] published in 2011 by the Japan Traditional Cultures Foundation.)

Edited by Joel Hageman, USA ●

Tatsuo Minagawa (b. Tokyo, 25 April 1927), Japanese musicologist. After graduating in European history at Tokyo University in 1951, he continued with postgraduate courses in aesthetics until 1953. Between 1955 and 1958, he went to the US, and from 1962 to 1964 to Europe, to study musicology. Since then, he has visited Europe almost every year to research musical sources. He was a professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo from 1968 to 1993, and a lecturer at Tokyo University and Keio University. His work centers on Medieval and Renaissance music history (He is the director of a choral group founded in 1952, which specializes in performing choral music dated up to 1600). His research interests include the introduction and influence of Christian music in Japan in the late 16th century. He was awarded *Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica italiana* in 1978.



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Henri Pompidor
choir director and teacher

Enthusiasm, sharing, joy, colors – these were the key themes of the second Vietnam International Choir Festival and Competition that took place in Hue, December 12-16, 2012. The happiness was shared between participants and members of the jury alike at this beautiful celebration of choral voices, a dazzling demonstration of the vitality and expressive diversity of Asian and Southeast Asian choirs. Many countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam, are promoting and supporting their choirs these days. The Vietnamese Ministry of Tourism and the Interkultur Foundation also deserve recognition for initiating the project and seeing to preparations down to the smallest detail. Their flawless organization enabled choral music to be expressed throughout the week and under the best possible conditions. A superb opening ceremony in the main Hue stadium launched five days of vocal music festivities structured around a high-level competition supplemented with numerous concerts in various tourist spots throughout the city.

More than twenty choirs came from the principal countries of Asia and Southeast Asia to participate in the competition. Indonesia and the Philippines were especially well represented, with several excellent ensembles each. Vietnam also displayed quite a bit of *savoir-faire*, with its very high quality groups. Other participating countries included Malaysia and South Korea. We are able to report favorably on the high musical and vocal quality of participants in this competition. Vietnam's National University of Art Education Choir (Vinh Hung, choir director) garnered several gold medals for excellence, notably in the Mixed Voices Chamber Choir and Equal Voices Male Choir categories. The competition featured numerous ensembles from the Philippines and Indonesia in particular. The Iriga City Singing Ambassadors (Cris Cary B. Yu) won the Grand Jury Prize, while others – The Indonesia Choir (Ignatius Widjajanto), the Smukiez Choir (Paulus Chandra), the Paduan Suara Mahasiswa University (Nestianta Kriswardhani) and the Mapua Cardinal Singers (Angelito A. Ayrán, Jr.) – left the competition with one or more gold medals.

In the Children's Choirs category, the Santa Laurentia Choir (Cornelius Selo Atmanto) did well for itself, garnering a gold medal as well as a prize for musical direction. The Girls Choir of the Malaysian Institute of Arts (Susanna Saw) also turned in an artistically fine performance, which was rewarded in the Equal Voices Chamber Choir category.

By the end of the competition, a positive report could be made of the state of choral music in Asia and Southeast Asia, its vitality confirmed by the presence of a significant number of high-level choirs. Most countries today seem to have available a choral training system distinguished by solid technical mastery and a diverse repertoire. Ensembles are clearly better prepared to handle the difficulties encountered in competition. The choirs displayed characteristic vocal coloration, the fruit of hard work by choir directors who had learned to pay particular attention to vocal quality and aesthetics. We should add that the visual presentation of the choirs, with their brightly colored costumes and use of synchronized movements, contributed to both national pride and audience interest in the different kinds of choral music. These are additional assets when it comes to attracting people to obtain musical training and education.

The jury particularly valued choir directors' efforts in the area of tuning and intonation. The basic principles of musical interpretation have been sufficiently mastered; today, execution is a question of nuance and, most importantly, of phrasing. The choirs we heard displayed solid musical sense and a true desire to display their own identity by means of a specific aesthetic. Likewise, they understood that their repertoire needed to be both diverse and adapted to the musical and vocal competences of the singers. Indeed, choir competition is not merely a straightforward technical comparison, but is rather an exchange of aesthetic contributions by each choir. Moreover, scores that exceed the performers' technical abilities do not always appeal the most to juries. Forcing voices puts them at risk of injury, and the jury's ears as well. Thus it is preferable for a choir director to choose unpretentious musical pieces that singers can perform well and use to win over the jury. The level of difficulty must always be adapted to the choir's experience and capabilities. A multitude of choral pieces exists, representing diverse styles and languages and capable of displaying a group's artistic sensibility; everything is a matter of choice. Song and dance combinations should be evaluated in the same way, as a function of the contribution they make to musical expression and interpretation, and therefore should be mainly in the folklore category; elsewhere the combination is questionable.

Choir directors' conducting gestures during competition also require greater attention than is currently the case. Directing with elaborate gestures requires the acquisition of artistic, musical and vocal competence on the part of the one who makes them. The director must be precise in order to maintain three-way

communication between the choir, the director and the jury. It is gesture that produces the sound, not the other way around. The gesture must be anticipated; singers will then follow it. Conducting is thus a discipline requiring methodical preparation for it to be called an interpretation in the true sense of the word. It is through their gestures and leads that directors give their musical vision of the piece and communicate their own dynamics, tempos and emotions to those who will carry it out.

These recommendations were mentioned during the final evaluation with members of the jury and participating choir directors. Thus, the second Vietnam International Choral Festival and Competition contributed significantly to the development of choral music by providing advice to participants on technical and artistic matters, building blocks on the road to improvement.

Additional Asian competitions are planned for 2013 and 2014: One is coming soon, in June, in Hoi An (Vietnam); two others are planned for October in Sulawesi (Indonesia) and for December in Manila (Philippines). Without any doubt, the Hue festival is a milestone in the expression of the new musical dynamism of this region of the world. It confirms that choral practice demands work, time and perseverance; that it is a discipline which is part of our patrimony reliant upon experience and exchange; an artistic field that, according to Pierre Kaelin, "creates community". Above all, these competitions consolidate the framework of musical education and contribute to the general formation of singers and choir directors. They develop bonds of friendship between ASEAN countries and contribute to the musical competitiveness and vitality of an entire region.

Henri Pompidor (Choir Director), a former student at the Conservatory of Toulouse, received his PhD in music and musicology from the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV). He was nominated Director of the Department of Voice and Choral Singing at the University of Rangsit in 2004, before joining the faculty of music at the University of Mahidol (Thailand), where he has since served as professor of choral music and director of university choirs. In 2007 he also became the permanent head of the choirs of the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 2004, he has directed numerous concerts of various university and professional choral groups in Thailand and throughout southeast Asia. In recent years, he has published several studies, notably on choral technique and phonetics, and a history of choral music from its origins to the present. Email: henripompidor@hotmail.com



Translated from the French by Anita Shaperd, USA ●

Choral Festival of Bucaramanga and Zapatoca, Santander, Colombia



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Coro Infantil y Juvenil Unimúsica de Bogotá. Director: Diana Carolina Cifuentes ▲

Oscar Escalada, Leonel Otero Cavarique, President of the Festival and José Antonio Rincón ►



Oscar Escalada
Composer, Arranger,
Musical Director and
Musicologist

José Antonio Rincón and I were invited by Leonel Otero Cabarique, President of the Gustavo Gómez Ardila Artistic Corporation, to the Gustavo Gómez Ardila International Choral Festival of Bucaramanga. We gave workshops and lectures there and, together with Eliana Sarmiento Gómez, we acted as adjudicators in the competition which took place in the beautiful city of Zapatoca between 1-5 November 2012.

The city of Bucaramanga is situated in the Cordillera Oriental Mountains, one of the three mountain ranges that make up the Andes. It is characterised by its university life and an enviable range of cultural activities; in addition to the choral festivals, there are also puppet festivals and festivals of theatre, piano, jazz and skating.

This sixth International Choral Festival took place under the auspices of the University of Bucaramanga which provided the necessary rehearsal rooms and lecture theatres. We stayed, with other teachers and conductors invited by the University, in the old ranch house whose grounds also house the School of Gastronomy. The University Campus is on what was the original estate which stretches down towards the valley.

The Chamber Choir of the University Foundation Juan N. Corpas of Bogotá and the Iuventus Youth Choir of the Sirenaica Foundation of Medellín took part in the competition. Both choirs reached a very high standard, the quality of their work being demonstrated by the fact that both obtained more than 83%, with only three marks separating them. There was also a prize for the best conductor and this was awarded to Jorge Alejandro Salazar, conductor of the Bogotá choir. Sadly, the other choirs taking part in the festival did not participate in the competition.

The vocal group Siete Palos from Mérida, Venezuela, led an interesting workshop demonstrating how to transform the human voice into percussion, guitars and brass instruments, so as to develop an excellent technique for this type of singing.

The second phase of the festival took place in the beautiful, tranquil, colonial city of Zapatoaca, where every house was adorned with geraniums. It was made possible by the invaluable collaboration of the Municipality of Zapatoaca and the Teatro del Instituto Técnico de Santo Tomás. José Antonio Rincón and I stayed in Cesar and Angela Ardila's family home; an old house very tastefully decorated in genuine colonial style.

One of this festival's key aims has been to raise awareness of choral singing for vulnerable children. A programme of concerts to demonstrate what was available for them took place on the morning of Friday 2 November.

We observed skilled teachers taking part in the project and were struck by the joyful way the children were encouraged to take part, the teachers ensuring repertoire remained within their capabilities. Some teachers I have witnessed elsewhere attempt 'serious' repertoire which does not take into account the abilities of the group, leading to frustrated young singers and teachers who feel these children 'do not know how to sing'. Fortunately, this was not the case with the present event.

One of the choirs presented a programme of unison singing that was so musically and beautifully expressed no knowledge of specialist techniques, complex melodies or close harmonies was needed to appreciate its beauty. What we heard was nothing more than music, wonderful music. Many of the pieces that were performed were based on the traditional music of Colombia, something with which the children identified completely. The second choir, which was a little more experienced, presented equally simple and beautiful works in two and three part harmonies, an ideal selection then.

This movement, very much in evidence in Latin America, concentrates on vulnerable children. Venezuela is the country that has achieved the most success in this respect; its network of choirs and orchestras for children and young people, known as 'el sistema', was founded by Antonio Abreu over 27 years ago. Many other countries have followed suit and more and more conductors have joined forces in this great cause. Countries like Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, as well as Venezuela and Colombia, also believe that choral singing is a useful and effective tool for the social inclusion of vulnerable children and young people. The International Choral Festival Gustavo Gómez Ardila is a welcome addition to this laudable movement which we share with such enthusiasm.

Translated from the Spanish by Mary Coffield, UK ●

Oscar Escalada is a Professor, Composer, Director, Writer, and Editor of choral music in the United States and Germany. He is Vice-President of 'America Cantat' (Argentine Association for Choral Music) and Secretary-General of the 'Organización America Cantat'. He has founded a number of national, provincial and municipal choirs, including in his home city, La Plata, in Argentina. He has been invited to speak at conferences, to give workshops and seminars and act as adjudicator in his own country (Argentina) and in the USA, Venezuela, Cuba, Ecuador, Spain, England, Greece, Italy, France, Mexico, Germany and South Korea. He took part in the 5th World Symposium of Choral Music in Rotterdam and was invited to the Conventions of the ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) in both Detroit and Chicago. He was also Coordinator of the composition sessions at the 9th World Symposium of Choral Music at Puerto Madryn. His own composition, 'Tanguendo', was a best-seller in the Warner/Chappell 2000-2001 catalogue. He is the author of the books, 'Un coro en cada aula' and 'Logogénesis'. In 2012 he has been invited to adjudicate at the World Choir Games in Cincinnati, USA and to give a workshop at 'Europa Cantat de Torino' in Italy. His email address is oscarescalada@mac.com



Cantate Domino, Kaunas, 13-16 December 2012

A Festival for Choirs in the Magic Atmosphere of a Lithuanian Christmas



© Cantate Domino

Raffles Voices, Singapore, dir. Ban Sheng Toh ▲

Raffles Voices, Singapore. awarded ►



© Cantate Domino

Andrea Angelini
ICB Managing Editor,
choral conductor and
teacher

More than 200 years ago, on June 23, 1812 Napoleon Bonaparte and his 690,000 strong *Grande Armée* crossed the Nemunas river on the outskirts of Kaunas, thus entering Russia and officially beginning his ill-fated march on Moscow. At the time Kaunas, then known as *Kovno*, was a bustling outpost on the border of the Russian Empire and the short-lived Duchy of Warsaw, with a large Russian, Polish and Jewish population and only a handful of ethnic Lithuanian inhabitants. Two centuries and several devastating wars later, today Kaunas is renowned locally as the most Lithuanian of Lithuania's large cities. How times have changed!

Kaunas prides itself on its compact and well preserved Old Town, with its traffic-free main streets. Beautiful 16th-century buildings adorn Vilnius Street, and many of these surround the Town Hall Square. You will find several modern art galleries housed in these historic buildings. The city stands where the rivers Nemunas and Neris meet and you can easily lose count of the many green parks in its centre. Santaka Park is just one of them and is a stunning place to stroll among birch, oak and maple trees. It's hard to believe you are still in the heart of such an energetic city.

The arrival at Vilnius airport was not of the best; but then, expecting to find spring in December at these latitudes, is pure madness. Flying through a furious snowstorm, finally the plane's wheels touched the runway with a hard jolt, making many of the passengers begin to scream. Ronaldas (Daugėla) and Silvija (Pročkytė), respectively artistic director and festival assistant, were waiting for me at the exit door. A two-hour trip by car brought me to the hotel in Kaunas.

The following day was devoted to visiting the city (there are many interesting places in the historic centre and also many warm pubs) even if the outside temperature, somewhere between -12° and -21° invited me rather to stay in the hotel. I do not know if it was funnier to see Ronaldas walking in the snow wearing just a jacket (no hat, no scarf) or me wearing so many clothes that I looked more ready for a polar expedition! But I had a pleasant time getting around in between a grog and a hot coffee. A pleasant evening concert performed by some of the choirs followed by J. S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* presented by the Varpelis Lithuanian children's choir closed the first day of the festival.

The competition (category without compulsory programme) started on the morning of December 14 at the conference hall of the Park-Radisson Hotel, a large space with some hundreds of chairs for the audience. The level of the participating choirs in this class was not so good, though one choir impressed me more than the others. In fact the only group admitted to the 'Grand Prix' was the Tartu Youth Choir directed by Riho Leppoja and Kadri Leppoja. The final score for this choir was 91.2/100. The quality of the choirs participating in the category with compulsory programme was much better. Here three groups were one step above the others. They were the Raffles Voices (Singapore) directed by Toh Ban Sheng, the Ivanovo Chamber Choir (Russia) directed by Evgeny Bobrov, the mixed vocal Ensemble A Cappella (Lithuania) conducted by Violeta Zutkuvienė; the Tartu Youth Choir also stood out. So four choirs played their trump cards on the last day in the final round at the Seminary Auditorium, but the Raffles Voices trumped all their competitors, winning the Grand Prix with a score of 97.5/100 points. I have come across this choir many times around the world and I have always been impressed by its sound and its rhythmic and expressive qualities. These young people are totally concentrated on their music, and serious about it. May I make just one suggestion, Mr. Toh? I would like to see more pieces in your repertoire, especially Christmas pieces.

Cantate Domino canticum novum ... (Sing unto the Lord a new song): this is the Festival motto. I am sure that God was happy to have listened to so much rich and beautiful music during those three days.

Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy ●



© Cantate Domino

▲ Tartu Youth Choir, Tartu, Estonia



© Cantate Domino

▲ Vocal Ensemble Cantilena, Ukmerge, Lithuania



© Cantate Domino

▲ Ivanovo Chamber Choir, Russia, dir. Evgeny Bobrov

A Carol for Christmas

The King's Singers Foundation Inaugurates First Composition Competition



© Philip Mynott

▲ The competition was held in the magnificent surroundings of King's College Chapel, Cambridge

Graham Lack
composer &
ICB Consultant Editor

A sense of expectation goes hand in hand with any new competition, and 'A Carol for Christmas', held for the first time in 2012 under the auspices of King's College, Cambridge and The King's Singers Foundation, certainly raised awareness of a rich tradition in the British Isles but also exemplified the parlous state of the genre. Supported too by Classic FM and Novello & Company (this imprint part of Music Sales Group), and sponsored by Woodfines Solicitors Cambridge, the competition was advertised as "a nationwide search for new carols", with composers of all ages from across the UK "being invited to showcase their talent" in a "festive composition competition". Prize-winners were guaranteed a performance in the stunning setting of King's College Chapel, a recording for Classic FM, a cash prize of £250 and the opportunity to be published by Novello.

The competition was split into four categories, one of which gave composers the opportunity to write for the King's Singers themselves. The first category was for an un-auditioned community choir, calling for a work written in unison or as a 2-part (SA) setting. It was open to submissions from composers of all ages. And carols could be submitted with or without keyboard accompaniment. The second category was for a composition for mixed choir (SATB), but composers had to be under 18. Again, works could be submitted with or without keyboard accompaniment. In the third category, also for SATB choir, composers could be aged 19 or over, and were able to submit either a *cappella* pieces or with keyboard accompaniment. Finally, in the fourth category, an *a cappella* composition for The King's Singers (CtCtTBarBarB) could be submitted, open to submissions from composers of all ages.

A total of 322 carols were entered for this inaugural competition; composers' ages ranged from 9 to 83. The jury of 'A Carol for Christmas' comprised Stephen Cleobury (Director of Music, Choir of King's College, Cambridge), John Rutter (composer and record producer), and David Hurley – first countertenor with The King's Singers.

During an afternoon event held at King's College Chapel on 18th December 2012, the works by the winning composers of the first three categories were performed in a workshop environment, the compositions sung by youth choirs from throughout Britain, including King's Junior Voices, CBSO Young Voices, the London-based Inner Voices, and Quay Voices from the North East of England. At the evening concert the same day, also in King's College Chapel, the premiere of the winning piece in the final category was given by The King's Singers. Both events were recorded for broadcast on Classic FM, and were presented by Tim Lihoreau, on 22nd December.

The Category 1 winner was Ruth Sellar, a music graduate from King's College, London, with her carol *Patapan*, for un-auditioned community choir. Ruth is currently working at Bilton Grange Preparatory School, Rugby, where her role includes teaching piano and music theory, accompanying choirs and instrumentalists and playing at chapel services. Cast in a lilting 5/4 time, and with a rollicking piano accompaniment, the work seemed easy to master, the young singers rising well to the task. But as the melody bifurcated into discrete soprano and alto parts,

the canonic writing seemed somehow less effective than simple unison, tailing off into hesitant intervals neither truly harmonic nor melodic. As for the melody itself, well, a catchy tune is a fine thing and not as easy to write as one might assume, so this one certainly passed the test of 'singability'. And if it stayed throughout too close to the English folksong *Scarborough Fair* and strayed at the end a tad too near to *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, it remained – for better or worse – in one's mind for some days to come.

The winner of Category 2 was Owain Park, a young musician based in the South West of England. He is currently the Senior Organ Scholar at Wells Cathedral, a position he holds until autumn 2013, when he will take up his place at Trinity College, Cambridge, to study music as one of the college organ scholars. His *Let Christians all with Joyful Mirth* sets words found in an old church gallery in Dorset. This carol relies too on a striking repetitive rhythm; it is the one Bernstein used for 'America' from his *West Side Story*, the composer marking it 'Tempo di Huapango'. It would be churlish to criticise too strongly the music of such a young composer, and the harmonic thinking is remarkably mature, but the slight feeling of 'stop and go' may be put down to the organ accompaniment, which is interpolated into the formal scheme, dividing one homophonic choral block from the next. All in all it is more an anthem than a carol, and only possibly a useful addition to the repertoire, albeit a work that could be tackled by a small chamber choir whose own style is, like the piece itself, quite fleet of foot.



▲ Winners in different categories:
 With competition organiser Chris Wingfield, from left to right: Ruth Sellar, winner of category 1; Owain Park, winner of category 2; Dominic Irving, winner of category 3
 Last picture to the right: Steven Griffin, winner of category 4 (a composition written especially for The King's Singers)

Dominic Irving won category 3. Based in the South-West of England, he holds an MA in Composition of Music for Film and Television from Bristol University, and a BMus in Composition from Trinity College of Music, London. His compositional style has been described as highly melodic, often humorous, and moves freely between bright virtuosity, rich lyricism and stern dissonance. To date he has completed a piano concerto, a children's cantata, numerous choral works, some chamber music, and a number of film scores. His carol *Blessed be that Maid Marie* was rendered in earnest manner by the versatile Quay Voices who – even if they were at the limits of their technique – understood well the composer's tight control of dissonant structures. This is highly idiomatic choral writing that ebbs and flows as one acerbic harmony gives way to the next. A full triad appears just where needed, at key harmonic points along the way. The musical language is really not reminiscent of Britten, but the formal constraints are evidence of composer who, such as he, knows how to say exactly what he wants to say.

The prize in the final category, a composition written especially for The King's Singers, went to Steven Griffin from Edinburgh. A previous member of the Chapel Choir of Magdalen College, Oxford, where he studied music under John Harper, Bojan Bujic and a former King's Singer, Bill Ives, he is presently Assistant Musical Director at George Watson's College in Edinburgh. Mr. Griffin began writing music at the age of age ten and since then his music has been performed at the Barbican Centre, the Southbank Centre, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and St. Martin-in-the-Fields. He admits to taking composition seriously only having begun his

4

29 *mp* *f risoluto* *sub. p* *pp*
 S. "Peace on Earth! A - lle - lu - ya! A - lle - lu - ya! In ex - cel - sis Glo - ri - a."
 A. "Peace on Earth! A - lle - lu - ya! A - lle - lu - ya! In ex - cel - sis Glo - ri - a."
 T. "Peace on Earth! A - lle - lu - ya! A - lle - lu - ya! In ex - cel - sis Glo - ri - a."
 B. "Peace on Earth! A - lle - lu - ya! Glo - ri - a."

33 *pp* *mp* *pp* *sf* *ppp*
 S. E - ya! The - sus ho - di - e Na - tus est de Vir - gi - ne.
 A. E - ya! The - sus ho - di - e Na - tus est de Vir - gi - ne.
 T. E - ya! The - sus ho - di - e Na - tus est de Vir - gi - ne.
 B. E - ya! The - sus ho - di - e Na - tus est de Vir - gi - ne.

37 *p* *pp*
 S. Fare three kings from far - off land, In - cense, gold and myrrh in
 A. Fare three kings from far - off land, In - cense, gold and
 T. Fare three kings from far - off land, In - cense, gold and
 B. Fare three kings from far - off land, gold in

'Blessed Be That Maid Marie, c. Dominic Irving. All rights reserved



▲ The King's Singers, with competition organiser Chris Wingfield, the workshops over, and the concert about to start

career as a teacher, having found it difficult to find music that was, as he points out “easy enough for a young choir to learn but which was neither childish nor patronising towards children”. His carol *A Hymn to the Virgin*, a poem famously set by Britten of course, is to one of the competition’s prescribed texts. It is quite superb, and is “perfectly suited the incomparable style of The King’s Singers” as a tweet by the ensemble actually during the concert put it.

Commenting on the winners, Stephen Cleobury said: “The response to the competition was tremendous and it was very difficult to choose the winners. Overall the quality of entries has been exceptional.” David Hurley had this to say: “I am delighted to be involved with this competition and have thoroughly enjoyed working with Stephen Cleobury and John Rutter. The standard in all the categories has been great, and in the King’s Singers’ category we received many skilfully crafted works.” And Adrian Frost, speaking on behalf of the sponsors, praised those who established the competition, explained that: “There has been a lot of work done in the background to the competition. Those people who have helped to make the competition a success have seen their vision realised with the large number and quality of the entries.”

Many, it would seem, had given very generously and hope that the competition will be, as Mr. Frost says, “an inspiration to composers across the UK”. Whether or not it will become an international event remains an open question. But if the competition seriously wishes to promote the cause of the Christmas carol, it will need to address this issue and open up ‘A

Carol for Christmas’ to all composers around the world, whatever their nationality.

As the audience inched its way out of King’s College Chapel just a few days before Christmas, the famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols imminent, discussions began about the new works performed, and the future of the carol as a species. With four categories and prizes divided between welcome remuneration, a possible publishing deal, and a radio broadcast heard by many, the competition is cannily structured. We just hope it will get the recognition it deserves and new forms of musical expression will be found within such a traditional genre. ●

Graham Lack studied Composition and Musicology at Goldsmiths’ College and King’s College, University of London (BMus Hons, MMus), Music Paedagogy at the University of Chichester (State Certificate), moving to Germany in 1982 to study at the Technical University Berlin (Doktorarbeit). He held a Lectureship in Music at the University of Maryland 1990-1998, and has chaired various symposia on contemporary music for the University of Oxford and the Goethe Institute. He contributes to *Groves Dictionary* and *Tempo*. *A cappella* works include *Sanctus* (Queens’ College Cambridge), *Two Madrigals for High Summer*, *Hermes of the Ways* (Akademiska Damkören Lyran), and a cycle for The King’s Singers, *Estraines* (CD on Signum). The Munich Philharmonic Chorus commissioned *Petersiliensommer*. *The Legend of Saint Wite* (SSA, string quartet) was a 2008 BBC competition prize-winner. REFUGIUM (chorus, organ, percussion) was premiered by Trinity Boys Choir in London in 2009 and recorded as a CD, DVD and LP in 2012. Recent works include *Wondrous Machine* for multi-percussionist Martin Grubinger, *Five Inscapes* for chamber orchestra, *Nine Moons Dark* for large orchestra and a cantata *The Angel of the East*. *Four Lullabies* were recently recorded by VOCES8 (Signum). *The Pencil of Nature* was commissioned by ‘musica viva’ in 2011, and *A Sphere of Ether* later that year by Young Voices of Colorado. *Michaelmas Dark* for organ solo was premiered at St Paul’s Cathedral this year, as was *Im Dunkel* (TTBB) at the Edinburgh Festival. Future projects include a First Piano Concerto and *The Windhover* (solo violin and orchestra) for Benjamin Schmid. Corresponding Member of the Institute of Advanced Musical Studies King’s College London; regular attendee ACDA conferences. Publishers: Musikverlag Hayo, Schott, Thomi-Berg. Email: graham.lack@t-online.de



The Development of Choral Singing in Malta

A historical overview

Up to the end of World War II (1939-45), Malta's traditional preoccupation in music was essentially limited to two forms – Roman Catholic sacred music, primarily liturgical, and Italian opera, mainly performed in the exquisite baroque Manoel Theatre constructed *ad honestam populi oblectationem*¹ in 1731 and, subsequently, in the magnificently proportioned Royal Opera House, built on a design by Edward Middleton Barry², which opened its door on October 9, 1866, with Bellini's *I Puritani*. Luftwaffe bombers devastated this theatre on April 7, 1942, and it was not rebuilt, opera moving back to the still-standing Manoel Theatre.

That Maltese 'art' music was moulded on Italian models is consequently a historical fact that needs no amplification. That the Maltese musical heritage was dominated by sacred, mainly liturgical, compositions is now another established fact. This statement might, in the past, have occasioned some comments, given the well-known and traditionally deeply-rooted Maltese infatuation with opera to the virtual total exclusion of other forms of theatrical spectacle at least up to the end of World War II. But even when there was no longer any valid reason why this aspect of Maltese cultural totality should have remained Italy-oriented, complex political, social and economic reasons continued to ensure that the nation's operatic gravitation remained firmly Italian to the almost total exclusion of non-Italian opera, including Maltese composed works that, *a priori*, should have earned the automatic backing of Maltese society³. Given this, Maltese composers, the best of them having remunerative appointments as church musicians, concentrated on composing sacred music for which they had a tangible market and considered, probably very unwillingly, opera-writing as a mere side-line.

If we wish to talk about an indigenous choral tradition both from the point of view of performance and also of composition, we have to seek it then primarily in church music as an integral part of the Roman Catholic liturgy and, to a lesser extent, in the operatic theatre. Choirs, in the sense of large groups of a secular independent provenance as seen in other Western nations, did not exist.

Given Malta's extended history of continuous colonization which began in the ninth century B.C., it may be a cliché to state that up to the middle of the twentieth century the events which fundamentally affected Maltese political, social and cultural history were externally determined. The situation was largely accepted by the native population and it might even have had the advantage of shielding Malta, a minuscule archipelago state of 320 square kilometers strategically situated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea with a current population of 400.000, from the direct vacillations of external realities. The after-effects of World War II, reinforced by the granting in 1964 of political independence from Great Britain, the then colonizing power, produced the uncharted reality of a new national identity in a global situation that was rapidly changing, a state of affairs which initiated a period of self-questioning not only for the Maltese intelligentsia but also for most strata of the population.

It became evident that composing music for the liturgy was not of great concern in the post-Independence environment. First of all, certain ecclesiastical developments during the twentieth century starting with Pope Pius X's *Motu proprio* (1903) on church music and culminating in the faithful-orientated promulgations of Vatican Council II (1962-5), had reduced considerably the activities of the traditional Maltese *cappella di musica* and, as a direct corollary, the importance of and the need to compose new liturgical works. But even if these developments had not occurred, it is still doubtful whether sacred music would have appealed to the post-Independence composer in an environment which was becoming rapidly secularized.

Liturgical works form a small part of the *oeuvre* of Carmelo Pace, Charles Camilleri, and Joseph Vella, the three most frequently performed post-Second World War composers. They were also very influential through their teaching and, for the first time in the history of music in Malta, started setting texts in Maltese.

1 Inscription above the main entrance to the theatre.

2 The architect of London's Covent Garden.

3 Of the 161 different operas presented at Malta's Royal Opera House between its inauguration on October 9, 1866 and its destruction on April 7, 1942, a period of just over 75 years, 113 (or over 70%) were by Italian composers, 8 by Maltese and 40 by non-Italians. Most of the non-Italian works were heard in Malta only after Giovanna Lucca, wife of the founder of the publishing house of Lucca, in an attempt to find an alternative to Verdi whose extremely popular operas were being published by the rival firm of Ricordi, zealously introduced into Italy the works of foreign composers. They were performed in Malta in the Italian-translated text heard in Italy.

Carmelo Pace (1906-1993) wanted to compose operas which focused on Maltese history. He wrote four – *Caterina Desguanez* (1965) based on the Great Siege of 1565, *I Martiri* (1967) narrating the tribulations of the Maltese during the brief French occupation, *Angelica* (1973) telling the story of the Bride of Mosta, and *Ipogeano* (1976) with a plot highlighting the Maltese Neolithic era. But he still bowed down to established norms by composing them to libretti in Italian and on Italian methods. Additionally, he composed many secular and sacred large-scale chorus-oriented works.



Carmelo Pace (1906-1993)

Charles Camilleri (1931-2009) challenged all traditional canons by composing his first two full operas, *Il-Wegħda* (1984) and *Il-Fidwa tal-Bdiewa* (1985), not only to Maltese texts but also to harmony and melodic lines springing directly from Maltese traditional music. He used the same formula for his oratorio *Pawlu ta' Malta* (1985) and the cantata *L-Għanja ta' Malta* (1989). In the new political ambience, these works gained wide national consensus, a newborn awareness of and a burgeoning pride in an inherent musical identity. In 1992, he was appointed first Professor of Music at the University of Malta, a position he held till 1996. This gave him the opportunity to propagate his intuitions about the importance of Maltese folk music and soundscape as the catalyst for the production of a distinctive Maltese sound to create a representative Maltese school of composition. His example and teaching influenced radically a new crop of composers. Like Pace, Camilleri and these emerging composers have contributed interesting and diverse works for choir or containing important choral movements.



Charles Camilleri (1931-2009)

Joseph Vella (b. 1942) is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Malta and a gifted conductor. A composer with a self-confessed allegiance to contrapuntal music, his works are all ingrained in a personal idiom that stems mainly from a neo-classicist indication. His impressive *oeuvre*, in various forms and designs, includes many outstanding works for choir and, moreover, his deep



Joseph Vella (b. 1942)

interest in old Maltese music, particularly of the Baroque era that he continues to edit and revive in concert form, has been instrumental in enabling the Maltese nation to discover an impressive musical past which include Neapolitan masses and psalms for two choirs.

These innovative musical developments in post-World War II aspiration and sensitivity were combined with the setting up, often privately instigated, of the musical environment and structures needed to present works in a non-operatic or non-liturgical ambience. They included newly-built theatres and concert halls, among them the auditorium of the Catholic Institute (1960) in Floriana. Very important was ecclesiastical acceptance that Maltese churches, many spectacularly structured and acoustically valid, were a legitimate site for the hosting of suitable musical productions.

The new structures also included the formation of independent amateur choirs, mostly for mixed voices and most of them founded by members of the clergy, not really surprising given that the Maltese population was, at that time, decidedly conservative and as a rule frowned upon the general mixing of sexes without proper supervision. The first, the Hamrun Choir, was set up in 1949 by the priest-musician Fr Joseph Cachia (1922-2001), its director and choirmaster. Others included the *Cantate Domino* Choir of Zurrieq instituted by Fr Mikiel D'Amato (1926-2002) in 1956; the St Julian's Choir founded a year later by Mgr Guido Calleja; the Jesus of Nazareth Choir created in 1960 by the Dominican monk Salv Galea; and the St Monica Choir which the Augustinian nun, Sr Benjamina Portelli, started in Mosta in 1964. It can be stated that these choirs, and others, had a parochial origin and purpose but over time won a national endorsement.

To achieve the normal objective for which it is formed, a choir has to perform in public. The problem was that there was no tradition of suitable openings outside liturgical rites. Clearly choirs had to take the initiative to inform and show the public the new musical scenarios they were now making possible. It was the Hamrun Choir which took the initiative. In the then absence of apposite Maltese material⁴, it embarked on the annual preparation and presentation of sacred oratorios from the international repertory. The first two were Handel's *Messiah* on January 3, 1959, and Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* on April 29, 1960, chosen to commemorate the nineteenth centenary of the Apostle Paul's shipwreck in Malta in A.D. 60, followed by *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Elijah*. Never before had such outstanding works been performed in Malta and the fact that they were performed by an all-Maltese cast increased their impact. Other choirs soon followed the lead.

More secular in character were a number of excellent choral groups which also emerged. The Malta Choral Society started in 1953. Its members were British residents and visitors but with an ever increasing number of Maltese singers. Works performed

⁴ The only valid exceptions were two oratorios, the secular *La lampada* (1901), composed by Luigi Vella (1868-1950), and *San Paolo evangelizza i Maltesi* (1913), by Carlo Diacono (1876-1942), with text in Latin by Giovanni Formosa, written to commemorate the 1913 International Eucharistic Congress held in Malta.

included *Messiah*, *The Creation*, Faure's *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Choral Fantasia*, *Carmina Burana* and a concert version of Verdi's *Nabucco*. Organisational difficulties led to its dissolution in the early 1980s. The Gruppo Corale Primavera, founded and directed by Joe Fenech and active between 1959 and 1970, produced several cultural and variety shows.

The Malta Operatic Choral Society was set up in 1953 by music organiser and tenor Joe Lopez with the principal aim of offering services to opera impresarios. An all-male choir of about 20 members, it was directed by composer and conductor Joseph Abela Sclaro. Its most innovative undertaking was its participation in the 1959 Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod held in North Wales from July 7 to 12, the first Maltese choir to enter the international arena. The result obtained was rather mediocre as it finished only 14th from among the 19 choirs that competed in the Male Choirs division. However the experience gained was considered important not only for the choir itself but also for the nation as a whole since it offered an effective means for assessing the technical and vocal worth the emergent choir movement of a small insular nation was achieving.

The most tangible and immediate result was the development of the Malta Operatic Choral Society into a mixed national choir of 60 members, accepted only after a strict audition or, in respect of trained active singers, by invitation. The choir mistress was pianist Bice Bisazza (1909-1994) and the director was conductor and composer Joseph Sammut (b. 1926). As expected, it developed into one of the best choirs ever established in Malta. Its first engagement and defining challenge was participation in the 1960 Eisteddfod held from July 5 to 10. The competitive results obtained were good but the landmark achievement occurred during the Saturday Evening Concert. Before an audience of about 10,000, its interpretation of *L-Imnarja*, a choral song for unaccompanied mixed voices based on Maltese folk rhythms composed for it by Carmelo Pace, was so striking and the applause was so immense and insistent that it had to be encoored, even though it was against the Festival rules for encores to be given, a feat even reported in the British media.

The final stage in the choir's development was a change in its name to Chorus Melitensis. Of the many admirable concerts it gave, its most prominent presentation, at least historically, was Verdi's *Requiem* in April, 1966, the first time that this universal masterpiece was presented live in Malta. The performance was a joint venture with the Malta Choral Society to form a combined choir of over 120 singers. Unfortunately, organizational difficulties led to the disbanding of the Chorus in 1979.

However by that time, the choir movement had put down deep roots, further nurtured by the in-depth spread of music education, the persuasive foreign example through international media entertainment, and the expanding national interest in forms traditionally ignored⁵. Now groups started to be formed all over

the country, trained and conducted by emerging musicians whose training was technically sound and multifaceted. The improved choral environment encouraged the writing of apposite works by established and up-and-coming composers particularly to texts in the indigenous language, now the dominant language for vocal compositions.

Perhaps the most visible sign of this new national awareness was the setting up, under government auspices, of the Malta International Choir Festival in 1989, with Charles Camilleri as its artistic director. In 1998 this responsibility was passed on to Rev. John Galea, a composer with a vast experience in choral direction and management. Between 1989 and 2004 the festival was held yearly in early November and a substantial number of choirs from different countries, including Malta, participated.

A major change was then introduced. After discussions with Interkultur, the government decided that collaboration with this worldwide institution would enhance the Malta Festival. It was now agreed to organize it biannually, under the guidelines and criteria of the Musica Mundi label. The first iteration, called 'The Malta International Choir Competition and Festival' was held in 2006, and it attracted 22 choirs from fifteen different countries. Others, all equally successful, were held in 2007, 2009 and 2011.

Edited by Mirella Biagi, Italy / UK ●

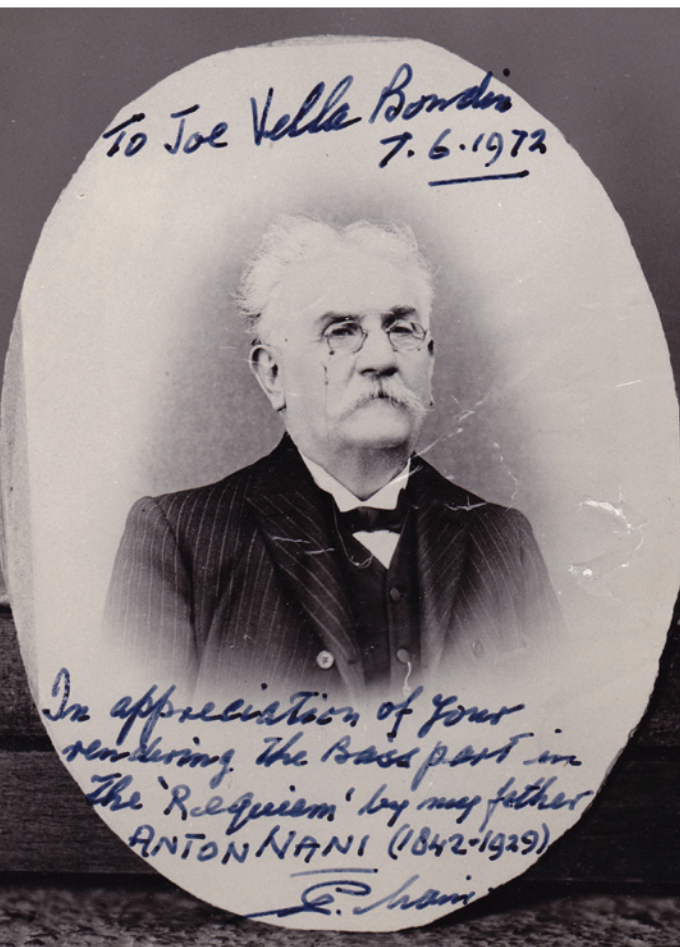
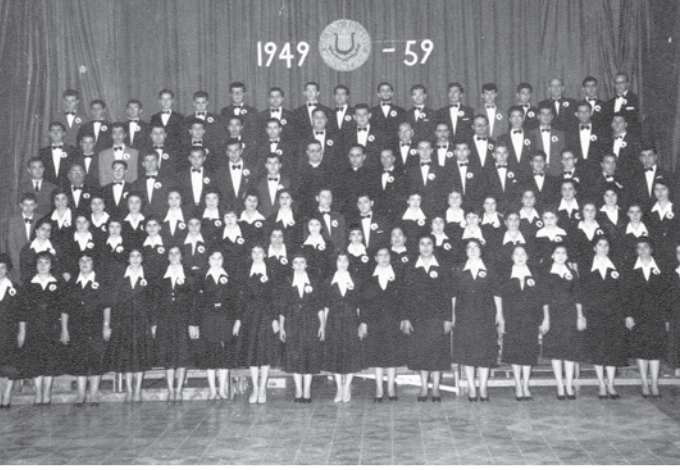
Initially trained as a bass singer, **Joseph Vella Bondin's** musicological interests concentrate mainly on Maltese music about which he has written widely. His history of music in Malta is the only one available, with the first volume, *Il-Mużika ta' Malta sal-Aħħar tas-Seklu Tmintax*, awarded the National Book Council 2001 Prize (Research Category). He is a contributor to the Second Edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and the New York-based *Repertoire International de Littérature Musicale* (1995-2002). His modern edition of Girolamo Abos's *Stabat Mater* (1750) was published, together with his landmark study of the composer, by AR-Editions in the USA (2003). With John Azzopardi and Franco Bruni, he has written *The Nani Composers* (2007). Since 2001, he has been music consultant to the APS Bank, helping it to produce its much-praised annual flagship concerts and its series of CDs featuring works by Maltese composers. Email: joseph.vellabondin@gmail.com



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through the organisation of annual flagship concerts, the first being *A Concert of Baroque Sacred Music by Maltese Composers* presented on November 10, 2001. The selected music is also recorded on compact disc. In 2007, the Bank decided to extend its commitment by initiatives which support the composition of new works. So far two National Competitions (2007, 2012) have been organised. The participation of choirs in these initiatives is underlined. Cf. the Bank's official website: www.apsbank.com.mt

⁵ Thus, as part of its corporate responsibility, APS Bank promotes Malta's musical heritage



Top to bottom - left to right

The Chorus Melitensis after singing L-Imnarja (Pace) during the 1960 International Eisteddfod in North Wales

A 10th Anniversary photo of the Hamrun Choir

The St. Julian's Choir singing in a 1986 performance of Sammut's oratorio 'Ommna tas-Sokkors' at St. John's Cathedral, Valletta

The St. Julian's Choir directed by Rev John Galea performing Messiah at St. John's Co-Cathedral on March 6, 1982

Portrait of Anton Nani dedicated to the author of this article by his son Paul

July 1960 - The Chorus Melitensis in LLangollen, Wales after singing for the BBC

2012 Taipei International Choral Festival



Snake from the 12 Chinese Zodiac signs in the opening concert



Professor Kari Ala-Pöllänen working with the Children Choir camp

Maestro Gábor Hollerung working with a Master Class participant



Yu-Chung John Ku
choral conductor and
teacher

Taipei International Choral Festival (TICF), one of the most prestigious and extensive choral festivals in Asia, was founded by Taipei Philharmonic Foundation and Professor Dirk DuHei in 1996. It started as a biannual event, and is now held annually from the end of July through to the beginning of August. Every year, several outstanding choirs from around the world, as well as excellent local artists, gather in Taipei to perform not only for tens of thousands of local audience members, but also for a great number of choral fans from Southeast Asia. In addition to the concerts, there are several workshops and master classes, presented by clinicians from all around the world, during the festival. In 2012, the 12th TICF not only brought excellent concerts to audiences and intensive workshops to participants, but also introduced several special events celebrating choral music.

Highlights of 2012's festival included the opening concerts on 28th and 29th of July. Taipei Philharmonic Chorus and the National Chinese Orchestra, Taiwan, presented the world premiere of Nan-Chang Chien's *The 12 Animal Signs of the Chinese Zodiac*. This piece was one of the works commissioned by the Taipei Philharmonic Chorus to celebrate its 40th anniversary. Drawing inspiration from ancient Chinese fairytales and novels, poet Mei-Chen Lai (Taiwan) wrote one poem about each of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs to form this 12-piece cycle. "In [the poem] *Snake*, I based the text on *The Tale of Lady White Serpent*", expounded the lyricist, "which is a love story about a woman who sacrifices everything to protect her lover and her family. Looking at things from a woman's perspective, I wish to pay tribute to all traditional Chinese women, who usually make sacrifices for their families, by portraying this strong and humble woman, Lady White Serpent." It is not only the 'snake'; Lai applies specific stories, some romantic, some serious, some humorous, to each of the zodiac signs. These stories, which are mostly very familiar to all Chinese speaking people, gave the composer many imaginative ideas whilst composing the music.

“It is important to learn about Western techniques, but we must also find inspiration in our own culture”, says the composer. “Images and sounds came to my mind as soon as I saw some of her lyrics, but I also put in some onomatopoeias and sound effects that were not originally in the text. I hope she, the lyricist, did not mind the changes I made.” The end result was very successful. *The 12 Animal Signs of the Chinese Zodiac* is not just a big, hour-long composition for chorus and Chinese orchestra. It is a combination of music, poetry, theatrical play, sound effects, children’s games, masks, costumes and props, with improvisation. The combination of the unique sonority of Chinese instruments and the oriental atmosphere the chorus brought to the stage meant the premiere was a huge success. Four thousand audience members from the two performances cheered this innovative work. Conductor Theodora Pavlovitch (Bulgaria) stated after watching the first concert: “It is so unique, so interesting, so colorful. What a wonderful way to open the festival.”

In addition to the opening concert, the 2012 TICF also introduced six outstanding choirs – Eva Quartet (Bulgaria), the Children and Young Women’s Chorus of the China National Symphony (China), Kammerchor Stuttgart (Germany), PUST (Norway), the Mandaue Children & Youth Chorus (The Philippines), and VOCESS8 (UK) – in the festival concert program. Every evening from 28th July to 5th August, concerts featuring these groups welcomed thousands of audience members to enjoy their fascinating repertoires, excellent singing skills and fabulous multicultural atmosphere in the National Concert Hall in Taipei, as well as in performance venues in many cities of Taiwan. Together with the free matinee concerts held in several public spaces in Taipei, the 2012 TICF presented 25 concerts in total, to tens of thousands of audience members in Taiwan.

The TICF has in fact hosted over 200 concerts for more than 50 outstanding choirs from all continents of the globe since its founding in 1996. Kammerchor Stuttgart (Frieder Bernius, conductor) is one of the choirs returning to the 2012 TICF, marking their fourth trip to Taipei. Other formerly invited choirs include the Tallis Scholars (Peter Phillips, conductor) from the UK, Real Group from Sweden, the Cantemus Children’s Choir (*Szabó Dénes*, conductor) from Hungary, Australian Voices (Stephen Leek, conductor) from Australia, the Vancouver Chamber Choir (Jon Washburn, conductor) from Canada, Cantoría Alberto Grau (Maria Guinand, conductor) from Venezuela, *Incheon City Chorale* (*Hak-won Yoon*, conductor) from Korea, and the World Youth Choir (*André Thomas*, conductor), amongst others. These concerts have for years been showcases of choral excellence for audiences and learning opportunities for workshop participants at the festival.

Workshops and master classes play very important parts in the TICF. Every year, hundreds of participants from Taiwan and all corners of Asia (China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and other countries) gather in Taipei to attend these workshops. In 2012, Theodora Pavlovitch (Bulgaria) and Fred Sjoberg (Sweden) each led a ten-session conducting workshop, containing different levels and varieties of choral pieces from several genres. With this

Mandaue Children & Youth Chorus (The Philippines) performing in the Taiwan University Hospital ▶

Mandaue Children & Youth Chorus (The Philippines) performing in the National Concert Hall ▼





PUST (Norway) giving a workshop to the festival participants and singers ▲

PUST in concert ►



wide repertoire, participants in both workshops can brush up their conducting skills, enhance their rehearsal techniques, widen their choral repertoires, and become familiar with different music styles. “The conducting workshop [at TICF] offers a rare opportunity to those who would like to advance their studies in conducting. It is really beneficial”, said Leon Chu, a conducting workshop participant from Hong Kong.

In contrast to the conducting workshops, the ten-session conducting master class, which was instructed by *Gábor Hollerung (Hungary)*, focused on one multi-movement, choral-orchestral work solely. In the past, TICF had featured pieces like Handel’s *Dixit Dominus*, selections from *Messiah*, Mozart’s *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* and *Krönungsmesse*, and *Fauré’s Requiem* among others. In 2012, it was *Rossini’s Petite Messe Solennelle*. Under *Gábor’s* guidance, the participants gained in-depth knowledge of this work through structural analysis, and examined their conducting and rehearsal techniques while working with the singers and instrumentalists during class sessions. At the end of the festival, participants had the opportunity to conduct the Taipei Philharmonic Youth Choir and Youth Orchestra and to perform this work at a gala concert.

The Children’s Choir Camp, a seven-day choral camp designed for children, was a new event launched at the 2012 TICF. Here, 100 children from China and Taiwan had the privilege of working with Kari Ala-Pöllänen (Finland), of experiencing the beauty and playfulness of making music in the choir. The final presentation was inspirational, meaningful, and full of children’s laughter. Ala-Pöllänen also gave a series of lectures to the workshop participants on topics such as children’s choir repertoires, vocal training technique, development issues, and so on.

The highpoint of the 2012 TICF was the final concert on the 5th August, in which the Festival Choir and Taipei Philharmonic Youth Orchestra presented Beethoven’s *Mass in C Major*, led by *Gábor Hollerung*. The festival choir consisted of 150 young singers, who participated in the workshop for choral singers. They rehearsed Beethoven throughout the week of the festival, and received voice lessons, took part in workshops given by invited international choirs, sat in international clinicians’ lectures, and watched all the festival concerts when they were not rehearsing. It was an intense learning experience for these young singers, and the outcome was phenomenal. These choral musicians of the younger

generation not only mastered Beethoven's Mass, but also presented a fresh, brilliant, new voice to the audience.

This year, TICF will be held from 27th July to 4th August. There will be six international choirs invited to perform, ten local groups invited to join the shows, four workshop and master class series for participants to attend, twenty-five concerts in the National Concert Hall and across all Taiwan. Taipei International Choral Festival is an event that on should definitely not miss.

Edited by Natalie Campbell, UK ●

Top to bottom - left to right

VOCES8 on Freedom Square, Taipei, Taiwan

A conducting master class participant rehearsing with the Taipei Philharmonic Youth Choir

Professor Theodora Pavlovitch (Bulgaria) teaching in the Conducting Workshop National Concert Hall in Taipei, Taiwan

Yu-Chung John Ku is Music Director of Taipei Philharmonic Chorus, assistant professor at the Chinese Culture University in Taiwan, and one of six members of the IFCM Asia Pacific working team. Ku has prepared the choir for maestros such as Frieder Bernius, Günther Herbig, Jahja Ling, and Helmuth Rilling, amongst others. He has conducted around the world, including at Carnegie Hall, the National Art Center of Beijing, and the National Music School in Sofia, Bulgaria, as well as at international concerts such as the 2011 ACDA National Convention. He is also a guest conductor, adjudicator, and choral clinician in many countries. Ku is a doctoral candidate at the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, and holds a master's degree from Temple University. E-mail: johnnyku@tpf.org.tw



New York, NY – Nowhere was the richness of choral expression – and its ability to foster intercultural goodwill - more evident this past June than at the first annual ‘Rhythms of One World’ international choral festival in New York City. The festival is one with a mission: to promote peace through cultural exchange, which is inscribed at the heart of the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation (FAF) vision for a more mutually-cooperative world. Beyond that, it was the first ever celebration of the birthdate of the United Nations (June 26, 1945). A very special, televised concert was staged at the iconic General Assembly Hall of the United Nations, shortly before its long time closure for renovations, to a large, appreciative audience of diplomats, and other, special guests.

Proceeds from the virtually sold-out Avery Fisher, Lincoln Center Concert were donated to a variety of international NGOs and was favorably reviewed by the *New York Times* and in other media.

The brainchild of Yin-Chu Jou and Patrick Sciaratta of FAF, and led by Emmy-Award winning composer, Festival Artistic Director Gary Fry, this non-competitive festival brought together seven elite choral ensembles from all corners of the globe. The choirs were selected for their excellence and their ability to present music of their indigenous cultures. The result was remarkable, with groups that were not only supremely musical but which spanned the spectrum of ages, geographical locations, and musical genres, much to the delight of their appreciative New York audiences.

From Australia came the University of Newcastle Chamber Choir (Philip Matthias, director) with their colorful repertoire of music that incorporated Australian birdsong imitations and harmonic overtone singing. The renowned Norwegian Girls Choir (AnnaKarin Sundal-Ask, Director) presented the music of Grieg as well as contemporary Norwegian composers in dramatic fashion.

The traditional American folk music of Appalachia, presented with accompaniment from fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass, formed the core of the engaging repertoire of the Appalachian Children’s Chorus from West Virginia (Selina Midkiff, Director). The infectious rhythms and appealing harmonies of Caribbean song made for a joyful presentation by the colorfully costumed Signal Hill Alumni Choir (John Arnold, director) from the island nation of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Luxembourg-based Voices International (Thomas Raoult, Director) boasted 22 different nationalities of singers within the group, and offered up a varied repertoire of European classical music as well as spirituals and popular selections. The music of Inuit Eskimo artists was the unique fare of the Canadian representative to the festival, the County Town Singers (Barbara Ouellette, Director).

Yin-Chu Jou

FAF Artistic Director/
Representative to the U.N.
and UNESCO



Left to right

- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: Finale Massed Choir Performance by 2012 Festival Participating Choirs: "Rhythms of One World" (World Premiere) written and directed by Festival Artistic Director Gary Fry.
- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: Final Bow by 2012 Festival Participating Choirs Music Directors and Artistic Management (left to right): John Arnold, Signal Hill Alumni Choir (Trinidad & Tobago); Bernard Kruger, Kearsney College Choir (South Africa); Selina Midkiff, Appalachian Children’s Chorus (USA); Thomas Raoult, Voices International (Luxembourg); Dr. Philip Matthias, University of Newcastle Chamber Choir (Australia); AnneKarin Sundal-Ask, Norwegian Girls Choir (Norway); Barbara Ouellette, County Town Singers (Canada); Alexandru Ciorobea, First Secretary: Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations; Ambassador Simona Miculescu, Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations (concert host); Yin-Chu Jou, FAF Artistic Director, Festival Founder and Manager; Gary Fry, Rhythms of One World Festival Artistic Director.
- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: Opening Massed Choir Performance by 2012 Festival Participating Choirs: "Song of Peace" (World Premiere) written by Jean Sibelius, arranged and directed by Festival Artistic Director Gary Fry.

And 65 young men from South Africa sang and danced a riveting program of African music, complete with prop spears, gumboots, and tribal drums, as their Kearsney College Choir (Bernard Krüger, Director) made the festival their first stop on an extended American tour. The end of their concert tour, also facilitated by FAF, saw them achieve a Gold Medal and a Championship Title at the World Choir Games in July.

Anyone who attended the festival concerts experienced the world of traditional, popular, and regional choral music in a way not found anywhere else. And anyone who observed the camaraderie and joyful spirit among the singers, as well as engaged audiences at each venue, could clearly see the power of choral music as a beautiful means of fostering international friendship. The annual festival and its message will provide a worthwhile step towards a more peaceful world.

United in song at the United Nations

The weeklong festival gave ample opportunity for each choir to present full individual concerts, to give workshops pertaining to their cultural repertoire, and to participate in massed choir performances. The individual concerts were presented in venues such as Merkin Hall at the Kaufman Center, more intimate (at 450 seats) and acoustically favorable for choral programs. These performances were particularly enlightening for audience members, as directors shared insights and background on the repertoire and its musical and cultural significance.

Choristers learned from each other at the varied workshops. Those who attended the workshop by the Kearsney College Choir were taught an African song in the Zulu language, complete with movement. The University of Newcastle Chamber Choir used the music of Australian composer Iain Grandage to give a fascinating seminar on harmonic overtone singing. Such workshops were an interesting and educational glimpse into styles of music often unfamiliar to choirs outside of those countries.

The festival was highlighted by two massed choir concerts, in which each choir performed a short program and combined to form a massed choir of 350 singers. The first of these spectacular, choral collaborations began with the massed choir performance of *Song of Peace* (set to Jean Sibelius' familiar 'Finlandia') arranged by Festival Artistic Director Gary Fry to include an *a cappella* chorale opening and a powerfully rhythmic conclusion with African percussion. In the Lincoln Center and UN concerts, each choir then performed individually, with an enraptured audience enjoying a cascade of differing musical styles as if globetrotting to seven exotic locations. Finally, all the participants came together in a jubilant performance of Fry's *Rhythms of One World*, a contemporary song of celebration especially commissioned for the festival. There was satisfying symbolism in the fact that for the opening number of the concert, all the choirs were dressed in their respective costumes, but for this final number all wore the exact same festival attire. The audience was taught a phrase of the song and even became part of the massed choir.

The culmination of the festival was the second massed choir concert, this time not in a traditional concert hall, but in a place known around the world for efforts to promote international peace: the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations. It was here that, beyond the music, the concept of the festival struck a resounding chord. Here, in a place accustomed to speeches, rang the glorious sound of people from around the world singing to celebrate both their diversity and their unity. Here, in a place too often concerned with conflict and contention, there was harmony in both the musical and the human sense. Here, there was music, and a profound feeling among the assembled dignitaries that these practitioners of the choral art also offered a meaningful example of intercultural respect, cooperation, and friendship. Here, the mission of the festival was truly recognized.

For more information visit www.faf.org ●



Left to right

- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: "A Taste of the Caribbean Vibe" by the Signal Hill Alumni Choir from the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, directed by John Arnold.
- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: "Koala Colours" by the University of Newcastle Chamber Choir from Australia, directed by Dr. Philip Matthias.
- Sat, 30 June 2012 Rhythms of One World Festival Closing Concert at the UN: "Footprint of Africa" by the Kearsney College Choir from South Africa, directed by Bernard Kruger.

All photos: © Dmitry Popov, UN Staff



Marianne Grimont © namurimage.be

CHORAL TECHNIQUE

Being a Choral Leader in Lean Times
Tobin Sparfeld

Missing the Sign: Gregorian Chant and Semiology
Aurelio Porfiri

The Art of Singing One Voice to a Part
An Occasional Series of ICB Interviews by Jeffrey Sandborg

If you would like to write an article and submit it for possible publication in this section

**Please contact Andrea Angelini,
ICB Managing Editor**

E-mail: aangelini@ifcm.net

Being a Choral Leader in Lean Times



In healthy, prosperous economies, many choirs have achieved success in the face of financial hardship. In much of today's world, however, the fiscal outlook for many choirs can seem daunting, perhaps even bleak. The process of budget cuts and dwindling accounting figures can lead to a depressing outlook for the future. This depression might discourage us and prevent us from carrying out our main tasks: making great music and educating our young singers.

No matter how dire your financial situation may be, your choir can be successful, even with severely limited resources. Before discussing specific tactics of making your dollars go further, there are two rules which, when followed, almost always lead to savings.

- 1. Plan ahead.** It is much easier to find an inexpensive solution to a problem when you have time to think. Commit yourself to planning activities and repertoire months ahead of schedule (planning a full year in advance is especially helpful for annual events). Creativity doesn't happen overnight; it is a process of trial and error which sometimes requires more effort than expected.
- 2. Use your singers.** They are willing to help. Ask them for suggestions about anything the choir needs. I once heard a wonderful anecdote from a colleague who got his young male singers involved in helping to find an anvil for Verdi's 'Anvil Chorus' for an upcoming concert. They got so excited that they turned it into a scavenger hunt where the goal was to find the hidden skills of your singers and their families. You never know when it might be valuable.

I have grouped the following specific ideas into five categories: music, rehearsal space, touring/traveling, general fundraising, and publicity/recruiting. None of these ideas is particularly new, and many are actually common knowledge. Nevertheless, they serve as a helpful reminder to us in difficult financial circumstances and may inspire you to discover other possibilities.

Tobin Sparfeld
choral conductor and teacher

Music - Your choral repertoire largely consists of three categories: traditional/historic works, folk songs/traditional songs from different cultures, and contemporary works. With a little effort, you can get music for two out of three categories at virtually no cost.

- Check public domain websites like CPDL.org and IMSLP.org. These sites have been well known and talked about for years and have both improved their selection considerably over time and allow you to find free historical literature. Countries have different standards regarding what is public domain, so be sure to check that you are abiding by the law.
- Don't sell your abilities short: arrange your own folk music / traditional music. That way you can arrange a piece appropriately suited to your singers. In many instances you can use instruments and voicing that are more appropriate for your ensemble than those in print. Furthermore, many published arrangements were originally created by conductors with little or no money and for singers with unique needs.
- Some choirs have begun charging their singers individually for the cost of music up front. At the end of the year, singers can donate their music to the choir (or the choir can offer to purchase it from them for a nominal fee), thus building up a choral library. While this places the financial burden on the singers, it can help defray costs.

Rehearsal space - Be creative and do not dismiss a possible location until you have seen it in person. Look for locations in your area that are not being used at times when you rehearse. They may be:

- i. Churches or other places of worship
- ii. Schools
- iii. Government buildings
- iv. Retirement communities/nursing facilities
- v. Shopping areas or other community centers
- vi. Unsold/unused properties
- vii. Private homes

As a choral singer, I have rehearsed in all of the places listed above. Some were not ideal, while others were surprisingly accommodating for the choir's needs. Many organizations and individuals are willing to let you use their space for a reduced fee or perhaps in exchange for a free concert.

Tour/travel - Just because you are short on funds does not mean you cannot participate in the wonderful activity of touring with your ensemble. Tours give your singers a goal to strive for and help them grow as a group.

- Homestay exchanges: offer to host a performing group from another area in your singers' homes in exchange for them hosting you when you visit them.

- When making travel plans, consider offering deals for tag-along guests, whose money can help subsidize the singers' travel expenses.

General fundraising - This encompasses several categories, such as sales, services, bartering, or advertising. Fundraising works best if you connect a specific goal to your request instead of just a general need. A pledge drive to buy new risers or for a tour will be more successful than one for building an endowment or just paying off debt will be.

- Professional fundraising companies - Many companies give organizations the opportunity to raise funds by selling their products. While this can be an easy way for singers to raise funds, the profits will be split between your choir and the company itself.
- Sales of donated goods - Collect donated goods from the singers or the community and then organize a sale of the goods.
- Auctions - Local companies may be willing to provide gift certificates to you (either free or at a reduced rate). By auctioning off those items to the highest bidder, you can potentially raise more money than the value of the items themselves.
- Ticket sales - Require the singers to buy ten tickets (or any specified number) before the concert that they are required to sell to others. Many theatre productions use this method to buy theatre supplies before the performance. While this does place a financial burden on your singers for tickets they cannot sell, it gets them involved in helping the choir.
- Ruffling off a large prize or a group of prizes (check local laws regarding such events). This may include prizes such as airline tickets, vacations, vehicles, electronics, appliances, or cash.
- Special fundraising concerts
- Services and other events, such as a group car wash, a walk-a-thon, sing-a-thon, cooking party, etc.
- Singing at weddings, singing telegrams, singing Valentine's Day or other holidays
- Local restaurants and business are sometimes willing to donate a percentage of their weekly or nightly profit to your organization. This means, of course, trying to get as many people to frequent that business during that time as possible.
- Grants and corporate sponsors - There are books written solely about the process of applying for government grants, so I will not go into that here. In essence, though, corporations both large and small may be willing to support your ensemble. Connections to these businesses can often be made through your singers and close audience members.

- Bartering for services - Be willing to ask for discounts for any services by promoting their name throughout your organization. The worst they can say is “no”.
- Sell advertising space to appear in your concert programs.

Publicity and Recruiting

- Retention is the cheapest recruiting of all. Write a personal note to each singer thanking them for their participation at the end of the year. If you have a large ensemble, simply write several each week to spread out the work.
- Singing at schools or wherever young people hang out.
- Bring-a-friend night. Arrange a rehearsal where singers can bring a friend to join them. This can encourage visitors to join the ensemble.
- Studies have shown that word of mouth is the most effective form of advertising. It's also free. Explore as many ways as possible to get people talking about your choir. Your singers can help spread the word. Consider what options may work in your community.
- While a less effective means of communication, press releases to your local newspaper are free and can help increase audience attendance. Write the headline as well as the story, making the first several sentences of your release the most compelling and providing background and contact information.

I have used these methods as a conductor and ensemble member. Some may work better than others in your community. Nearly all of them require more effort on our part in planning, research, negotiation, and communication. While this work may not feel rewarding at the moment, we must always remember that saving money helps us fulfill our duty as musicians. Robert Shaw once said this about our duty as musicians:

“Don't let anyone - including oneself - forget that we are all in the *service* of a human excellence and creativity vastly superior to our own, and that we have a responsibility to make this beauty and excellence available to our entire human community - not just a narrow stratum”.¹

By doing more with less, we make the choral art available to a wider part of humanity and allow more singers to participate as well. As we all believe that music can heal mankind, let us strive to let our art shine as brightly as it can, edifying our fellow man when he needs it most.

Edited by J. Aaron Baudhuin, Germany ●

¹ Blocker, Robert., ed. *The Robert Shaw Reader*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004, p. 388.

As a former member of the St. Louis Children's Choirs, **Tobin Sparfeld** has toured all over the world, from as far west as Vancouver, British Columbia, to as far east as Moscow, Russia. He has also sung with Seraphic Fire and the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. Tobin has worked with choirs of all ages, serving as Assistant Music Director of the Miami Children's Chorus as well as Associate Director of the St. Louis Children's Choirs. He taught at Principia College and was the Director of Choral Activities at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. He was also the assistant conductor of the Civic Chorale of Greater Miami. Tobin received his DMA in Conducting from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, studying with Jo-Michael Scheibe and Joshua Habermann. He also received an Artist Teacher Diploma from the CME Institute led by Doreen Rao. He is currently head of the Music Division at Los Angeles Mission College, part of the Los Angeles Community College District. Email: tobin.sparfeld@gmail.com



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Aurelio Porfiri
choral conductor and
teacher

Gregorian chant has known a strange twist of fate in recent decades: on the one hand, implementation of the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) made the only repertoire claimed by the Catholic Church as its own a *de facto* foreigner in its own country. (I will not delve here into that topic, which is very hotly debated in church music circles and is a source of never-ending debates.) On the other hand, this repertoire has experienced a great revival thanks to CDs of both traditional chant and pop arrangements (by Enigma and similar groups) and, especially, to scholarly studies that in recent decades have shed new light on it. In addition, one cannot help noticing how ‘cool’ the Middle Ages have recently become, thanks to movies and other works of fiction that portray characters and times clearly inspired by the ‘Christian centuries’, for example the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy by Tolkien (both the books and especially the movies) or the TV series *Game of Thrones*. And since Gregorian chant is, as we all know, the quintessential soundtrack of medieval times, it too benefits from the medieval revival. Thus it is worth exploring a very interesting development in Gregorian chant studies – Gregorian semiology – knowing that, whether we like it or not, Gregorian chant lies at the beginning of the western musical tradition and as such is worthy of being more deeply understood¹.

If there is one place most strongly associated with Gregorian chant from the middle of the 19th century to this time, it is without doubt the Abbey of Solesmes in France. Why is this so? The reason is the great impulse given it by the restorer of monastic life and the champion of Roman liturgy in France, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875). The Abbey of Solesmes was the center of a Gregorian chant movement that produced scholars among its monks who have led this movement up until the current time. In the middle of the 19th century, serious study of this repertoire was conducted in hopes of achieving a very important goal: to restore the melodies to their original form and beauty (to the extent that this was possible given the manuscripts available) after several centuries of corruption had made them almost unrecognizable. This deterioration is clearly represented by a 17th century edition of chant melodies, the ‘Medicean’².

This research suggested new ways to understand chant. Probably the most important developments in chant studies in recent decades are in two specific fields: one, a better understanding of modality thanks to another Solesmes monk, Dom Jean Claire (1920-2006), the other, the development of a Gregorian semiology.

What is Gregorian semiology? It is a new understanding of the meaning, diversity and values of the ‘neumes’ notated in the medieval manuscripts. Neumes (signs used to represent melodic lines, one neume being all notes sung on a given syllable) were of course already known by great Gregorianists of Solesmes like Dom Joseph Pothier (1835-1923) and especially, Dom André Mocquereau (1849-1930), but were reconsidered and given new life thanks to research by another monk of that Abbey, Dom Eugène Cardine (1905-1988). Indeed, Pothier’s and Mocquereau’s ground-breaking studies led to what is considered the first phase of the Gregorian chant restoration, with Cardine and Claire the main representatives of the second phase, which began in the 1950s (Turco 1991, page 38). As stated above, Dom Cardine understood that the *neumes*, the signs, can tell us more about interpretation and rhythm than was previously understood; something had been missing:

“(…) Cardine concentrated his attention upon that extreme diversity of signs found in the most ancient manuscripts. He gradually became convinced that this diversity is intended to express the particularities and the delicate nuances of expression within the interplay of durations and intensities” (Combe 2003, p. 15).

The book that was to spread this new idea of semiology is basically a collection of lessons he delivered at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, lessons gathered in his *Gregorian Semiology*. This publication has now been translated into several languages. The idea behind Dom Cardine’s new understanding of chant is simple: despite the fact that his great predecessors (notably

¹ I want to thank Professor Nino Albarosa, renowned chant scholar, who kindly agreed to read this article and offered a few suggestions for improvement. Of course any imperfections must be ascribed to me alone.

² There are several reasons for this decay, having mainly to do with changing musical tastes over the centuries that brought consistent alterations in the melodic and rhythmic elements of chant.

Pothier and Mocquereau) were familiar with the neumes, they missed a deeper understanding of what lies in the neumes themselves. They were important not just for the reconstruction of melodies but also for giving fundamental indications about rhythm and expression. We know that the most popular rhythmic theory was the one developed by Dom Andre Mocquereau in his two-volume book *Le Nombre Musical Grégorien* (A Study of Gregorian Musical Rhythm), in which he attempts an explanation of the rhythm of Gregorian chant that would become very popular in the twentieth century. This theory suggests the rhythmic subdivision of Gregorian neumes into groups of two or three notes governed by an accent called 'ictus'. This theory represented a breakthrough in its time but also had its limitations. Indeed, it seems that even in Solesmes the choir never really followed the rhythmic theories of Dom Mocquereau, and today they are considered outmoded. As already mentioned, the theory that was to bring life back into the inner soul of the neume was Dom Cardine's semiology.

His ideas were guided by two criteria:

"The first belongs to the material or graphic order, and considers the design or configuration of the signs. The second belongs to the aesthetic order, and considers the musical context in which each sign is used. It is a matter of investigating the convergence of these two criteria, and of comparing the instances identified in each of the different notations" (Combe 2003, p.16)

Why is it called semiology? At first Dom Cardine preferred to call this new science 'Gregorian diplomatics' but the name did not have a good ring to it; someone suggested he call it 'Gregorian semiology', and it has been known by that name ever since.

The practical book for the performance of Gregorian chant, following the semiological principles rediscovered by Dom Cardine, is the *Graduale Triplex*. Together with the square notation of the Vatican edition, it also uses the neumes from two ancient and reliable neumatic families, Laon and St. Gall. Today indeed we also have the *Graduale Novum*, a quite recent addition to the list of chant books, with many improvements designed to restore a more authentic version of the melodies. Many scholars after Cardine (some of them his students at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome) have continued the investigation of semiology. We cannot forget here Nino Albarosa, Alberto Turco, Luigi Agustoni, Johannes Berchmans Göschl, Giacomo Baroffio, Columba Kelly, Robert M. Fowells and many more.

Is it possible to perform Gregorian chant without using the theory of Dom Cardine? Of course it is,

and indeed several chant choirs prefer not to use the semiology. But I still think it is very valuable to use because the signs, when considered in a semiological context, provide more information for a good performance of chant; they help performers deepen their understanding of how the melody clothes the text. Indeed, the great intuition of Dom Cardine was to ask why the ancient scribes had to spend time shaping the same neume in different ways. His answer was: because they wanted to tell us more about the interpretation and the nuances; they wanted to communicate a written gesture. It is a way to look ever more deeply into the soul of chant. We can say that semiology is an exegetical tool, one that provides more insights on a piece the choir will perform. The

TEMPUS ADVENTUS
DOMINICA PRIMA ADVENTUS

Antiphona ad introitum

VIII.

De te le-vá-vi á-nimam me-am: De-us me-
us in te confi- do, non e-ru- bé-scám: neque ir-
rí- de- ant me in-imí- ci me- i: ét-e- nim u-ni-vér- si qui
te-exspé- ctant, non confun- dén-tur. Ps. Vi- as tu- as, Dó-
mi-ne, demón-stra mi-hi: * et sé-mi-tas tu- as do-ce me.

First Sunday of Advent Introit 'Ad te levavi' in the Graduale Novum

hope is that, along the path of Dom Cardine, more and more discoveries will enlighten the way for those who continue to regard chant not as a relic of the past, but as a living tradition.

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The Hilliard Ensemble: Interview with David James and Gordon Jones

Jeffrey Sandborg: Are you both founding members?

David James: I'm the only one left of the original four.

Gordon Jones: And I've been with the group since 1990. Over twenty years, now.

JS: Does the Hilliard Ensemble comprise your full-time work?

GJ: There's not time to do anything else.

DJ: As a group we occasionally do a master class and what have you. None of us has a separate job; this is our bread and butter.

GJ: We do up to a hundred concerts per year, plus recordings, plus various other projects, along with keeping up the website.

Jeffrey Sandborg
Director of
Choral Activities and
Wade Professor of Music,
Roanoke College

JS With your heavy performance schedule, how often do you rehearse?

DJ That's difficult to answer. We don't have any set rehearsal patterns. The best way to describe it is that we rehearse when we need to.

GJ That's very good for us because there's nothing worse than rehearsing when we don't need to. We need to learn a lot of new music written for us so we arrange rehearsals for that. However, if we've got a period where we're singing standard repertoire and we haven't got anything new we've got to learn, then we probably won't rehearse much, it's as simple as that.

DJ We don't say, "we must rehearse this week," because the fact of the matter is that we do sing so many concerts that we tend to do our rehearsing and learning when we're on the road. With so much time together travelling, we find that this is generally enough and, so, when we're at home, we try to keep rehearsals to a minimum.

JS How many different programs will you cycle through in those 100 concerts?

GJ We have quite a lot of regular, fixed programs. There must be at least ten programs we do regularly, maybe more. But on top of that there are a lot of one-off programs for festivals or other performances that have a special theme. If we have a big, new work written for us then that's an entirely different kind of program. In all we get through an amazing amount of repertoire.

JS Since you sing so much newly commissioned music, how would you describe your process of learning a new work?

GJ The motto is, little and often. I think we're happiest learning a new work when we're on tour because it means we can spend maybe an hour on the piece every day in a hotel room, rather than try to meet up in, say, London. To make a rehearsal worthwhile you've got to rehearse three hours and three hours on a new piece is too much. Your brain starts aching. We find that things fall into place much better this way.

DJ It's an extraordinary thing the way the process works and if you were to ask, "Why is that?" I can't answer. It seems to me that a little time is an amazing developer of music learning. Something we might have looked at for an hour yesterday will seem easier today. Strangely enough, this will almost always be the case.

GJ Very often we'll have difficulty with a progression in a new piece of music. There may be just one chord that's not working and you can't get from A to C through B because B isn't in the right place. We'll sometimes struggle with that for a little while. It's not necessarily obvious which of the pitches need adjusting.

JS This occurred to me when I heard you in concert with Garbarek. What if a piece slips a quarter tone and the sax comes in at what for him is still his fixed pitch? Does that happen?

GJ There are times when you have to negotiate with him, for example, when his reeds aren't behaving themselves. You'll hear that he's playing very quietly and you'll think to yourself, "Is he worried about pitch?"

DJ A large amount of the time we're able to stay in tune. We know the important notes within the harmonies to keep absolutely

right. And Rogers (Covey-Crump) has such a fantastic ear for pitch. You know that if you home in on what he's singing, it's going to be OK. I repeat myself but it's all a matter of listening, of knowing what a chord sounds like when it's in tune.

GJ I have to admit, we have preferences for keys. We're not very good at singing in sharp keys. I don't know why certain preferred keys are most comfortable.

JS When you're working on a commission, do you include the composer in that process?

DJ Not so often. Normally, they're not around but we find it works better when we work on it ourselves. Maybe closer to the performance, and then maybe they can make some comment or adjustment. On the whole we find this way to work better. They trust us. We'll get as close as we can and it might satisfy them completely. If we're uncomfortable with anything, we can always get on the telephone or write an e-mail.

GJ Sometimes, after looking at the score, you're baffled because things are not immediately obvious. There may be notes we simply cannot sing! Before the process begins we send out information on a piece of paper with all of our ranges on it and it's amazing how many composers ignore it.

DJ And we're not so keen on receiving the score where it is so tightly marked with every bar having dynamics. When that happens there is very little for the performers to decide.

JS So, when you get the score, nobody sits down, analyzes, makes decisions, plans a rehearsal?

You just have at it?

DJ Usually. When we get the new score we go through what we can in rehearsal. At the first meeting it is pretty clear how much time it's going to take, how difficult it is, and how we're going to have to approach it.

JS Do you have a coach or some other objective set of ears that might give you feedback on your overall sound?

GJ No. Sometimes I think I could see the point in that but other times I think it would be nonsense. We have our 'house style' which is the four of us.

DJ We think that Rogers is enough in terms of tuning. And for *a cappella* it would not be useful. We're very fluid in what we do and, therefore, someone from the outside wouldn't quite work because at every performance we'd start to think what we'd been told and we'd lose that sense of freedom.

JS I see from some of your recordings that you expand the ensemble for certain repertoire. What's the largest the Hilliards could be?

GJ Eight, maximum. We have a pool of friends who are fabulous singers and they are very happy to join us when we need them. We don't really go outside that circle because we like to sing with people who know how we sing. Since we don't have a conductor, someone who doesn't know how we work can become quite nervous and might wonder, "What's going on here?" We don't show them how it goes; you just have to guess.

GJ It takes a little while for people to get used to working this

way. New people are quite often very uncomfortable at a first rehearsal. We're just expecting them to do what they feel like doing and we'll react to it.

JS What happens when you're on tour and someone cannot sing because of illness?

GJ We have some emergency three-voice programs, depending on who is sick.

JS I wonder about these pieces you perform with saxophonist Jan Garbarek introduced with the *Officium* project? How did that come to be?

GJ It came about through our record company, ECM, which has always fostered collaborations between its artists. It just happened that if we were going to have this sort of collaboration, Jan was the right person. A wind instrument is much more vocal-sounding, as opposed to a piano which for us is difficult to work with. First, because the piano is a percussion instrument and second because the tuning is crazy for us.

DJ Of course we were apprehensive when we first met—no one knew what to expect. I'm sure Jan felt the same way. So the first meeting was a nerve-wracking experience. Fortunately, at the first very meeting it was clear that there was common ground. He somehow understood how we sang and felt comfortable to join in, and vice versa. It didn't seem so different from what we do. And so, from the start both sides were reasonably comfortable.

JS There seems to be a lot of this kind of 'improv' – that is, improvising over fixed-pitch choral works – going on in Sweden and Norway, and also the practice of using the space in creative ways by moving around. Did Garbarek bring these ideas from Norway?

GJ Well, the moving around in space may actually have come from us.

DJ I think that initially it took Jan some time to get used to the idea that he could move around, especially since he'd always been onstage with his band.

Suddenly, he thought, "Gosh, in the right building, this is good because I can create different colors."

GJ And then we tried to push the boundaries to see how far apart we could stand and still sing the same piece of music.

DJ In the initial recordings Manfred Eicher, the producer at ECM, said, "Guys, why don't you go to all four corners of the chapel and sing into the walls?" We thought, "The guy's completely mad." But somehow it worked—again, it's the listening. It's like learning anything new,

awkward at first and then normal after you've done it awhile.

GJ Fortunately it was only an extension of what we were already doing because we work entirely by listening. It was just a matter of having the confidence of singing with someone twenty meters away.

JS Why do you think that audiences have such a strong response to this spatial music?

DJ It is noticeable that people are most taken by our moving around and singing amongst them. They can't quite believe what is happening. Of course, it needs a decent building. People suddenly feel that they're part of the music. I'm surprised it's not done more.

JS Where does all of this music come from and how do you handle editions of so much rarely performed music? Do you make your own?

GJ Generally we don't make our editions but just occasionally we have to. There are all sorts of different ways of coming up with scores. The Armenian music we sang in our last concert was sent to us from Armenia because they were preparing a special new edition of the complete church music of Comitas (1869-1935) and they wanted us to sing some. So that was a gift. I might find stuff in libraries or on the Internet and all sorts of curious places. Something I sang on my own the other night is written in Kiev chant notation. It was the only version available so I had to find out how to transcribe it.

JS Do you ever sing, for example, something like Brahms?

GJ It gets very difficult, then, because in a four-part Brahms piece you'll have a high voice, slightly lower voices, then a lower voice, then the bass. In our group, we have a high voice, two equal middle voices and the bass. So Brahms requires a very different disposition than our ATTB. To do Brahms it would mean that one of the tenors would have to pretend to be an alto

and you'd probably have to transpose the piece because the other tenor is probably going to be too low.

JS Does most of this early music conform to your forces, ATTB?

GJ A lot of it but not all. There's a whole slew of English church music that lies very differently, with high boys' parts, for example.

DJ A lot of it is determined by how we sing. We try to sing with a very straight tone most of the time and that suits well the Medieval and Renaissance periods, I think. Our voices are not so naturally suited to the Romantic.



JS What drives your programming now? Recordings? Commissions? The marketplace?

GJ Very often it's got to do with a new acquisition. We might get a piece written for us that's so good that we see the possibility of a good program built 'round it. One recent program was done because of that. We had a new piece by Roger Marsh, a setting of Dante, and I developed an all-Italian program to go with it. It became a mixed program of early and contemporary music with an Italian theme. Every so often we'll think there is some music that needs doing, or else we've got something particular we want to record.

DJ Mainly our programming is determined by things we like to do. We don't go by the marketplace. And we're not ones looking to see whose anniversary is coming up; that's not our way at all.

JS How did you come to specialize in early music?

DJ I first started to sing when I came out of Magdalen (Oxford). This whole early music movement hadn't really started then and I briefly joined a group, The Early Music Consort of London, led by David Munrow (1942-1976). David was blazing a new path. The interest in early music really started instrumentally. It was only later the vocal came along. He was the first who one day said to a few guys, "Look, shall we try some of the vocal stuff?" I was invited to join in and so was Rogers, coincidentally. David was magnificent. He quickly realized that the voice didn't work quite so well with instruments so he wondered, "Why don't we try a *cappella*?" And we tried some Renaissance pieces and it was a revelation; we were completely bowled over. Sadly, David's life ended very tragically within six months of starting so we were left with a huge hole.

JS Did the group thrive within the early music movement and then expand into new music?

GJ The group has done new music from the very start.

DJ With the very first concert, actually. In those days record companies wouldn't take much risk with contemporary music so, although we did it in concert, it wasn't recorded. The first time we came to the public's conscious was with Arvo Pärt. That was through ECM.

GJ The Hilliard Ensemble did the first performance of his *Stabat Mater*.

JS What projects do you have on the horizon?

DJ We find there are still challenges with the small world in which we work.

GJ And we have some new pieces being written for us.

DJ There are pieces being written either with small chamber orchestra or for large orchestra which is quite exciting. We've also got quite a nice project in a couple years' time—we're joining with a viol consort, Fretwork.

We'll be singing Orlando Gibbons' *The Cries of London* and at the same time, we're commissioning a new composer to write on the same text. That's the sort of thing we're doing—but there's no new 'Officium' on the horizon!

GJ We also are working on a theater project, a piece called, *I Went to the House but Did Not Enter* by Heiner Goebbels. We've done this piece a lot in Europe.

JS What do you mean when you say "theater piece"?

GJ It's staged with costumes and it's just the four of us.

DJ It's superb. He wrote it specifically for us so we worked with him from day one. We were very much part of the whole creative process. Goebbels' background is the theater but he's taken a tremendous interest in music and he has a phenomenally wide, catholic taste for all types of music and theater. He's a visionary. He can see things not many others can imagine. And he can see what works and how to put things together. That's what he did with us.

JS Is it recorded?

DJ There might be a DVD one day.

Since its founding in 1974 The Hilliard Ensemble has been at the vanguard of both the Early Music movement while also performing and commissioning new works. Consequently, its vast discography has brought to light much important repertoire for audiences and conductors. Comprising four male singers, David James, Countertenor, Tenors Rogers Covey-Crump and Steven Harrold, and Gordon Jones, Baritone, 'The Hilliards' maintain an ambitious performance schedule of nearly a hundred concerts every year. The ensemble's profile was raised with its immensely popular crossover recording 'Officium' (1994) with saxophonist Jan Garbarek. It combined Medieval and Renaissance motets with improvisation, and the collaboration between these artists continues to be fruitful with the most recent 'Officium Novum' released in 2010. Arvo Pärt is only one of the numerous living composers with whom the Hilliards have worked closely. In addition to being a rich source for further information about the ensemble, the Hilliard website has informative articles on tuning by member Rogers Covey-Crump.

Web site: www.hilliardensemble.demon.co.uk ●

Jeffrey Sandborg holds the Naomi Brandon and George Emery Wade Professorship in Music at Roanoke College where he has been Director of Choral Activities since 1985. His conducting credits of major choral/orchestral works with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra include Verdi's Requiem, Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor and Handel's *Messiah*. He has also led the Roanoke Valley Choral Society and Orchestra in performances of Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*, J. S. Bach's Mass in B Minor, and the Requiems of Joonas Kokkonen and Andrew Lloyd Webber. Sandborg remains active as a clinician, adjudicator, arranger, composer and choral scholar. He is the author of *English Ways: Interviews with English Choral Conductors* along with numerous articles on choral and vocal literature and practice. Email: sandborg@roanoke.edu





COMPOSERS' CORNER

Great Choral Music in a Small Country:
A conversation with the Lithuanian Composer Vytautas Miškinis
Cara Tasher

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Please contact Cara S. Tasher, Editor
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Great Choral Music in a Small Country

A conversation with the Lithuanian Composer Vytautas Miškinis



Cara Tasher: What was it like growing up in Lithuania?

Vytautas Miškinis: As I child, I lived in the beautiful village of Zervynos where half of its inhabitants were relatives on my mother's side. It was quite ordinary except for the responsibilities I held at such a young age. There I completed my first primary school class and then began in my second year in the capital city of Vilnius. As far as I remember I have always loved singing, no matter where and when; during meals, in the forest, the bathroom . . . Very soon my parents noticed my interest and enrolled me in the boy's choir where my music education officially began. I succeeded easily in the classes and this attracted the conductor's attention. It was he, Mr. H. Perelstein who directed and guided me along this road and from whom I gained all of my musical knowledge. I feel proud of taking private music lessons as the great W.A. Mozart, J. S. Bach, A. Bruckner and E. Elgar also studied privately. In fact, I learned and achieved most in music while under the direction of Perelstein whose personality had great influence on me. At 17, I entered the Music Academy and became assistant conductor, and at the age of 21 became the second conductor of the Kaunas State Choir. Later, at 25 years old, I served as Artistic Director of the boys' choir after my predecessor Perelstein had left Lithuania for the USA. Soon after, I founded the Aзуoliukas Music School. Everything described above seems a simple biography, yet the insular environment in which we lived was actually quite complex: we were forbidden by the government to perform abroad and the spread of musical information was very limited. There were politicized music textbooks and the study of a foreign language was one of the only means to learn about music literature of other cultures.

Cara Tasher
choral conductor
and teacher

Criticism aside, musical education and professional music training was of high priority to the government. The pyramid of professional learning functioned well: music school, college of music (equivalent to the current Conservatory), Higher School of Music (now the Academy of Music). Then, a graduate of the Academy of Music was guaranteed the right to a job, whereas now it is a personal and private matter of fortune. Also during that time, children's summer holidays were a matter for state consideration and working parents could afford to send their child to the well-established pioneer camps where childcare, food, lodging, sports and entertainment were all provided, ensuring that children would have a pleasant holiday. Unfortunately with current costs for education, summer camps are too expensive for many families and are often considered a luxury. With the disappearance of the state-camp network, I take pride in organizing summer camps for 130 choirboys annually, yet the duration of camps has already become shorter and less affordable for many families. Still, don't take my words as nostalgia for the old times. We live in a "modern" society where wealth depends on economic profitability. To close, I wish to quote an ancient Roman saying: "If you are not educated in music, you are plebeian". Music in many ways has become the object of hedonistic needs rather than part of aesthetic education. How sad! Today music education is less well supported and participation in school choral activities is no longer compulsory. The law mandates that the Ministry of Education and Science regulates curriculum and schools are financed and maintained, but the municipalities control their functions. Such are the changes in the era of capitalism.

CT Discuss the transformation of your approach to making music after 1990, if any. Did choral music and music education change?

VM In the past, no expense was spared for choral music education to prove the superiority of the Soviet education system over western standards, as it was one of the areas where a political approach could be applied. It was easier to manage the masses than a single person. Therefore, mass participation in choirs and music education was greatly encouraged, and there was even an official position of Coordinator of the Development of Art and Mass Culture. As you may know, in addition to professional art, much attention was paid to amateur art maintenance and development. Under the Soviet rule, a wide network of children's music schools was developed and fully maintained by public funds. Commonly, businesses and factories encouraged and funded employees' participation in choirs, dance groups, folk bands or orchestras, and some workplaces built their own cultural centers. Involvement in music and music education was considered mandatory.

Fortunately, despite the Soviet regime, many positive things emerged. For example, music education was provided from pre-school to secondary education and it was obligatory for schools to have a choir, band, orchestra or dance group. Unfortunately, after the restoration of independence to Lithuania, the network of music education was ruined, and not only due to the lack of funds for maintenance of all cultural educational institutions, but also in order to erase and destroy any memory of the Soviet regime. Sadly enough, even now concepts such as the 'Soviet system of education', 'Soviet heritage' or 'Soviet network' are partially associated with art, largely because the amateur art network was fully sponsored by the former Trade Unions. Unfortunately, with the restoration of independence, these were destroyed for political reasons.

After Lithuania became a member of the European Union, surprisingly, partial support for highly developed and well-functioning structures is now being revived. It seems controversial when European standards are considered to fit and match our national educational system, not to mention our individual cultural and national development. Unfortunately, today's 'modernized' models of life are integrated according to the commonly patterned standards of the EU.

Still, the main cultural identity puzzle seems to be how to protect and maintain the traditional things that have justified themselves throughout time.

CT How have the traditions of Lithuanian choral music been kept alive?

VM Frankly speaking, open opposition to Soviet rule has never been demonstrated since it was dangerous or simply impossible. The national Song and Dance Festival provided an opportunity to preserve a tradition of our national cultural heritage. As for the festival's repertoire, no one dared to argue about its content. In general, anything that didn't oppose the ideology of the Soviet system was accepted. Folk song and dance were paid special attention as they supported our national identity. However, the repertoire had to be internationally varied, usually consisting of Lithuanian, Russian, Latvian, Estonian or other international music performed in their national languages, and then translated into Russian and Lithuanian.

As Lithuania was a bilingual country, the Lithuanian and Russian languages were obligatory, but the Lithuanian language was always a priority for native Lithuanians; it was taught at school, used in public and considered to be the mother tongue in all senses. The Soviets feared and neglected to accept modernism as it was associated with Western influence, which for Soviets

meant capitalism – a great evil that objected to the principles of communist society and ideas.

Despite any communist attempts to limit or ignore the influence of the West, it spread rapidly in the form of a tangible declaration of a “hidden” thought demonstrated mainly through instrumental music. With an increased quantity of symphonic music composed, loud unspoken messages or ideas were sensed hidden deeply within the music. At the same time, the communist ideas and the praise of the regime under the established rules and regulations were openly stated and encouraged. Lithuanian folk art was neither objected to nor resisted, on the contrary, it was tolerated and even developed. Meanwhile, intellectuals found certain elements of national resistance in the ethno-cultural heritage and easily noticed these since the word is a powerful tool to carry a clear message; song texts possessed ambiguity or elements of Aesopian language. For example, in the folksong harmonized by M.K. Čiurlionis *Oh, flying, flying* the text states: “Oh, the swans fly, fly to defend the motherland and call the brothers for...” But, the censors of the Lithuanian folk songs found nothing specific in the text to criticize as the songs more generally alluded to ideas hidden between the lines or within ambiguities. And if a composer pleased the regime by composing at least one song in praise of the Soviet system, he could make music more freely, as censors favored composers who demonstrated loyalty to the government, and consequently scrutinized their works less harshly.

CT Your elegance and fluidity within different styles is notable. What's the piece you've written that you are most pleased with?

VM I have written a great number of songs of different genres and various styles and roughly 800 choral works and I am particularly proud of my works for children and sacred music compositions. I am especially pleased with my Light Mass for two pianos and jazz trio that I recently set for orchestra. Then comes my musical tale for children *The Tale about Tenderness* whose text is based on American author Steiner's book. Currently I am setting *St. John's Passion* in German for the Cathedral of Graz, Austria, for Evangelist (tenor), Petrus (tenor), Jesus (bass), Servant (soprano) and *a cappella* SATB choir (35 minutes). I have also written an

hour-long version in Latin with organ and orchestra. Among European conductors I have been given the nickname “Mister Cantate Domino” for a simple reason: *Cantate Domino* is my most frequently performed work and the publisher Carus Verlag considers it to be a bestseller. I would never wish to compose a piece that would discredit me as a composer and so I am extremely cautious in publishing my works, in case my work turns out to be of no interest for the public: I would not dare to disappoint a listener by any new work of mine.



CT Your compositional output is very abundant for a contemporary composer. Please talk about your compositional process and what inspires you.

VM What always inspires me is the poetry. I always read a lot of poetic texts, especially children's poetry. Sometimes the text “ignites” me spontaneously, whereas sometimes I feel indifferent to it. It is more difficult with commissions, especially when the text is given and the direction of the style is described. Luckily, I am pretty quick at composing, because every minute I live with music in my head, thoughts, and sometimes in my dreams that I try to write down before the audiovisual has evaporated. I tend to exploit every free minute I possess; otherwise I wouldn't manage to do much. I write while waiting for a flight, aboard a plane, during any spare minute at the Academy of Music, when a

student doesn't appear for his conducting lesson, at home, at work, simply everywhere. Unexpectedly, in the year 2012 I received ten choral commissions. I create many without specific focus and direction, which is useful in expressing my personal self through music. Sometimes the ideas are born while I'm driving a car. Then I stop and hurry to capture the thoughts on any piece of paper and rush home to express them in musical form. For example, *Cantate Domino* and several other compositions were composed like this. Also, I love nature. It recharges me and clears the mind from any negative thoughts that surround us in our lives. When I feel sad, I am likely to compose joyful music. When I am optimistic, nostalgic or melancholic music comes to my mind. Who knows, maybe this happens due to the balance in wild nature as well as in the nature of man. After the rain, you wait for the sun to shine and as you long for it, moments of joy follow the sadness and euphoria calms within time passed.

CT Through the many Lithuanian choral festivals, you have access to your country's most talented musicians. Has the rich choral tradition of Lithuania helped the country to gain recognition worldwide?

VM Lithuania is truly rich in talents. Our ethno-cultural heritage is very rich and plentiful. Within our population of three million, there are a significant number of choirs and professional artists in many fields. The choral movement is one of the most powerful.

The power of singing helped Lithuanians to withstand the twenty years' pressure from the Soviet Army, and to long for the Independence of Lithuania. It is no wonder that the phenomenon when a song turned out to be mightier than a weapon was called The Singing Revolution. We'll never forget the tradition of the giant Baltic Song Festivals that, in 2006, UNESCO proudly singled out as a cultural practice considered a "masterpiece of humanity." I was honored to be part of the creation of a law passed in 2008 to support the continuity of the Lithuanian Song Festival tradition. The fact that three Lithuanian choirs are European Grand Prix winners speaks louder than words. Well, we admit we also have problems, but if we compare our situation with the many countries where choral singing is less cultivated, I dare say that our situation is good enough so far. I feel justified in making comparisons since the World Choir Council contemplates these problems on the global scale, where I have the honor to represent Lithuania.

We have a lot of interesting artists of all genres: pop, jazz, and classical music. We also have many interesting composers. But how could we make their names known to the world? The problem is that having lived for fifty years behind the 'iron curtain' we were anonymous to the major part of the world. And how should we find a foreign publisher who would believe in the talent of a composer and wish to promote Lithuanian music to foreigners?

I feel very disappointed in the current situation, yet I am a happy exception: the best choirs in the world perform my works, and ask me to work for them. It is a great honor and happiness, and at the same time, it is a great responsibility to represent Lithuanian art.

CT Finally, you were awarded the Enlightened Person of Lithuania in 2006. Describe the path to enlightenment and tell us more.

VM This high award was given to me for my work with boys. I am the artistic director of the largest boys' and youth choir in all of Europe, a system consisting of 450 singers. I like to joke by calling my singing team the "all men's sexy choir!" The system includes eight ensembles of different ages and ten assistant conductors. It is an integral system including an eight-year curriculum, where they learn solfeggio, music history, and conducting, and study voice privately as well as a musical instrument of their choice.

Choral singing is the main lesson. The award granted is the greatest evaluation of my ability to promote interest in music in such a large number of boys who devote their time to musical education. In 2002 I was nominated "Best author of the year and composer of frequently performed music abroad" and over the last decade, three of my works have been rated as the most frequently performed by choirs in Europe. The fact that I am interesting to someone makes me happy.

CT Thank you for allowing us to feature you as well as a very special thanks to our colleague and friend Darius Polikaitis, the artistic director of Dainava Lithuanian Chorale in Chicago, for translation of the work provided here, as well as this helpful pronunciation guide.

VM My sincere thanks to ICB for the opportunity to share my thoughts. Of course, I receive a lot of e-mails with a variety of questions, and in most cases inquiring where to find my music. Information about my works can be found on the website www.mic.lt in the composers' section. The information only pertains to my works printed by foreign publishing houses: Carus Verlag, Editions Ferrimontana, Schott Verlag, Germany; A Coeur Joie, France; CMEdiciones Musicales, Spain; Astrum, Slovenia; Musica Baltica, Latvia; earthsongs, Laurendale Associates, Santa Barbara, USA. Information about the Ažuoliukas choir can be found at www.azuoliukas.lt and my personal email is: v.miskinis@azuoliukas.lt.

Shaped by meaningful and life-changing experiences within organizations such as the Atlanta Symphony Chorus, Chicago Symphony Chorus, Conspirare, Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus, Trinity Choir-Wall Street and the Young People's Chorus of New York City, **Cara Tasher** completed her studies at the University of Cincinnati-CCM, the University of Texas at Austin, La Sorbonne, and Northwestern University. Her calendar includes concerts, guest performances in festivals and workshops, and preparation of professional organizations throughout the US and abroad, this year also with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Her ensembles have toured five countries and added South Africa in an exchange with Junita van Dijk's NMMU chorus in May 2012. She is based in Jacksonville, where she serves as Director of Choral Activities at the University of North Florida, and recently appeared conducting the opening of the Florida 2012 Republican National Debate live on CNN. Email: ctasher@gmail.com



Mano gimtinė

Ten, kur Nemunas banguoja
Tarp kalnų, laukų
Broliai vargdieniai dejuoja
Nuo senų laikų.
Ten močiutė užlingavo
Raudomis mane,
Į krūtinę skausmą savo
Liejo nežinia.
Girios užė ten, minėjo
Praeitie laikus,
Kai lietuvis netikėjo,
Jog belaisviu bus.
Ten apleistos pilys griūva
Ant kalnų aukštai;
Milžinų ten kaulai pūva,
Verkia jų kapai.
Ten užaugau, iškentėjau
Aš kančias visas
Ir pamėgau, pamylėjau
Vargdienių dūmas.
O tos dūmos vargdieninės
Griausia kai kada,
Tartum rūdys geležinės
Amžina žaizda.

There is my birth place

Where the river Nemunas flows
through the hills and plains,
there our poor brothers lament their fate,
as they have for ages past.
There my mother rocked me to sleep
with mournful lullabies,
pouring her heartache
into my bosom.
There the forests moaned
remembering the times of the past,
when nary a countryman could have
believed
that he would be a slave.
There abandoned fortresses lay in ruins
On the hilltops high;
they mark the resting places of giants,
their weeping graves.
There I grew up
and lived through many hard times,
and grew to love
the common life.
But ever so often,
the memories of that life gnaw at me,
As rust eats away at iron,
As a permanent wound.

Maironis (born Jonas Mačiulis, 1862–1932) is one of the most famous Lithuanian romantic poets. He is known as the “great poet of Lithuania’s rebirth”. Maironis, a Roman Catholic priest, lived most of his life under the Russian Czarist occupation. His patriotic poetry was at the forefront of a Lithuanian national revival that ultimately led to independence in 1918. The text of this piece is typical of Maironis’s creative oeuvre. In attempting to awaken his countrymen to their national identity, Maironis speaks lyrically of Lithuania’s beauty, of its glorious past, of its sufferings and struggles. Yet he identifies with and addresses the common man (rather than the aristocracy), for it is there that he sees hope for the future of Lithuania as a free nation.



Vowels:

a = [ʌ] (up) or [a] (far)
ą = [a] (far)
e = [ɛ] (met) or [æ] (cat)
ę = [æ] (cat)
ė = [e] (cafe)
i = [ɪ] (sit)
į = [i] (sleep)
y = [i] (sleep)
o = usually [ɔ] (law), sometimes [o] (open)
u = [ʊ] (book)
ų = [u] (truth)
ū = [u] (truth)

Consonants:

c = [ts] (not [k])
č = [tʃ] (church)
g = [g] (good) - always hard
j = [j] (young)
r = rolled
š = [ʃ] (ship)
ž = [ʒ] (Zhivago)

Diphthongs:

ai = [ʌ:i] or [a:i]
au = [ʌ:u] (low) or [a:u] (down)
ei = [ɛ:i] (Beijing) or [æ:i]
ie = difficult to transcribe in IPA because its components are quite merged. I have tried to represent as [iɛɐ] - in sustained notes the ə (schwa) is sustained. An English equivalent would be “Vietnam”. I have also heard comparisons to “deer”, if the r is not pronounced.
ui = [ʊ:i]
uo = difficult to transcribe in IPA because its components are quite merged. I have tried to represent as [uɔ], - in sustained notes the [ɔ] is sustained. I have also heard comparisons to English “poor”, if the r is not pronounced.

Palatization:

An “i” before the vowels “a”, “ą”, “o”, “u”, “ų”, “ū” is not explicitly pronounced, but rather serves to soften, or palatize the preceding consonant. Therefore, “broliai” is not really [bro-ʌʌ:i], but rather [[bro-ʌʌ:i] with the “i” softened. This is a bit difficult for non-native speakers, so a pronunciation of [bro-ʌʌ:i] is acceptable, as long as the [i] is very quick. This is how I have transcribed the poetry above.

Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy

MANO GIMTINĖ

Maironis

Vytautas MIŠKINIS
2012

Ramiai, dainingai ♩ = 54 (tranquillo)

SOPRANO

Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja tarp kal - nų, lau - kų bro - liai varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų. Ten mo -

ALTO

Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja tarp kal - nų, lau - kų bro - liai varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų. Ten mo -

TENOR

Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja tarp kal - nų bro - liai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų. Ten mo -

BASS

Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja tarp kal - nų bro - liai varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų. Ten mo -

5

čiu - tē už - lin - ga - vo rau - do - mis ma - ne, į krū - ti - nę skaus - mą sa - vo lie - jo ne - ži - nia, į krū -

čiu - tē už - lin - ga - vo rau - do - mis, į krū - ti - nę skaus - mą lie - jo ne - ži - nia,

čiu - tē už - lin - ga - vo rau - do - mis, į krū - ti - nę skaus - mą lie - jo ne - ži - nia,

čiu - tē už - lin - ga - vo rau - do - mis, į krū - ti - nę lie - jo ne - ži - nia,

9

Judriau ♩ = 62 (poco più mosso)

ti - nę skaus - mą sa - vo lie - jo ne - ži - nia. Gi - rios ū - žė pra - ei - ties, kai lie - tu - vis ne - ti - kė - jo,

į krū - ti - nę skaus - mą lie - jo ne - ži - nia. Gi - rios ū - žė ten pra - ei - ties, kai ne - ti -

į krū - ti - nę skaus - mą lie - jo ne - ži - nia. Gi - rios ū - žė pra - ei - ties lai - kus, kai ne - ti -

į krū - ti - nę lie - jo ne - ži - nia. Gi - rios ū - žė ten, mi - nė - jo pra - ei - ties, kai ne - ti - kė - jo,

14 *mf* *f* *mp* *p* **lėčiau ♩ = 54 (più lento)**

jog be-lais-viu bus. Ten ap-leis-tos pi-lys griū-va ant kal-nų aukš-tai; mil-ži - nų ten kau-lai pū-va, ver-kia jų ka-
 kė - jo. Ten ap-leis-tos pi-lys griū-va ant kal-nų aukš-tai; kau - lai pū-va, ver-kia jų ka-
 kė - jo. Ten ap-leis-tos pi-lys griū-va ant kal-nų aukš-tai, aukš-tai; kau - lai pū-va, ver-kia jų ka-
f espress. jog be-lais-viu bus. Ten ap-leis-tos pi-lys griū-va ant kal-nų aukš-tai; kau - lai pū-va, ver-kia jų ka-

19 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp* **gyviau ♩ = 66 (più mosso)**

Ten u-žau-gau, iš-ken-tė - jau *mf* aš kan-čias vi - sas ir pa-mė-gau,
 pai. *mp* Ten u - žau-gau, iš-ken-tė - jau aš kan-čias vi - sas ir pa-
 pai. *mp* Ten u-žau-gau, iš-ken-tė - jau aš kan-čias vi - sas ir
 pai. *mp* Ten u-žau-gau, iš-ken-tė - jau aš kan-čias vi - sas, vi-sas ir pa-mė -
 pai. *mp* Ten u-žau-gau, iš-ken-tė - jau aš kan-čias vi - sas, vi-sas ir pa-mė -

26 **rit.** **Tempo primo ♩ = 54** *p*

pa-my-lė - jau varg-die - nių dū - mas. O tos dū-mos
 mė-gau, pa-my-lė - jau varg-die-nių dū - mas. O tos dū - mos varg-die-ni - nės
 pa-mė-gau, pa-my-lė - jau varg-die-nių dū - mas. O tos dū - mos varg-die-ni - nės
mp ir pa-mė-gau, pa-my-lė - jau varg-die-nių dū-mas. O tos dū - mos varg-die-ni-nės
 gau, pa-my-lė - jau varg-die-nių dū-mas. O tos dū - mos varg-die-ni - nės
 O tos dū - mos varg - die - ni-nės

32

mp tar-tum rū - dys *mf* am - ži - na žaiz - da. Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja

griau - žia kai ka - da, tar - tum rū - dys ge - le - ži - nės am - ži - na žaiz - da. Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja

mp griau - žia kai ka - da, tar - tum rū - dys ge - le - ži - nės *mf* am - ži - na žaiz - da. Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja

mp griau - žia tar - tum rū - dys *mf* am - ži - na žaiz - da. Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja

mp griau - žia tar - tum ge - le - ži - nės *mf* am - ži - na žaiz - da. Ten, kur Ne - mu - nas ban - guo - ja

36

f tarp kal - nų, lau - kų bro - liai varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų, bro - liai

tarp kal - nų varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų,

f tarp kal - nų bro - liai varg - die - niai de - juo - ja, bro - liai

f tarp kal - nų de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų,

lėtai ♩ = 48 (lento)

rit. molto

39

varg - die - niai de - juo - ja

varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų.

p varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų.

p varg - die - niai de - juo - ja nuo se - nų lai - kų.

p varg - die - niai, nuo se - nų lai - kų.

Ave verum corpus

Vytautas MIŠKINIS

Tranquillo ♩ = 54 (leggiero)

p *mp*

SOPRANO
A - ve ve - rum cor - pus na - tum ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne, ve - re pas - sum

ALTO
A - ve ve - rum cor - pus na - tum

TENOR
A - ve ve - rum cor - pus na - tum ex Vir - gi - ne, cor - pus na - tum ve - re pas - sum

BASS
A - ve ve - rum cor - pus na - tum, ve - re pas - sum.

5

mf *mp*

S.
im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi - ne, ve - re pas - sum im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi -

A.
ho - mi - ne,

T.
im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi - ne, ve - re pas - sum im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi -

B.
im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi - ne, ho - mi - ne, ve - re pas - sum im - mo - la - tum in cru - ce pro ho - mi -

11 *f* *rit.* *p* **poco più mosso e più espressivo** ♩ = 66 *mp*

S.
ne, ho - mi - ne. Cu - jus la - tus per - fo - ra - tum un - de flu - xit, un - de flu - xit

A.
ho - mi - ne.

T.
ne, ho - mi - ne. Cu - jus la - tus per - fo - ra - tum un - de flu - xit, un - de flu - xit

B.
ne, Cu - jus la - tus per - fo - ra - tum un - de flu - xit, un - de flu - xit

mp espress. *mf*

poco rit. **Tempo primo**

17

S. *mf* *mp* *p*
 san - gui - ne, san-qui-ne, es-to no - bis prae-gu-sta-tum mor-tis ex - a mi-ne, ex -

A. *mf* *mp* *p*
 san-gui-ne, — in — ex - a-mi-ne,

T. *mf espress.* *mp* *p*
 8 san - gui - ne, es-to no - bis prae-gu - sta - tum mor-tis ex - a-mi-ne, ex -

B. *mf* *mp* *p*
 san - gui - ne, san-qui-ne, es-to no - bis prae-gu-sta-tum ex - a-mi-ne,

poco meno mosso

23

S. *rit. pp* *sub ff* *pp*
 a - mi - ne, ex - a-mi - ne, ex - a - mi - ne. O cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su,

A. *pp* *sub ff* *pp*
 a - mi - ne, ex - a-mi - ne, ex - a - mi - ne. O cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su,

T. *pp* *sub ff* *p espress.*
 8 a - mi - ne, ex - a-mi - ne, ex - a - mi - ne. O cle - mens, o pi - e,

B. *pp* *sub ff* *p espress.*
 a - mi - ne, ex - a-mi - ne, ex - a - mi - ne. O cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su,

mp espress. **rit.** **più tranquillo**

30

S. *mp espress.* *mp*
 o dul - cis Je - su, Fi - li Ma - ri - ae,

A. *p* *mp*
 o cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su, Ma - ri - ae,

T. *p* *mp*
 8 o cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su, Ma - ri - ae,

B. *p* *mf*
 o cle - mens, o pi - e, o - dul - cis Je - su, Fi - li Ma - ri - ae,

36 *dim. poco a poco* *p*

S. Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, Fi - li Ma - ri - ae,

A. Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, Fi - li Ma - ri - ae,

T. *p* Ma - ri - ae, Ma - ri - ae,

B. Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, *mp* Fi - li Ma - ri - ae,

40 *pp* *rit.* *Lento* ♩ = 48 *ppp*

S. Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, Ma - ri - ae.

A. *pp* Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, *ppp* Ma - ri - ae.

T. *pp* Ma - ri - ae, *ppp* Ma - ri - ae.

B. *p* Fi - li Ma - ri - ae, *ppp* Ma - ri - ae.

Ave, verum corpus Natum de Maria Virgine,
 Vere passum immolatum In Cruce pro homine,
 Cujus latus perforatum Unda fluxit et sanguine,
 Esto nobis praegu`m In mortis examine.

Hail, true body Born of the Virgin Mary,
 Who truly suffered sacrifice On the Cross for man,
 From whose pierced side Blood streamed and flowed,
 Be for us a foretaste Of the test of death.

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Treble Repertoire from Latin America and the Caribbean
Cristian Grases

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Please contact Cristian Grases, Editor
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Treble Repertoire from Latin America and the Caribbean.



▲ Andean Corporation Bank of Development and Foundation Schola Cantorum of Caracas in a project of human development using choral music as the main tool

Selecting literature for choral ensembles remains one of the most difficult aspects of the conducting profession. It is essential for the functioning and development of the group. In his book *The Choral Rehearsal*, James Jordan explores the subject and states that the:

“decisions we make concerning the music we choose to teach, rehearse, and live with are some of the most important decisions we make for the vocal health, musical growth, and human growth of our ensembles.”

This process is never simple. There are many criteria by which conductors select repertoire: vocal abilities of the ensemble, musical difficulties present in the score, educational purposes that will allow the musical abilities of the group to develop, length of the work, thematic ideas in the program (including perhaps the presence of many different periods and styles, or a theme reflected in the texts of all works), the overall flow of the program using contrasts (slow vs. up-tempo, sad vs. happy, *a cappella* vs. accompanied, etc.), length of the set, acoustical considerations of the venue, personal taste, and even the make-up of the audience. However, all of these criteria aforementioned are subject to one common reality: the conductor needs to have a large group of works from which to select appropriately. The more works we become acquainted with, the larger our personal “choral library”

Cristian Grases
teacher and
IFCM Board member

becomes, and thus our selections are made from a richer and wider source. In other words, every conductor should eagerly search for opportunities to get to know more repertoire, because it allows the conductor to choose from a larger collection.

The purpose of this article is to offer our readers the possibility of becoming acquainted with an assortment of published works; in this case, specifically originating from Latin America and the Caribbean, and written for treble ensembles. Argentina is one of the countries that has produced most choral music for treble choirs in Latin America. The most important catalog is held by Ediciones GCC (www.gcc.org.ar). They have over 55 arrangements of folk songs from all over Latin America specifically

written for treble voices by some of the most outstanding composers of the nation. Additionally, their catalog of original compositions for such ensembles is very rich and offers music of various levels. Some of my favorite works have been written by Antonio Russo (*Canción de las Siete Doncellas*, *Venite Exultemus Domino*, *Canto al Sol*, and *Cuatro Canciones para Niños*). Russo has the ability of writing music of many different levels of difficulty. Marcelo Valva's *Pedronianas* and Dante Andreó's *Cuatro Alondras* are beautiful four-song suites that are not too challenging and capture the regional flavor. Recently GCC has published award-winning original works by María Paula Gómez, Oscar Llobet, and Federico Neimark. In the US, Neil A. Kjos Music Company (www.kjos.com) has published some titles for treble voices in their Latin American Series edited by Oscar Escalada. *Libertango* and *Guachi Torito* are two of Escalada's most popular arrangements.

Another important nation with a significant output of choral music is Venezuela. Here, composer Alberto Grau has dedicated immense efforts to create a new and extensive catalog of works for treble choirs of diverse levels of difficulty. His works are published by GGM Ediciones (<http://alberto.fundacionscholacantor.org.ve/Obras>) and distributed by Earthsongs (www.earthsongschoralmusic.com). Among his numerous arrangements and compositions for treble voices, I would recommend *Cruje-Silba*; *Como Compongo Poco*, *Yo 'Toy Loco*; *Rumex Crispus*; *Kasar*

Mie La Gaji (ssaa version); *A un Panal de Rica Miel*; *La Flor de la Miel*; *La Balada del Retorno* with orchestral accompaniment, and his complex and energetic *Como Tú*. He has also published three important suites: *Opereta Ecológica en Cuatro Actos*, *Los Duendes*, and *El San Pedro*. Additionally, his compositions based on texts by Jesús Rosas Marcano are particularly appropriate for children's choirs. Finally, the French publishing house Editions A Coeur Joie (<http://edacj.musicanet.org>) published *Pata Pa 'ca*, which was a collaboration between Alberto Grau and Cristian Grases. Grases has published some popular arrangements through Earthsongs (*María Pancha* and *Los Dos Gavilanes*), Walton Publications (www.waltonmusic.com/index.php) (*La Paloma*), and Pavane Publishing

(www.pavanepublishing.com) (*Canto de Pilón*); and has recently created a Latin American Series with Gentry Publications (<http://gentrypublications.com>) in which his fun *Tottoyo* is included. Other important Venezuelan works are included in María Guinand's Latin American series with Earthsongs. Some of the most important are *Mata del Anima Solo* by Antonio Estévez, *Duerme Negrito* by Emilio Solé, and *El Romantón* by Francisco Muro and arranged by Miguel Astor. Finally I want to take advantage of this opportunity to mention the large and important catalog of arrangements and compositions for children's choruses by Modesta Bor, which unfortunately has not been published yet.

Brasil is a nation of many treble choirs and a long choral tradition. Heitor Villa-Lobos' *As Costureiras*, one of the classic Brazilian works for treble voices, is published by G. Schirmer (www.schirmer.com).

Ernani Aguiar's *Sine Nomine et Sine Sensu* and *Salmo 150* are great selections for more advanced ensembles and are published by Earthsongs, which also has Carlos Alberto Pinto Fonseca's lovely arrangement of *Muie Rendera*. Also, Santa Barbara Music Publishing (www.sbmp.com) has J. Edmund Hughes' arrangement of *Eu e Você*. Finally I would like to mention composer Eduardo Lakschevitz who works in Rio de Janeiro and has numerous arrangements. One of his most popular (and unfortunately yet unpublished) tunes is *Sambalele*. On the Pacific coast, Colombia's Julián Gómez Giraldo has published some of his works through



Hal Leonard (www.halleonard.com). *Maquerule*, *Maximina*, *Juego a Que Me Quemo*, and *A Belén Pastores* are all great fun and filled with the dance-like spirit of the Caribbean.

Speaking of the Caribbean, Larry Farrow's *Jamaican Market Place* (Gentry Publications) remains a classic and beloved West Indies song. Boosey & Hawkes (www.boosey.com) published *Chanflín* and the catchy *El Pambiche Lento* by Tony Guzmán from the Dominican Republic, and also some of the works by Francisco Nuñez—originally from Puerto Rico—such as *Misa Pequeña Para Niños*, *Cantan*, and *Four Spanish Lullabies*. Haiti's young composer Sidney Guillaume has been very active in recent years, and he has seven works for treble choirs of which *Koudjay*, *Plakatap*, and *La Providence* stand out. Finally, Cuba has a very active choral movement and has a very important choral output written by some of the finest composers in Latin America. Unfortunately, access to such works is very limited. The only publications I know of are Eleco Silva's *Cinq Chansons Folkloriques D'Guadeloupe* edited by Kjos, and Carlos Abril's arrangements of *El Mambi* and *Ogguere* published by World Music Press (www.worldmusicpress.com).

With time I believe that the choral community will have ever more access to quality repertoire from Latin America and the

Caribbean. In the meantime, I hope this list provides the reader with new resources and titles that can enrich their programming in years to come.

Cristian Grases obtained his Masters Degree in Choral Conducting under Alberto Grau and María Guinand in Caracas, Venezuela, and his Doctorate in Choral Conducting at the University of Miami. He is an award-winning composer active as a guest conductor, clinician, adjudicator and pedagogue in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. He is a Board Member of IFCM and the chair of the Ethnic and Multicultural Perspectives Committee for the ACDA, Western Division. He is currently an assistant professor at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, USA. Email: cgrases@gmail.com



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Beneficence Refined: an Exploration of Sacred Choral Settings by Women
Composers from Northern Europe
T. J. Harper

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Beneficence Refined

An Exploration of Sacred Choral Settings by Women Composers from Northern Europe

Throughout history the more complex activities have been defined and redefined, now as male, now as female, sometimes drawing equally on the gifts of both sexes. When an activity to which each could have contributed... is limited to one sex, a rich differentiated quality is lost from the activity itself.¹

– Margaret Mead

In this statement, noted cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead (1901-1978) speaks to a universal challenge affecting all people in all disciplines. In choral music, Mead's "rich differentiated quality" has historically been absent from both the composition of choral music and from subsequent performances. Though there have been a number of women composers who have made great contributions to the canon of choral repertoire over the centuries, the majority of choral music currently being composed, studied, and performed is still written by men. As far back as 1880, music critic George P. Upton argued, "it does not seem that woman will ever originate music in its fullest and grandest harmonic forms. She will always be the recipient and interpreter, but there is little hope she will be the creator."² Moving forward, it is the responsibility of choral musicians to advocate for and seek out exceptional choral compositions by both women and men.

In recent decades, the number of women composers has grown considerably around the world. While it may be shortsighted to assume the tradition of choral composition continues to progress simply because there are more women composers, there can be no doubt that the trend towards equality in this field exists. Three women who are at the vanguard of this trend and enriching the landscape of sacred choral composition with their unique vision are Kristina Vasiliauskaitė (Lithuania), Agneta Sköld (Sweden), and Maija Einfelde (Latvia). The authenticity expressed in the music of these composers is born out of a clearly defined personal faith, and by the socio-political hardships they witnessed in their respective homelands. These composers are contributing to and representing an emerging corpus of substantive sacred choral music that is contributing to the "rich differentiated quality" of the choral art.

Kristina Vasiliauskaitė (b. 1956, Vilnius, Lithuania)

Coming from a large family of musicians, Kristina Vasiliauskaitė has emerged as one of Lithuania's most prolific composers of sacred choral music. She studied musicology with Jadvyga Čiurlionyte (1974-1975) and composition with Eduardas Balsys (1975-1980) at the Lithuanian Academy of Music. Upon graduation from the Academy, Vasiliauskaitė was appointed the editor of musical programming for the Lithuanian Radio and Television network (1980-1983). She taught at the M. K. Čiurlionis School of Art and in 1993, she was appointed the head of the piano program at the Vilnius Ažuoliukas Music School where she also began teaching composition in 1996. In 1998, she was granted the title of Senior Teacher of Lithuania.

The unique quality in the compositional style of Kristina Vasiliauskaitė has established her as one of the leading composers of her generation. As such, she has been recognized for excellence for her compositions *Porcupine's Home*, *A Breath*, *Snowflakes Talk*, *Let's Sing Alleluia*, and *From Your Hands*. In 2001, she gained international recognition for *Magnificat*, which received first prize at the '4th Annual Juozas Naujalis Composition Competition for Sacred Music'.

The choral music of Kristina Vasiliauskaitė is unique with lyrical warmth that comes from attention to an approachable harmonic style and rich textures. Rolandas Aidukas, describes her music thus:



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¹ Margaret Mead, *Male & Female: A Study of the Sexes in a Changing World*, (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1949), pp. 345-346.

² Carl E. Seashore, "Why No Great Women Composers?" *Music Educators Journal*, March 1940: 21, 88; and George P. Upton, *Woman in Music* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1880)

“Vasiliauskaitė’s musical style is an alternation between diatonic modes and various chromatic detours and modulations. The translucent and delicate musical texture of her compositions exhibits beautiful melody [*sic*] permeated by romantic emotion. The scores are aesthetically pleasing and capture the ear and understanding of a wide variety and age of listeners. Her vocal compositions display a close relation between the liturgical text and the music, a natural imaginativeness, and clarity of form.”³

This “natural imaginativeness” is clearly witnessed throughout the five-movement setting of the Magnificat, which is scored for mixed choir, flute, oboe, trumpet, and organ. In the first movement, Vasiliauskaitė employs various major keys, an unhurried tempo (*moderato maestoso*), and tonal motion in equal values that confer “nobility and stability to the melody” as musicologist Daiva Tamošaitytė correctly observes. There is an accumulated energy that accompanies each rising sequence of ascending semi-tone phrases, which in affect, expands the tonal landscape to the end of the movement providing adequate space for the joyous text, ‘My soul doth magnify the Lord.’ (Figure 1)

Selected Compositions

Stabat Mater (2006) – SATB, fl, vln, va, vc, db, org, manuscript*

Magnificat (2005) – SATB, fl, ob, tp, org, manuscript*

Nine Motets of the Good Friday (2005) – SATB, manuscript*

Mass in Honour of St. Cecilia (2003) – SATB *a cappella*, manuscript*

The Canticle of the Sun by St. Francis of Assisi (1997) – SATB double choir *a cappella*, manuscript*

Missa Brevis in Honorem Beatae Mariae Virginis (1992) – SATB *a cappella*, SBMP 265-268

*Available on loan from Lithuanian Music Information www.mic.lt/en/classical/persons/works/139

Figure 1. Vasiliauskaitė, *Magnificat*, mvt. 1, Lithuanian Music Information www.mic.lt

Agneta Sköld (b. 1947, Västerås, Sweden)

Also from a family of musicians, Agneta Sköld is most widely recognized as a member of the contemporary Swedish Liturgical Movement. She studied at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and graduated with concentrations in music education, organ performance, and choral music. From 1967 to 1976, she sang professionally in the Swedish Radio Choir and the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir. In 1991, after teaching Music Theory at Ingesund College of Music in Arvika, Sweden, she was appointed the conductor of the Mariakören and the Assistant Organist of Västerås Cathedral. In 1998, she was honored with the distinction of being named the Swedish Choir Leader of the Year. In 2006, Sköld was appointed the Director of Music and Organist of Västerås Cathedral.



³ Rolandas Aidukas, *Musica Sacra: Sacred Choral Works by Kristina Vasiliauskaitė*, Notes taken from CD jacket, translated by Vytenis M. Vasyliunas, performed by Atlieka choras “Vilnius”, compact disc.

In pursuit of a greater understanding and appreciation of her art, Agneta Sköld has been the recipient of numerous research grant awards. In honor of her accomplishments as a composer, she has received prestigious awards including the Johannes Norrby Medal in 2003, and the Royal Medal of the 8th Grade from the hands of His Majesty, King Carl-Gustaf the 16th.

Gloria is an exhilarating expression of joy and faith, which gave the composer a sense of hope during a time of personal hardships. The unrelenting intensity of this work is marked by authentic expressivity and conviction. Sköld employs a textural device of motivic layering that along with ascending 16th note *ostinati* drive the music forward through a gradual increase in both texture and rhythmic activity. (Figure 2)

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'GLORIA' by Agneta Sköld. It is arranged for Soprano 1 (Sopr. 1), Alto 1 (Alt. 1), and Piano. The score includes vocal lines with lyrics 'Glo - ri - a' and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a prominent 16th-note ostinato. The score is numbered 6 and 5 at the beginning of the respective systems.

Figure 2. Sköld, *Gloria*, Walton Music HL08500321

Selected Compositions

- Corpus Christe Carol* (2004) – SATB, Gehrman's musikförlag, 10623, Stockholm
- There is no Rose* (2004) – SATB, Gehrman's musikförlag, 10553, Stockholm
- Magnificat* (1998) – SSAA, harp or piano/cello, Sveriges Körförbund/Gehrman's musikförlag, SK877, Stockholm
- Kyrie/Gloria* (1990) – SSAA, piano, Sveriges Körförbund/Gehrman's musikförlag, SK 656, Stockholm, Walton, USA
- Go Crystal Tears* – SSAATTBB, Gehrman's musikförlag
- Jubilare Deo* – SATB, Gehrman's musikförlag, 10624, Stockholm

Maija Einfelde (b. 1939, Valmiera, Latvia)

Maija Einfelde's introduction to music came at an early age. Her father was an organ builder and her mother was a local church organist. She began her music education in Cēsis, at the Alfrēds Kalniņš Music School and then at the Jāzeps Mediņš College of Music in Riga. She studied composition with Jānis Ivanov at the Latvian State Conservatory where she graduated in 1966. In 1968, she began to teach composition and music theory at the Alfrēds Kalniņš Cēsis School of Music, the Jāzeps Mediņš College of Music, the Emīls Dārziņš School of Music, and the Evening Music School of Rīdze.



Primarily focused on creating works for choirs and for chamber ensembles, Maija Einfelde has received numerous honors and awards. In 1997, she won the Barlow Foundation Composition Competition for *At the Edge of the Earth*. In this same year, she also received the Latvian Great Music Award. In 1999, she received the Culture Award of the Republic of Latvia. In 2000, she received the Copyright's Infinity Award by the Latvian Author's Union. She also achieved distinguished success from the UNESCO International Music Council's Competition, 'Rostrum' for her work, *Maija Balāde* (May Ballad) for four clarinets and 8-part mixed chorus.

There is a stark quality to the compositional style of Maija Einfelde that goes beyond simple dissonance and stridency. Rather, her music seems to be informed by an acceptance and ever-present acknowledgement of the suffering and pain all must endure. Writing for the Latvian national daily newspaper, *Diena* (The Day), Inese Lūsina summed up the music of Maija Einfelde this way:

"Since childhood, the bitter life of the composer has materialized in valuable art that is characterized by an acute pain all the way to the bone, the kind that the westerner, expecting a certain European comfort standard, will not be accustomed to. It is a bright dream about small things, which will not be revealed to a maestro spoiled by life and a delicate environment. She reveals a Latvianness [*sic*] that never shows itself as primitive. In principle, it is a new approach to a person's voice, which assuredly shows a refinement that is not simply academic."⁴

At the Edge of the Earth was composed in 1996. Written in four sections, this work is based upon text from the play,

⁴ Inese Lūsina, *Maija Einfelde: Latvian Composers*, Notes taken from CD Jacket, Musica Baltica, Compact Disc.

Prometheus Bound by the 5th century Greek dramatist Aeschylus. The opening of *Pie zemes tālās* is stark. The reserved counterpoint, which actually creates momentum, never betrays the ominous weight of the Aeschylus text: “Here we have reached the remotest region of the earth, the haunt of Scythians, a wilderness without a footprint.” (Figure 3)

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Figure 3. Einfelde, *Pie zemes tālās* (At the Edge of the Earth)

Einfelde’s most recent composition, *Lux aeterna*, provides a glimpse into what can be seen as a significant departure from the ‘bitter life’ of a composer who once said, “Life is not beautiful, that I would be able to write beautiful music.”⁵ In this new work, which is taken from the *Communio* section of the *Missa pro Defunctis*, or Requiem Mass, Einfelde demonstrates a level of balance and restraint that speaks to the unifying and communal message of this portion of the Requiem Mass. Moving into the end of the first choral section, the texture opens to twelve parts at *...quia pius es*, and the universality of the text is coupled at *largo* with an undulating rhythmic augmentation which recalls what musicologist Baiba Jaunslaviete referred to as Einfelde’s “particular attraction to the sea.”⁶ The text is treated with care but the depth of expressivity cannot be denied. (Figure 4)

Selected Compositions

- Lux Aeterna* (2012) – manuscript
- Cikls ar Friča Bārdas dzeju* (Three Poems by Fricis Bārda) (2003) – SATB *a cappella*, Musica Baltica MB0061
- Ave Maria* (1998) – SATB, org, Musica Baltica MB0059
- Psalm 15* (1998) – SSSAAATTTBBB *a cappella*, Musica Baltica MB0564

5 Baiba Jaunslaviete, *20th Century and the Phenomenon of Personality in Music*, 39th Baltic Musicological Conference: Selected Papers. Riga: Latvijas Komponistu savienība, Musica Baltica, 2007, pp. 19-28.

6 Ibid.



Figure 4. Einfelde, *Lux aeterna* (manuscript)

- Pie zemes tālās* (At the Edge of the Earth) (1996) – SSSAAATTTBBB *a cappella*, Musica Baltica MB0356
- Ave Maria* (1995) – SSAA, org, Musica Baltica MB0060 ●

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Critic's Pick 1 ...

Graces & Voices: Mysterium Crucis

Reviewed by Jonathan Slawson

Critic's Pick 2 ...

The Australian Voices

Reviewed by David Swinson

Choral Book Review

The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music

Reviewed by Debra Shearer-Dirié

If you would like to write an article and submit it for possible publication in this section

Please contact **Jonathan Slawson**
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Critic's Pick 1 . . .

Graces & Voices: *Mysterium Crucis*
Rondeau Production ROP6067



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Graces & Voices, an all female ensemble, was founded by Adrija Čepaitė and Antanina Kalechyts in 2010. Its members hail from Austria, Belorussia, Lithuania, and Singapore. Each member is a professional musician in her own right, and all hold degrees either in Gregorian chant, conducting, Church music, organ, recorder, violin, or vocal music. Their international makeup – seven ladies, four countries – is compelling, inasmuch as it illustrates the transcending, universal nature of the choral art form.

Graces & Voices explores repertoire written primarily for the Church. They perform primarily Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony, as well as contemporary and instrumental music as well. This relatively new ensemble is a rising star in the choral community, as they continue to find and develop their collective musical voice. In 2012, they were recognized at the International Gregorian chant festival in Watou, Belgium. That same year, they participated in the international Chant festival in Bratislava, Slovakia. The ensemble is excited to launch two European tours in 2013.

'Mysterium Crucis', recorded at Sommerrefektorium des Stiftes Rein, Steiermark, Österreich, explores the *Invention cruces* and *Exaltatio cruces* – Gregorian Chants for the Two Feasts of the Cross. It excites a listener to witness such a talented group of classically well-trained, singers in their infancy stage of ensemble development. This CD is filled with glimmers of breathtaking uniformity, as should be the case always with plainchant style singing. The listener grows eager to track their continued progress as they perform around the globe and find their collective voice, and discover what it is, beyond their international makeup, that makes them unique in the choral community. It is a feeling of 'getting in on the ground floor,' so to speak, of an ensemble with limitless potential.

The present disc is stripped of elegance and over stylized musical nuance. It has a rawness that is certainly appropriate for the Church. In the context of a musical recording, however, perhaps the ensemble might have paid greater attention not only to achieving near pitch-perfection and a warm, rich unison, but also further developing their sense of musical line, or their vocal viewpoint on the text. One of the most popular choral musical devices in Chant to achieve this sense of cadential direction is to emphasize the penultimate note of each cadence, allowing a delicate 'landing' of each musical phrase. This is rarely done here, but when it is – it is so profoundly beautiful.

Reviewed by
Jonathan Slawson
Journalist

For more information, please visit: <http://www.gracesvoices.com>

And listen to music samples here: <https://itunes.apple.com/it/album/graces-voices-mysterium-crucis/id529445318>

Do you have a CD that you would like reviewed in the journal?

Please contact me at

jonathan.ryan.slawson@gmail.com

Jonathan Slawson holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Westminster Choir College and a Masters of Nonprofit Management at the New School University. His professional interests cross arts education, policy, and management. Currently, he works for the League of American Orchestras as their Donor Support Manager. Prior, he was the Development Assistant for Lincoln Center's capital campaign. He served as Lincoln Center's Government and Community Relations Intern and has written for Disney's, *In Tune Monthly* Magazine, where he was editor of the Teacher Guide. He also worked at New World Stages (Stage Entertainment) and the McCarter Theatre Center. He has taught music at Maureen M. Welch Elementary School, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and Stagestruck Performing Arts Center. He serves on Blair Academy's Board of Governors, and was the recipient of the Westminster Choir College President's Award in 2009, the university's top honor.



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deadline for application 31st May 2013

information
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www.feniarco.it

Critic's Pick 2 . . .

The Australian Voices (Warner Classics 0825646548606)
Gordon Hamilton, conductor



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The Australian Voices have been performing worldwide for twenty years but their recent YouTube phenomenon *Toy Story 3 = Awesome! The Facebook Song* has brought them many new and devoted followers. This showcase recording demonstrates an eclectic repertoire and it is easy to admire the group's technique and sense of identity. At the heart of their work is their distinct cultural heritage and this is immediately evident in the arresting opening track, *Kalkadunga Yurdu*. The text and music are by William Barton, and the choir's conductor, Gordon Hamilton, has worked with him on this arrangement, presumably helping to create the impressive vocal imitations of the didgeridoo and the extraordinary vocal overtones. The most powerful and moving work for me is *We Apologise* by Robert Davidson. This electro-acoustic treatment of former Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd's, apology in 2008 to aboriginal Australians for past mistreatment is based on the recorded speech: the original audio was slowed down by 250 times; the singers imitate this, and their version is recorded and continually repeated, with each repetition doubling in speed until the original voice of Rudd emerges in real time. It is sonically both stunning and beautiful. I also enjoyed Hamilton's own compositions, particularly those from his choral-theatre work, *MOON*, which was performed with notable success at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2012. Hamilton clearly understands how to write for voices but he also demands much from his singers: ravishing clusters are perfectly tuned; each part is expected to cover a wide range, and voices are not merely used to articulate text but also to create colours. His 'Facebook Song' is the final track and is best described as confectionary; but it no doubt provides the perfect conclusion to a concert, and only a scrooge would quibble with its inclusion, following as it does Peter Clark's eight part atonal *Pessoa Chorus 1*. Many listeners will skip Clark's track but Hamilton is to be commended for introducing this effective setting of Pessoa's eccentric text and it is worth a repeated hearing. Alongside these virtuosic contemporary works stand a small number of choral staples, including Rachmaninoff's *Bogoroditse Devo*. The present CD, released in 2012 on the Warner Classics label, is a compilation of various sessions at several venues, and one track can feel quite different to the next. This is a shame as the singing is excellent throughout and the repertoire value is high. Australian choral singing has truly come of age. ●

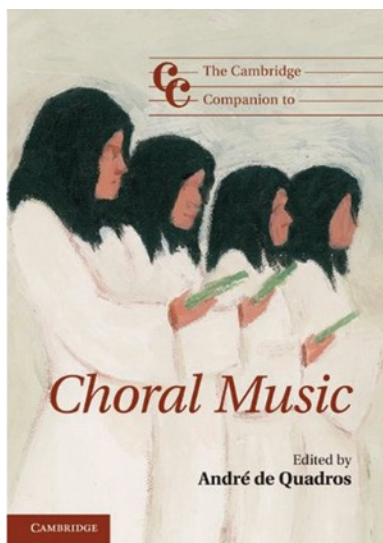
Reviewed by
David Swinson
conductor, organist &
Music Director Trinity Boys
Choir London

David Swinson was Head Chorister at Magdalen College, University of Oxford, before studying piano and organ at The Royal College of Music and then Music as Organ Scholar at Jesus College, Cambridge. Musical distinctions during this period included five RCM prizes, a scholarship from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, and his Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists. Since graduation he has enjoyed a busy career as a teacher, conductor and organist. As an organist, he has given recitals throughout Europe and in the USA, and as a conductor he has worked with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the Bournemouth Sinfonietta and the London Mozart Players. Mr Swinson has been Director of Music at Trinity School, Croydon, and Director of Trinity Boys Choir since 2001 and has made various television appearances and several recordings with them. A new recording of contemporary British music will be issued on LP and CD soon. Email: djs@trinity.croydon.sch.uk



Choral Book Review

The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music, Edited by André de Quadros
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012



Editor André De Quadros has invited some fine experts in various fields of choral music to contribute to the Companion. The present publication consists of 19 chapters which include a handful of key topics within the choral arts that are often missed in similar books. There are three sections: 'Choral music: history and context'; 'Choral music the world over'; and 'Choral philosophy, practice, and pedagogy'. Several prior publications have dealt with these themes independently, but the Companion brings them all under one cover.

After a brief foreword by John Rutter, de Quadros first defines what we mean by choral music. He then states that his threefold aims are: to put choral music in a historical perspective, to display and celebrate the wide diversity of choral music globally, and to honor choral activity and contribute to its advancement.

Contributors in Part 1 include Andrew Parrott, Chester L. Alwes, Nick Strimple, and Paul Hiller. These first four chapters describe the rise and formation of choral ensembles, mentioning the main composers, genres, important geographical centres, political or historical figures, and events affecting the path of choral music.

Alwes begins the third chapter, Choral music in the culture of the nineteenth century, by exploring the philosophical engines of the eighteenth century, including the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution, during which thinkers like René

Descartes, John Locke, Isaac Newton and Jean-Jacques Rousseau took their stance.

Strimple brings us up to modern times in the fourth chapter, 'Choral music in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries', covering the development of polytonality, impressionism, eclecticism, dodecaphony, nationalism. He concludes by examining certain advancements emerging at the close of the twentieth century, and describes how music from areas like Mongolia and various African countries gradually became more accessible.

Chapter 5, 'The nature of chorus' is by Hillier, who encourages us to rethink why people sing in vocal ensembles. His prose is like a train journey, as he stops off to visit places where singers are found, examining on the way opera and oratorio choruses, church choirs, folk groups, and concert choirs. This is perhaps the most provocative chapter, and makes the reader think of what the future might hold.

The second section, Chapters 6- 13, devotes itself to choral activities around the world. Each author, an expert in a particular region, takes a slightly different angle. Of most interest perhaps are the chapters devoted to the music of indigenous peoples and how it has contributed or affected the course of choral music where they live. Some statistical information on population percentiles participating in singing is also included. And all prominent ensembles and important choral centres are covered, the focus being on the dissemination of choral music itself.

The final section of this book, 'Choral philosophy, practice, and pedagogy', are by Francisco Núñez, Mary Goetze, Cornelia Fales, Wolodymyr Smishkewych, Doreen Rao, Mike Brewer, Liz Garnett, Ann Howard Jones, and Simon Carrington. These are case studies which address different aspects of practice or pedagogy or both. The development of audience and ensemble diversity is an issue here. The question is asked as to how singers may best be exposed to repertoire calling for a vocal timbre other than that used for bel canto style. The training of upcoming conductors in the twenty-first century is also covered, as is the idea of individuality in our ensembles, discussed well by Brewer and Garnett who aptly describe this as a "microcosm of human social life".

De Quadros and all his contributors are to be commended for this all-embracing compilation of articles. It is a 'must read' for all conductors, music organization committees and boards, tertiary music programmes, and singers alike.

Edited by Graham Lack, Germany-UK

Debra Shearer-Dirié holds a Diploma from the Kodály Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary, a Master of Music Education degree and Doctor of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Indiana University, USA. Currently located in Brisbane, Australia, she has taught choral conducting and aural studies at The University of Queensland, the ACCET Summer School, and at the New Zealand International Summer School in Choral Conducting. Dr. Shearer-Dirié is currently serving as Editor of the Australian National Choral Association's Publication and serves on the National Council for this organization. She is Musical Director of the Brisbane Concert Choir, Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir, Fusion, and Vintage Voices. Email: debrashearer@gmail.com





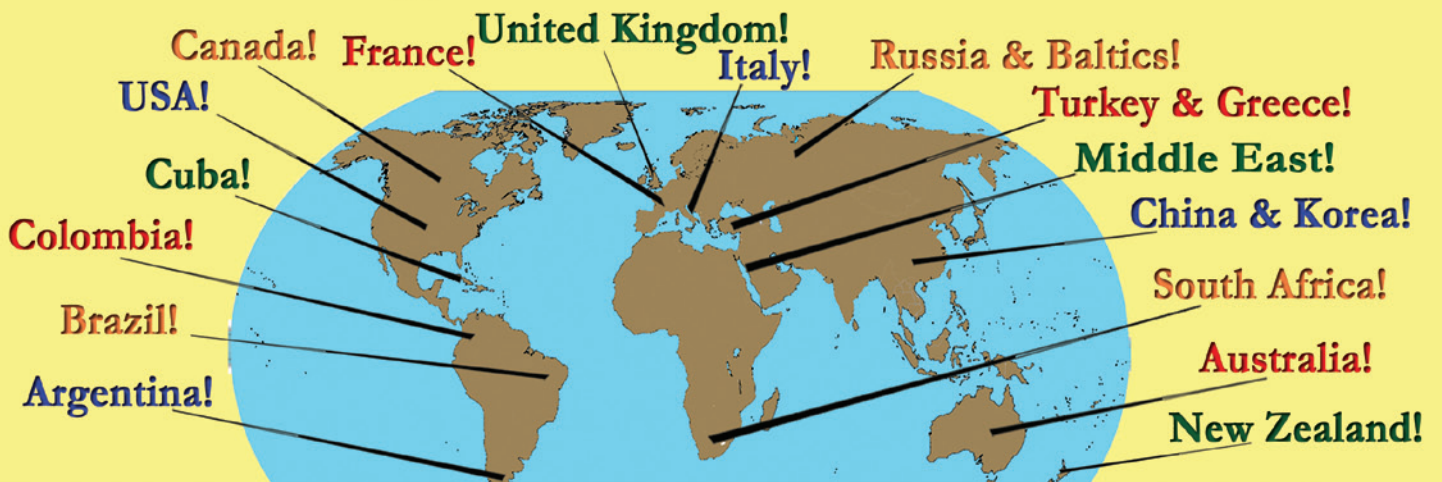
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Winspear Opera stage before the performance of the Asia Pacific Youth Choir, Dallas, Texas, USA ▲

Events

I. Conferences, Workshops & Masterclasses

II. Festivals & Competitions

We are pleased to provide these lists of international festivals, competitions, conferences, workshops and masterclasses to our members. They are based on the best information available to us. However, we advise you to check the specific details with the organizers of the individual event that you may be interested in attending.

IFCM does NOT specifically recommend any of the events listed. However, we encourage you to check with the "Choral Festival Network" www.choralfestivalnetwork.org whose members have signed the IFCM "Total Quality Charter", which is an agreement to follow the minimum requirements of quality, transparency and fairness for choral festivals.

Please submit event information for publication to
Nadine Robin
IFCM, PO Box 42318, Austin TX 78704, USA
Fax: +1-512-551 0105
E-mail: nrobin@ifcm.net

Conferences, Workshops & Masterclasses

North Dakota State University Symposium; Choral Music of the Americas, Fargo, USA, 3-5 May 2013.

The symposium will showcase choral performances and academic examinations of choral music styles and traditions of the Americas, including those of Canada, the United States, Mexico, and other Latin American countries. Contact: NDSU School of Music, in partnership with the American Choral Directors Association - Website: ndsu.edu/finearts/cmota

International Masterclass for Choral Conductors, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 22-26 May 2013.

With Volker Hempfling (Germany) and Simon Carrington (UK/USA), for experienced choral conductors. Active and passive participation. Apply before March 1. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

Festival Attacca, Maribor, Slovenia, 3-6 June 2013.

The aim of this festival is to include the basic elements of the concept called "Choregie studio – vocal theatre or theatre of voices" into the general idea of all activities held under the project Attacca. With innovative interventions in vocal music the Choregie concept is opening up wider spaces for complex multi-form artistic events. Contact: Carmina Slovenica, Email: carmina.slovenica@guest.arnes.si - Website: www.zbor-carmina-slovenica.si

Monteconero Voice Workshop, Italy, 8-14 June 2013.

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

Music at Monteconero, Sirolo Ancône, Italy, 15-21 June 2013.

A course led by Carlos Aransay which will look at the musical interchange between Spain during the Renaissance and feature Morales's magisterial Missa Mille Regretz. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

1st International Choral Workshop, Cuidad Habana, Cuba, 30 June-6 Julio 2013.

5 different workshops on choral conducting techniques, Cuban composers, Cuban folk music arrangements, etc... With José Antonio Méndez Valencia, Carmen Collado López, Digna Guerra Ramirez, Alina Orraca Llama and the Schola Cantorum Coralina and Beatriz Corona. Contact: Digna Gerra Ramirez, Email: tallerchorhabana2013@amadeo.cult.cu or dguerra@cubarte.cult.cu

10th Oratorio Choir Academy 2013, Pomáz, Hungary, 11-21 July 2013.

Workshop on orchestra conducting for choral conductors and choir atelier for singers, in collaboration with the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat. With Máté Szabó Sipos (Hungary) and artistic director, Peter Broadbent (UK). Apply before April 30. Contact: Hungarian Choral Castle Pomázi Zenekastély Nonprofit Ltd., Email: info@choralcastle.hu - Website: www.koruskastely.hu/index.php/home/235-cantor-regis-hungariae

Corsham Summer School, United Kingdom, 21-26 July 2013.

Robert Hollingworth and Graham Bier will each divide their time between two separate groups: a chamber choir and a one-to-a-part consort class. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Festival Setmana Cantant (Singing Week) Vic 2013, Barcelona, Spain, 22-29 July 2013.

Workshops: the "teacher-composer" and his work with Johan Duijck (Belgium), New colors for female choirs with Basilio Astúlez (Basque Country), Latin American folklore with Hugo de la Vega (Argentina) and Francisco Simaldoni (Uruguay). Open singing with Edmon Colomer (Catalonia). Artistic director: Josep Prats. Contact: Setmana Cantant Vic, Email: info.scvic@gmail.com - Website: www.setmanacantantvic.cat

Masterclass for Choir Conductors, Vaison-la-Romaine, France, 23-28 July 2013.

With Brady Allred (USA) and Harmonia Choir (Japan). Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: activities@choralies.org - Website: www.choralies.org

Renaissance Choral Music in Avila, Spain, 27 July-4 Aug 2013.

Under the guidance of renaissance specialists Vincenzo Scarafile and Vera Marengo Personal coaching sessions and masterclasses. www.zenobiaconsort.es/Zenobia_Consort/Curso2013.html - Website: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/1oi0cpiki303i80/avila%202013ENGLISH.pdf>

Sarteano Chamber Choral Conducting Workshop, Sarteano, Italy, 27 July-3 Aug 2013.

Three levels: full conductor, conducting auditor and singer. Conducting master classes with Simon Carrington; each full conductor will conduct in every master class. Vocal pedagogy ensemble work with Bronislawa Falinska (Rohmert method of functional voicetraining). Clinics on developing a vital chamber choir with Brian O'Connell. Contact: Sarteano Chamber Choral Conducting Workshop, Gail Leicher, Email: sarteanochoral@rcn.com - Website: www.sarteanochoralworkshop.com

Cambridge Choral Courses, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 28 July-4 Aug 2013.

Event bringing the English and American choral traditions together, allowing people to experience the best of both traditions and their music. Course exclusively staffed by members of Cambridge College Choirs, including the renowned King's College Cambridge, and conducted by a leading American Choral director, Dominick DiOrio. Contact: Jonathan Coates, Email: enquiries@cambridgechoralcourses.com - Website: <http://www.cambridgechoralcourses.com/>

1st International Forum of Choral Conductors, St. Petersburg, Russia, 5-8 Aug 2013.

For all choral conductors around the world. Contact: International Choral Festival and Competition, Email: interaspect@mail.ru - Website: www.interfestplus.ru

Rimini International Choral Workshop with Peter Phillips, Andrea Angelini and Ghislaine Morgan, Rimini, Italy, 25 Aug-1 Sep 2013.

For advanced choristers and conductors. Repertory focused on Renaissance Sacred Music. Final concert, Sung Mass and diploma. Individual vocal tuition. Contact: Musica Ficta, Email: info@musicaficta.org - Website: www.choralworkshop.org or www.musicaficta.org

7th European Academy for Choral Conductors and Singers, Fano, Italy, 8-15 Sep 2013.

Conductor: Nicole Corti (France). French and English repertoire of the 20th Century. Contact: FENIARCO, Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

5th International Music Council World Forum, Brisbane, Australia, 21-26 Nov 2013.

Platform on music and society in the 21st century, exploring a variety of topics from diverse perspectives: cultural, political and economical and focusing on 5 areas: cultural diversity, music as a vector for dialogue, creativity and innovation in music distribution, new approaches to music education, changing audiences (challenges for art music around the world). Contact: Conseil International de la Musique, Email: forum.imc@unesco.org - Website: www.unesco.org/imc

Children Youth Choral World Championship, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2-6 Apr 2014.

For all children's choirs from all over the world. Contact: International Choral Festival and Competition, Email: interaspect@mail.ru - Website: www.interfestplus.ru

10th World Symposium on Choral Music, Seoul, Rep. Korea, 7-14 Aug 2014.

Email: secretariat@ifcm.net - Website: www.ifcm.com

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INTERKULTUR



May 29 – June 2, 2013
Linz, Austria

**4th International
Anton Bruckner Choir
Competition & Festival**



June 19 – 23, 2013
Hoi An, Vietnam

**3rd Vietnam International
Choir Competition**



July 3 – 7, 2013
Rome, Italy

**5th Musica Sacra
a Roma**



**INTERKULTUR
The World of Voices**



October 8 – 18, 2013
Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia

3rd Asia Pacific Choir Games



October 10 – 14, 2013
Riva del Garda, Italy

**10th "In...Canto sul Garda"
International Choir
Competition & Festival**



October 23 – 27, 2013
Calella & Barcelona, Spain

**CANTA AL MAR 2013
2nd Festival Coral
Internacional**



April 13 – 17, 2014
Riva Del Garda, Italy

**13th Concorso Corale
Internazionale**



April 30 – May 4, 2014
Venice, Italy

**12th Venezia in Musica,
Choir Competition &
Festival**



May 15 – 18, 2014
Budapest, Hungary

Singalong Concert International



June 5 – 9, 2014
Vienna, Austria

**Sing'n'joy Vienna 2014
& 29th International Franz
Schubert Choir Competition**



October 15 – 19, 2014
Zwickau, Germany

**7th International
Robert Schumann
Choir Competition**

EVENTS 2013 – 2014

© Graz Tourismus




July 14 – 21, 2013
Graz, Austria

1st European Choir Games

© POT




July 17 – 21, 2013
Wernigerode, Germany

8th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival & Competition

© POT




Sep. 11 – 15, 2013
Toruń, Poland

PER MUSICAM AD ASTRA
1st International Copernicus Choir Festival & Competition

© Therese Debono




Oct. 31 – Nov. 4, 2013
Malta

5th International Choir Competition & Festival Malta

© Fotogruppe Gleisdorf




December 11 – 15, 2013
Manila, Philippines

Sing'n'Joy Manila 2013
Philippine International Choir Competition

© Carlo Cruz




April 30 – May 4, 2014
Bad Ischl, Austria

12th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl

© Studi43




October 22 – 26, 2014
Calella & Barcelona, Spain

CANTA AL MAR 2014
3rd Festival Coral Internacional

© Riga City Council





July 9 – 19, 2014
Riga, Latvia

8th World Choir Games

Let's **SING** in **RIGA** 2014!

Sing Along Concert, Budapest, Hungary, 15-18 May 2013. With Simon Halsey and the Berliner Rundfunkchor. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

The Esoterics' Polyphonos 2013-2014 Competition, Seattle, USA, 15 May 2013.

Dedicated to performing and perpetuating contemporary a cappella choral settings of poetry, philosophy, and spiritual writings from around the world. Apply before 15 May. Contact: The Esoterics POLYPHONOS, Email: polyphonos@TheEsoterics.org - Website: www.theesoterics.org/polyphonos/

Mexico Children's Choir Festival, Cozumel Island, Mexico, 16-19 May 2013. Email: coros.fpmc@gmail.com - Website: www.facebook.com/MaestraGabyRod

3rd Kaunas Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Kaunas, Lithuania, 16-19 May 2013. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

13th International Chamber Choir Competition, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 17-22 May 2013.

Two categories: mixed choir and mixed youth choirs (singers aged 14 to 21). Compulsory work for each category. Apply before October 13, 2012. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

9th International Choir Festival Mundus Cantat Sopot 2013, Sopot, Poland, 22-26 May 2013.

For choirs from all over the world. Exchange of cultural traditions, strengthening natural human bonds. Contact: Festival Office Mundus Cantat Sopot, Email: munduscantat@sopot.pl - Website: www.munduscantat.sopot.pl

Mayo International Choral Festival, Ireland, 23-26 May 2013.

Involvement with choirs from the Mayo County, local performances, concert tour in different cities of the county, competition and a Gala Concert at the Royal Theatre in Castlebar, Competition categories: mixed, female and male choirs, Sacred Music and Gospel Choirs, Gaelic or Celtic Language pieces. Contact: Mayo International Choral Festival, Email: info@mayochoral.com - Website: www.mayochoral.com

Festival Filadelfia 2013: The Musical City of Europe Featuring the Paolo Serrao Special Award Competitions, Filadelfia, Italy, 23-27 May 2013.

For equal voices, mixed, children and youth, folk, Gospel/Spiritual choirs. Contact: Associazione Musicale Melody, Email: associazionemelody@libero.it - Website: www.associazione-melody.com

3rd Šiauliai Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, iauliai, Lithuania, 23-26 May 2013.

Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

42nd International Competition "Florilège Vocal de Tours", France, 24-26 May 2013. New rules: three categories: mixed choirs, mixed vocal ensembles, equal voices (male or female). Two rounds and Grand Prix. Special Competition in Homage to Francis Poulenc (optional). National competition: three categories and two rounds. Contact: Florilège Vocal de Tours, Email: contact@florilegevocal.com - Website: www.florilegevocal.com

Dawn Chorus, Worldwide, 26 May 2013. To mark Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), we are inviting people from all over Europe and beyond to join us in our choral event. Email: edel.ryan@ageandopportunity.ie - Website: http://bealtaine.com/sites/all/files/Dawn%20Chorus%20How%20to%20Guide%20.pdf

8th Festa Choralis Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 29 May-2 June 2013.

Festival and competition including 19 categories. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

4th International Anton Bruckner Choir Competition and Festival, Linz, Austria, 29 May-2 June 2013.

For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Cantate Adriatica, Republic of San Marino, 30 May-3 June 2013.

Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

7th International Choir Festival Harmonia, Harmanli, Bulgaria, 31 May-2 June 2013.

Non competitive festival for all kind of choirs. Contact: Mixed Choir Slavej, Gencho Donchev, President, Email: harmchoir@abv.bg or harmchoir@yahoo.com - Website: www.harmchoir.org

41st Festival of Songs Olomouc, Czech Republic, 5-9 June 2013.

Mundi Cantant: international choir competition; Mundi Cantant superior: international choir competition with obligatory songs. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

International Choral Festival "La Fabbrica del Canto", Legnano, Italy, 10-20 June 2013. Contact: Associazione Musicale Jubilate, Email: amj@jubilate.it - Website: www.jubilate.it

Sing Faure and Duruffe Requiems, Salzburg, Linz & Innsbruck, Austria, 10-16 June 2013.

For choristers from Europe and USA. Contact: Varna International, Email: Office@VarnaInternational.com - Website: www.varnainternational.com

2013 Yeosu International Competition & Festival, Yeosu, Rep. of Korea, 11-17 June 2013.

For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Yeosu International Choir Competition & Festival, Email: yicc2013@gmail.com - Website: www.yicc2013.com

International Choir Festival and Contest Berlin 2013, Germany, 12-16 June 2013. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: EvenT Tours, Email: info@eventtours.nl - Website: www.eventtours.nl/Choirfestivals_Berlin_2013.htm

The Rhythms of One World 2013 Festival, New York City, USA, 12-20 June 2013.

For youth and adult choirs from all nations with programs that include choral works in folklore, regional sacred, contemporary and national pop music. Artistic Director: Gary Fry. Apply before 10 Sep 2012. Contact: Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Email: TheRhythmsOfOneWorld2012@faf.org - Website: www.faf.org

Treble Choirs Festival ¡Canta! Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica, 12-16 June 2013.

Contact: Witte Travel & Tours, Email: groups@wittetravel.com - Website: cantacostarica.com

4th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 13-16 June 2013.

Competition part in many categories, concerts, gala concert in Philharmonic Hall in one of the most beautiful town of the world, the biggest international choral festival in Poland Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl/

Cantate Smaland, Sweden, 14-16 June 2013.

For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music&Friends, Email: musicandfriends@tri.lu - Website: www.choirfestivalparis.com

10th International Choir Festival Maesrto Mednikarov, Dobrich/Albena, Bulgaria, 14-17 June 2013.

Competitive and non-competitive festival for children's and youth choirs only. Contact: International festival program Friends of Bulgaria, Email: festival.bg@abv.bg - Website: www.festival-bg.com

Urban Youth Choir Festival, Örebro, Sweden, 14-21 June 2013.

Festival for young people in the frame of VOICE (Vision on Innovation for Choral Music in Europe) projects, including workshops for children and youth choirs: music and dance from Togo (Gbeteglo Sassou), beatboxing (to be confirmed), multicultural music (Henry Leck and Gunnel Sjöberg), music from the street (Jocke Arenius), pop and rock (Fred Sjöberg and Stefan Berglund), world Premiere (Tobin Stokes). Contact: Swedish International Choral Center Örebro (SWICCO), Email: info@swicco.se - Website: www.urbanyouthchoirfestival.se or www.swicco.se

7th Grand Prix St Petersburg, Russia, 19-23 June 2013.

Festival and Grand Prix competition including 21 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

16th Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy, 19-23 June 2013.

Non-competitive festival in the heart of the Dolomites: concerts, open-air reviews, day-meetings. Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival Office, Email: info@festivalpusteria.org - Website: www.festivalpusteria.org

3rd Vietnam International Choir Festival & Competition, Hoi An, Vietnam, 19-23 June 2013. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Musica Sacra Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 20-23 June 2013. International Sacred Music Festival. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches, sightseeing. Bratislava is widely recognized as a city of music, which increases its fame as a city of rich cultural and artistic heritage. Apply before 31/01/13. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Argentinian Choral Congress, Ciudad de Mar del Plata, Argentina, 20-23 June 2013. For conductors, composers, singers and all amateurs of choral music around the world. Theme: actual and future choral activities. Contact: OFADAC, Email: amcet@ofadac.org.ar - Website: www.ofadac.org.ar

Tuscany International Choral Festival, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 20-24 June 2013. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

2nd Summer Choral Fest 2013, Lisbon, Portugal, 21-24 June 2013. Opening and closing concerts with Lisbon summer fest choir and chamber choir, conducted by Dr. Eugene Rogers, featuring members of the University of Michigan Choirs, alumni of the World Youth Choir and members of the ESML choirs (Lisbon Superior School of Music). Artistic director: Paulo Vassalo Lourenço. Contact: SourceWerkz, Email: sourcewerkz@gmail.com - Website: pscf.sourcewerkz.com or facebook/sourcewerkz

11th International Festival of Renaissance and Early Baroque Music, Pecka Castle, Czech Republic, 21-23 June 2013. Competition, workshops, concerts. Contact: NIPOS, Email: dankova@nipos-mk.cz or hshz@seznam.cz - Website: www.nipos-mk.cz

Universitas Cantat 2013, Poznań, Poland, 26-29 June 2013. Meetings of university choirs from all around the world in order to stimulate co-operation and cultural exchange. Non-competitive festival. Contact: International Festival of University Choirs, Email: festiwal@amu.edu.pl - Website: www.cantat.amu.edu.pl

Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 27 June-1 July 2013. For youth and adult choirs, concerts in prestigious venues, workshops with notable choral conductors, musical exchanges and sightseeing. Contact: Yarina Connors, Classical Movements, Email: Yarina@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm

Sing A Mile High Children's Choral Festival, Denver, CO, USA, 27 June-1 July 2013. Non-competitive festival for Treble-voiced choirs. Each choir will participate in massed choir rehearsals and performance and individually in the finale concert at the Newman Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Denver. Contact: Young Voices of Colorado, Email: chrys@youngvoices.org - Website: www.singamilehigh.org

Choral Festival Verona Garda Estate, Lake of Garda, Italy, 27 June-22 July 2013. Six to eight choirs will be invited at each part of the festival. Each choir should present two 30-40 minutes programs, one sacred and one profane. Contact: Associazione Pro Musica Cantate Domino, Email: hanna.valkonen@phnet.fi - Website: http://gardaestate.altervista.org

56th International Festival of Choral Art Jihlava and 11th International Composers' Competition Jihlava 2013, Czech Republic, 28-30 June 2013. International composers' competition, concerts, workshops, meetings. Contact: NIPOS Artama, Email: dankova@nipos-mk.cz - Website: www.nipos-mk.cz

3rd Krakow Singing Week, Poland, 29 June-7 July 2013. Non-competitive concerts in Krakow, sightseeing program. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: info@poloniacantat.pl - Website: www.krakowsingingweek.pl

Silver Voice!, Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, Ceske Budejovice & Prague, Czech Republic, Venice, San Marino, Rimini, Verona, Italy, 30 June-10 July 2013. Will bring singers together in some fine concert venues. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

UNISONG, Ottawa, Canada, 1 July 2013. UNISONG Choirs Wanted! Bring your choir to represent your province at a choral festival in Ottawa on Canada Day in 2013 or 2014! Contact: MKI Travel, Carla Ala-Kantti, Email: calakantti@mkitravel.com - Website: www.abc.ca

5th Musica Sacra a Roma, Italy, 3-7 July 2013. Competition in different categories and difficulties. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Festival 500 Sharing the Voices, St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada, 3-10 July 2013. International non-competitive choral festival featuring multiple performance opportunities and workshops for choirs as well as individual "Come Solo" participants. Featuring a variety of guest clinicians, small vocal ensembles, conductors and choirs from around the world, the 2013 Festival and overlapping International academic Symposium highlights the Power of Song. Contact: Festival 500 Sharing the Voices, Email: information@festival500.com - Website: www.festival500.com

4th International Sacred Music Choir Festival & Competition Laudate Dominum, Vilnius, Lithuania, 3-8 July 2013. For all choirs around the world. Contact: Gratulations, Email: info.gratulationes@gmail.com - Website: www.gratulationes.lt

38th International Congress of Pueri Cantores, Washington D.C., USA, 3-7 July 2013. For youth choirs from all around the world. Contact: Pueri Cantores USA, Email: info@puericantores.com - Website: http://pccongress13.org/

International Choir Festival of Preveza, International Competition of Sacred Music, Preveza, Greece, 4-7 July 2013. For mixed, equal voices', children's, chamber vocal ensembles, mixed youth choirs & choirs of Byzantine chant. Repertory must include a compulsory piece, a piece composed before 1800, a piece composed during 1800 - 1950, a piece composed after 1950 & a folk song from the choir's country of origin. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: www.choralpreveza.gr

Cantus Salisburgensis Summer Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 4-8 July 2013. Concerts and friendships. Massed sing with János Czifra, the Salzburg Cathedral's Music Director. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

15th International Cantus MM Choir and Orchestra Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 4-7 July 2013. 10 selected choruses or orchestras of any age and composition (also dance groups). Performances in Salzburg and surroundings. Contact: Chorus MM, Email: cantusmm@cc-a.at - Website: www.chorus2000.com

Cantus Salisburgensis Kaleidoscope of Nations, Salzburg, Austria, 4-8 July 2013. Kaleidoscope of Nations. For choirs and orchestras. Contact: Cultours Carl Pfliegler, Email: office@cultours.at - Website: www.cultours-europe.com or www.cantussalisburgensis.at

31st International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Greece, 5-14 July 2013. For mixed, male, female and children choirs as well as for groups of soloists and chamber choirs. Program including ancient Greek and Byzantine music as well as Gregorian and Renaissance music. Contact: International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Email: nke@otenet.gr

Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, held in the Musikverein in Vienna, Austria, 6-10 July 2013. Cross-cultural and musical exchange event including workshops, lectures, seminars, concerts in and around Vienna, competition with an international and highly renowned jury. Contact: Summa Cum Laude Youth Music Festival, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Nashville, TN, USA, 6-12 July 2013. International classical chorus festival held in America's Music City Nashville, giving the opportunity for treble choirs to meet and perform with celebrity vocalists and professional clinicians to develop musicianship as to explore the common roots of various music genres. With built-in fun activities, sophisticated musical instruction and performances, the CCCF will provide once in a lifetime opportunities to its participants. Contact: Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Email: info@crossroadsschildrenschorusfestival.com - Website: www.crossroadsschildrenschorusfestival.com

48th International Days of Choral Singing, Barcelona, Spain, 8-14 July 2013. Concerts and workshops with Poire Vallvé (Catalan folk music), Panda Proosdij (stage movement in musicals), Jaume Miranda (Wagner opera choruses). Apply before 15 Jan 2013. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: fcec@fcec.cat - Website: www.fcec.cat

Coastal Song Children's Choir Festival, Savannah and Charleston, USA, 8-13 July 2013. For children's choir, with Josh Pedde and Robyn Lana. Contact: Coastal Song Children's Choir Festival, Email: jdiblasio@gogmt.com - Website: www.coastalsong.com

Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, United Kingdom, 9-14 July 2013. Choirs, musicians, folk singers and dancers from all corners of the world compete in the world's leading festival of music and dance. Contact: Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, Email: info@international-eisteddfod.co.uk - Website: <http://international-eisteddfod.co.uk/>

International Youth Music Festival, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 11-14 July 2013. International Festival for Youth and Children Choirs and Orchestras. Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music, bringing together talented young musicians from around the world for a unique musical and cultural experience. Apply before 15/04/2013. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 11-21 July 2013. Travel to Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & a Game Park. Experience African rhythms, dancing and singing. Open to all choirs, each conducted by their own music director. Contact: Jayci Thomas, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: jayci@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_af.htm

Rhapsody! Children's Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic & Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, 11-21 July 2013. Participating choirs will perform at famous venues in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities. Workshop, musical exchanges and sightseeing tours. Contact: Christopher Harris, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Christopher@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm>

2nd Bali International Choir Festival, Competition and Championship, Indonesia, 14-22 July 2013. Symposium and competition, workshops, Balinese Culture, intercultural collaboration, Temple tours for choirs, and individual conductors and singers. Contact: Bandung Choral Society, Tomohon International Choir Competition, Email: mail_bcsevents@yahoo.com - Website: <http://bandungchoralsociety.com/>

3rd International Choir Festival with Flower and Song, Cuernavaca, Mexico, 14-21 July 2013. Festival and workshops for all kind of choirs. Contact: Pablo Puente, Artistic Director, Email: fest.coral@gmail.com

1st European Choir Games, Graz, Austria, 14-21 July 2013. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

4th Hong Kong International Youth and Children's Choir Festival, Hong Kong, China, 14-19 July 2013. 13 competition categories, 4 international standard venues, international choral judging system, more than 10 masterclasses and workshops, conducting master course by Dénes Szabó. Contact: Hong Kong Treble Choirs' Association, Email: info@hktreblechoir.com - Website: www.hktreblechoir.com

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 14-24 July 2013. Open to all choirs with their own conductors. Combined choirs performance in top venues. Can be combined with Melodia Argentina, same dates. Contact: Laura Smith, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Laura@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 17-21 July 2013. Non-competitive showcase Festival for children's, youth, men's, women's and mixed choirs. Social events, home stays (international choirs) and cultural exchange. Contact: International Choral Festival, Carol Stovall, Executive Director, Email: info@choralfestival.org - Website: www.choralfestival.org

8th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival & Competition, Wernigerode, Germany, 17-21 July 2013. Competition in different categories and difficulties. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

International Folklore Festival, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 18-21 July 2013. Festival of folklore music and dance ensembles. Apply before 15/04/13. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 18-26 July 2013. Open to all choirs with their own conductors. Combined choirs performance in top venues. Contact: Laura Smith, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Laura@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

31st International Music Festival, Cantonigròs, Barcelona, Spain, 18-21 July 2013. Competition and exhibition of music for mixed choir, female voices, children's choir and popular dances. Contact: Joana Gonzalo & Irina Isern - FIMC 2013, Email: fimc@fimc.es - Website: www.fimc.es

51st International Seghizzi Choral Competition and Festival, Gorizia, Italy, 18-21 July 2013. For choirs or musical groups. Categories: Renaissance, Baroque, 19th Century, 1900 to the present day, folk and traditional songs or spirituals and gospels, pop and jazz music, contemporary music. 25th Grand Prix Seghizzi and 6th Trophy of the Nations. Contact: Associazione Corale Goriziana "CA Seghizzi", Email: info@seghizzi.it - Website: www.seghizzi.it

1st Amakwaya Cape Town International Choir Festival, Cape Town, South Africa, 21-27 July 2013. Competition in 7 categories, non competitive festival, African workshops including singing, Gumboot dancing and drumming, friendship concerts, township visits and more. Contact: Amakwaya, Email: bennie@amakwaya.com - Website: www.amakwaya.com

Nordklang Festival 2013, Hamar, Norway, 22-27 July 2013. Festival for choirs, singers and conductors in the Nordic countries. Summer school courses, workshops, masterclasses, Nordic choir conductors conference, participating choirs concerts. Contact: Nordklang Festival, Email: post@nordklang.no - Website: www.nordklang.no or www.facebook.com/korfestival

5th International Choral Contest of Habaneras and Polyphony, Torrevieja (Alicante), Spain, 22-28 July 2013. Outdoors habaneras, polyphony in the auditorium "Eras de la Sal" on the Mediterranean Sea coast. Apply before: 30 Jan 2013. Contact: Certamen Int'l de Habaneras de Torrevieja, Email: habaneras@habaneras.org - Website: www.habaneras.org

6th Grand Prix Pattaya, Thailand, 24-28 July 2013. Festival and Grand Prix competition including 15 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

2nd Florence International Choir Festival, Florence, Italy, 24-26 July 2013. For choirs of all categories from all around the world. Contact: Florence International Choir Festival, Email: director@florencechoirfestival.com - Website: www.florencechoirfestival.com

Belgian Summer Sing, Ghent, Belgium, 25-29 July 2013. Open air festival for all kind of choirs in the historic Belgian city of Ghent. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com



RHAPSODY!

Children's Music Festival
Vienna, Salzburg & Prague

July 11 - 21, 2013
July 3 - 13, 2014



MELODIA!

South American Music Festival

July 14 - 24, 2013
July 20 - 30, 2014



SERENADE!

WASHINGTON, DC CHORAL FESTIVAL

June 27 - July 1, 2013
June 26 - 30, 2014



IHLOMBE!

South African Choral Festival

July 11 - 21, 2013
July 17 - 27, 2014

New in 2014 - 4 Festival Competitions!

- ➔ All four of our international festivals will contain an **optional competition** component for choirs that wish to add some friendly competition to their participation.
- ➔ Choirs will have **one day of competition** and singing before a panel of **international judges**.
- ➔ Prizes include both **monetary and trophy awards** for groups that demonstrate outstanding intonation, performance acumen, style, and presentation.

Artistic Advisors

Renette Bouwer (Africa)
Philip Brunelle (N. America)
Simon Carrington (Europe)
Oscar Escalada (S. America)
Vytautas Miskinis (Europe)
Aida Swenson (Asia)
Andrew Wailes (Australia)



World Vision 2013 International Children's Choir Festival *A voice for the Voiceless*, Seoul, South Korea, 27 July-1 Aug 2013. From traditional and classical to contemporary music festival. Artistic Director: Hee-Churl Kim. Contact: World Vision Korea Children's Choir, Tel: +82-2-2662 1803, Fax: +82-2-2661 2568, Email: wvchoirfestival@wvchoirfestival.or.kr - Website: www.wvchoirfestival.or.kr

Darlington International Summer School, Devon, United Kingdom, 27 July- 31 Aug 2013. Accessible, relaxed and informal Summer School where participants can mingle freely with their musical heroes, meet like-minded people and some of the world's top artists. Contact: Darlington International Summer School, Email: summerschool@darlington.org - Website: www.darlington.org/summer-school

World Peace Choral Festival Vienna 2013, Austria, 29 July-1 Aug 2013. Concerts, workshops, mass concert for children's and youth choirs from around the world under the slogan "Coming together to sing, Singing for a better future". Contact: World Peace Choral Festival, Email: info@wpcf.at - Website: www.wpcf.at

5th IFCM Multicultural & Ethnic Choral Conference, Girona, Spain, 29 July-2 Aug 2013. Musicians, musicologists, conductors and choral singers from different countries in the northern and southern Mediterranean area will offer an overview of the various vocal and choral traditions of the Mare Nostrum. Contact: Mediterranean Office for Choral Singing and Movement Coral Catalá, Email: mcc@mcc.cat - Website: www.mcc.cat

Istanbul International Chorus Competition and Festival, Istanbul, Turkey, 29 July-3 Aug 2013. For children, female, male, mixed choirs and folk groups. Contact: Istanbul Harman Folklor, Email: istanbul@istanbulchorus.com or istanbul@istcup.com - Website: www.istanbulchorus.com or www.istcup.com

21st Choralies, Vaison-la-Romaine, France, 1-9 Aug 2013. Large non-competitive choir meeting in the beautiful Roman town of Vaison. 40 workshops for singers, 2 workshops for conductors, 100 concerts and all kinds of activities for participants and conductors. Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: acj.choralies.inscriptions@orange.fr - Website: www.choralies.fr

11th International Choral Festival The Singing World, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2-7 Aug 2013. For choirs and vocal ensembles of various styles, levels and origins from all over the world. Event promoting long-term contacts among choirs. Apply before: 1 Apr 2012. Contact: International Choral Festival and Competition, Email: Singingworld@mail.ru - Website: www.singingworld.spb.ru

Iones International Choir Festival, Nikoleika, Greece, 3-6 Aug 2013. Non competitive festival for all kinds of choirs. Contact: Diavlos Culture Groups & Festivals, Email: diavlos@yahoo.gr - Website: www.diavloslink.gr

Andrea O. Veneracion International Choral Festival, Manila, Philippines, 7-10 Aug 2013. Festival in the fame of the 50th Anniversary of the Philippines Madrigal Singers. Competition open to choirs of any nationality, without age limit, in three categories: folk music, vocal ensemble, and chamber choir. Contact: Artist Training Division, Arts Education Department of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Email: choralfestmnl2013@yahoo.com.ph - Website: www.culturalcenter.gov.ph

23rd Zimriya World Assembly of Choirs, Old Acre, Israel, 11-16 Aug 2013. Open singing, choir to choir sessions, concerts. Workshops: Timothy C. Brown (UK): The Great Choruses of J.S. Bach; Gabor Hollerung (Hungary): Oratorio Music; Joshua Jacobson (USA): Jewish Music; Werner Pfaff (Germany) Romantic Music; Sanna Valvanne (Finland): Common Singing; David Zeba (Israel): Israeli Music; Nestor Zadoff (Argentina): Choral Music from South America Contact: ZIMRIYA, Email: harzimco@netvision.net.il - Website: www.zimriya.org.il or www.youtube.com/watch?v=78CbjdqjJEU

2nd Choir Competition Heart of Europe, Gelnhausen, Germany, 14-18 Aug 2013. 4 categories, international jury, meeting and gala concerts, choir parties, workshops, awards. Please apply before: 31 Dec. Contact: 1st Heart of Europe Choir Competition, Organization Committee, Rapahel Trageser, Email: info@heartofeurope.de - Website: www.heartofeurope.de

8th International Choral Festival San Juan Coral 2013, Argentina, 15-20 Aug 2013. Non competitive choral festival organized by Universidad Católica de Cuyo's Choir for 8-10 selected mixed, female, male and chamber choirs. Each choir will participate in massed choir rehearsals and performance and individual concerts at the Auditorio Juan Victoria. Concerts, lectures and workshops for choirs, singers and conductors. Contact: María Elina Mayorga, Email: mariaelinamayorga@gmail.com or coro@uccuyo.edu.ar - Website: www.sanjuanacoral.com.ar

7th Choral Singing Contest of South American Folk and Popular Music, La Plata, Argentina, 16-19 Aug 2013. Open for amateurs choirs from over the world. Pre registration: December 1, 2012. Announcement of the selected choirs: January 15, 2013. Selected Choirs must prepare two compulsory choral works per each category they wish to participate: mixed choir (28-40 members); equal voices (male or female) (12-30 members) and mixed vocal ensemble (8-27 members). Contact: Asociación Argentina para la Música Coral, Email: aamcantlp@ciudad.com.ar - Website: www.aamcant.org.ar

2nd Mediterranean Choral Festival Gibraltar, 21-25 Aug 2013. Festival and competition including 13 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

A Cappella Choral Summer School of Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London, United Kingdom, 27-31 Aug 2013. The A Cappella Choral Summer School will guide you through 400 years of English choral history. The course includes madrigals from Musica Transalpina I and works by composers such as Tallis, Gibbons, and Purcell through to works by Parry, Stanford and Vaughan Williams. Accommodation available. Contact: Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Email: shortcourses@gsm.ac.uk - Website: www.gsm.ac.uk/acappellachoral

Alpe Adria Cantat 2013, Lignano Sabbiadoro (UD), Italy, 1-8 Sep 2013. International singing week for mixed and children's choirs, vocal groups, conductors and individual singers. Workshops with Luigi Leo (IT), Fabio Lombardo (IT), Andre Thomas (US), Rainer Held (CH), Rogier Ijmker (NL) and Silvana Noschese (IT). Contact: FENIARCO, Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

EUROTREFF 2013, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 4-8 Sep 2013. Concerts and 6 Ateliers for children's, girls' and mixed youth choirs. Possibility of regional meeting with a German choir before or after the festival. Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: info@amj-musik.de - Website: www.amj-musik.de

Liviu Borlan International Choral Festival, Baia Mare City, Romania, 5-8 Sep 2013. For mixed choirs in the beautiful Maramures region. Artistic Director: Andrea Angelini. Money prizes and diplomas. Contact: Prietenii Armoniei, Email: mail@festivalborlan.ro - Website: www.festivalborlan.ro

1st International Copernicus Choir Festival & Competition, Toruń, Poland, 11-15 Sep 2013. Competitions in pop, jazz, sacred choral music and more, with a special focus on Contemporary Music. Rehearsals with international choral experts, coaching concerts and professional voice training. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

3rd International Choir Competition and Festival Canco Mediterrania, Barcelona & Lloret de Mar, Spain, 17-22 Sep 2013. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: International Choir Festival and Competition Canco Mediterrania, Email: festivalbarcelona@interia.eu - Website: www.serrabrava.eu

10th Trelew International Choral Competition - 20th Anniversary, Trelew, Chubut, Patagonia, Argentina, 18-22 Sep 2013. Open to female, male and mixed choirs including a non competitive stage with previous participant's selection. International Jury. Workshops, conducting masterclasses, composers forum and open singing. Contact: Fundación C.I.C., Alejandro Daniel Garavano, Email: citrelew@yahoo.com.ar - Website: www.fundacioncic.org

6th Animato Choir Competition, Pretoria, South Africa, 26-29 Sep 2013. In collaboration with the ATKV (Afrikaanse Taal and Kultur Vereniging). Competition for all kinds of choirs from around the world which want to also experience the different cultures of South Africa. Contact: CULTOUR AFRICA, Email: animato@cultourafrica.co.za - Website: www.cultourafrica.co.za

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 26-29 Sep 2013. Competition for equal voices, mixed, chamber, children, young, sacred music, folk and spiritual choirs in the beautiful old town of Rimini. Possibility of a sung mass in the Renaissance Cathedral. Contact: Rimini International Choral Competition, Email: competition@riminichoral.it - Website: www.riminichoral.it

International Choir Festival Amsterdam 2013, Netherlands, 28 Sep 2013. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: EventTours, Email: info@eventtours.nl - Website: www.eventtours.nl/choirfestivals.html

3rd Asian Choir Games, North Sulawesi, Indonesia, 2-12 Oct 2013. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

5th Grieg International Choir Festival and NINA Solo Competition for Young Singers, Bergen, Norway, 3-6 Oct 2013. Open to amateur choirs in all choral categories and difficulties. Competition in 4 categories: sacred & secular music, folk songs, contemporary music, concerts, "sing together Carmina Burana". Apply before 1 May 2013. In parallel, vocal competition for singers between 15 and 24 years old. Contact: Annlaug Hus, Email: post@griegfestival.no - Website: www.griegfestival.no

12th International Choir Contest of Flanders, Maasmechelen, Belgium, 4-6 Oct 2013. Limited to ensembles from 12 to 40 equal voices and 16 to 40 mixed voices. Contact: International Choir Contest of Flanders, Gert Vanderlee, Email: info@ikv-maasmechelen.be - Website: www.ikv-maasmechelen.be

Bratislava Cantat, Slovak Republic, 10-13 Oct 2013. International Choir and Orchestras Festival. Competition, concerts of choir and orchestral music. The Slovak capital Bratislava opens its gates and invites choirs to its charming centre in autumn. Apply before 01/07/2013. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

10th In... Canto Sul Garda, Riva del Garda, Italy, 10-14 Oct 2013. Competition in different categories and difficulties. Repertoire will include jazz, pop, spirituals, gospel, folklore and sacred music. Contact: Interkultur e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2013, Spain, 12-16 Oct 2013. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Performances and workshops with Joan Pagès, Germany, Basilio Astúlez & David Azurza, Basque Country, Spain. Apply before 22 Dec 2012. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: colonies@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es

International Choral Week 2013, Guadalajara de Buga, Colombia, 15-19 Oct 2013. Festival and workshops for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Corpacoros, Email: corpacoros@corpacoros.org - Website: www.corpacoros.org

9th Busan Choral Festival & competition, South Korea, 16-19 Oct 2013. Categories: classical mixed, classical equal, senior (above 55) choirs, ethnic (traditional) music, a cappella ensemble, children and youth choirs. Contact: Busan Culturel Center, Email: koreachoral@gmail.com - Website: www.busanchoral.com

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 18-22 Oct 2013. Performances, friendship concerts and workshops. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: info@musiccontact.com - Website: www.musiccontact.com

World Choir Festival and contest, New York, USA, 22-23 Oct 2013. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: EventTours, Email: info@eventtours.nl - Website: www.eventtours.nl/choirfestivals.html

Canta al Mar 2013, Calella/Barcelona, Spain, 23-27 Oct 2013. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Derry International Choral Festival, Ireland, 24-27 Oct 2013. Competitive and non-competitive participation for singers across a wide range of styles, ensembles and ages. Performances from Mixed Voice to Equal-Voice choirs, Youth to Chamber choirs and from Church Music to Light, Popular and Jazz. Contact: Fiona Crosbie, festival manager, Email: info@codetta.net

9th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 25-27 Oct 2013. For a cappella choirs. Choirs can compete in one of the 4 categories for statuettes of Golden Lyre. Festival takes place in Chopin Hall as well as churches in Warsaw. Contact: International Krakow Choir Festival MELODY, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl

International masterclass in choir and orchestra conducting 2013 and 2014, Örebro, Sweden, 26-31 Oct 2013. Students will get 10 university credits when attending this masterclass and the next one on 18-24 Oct 2014. Required level is BA in Music. Technique lesson, esthetics exchanges and discussion, practical work in rehearsal, how to work with orchestra versus choir, methodology of the rehearsal and the performance and preparational work, working in different venues. Conductor: Andrew Parrott (UK), assisted by Katarina Andreasson and Fred Sjöberg (Sweden). In the frame of VOICE (Vision on Innovation for Choral Music in Europe) projects. Contact: Swedish International Choral Center Örebro (SWICCO), Email: urban.tholen@oru.se - Website: www.antagning.se or www.swicco.se

International Symphonic Choir University Course 2013 and 2014, Örebro, Sweden, 26-31 Oct 2013. Students will get 5 University credits when attending this course and the one on 18-24 Oct 2014. Required level for students is an exam from gymnasium. Basic level. Technique lesson, sectional vocalization, esthetics exchanges and discussion, practical work in rehearsal with the orchestra, how to work with orchestra versus choir, methodology of the rehearsal and the performance and preparational work, working in different venues. Conductor: Andrew Parrott (UK), assisted by Katarina Andreasson and Fred Sjöberg (Sweden). In the frame of VOICE (Vision on Innovation for Choral Music in Europe) projects. Contact: Swedish International Choral Center Örebro (SWICCO), Email: urban.tholen@oru.se - Website: www.antagning.se or www.swicco.se

Autumn Fairy-tale!, Vienna, Austria, Teplice & Prague, Czech Republic, Dresden & Berlin, Germany, 27 Oct-1 Nov 2013. International Festival competition for participants aged 8 to 26. Categories: musical, solo and choir singing, folk groups, etc... Apply before 15 Sep 2013. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

5th International Choir Competition and Festival Malta, Malta, 31 Oct-4 Nov 2013. Open to all categories. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Miramar Canta 2013, Miramar, Buenos Aires province, Argentina, 2-3 Nov 2013. Non-competitive choral meeting for all kind of choirs. Contact: Miramar Canta, Fabio Valente, Artistic Director, Email: Miramarcanta2006@yahoo.com.ar - Website: www.miramarcanta.com.ar

25th Cantapueblo - La Fiesta Coral de América, Mendoza, Argentina, 5-10 Nov 2013. Great Latin American festival open to mixed choirs, equal voices, mixed youth choirs, chamber ensembles and other vocal groups. Contact: Cantapueblo Artistic Director: Alejandro Scarpetta, Email: cantapueblo@cantapueblo.com.ar - Website: www.cantapueblo.com.ar

40th Choir Festival Pampa Canta Tandil, Argentina, 6-10 Nov 2013. Festival and competition including 11 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

5th International Festival Interfolk in Russia, St. Petersburg, Russia, 8-12 Nov 2013. For folk groups, vocal and instrumental ensembles, choirs and dance groups of various styles, levels and origins from all over the world. Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: interfolk@mail.ru - Website: www.interfestplus.ru

114 International Choir Festival Barcelona 2013, Spain, 16 Nov 2013. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: EvenTTours, Email: info@eventtours.nl - Website: www.eventtours.nl/choirfestivals.html

Choral Celebration of Luther, Leipzig, Germany, 20-24 Nov 2013. Choirs from around the globe come together to work with Leipzig Bach Choir Director Jürgen Wolf and perform a Massed Sing in St Nicholas Church. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

19th Statys Šimkus Choir Competition, Klaipėda, Lithuania, 21-24 Nov 2013. Open to open to mixed, male, female, chamber, youth, children choirs (min 26 max 45 singers). Apply before July 15, 2013. Contact: Klaipėda Choir Association „AUKURAS“, 19th International Statys imkus Choir Competition, Email: aukuras@ku.lt or simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com - Website: www.ssimkus.ku.lt or www.facebook.com/internationalChoirCompetition

Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 28 Nov-23 Dec 2013. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: vienna@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

2nd Natale Festa Corale Olomouc International Christmas Choir Festival, Czech Republic, 4-8 Dec 2013. Christmas concerts, Parade of Choirs, International Choir Competition. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: festamusicale@atlas.cz - Website: www.festamusicale.cz

7th International Choral Sympaatti Festival, Rovaniemi, Finland, 5-8 Dec 2013. Workshops, concert opportunities and sightseeing in the winter wonderland of Rovaniemi. Contact: Association of Finnish Youth Choirs (Nuorten Kuoroliitto), Email: nuorten.kuoroliitto@sulasol.fi - Website: www.sulasol.fi

4th Krakow Advent & Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 6-8 Dec 2013. For all kinds of choirs. Choirs can compete for statuettes of Golden Angeles. Non-competitive participation possible. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: www.christmasfestival.pl

Christmas in Venice Gloria & Carols, Italy, 6-8 Dec 2013. Open to amateur and professional singers from all over the World. Contact: Vivaldi Festival, Lars Forslund, Artistic Director, Email: chorus@vivaldifestival.com - Website: www.vivaldifestival.com/gloria

10th A Voyage of Songs, Bangkok, Thailand, 6-9 Dec 2013. 10th anniversary of this festival, friendships concerts, conductors' forum, competition and ceremonies. Apply before: 31 Aug 2013. Contact: Victoria Choral Academy, Email: info@vca.com.sg - Website: www.vca.com.sg

Vermont International Choral Festival, Burlington, USA, 6-9 Dec 2013. Concerts and friendships. Massed sing with Robert De Cormier. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: vermont@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Vienna Choir Sing, Austria, 8 Dec 2013. Open air concert Rathausplatz for all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: volkskultur@outlook.com - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

Vienna Choir Sing, Austria, 9 Dec 2013. Concert Goldener Saal for all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: volkskultur@outlook.com - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

Sing'n'Joy Manilla 2013, Philippines, 11-15 Dec 2013. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Christmas in Venice Messiah, Italy, 12-14 Dec 2013. Open to amateur and professional singers from all over the World. Contact: Vivaldi Festival, Lars Forslund, Artistic Director, Email: chorus@vivaldifestival.com - Website: www.vivaldifestival.com/gloria

4th International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music The Winter Sonata Prize 2012, Prague, Czech Republic, 14-18 Dec 2013. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Apply before 1 Nov 2013. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

21st International Sacred, Advent & Christmas Music Festival and Choir Competition Cantate Domino Kaunas, Kaunas, Lithuania, 19-22 Dec 2013. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories, workshops. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

New Year's International Choir Festival Vienna 2014, Austria, 4 Jan 2014. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: EvenTTours, Email: info@eventtours.nl - Website: www.eventtours.nl/choirfestivals.html

Winter Fairy-tale!, Vienna, Austria, Teplice & Prague, Czech Republic, Dresden & Berlin, Germany, 4-9 Jan 2014. International Festival competition for participants aged 8 to 26. Categories: musical, solo and choir singing, folk groups, etc... Apply before 18 Nov 2013. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

China meets Australia Chinese Culture Festival, Sydney, Australia, Feb 2014. Festival for exchanging art and music on a high-level, and contributing to intensifying the friendship between China and Australia. Contact: Masters International Culture Development (Beijing) Ltd., Email: info@master-music.cn - Website: www.master-music.cn

4th International Sacred Music Festival Kaunas Musica Religioza, Kaunas, Lithuania, 20-23 Feb 2014. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

3rd International Gdansk Choir Festival, Poland, 21-23 Feb 2014. Competition part, additional concerts. Non-competitive participation possible, meeting of choirs in the city of Solidarity. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: mail@gdanskfestival.pl - Website: www.gdanskfestival.pl

Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del Garda, Italy, 13-17 Mar 2014. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Holiday of Spring!, Vienna, Austria, Teplice & Prague, Czech Republic, Dresden & Berlin, Germany, 27 Mar-1 Apr 2014. International Festival competition for participants aged 8 to 26. Categories: musical, solo and choir singing, folk groups, etc... Apply before 21 Jan 2014. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

1st Children & Youth Choral World Championship, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2-6 Apr 2014. For choirs with 7-18 years old singers from all around the world. Contact: International Choral Festival and Competition, Email: Singingworld@mail.ru - Website: www.singingworld.spb.ru

25th Anniversary of America Sings! Festival, Washington DC, USA, 4-5 April 2014. Your singers will love learning that they, along with hundreds of other young people who love music, have the power to make a difference — singing and serving. Contact: America Sings!, Email: sarah@americasings.org - Website: americasings.org/

4th Vratslavia Sacra - International Wroclaw Choir Festival, Poland, 5-7 Apr 2014. Festival focusing on sacred music of different styles and churches. Contact: Cantilena & Melody, Email: info@vratlaviasacra.pl - Website: www.vratlaviasacra.pl

10th Palm Sunday International Choir Cycle Concerts, Cascais, Portugal, 5-12 Apr 2014. Guest Conductor: Virginia Bono, Argentina. Join this International sacred choir for a week and perform 5 concerts. Contact: Vox Laci, Myguel Santos e Castro, Email: info@voxlaci.com - Website: www.voxlaci.com

12th Festival Musica Religiosa Olomouc, Czech Republic, 9-13 Apr 2014. International choir festival of sacred and clerical music, Musica Religiosa Competition for choirs in all categories from all around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: festamusicale@atlas.cz - Website: www.festamusicale.cz

Children Festival Vox Pueri 8, Cascais, Portugal, 14-18 Apr 2014. Non-competitive festival for all kinds of children's choirs with many concerts and common singing. Contact: Vox Laci, Myguel Santos e Castro, Email: info@voxlaci.com - Website: www.voxlaci.com

4th International Choral Competition for Children's Choirs "Il Garda in Coro", Malcesine sul Garda, Verona, Italy, 22-26 Apr 2014. Event held in Malcesine on Lake Garda, acknowledged to be the world capital of Children's Choir competitions. Apply before 31 Dec 2013. Contact: Associazione Il Garda In Coro, Renata Peroni, Email: info@ilgardaincoro.it - Website: www.ilgardaincoro.it

Slovakia Cantat 2014, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 24-27 Apr 2014. International Choir and Folksong Festival. Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music. The Slovak capital Bratislava opens its gates and invites choirs to its charming centre in spring. Apply before 15/12/13. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

4th Messiah Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 24-27 Apr 2014. 10 selected choruses or orchestras of any age and composition (also dance groups). Performances in Salzburg and surroundings. Contact: Chorus MM, Email: messiah-salzburg@cc-a.at - Website: www.chorus2000.com

Sing A Mile High Children's Choral Festival, Denver, CO, USA, 26-30 June 2014. Non-competitive festival for Treble-voiced choirs. Each choir will participate in massed choir rehearsals and performance and individually in the finale concert at the Newman Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Denver. Contact: Young Voices of Colorado, Email: chrys@youngvoices.org - Website: www.singamilehigh.org

60th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 30 Apr-4 May 2014. Founded in 1954, the Cork International Choral Festival in Ireland is a world class festival celebrating the very best of choral and vocal music. The programme includes a series of excellent international and national competitions, world class gala concerts, vibrant fringe and public performances, non-competitive choirs and an education programme. Top international choirs compete in the prestigious Fleischmann International Trophy Competition. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

2nd Guam Pacific Choral Festival Hagatna, Guam, 30 Apr-4 May 2014. International choir festival and competition including 9 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

Venezia in Musica, Choir Competition and Festival, Venice, Italy, 30 Apr-4 May 2014. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Blossoming Bohemia!, Vienna, Austria, Teplice & Prague, Czech Republic, Dresden & Berlin, Germany, 1-6 May 2014. International Festival competition for participants aged 8 to 26. Categories: musical, solo and choir singing, folk groups, etc... Apply before 15 Feb 2014. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

International Competition for chamber Choirs Mosbach 2014, Mosbach (Baden), Germany, 2-5 May 2014. Jury members: Frieder Bernius, Marcus Creed. Contact: , - Website: www.choral-competition-mosbach.de

Choralscapes Paysages Chorals Podium 2014, Halifax, Canada, 15-18 May 2014. Contact: Association of Canadian Choral Communities, Email: accc@choralcanada.org - Website: www.choralcanada.org

4th Kaunas Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Kaunas, Lithuania, 15-18 May 2014. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

International Choral Competition Ave Verum, Baden, Austria, 22-25 May 2014. For non-professional children, female, male and mixed choirs from all over the world (between 20 to 50 singers). First part of the competition: 4 pieces (comp. before 1700, Romantic period, comp. after 2000, unisono song). Second part: the 5 best choruses from 1st part will sing a free program (no pieces may be repeated from part A). Music pieces may be sacred and secular, but all a cappella. Apply before Sep 30. Contact: Wolfgang Ziegler, chairman, Email: office@aveverum.at - Website: www.aveverum.at

Festival Filadelfia 2014: The Musical City of Europe Featuring the Paolo Serrao Special Award Competitions, Filadelfia, Italy, 22-26 May 2014. For equal voices, mixed, children and youth, folk, Gospel/Spiritual choirs. Contact: Associazione Musicale Melody, Email: associazionemelody@libero.it - Website: www.associazione-melody.com

4th Šiauliai Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Šiauliai, Lithuania, 22-25 May 2014. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

9th Festa Choralis Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 28 May-1 June 2014. Festival and competition including 19 categories. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

9th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 28 May-1 June 2014. Non competitive festival for 18 selected children's and youth choirs (age limit 25) from European countries. Over 20 choral concerts in churches, concert halls and open air in Basel and around for more than 22'000 spectators. Workshops, parties, boat trips, open singing. Apply before: 30 Jan 2013. Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: k.renggli@ejcf.ch - Website: www.ejcf.ch

International Festival of Choral Singing Nancy Voix du Monde, Nancy, France, 28 May-1 June 2014. 1600 singers from all over the world. Contact: Festival International de Chant Choral de Nancy, Email: festival-choral@orange.fr - Website: www.chantchoral.org

43rd International Competition "Florilège Vocal de Tours", France, 30 May-1 June 2014. Three categories: mixed choirs, mixed vocal ensembles, equal voices (male or female). Two rounds and Grand Prix. International competition for children's and youth choirs. Contact: Florilège Vocal de Tours, Email: contact@florilegevocal.com - Website: www.florilegevocal.com

42nd Festival of Songs Olomouc, Czech Republic, 4-8 June 2014. Mundi Cantant: international choir competition; Mundi Cantant superior: international choir competition with obligatory songs. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

Sing'n'Joy Vienna 2014 29th International Franz Schubert Choir Competition, Austria, 5-9 June 2014. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Musica Sacra International Festival, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 6-11 June 2014. Musica Sacra is a unique festival which brings music and dance from the five major world religions into Allgäu region, organising concerts in which Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus meet and perform together. Contact: Musica Sacra International, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

5th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 12-15 June 2014. Competition part in many categories, concerts, gala concert in Philharmonic Hall in one of the most beautiful town of the world, the biggest international choral festival in Poland Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl/

CantaRode, Kerkrade, Netherlands, 12-16 June 2014. Competition, concerts, events for all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Dion Ritten, Artistic Director, Email: info@cantarode.nl - Website: www.cantarode.nl

8th Grand Prix St Petersburg, Russia, 18-22 June 2014. Festival and Grand Prix competition including 21 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusical.com - Website: www.festamusical.com

Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 26-30 June 2014. For youth and adult choirs, concerts in prestigious venues, workshops with notable choral conductors, musical exchanges and sightseeing. Contact: Yarina Connors, Classical Movements, Email: Yarina@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm

Silver Voice!, Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, Ceske Budejovice & Prague, Czech Republic, Venice, San Marino, Rimini, Verona, Italy, 30 June-10 July 2014. Will bring singers together in some fine concert venues. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

Rhapsody! Children's Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic and Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, 3-13 July 2014. Participating choirs will perform at famous venues in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities. Workshop, musical exchanges and sightseeing tours. Contact: Christopher Harris, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Christopher@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm

16th International Cantus MM Choir and Orchestra Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 3-6 July 2014. 10 selected choruses or orchestras of any age and composition (also dance groups). Performances in Salzburg and surroundings. Contact: Chorus MM, Email: cantusmm@cc-a.at - Website: www.chorus2000.com

Cantus Salisburgensis Kaleidoscope of Nations, Salzburg, Austria, 3-7 July 2014. Kaleidoscope of Nations. For choirs and orchestras. Contact: Cultours Carl Pfliegler, Email: office@cultours.at - Website: www.cultours-europe.com or www.cantussalisburgensis.at

4th Krakow Singing Week, Poland, 4-13 July 2014. Non-competitive concerts in Krakow, sightseeing program. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: info@poloniacantat.pl - Website: www.krakowsingingweek.pl

10th International Youth Chamber Choir Meeting, Usedom Island (Baltic Sea), Germany, 4-13 July 2014. Festival for girls' and mixed youth choirs, max. 36 persons (incl. staff), up to the age of 26. Concerts, ateliers and time to get to know each other and the wonderful island of Usedom. Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: nfo@amj-musik.de - Website: www.amj-musik.de

Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Nashville, TN, USA, 5-11 July 2014. International classical chorus festival held in America's Music City Nashville, giving the opportunity for treble choirs to meet and perform with celebrity vocalists and professional clinicians to develop musicianship as to explore the common roots of various music genres. With built-in fun activities, sophisticated musical instruction and performances, the CCCF will provide once in a lifetime opportunities to its participants. Contact: Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Email: info@crossroadchildrenschorusfestival.com - Website: www.crossroadchildrenschorusfestival.com

Coastal Song Children's Choir Festival, Savannah and Charleston, USA, 7-12 July 2014. For children's choir, with Josh Pedde and Robyn Lana. Contact: Coastal Song Children's Choir Festival, Email: jdiblasio@gogmt.com - Website: www.coastalsong.com

8th World Choir Games, Riga, Latvia, 9-19 July 2014. In 2014 Riga will not only be the European Capital of Culture, but also the World Capital of Choral Music. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

International Youth Music Festival, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 10-13 July 2014. International Festival for Youth and Children Choirs and Orchestras. Competition, workshop, concerts of sacred and secular music, bringing together talented young musicians from around the world for a unique musical and cultural experience. Apply before 15/04/2014. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 17-25 July 2014. Open to all choirs with their own conductors. Combined choirs performance in top venues. Contact: Laura Smith, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Laura@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

32nd International Music Festival, Cantonigròs, Barcelona, Spain, 17-20 July 2014. Competition and exhibition of music for mixed choir, female voices, children's choir and popular dances. Contact: Joana Gonzalo & Irina Isern - FIMC 2013, Email: fmc@fmc.es - Website: www.fmc.es

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 17-26 July 2014. Travel to Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & a Game Park. Experience African rhythms, dancing and singing. Open to all choirs, each conducted by their own music director. Contact: Jayci Thomas, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: jayci@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_af.htm

7th Grand Prix Pattaya, Thailand, 23-27 July 2014. Festival and Grand Prix competition including 15 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusical.com - Website: www.festamusical.com

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 24 July-1 Aug 2014. Open to all choirs with their own conductors. Combined choirs performance in top venues. Can be combined with Melodia Argentina: July 20-30. Contact: Laura Smith, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Laura@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

10th World Symposium on Choral Music, Seoul, Rep. Korea, 7-14 Aug 2014. Email: secretariat@ifcm.net - Website: www.ifcm.com

3rd Mediterranean Choral Festival Gibraltar, 20-24 Aug 2014. Festival and competition including 13 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusical.com - Website: www.festamusical.com

International Robert Schumann Choir Competition, Zwickau, Germany, 15-19 Oct 2014. Competition in different categories and difficulties. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Canta al Mar 2014, Calella/Barcelona, Spain, 22-26 Oct 2014. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

10th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 24-26 Oct 2014. For a cappella choirs. Choirs can compete in one of the 4 categories for statuettes of Golden Lyre. Festival takes place in Chopin Hall as well as churches in Warsaw. Contact: International Krakow Choir Festival MELODY, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl



IV KRAKOW ADVENT & CHRISTMAS CHOIR FESTIVAL

4th Krakow Advent & Christmas Choir Festival

6 – 8 December 2013 in Krakow

For all kinds of choirs. Competition in 5 categories for the statuettes of “Golden Angels” or non-competitive participation. The biggest Advent Festival in Poland.

Deadline for applications: 30 June 2013

More information you may find at website:
www.christmasfestival.pl or by e-mail:
krakow@christmasfestival.pl



3rd International Gdansk Choir Festival

21 – 23 February 2014 in Gdansk

For all kinds of choirs. Competition part, additional concerts, non-competitive participation possible, meeting of choirs in the famous city of Solidarity.

Deadline for applications: 15 October 2013

More information you may find at website:
www.gdanskfestival.pl or by e-mail:
mail@gdanskfestival.pl



INTERNATIONAL KRAKOW
CHOIR FESTIVAL

Cracovia
Cantans

Cracovia Cantans International Krakow Choir Festival 12 – 15 June 2014 in Krakow

The biggest international choir festival in Poland. For all kinds of choirs, 8 categories, Gala Concert in Krakow Philharmonic. Festival is a member of International Federation for Choral Music.

Deadline for applications: 15 November 2013

More information you may find at website:
www.krakowchoirfestival.pl or by e-mail:
mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl



Autumn Fairy-tale!, Vienna, Austria, Teplice & Prague, Czech Republic, Dresden & Berlin, Germany, 27 Oct-1 Nov 2014. International Festival competition for participants aged 8 to 26. Categories: musical, solo and choir singing, folk groups, etc... Apply before 15 Sep 2014. Contact: International Youth Forum ENDOWMENT FUND, J&S Group, Email: festival@praha-cz.net or artmarket@praha-cz.net - Website: www.children-festivals.com or www.advent-in-prague.cz

41st Choir Festival Pampa Canta Tandil, Argentina, 5-9 Nov 2014. Festival and competition including 11 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

3rd Natale Festa Corale Olomouc International Christmas Choir Festival, Czech Republic, 3-7 Dec 2014. Christmas concerts, Parade of Choirs, International Choir Competition. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: festamusicale@atlas.cz - Website: www.festamusicale.cz

4th Krakow Advent & Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 5-7 Dec 2014. For all kinds of choirs. Choirs can compete for statuettes of Golden Angeles. Non-competitive participation possible. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody, Email: krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: www.christmasfestival.pl

22nd International Sacred, Advent & Christmas Music Festival and Choir Competition, Kaunas, Lithuania, 18-21 Dec 2014. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories, workshops. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

11th Palm Sunday International Choir Cycle Concerts, Cascais, Portugal, 21-29 Mar 2015. Guest Conductor: André de Quadros, USA. Join this International sacred choir for a week and perform 5 concerts. Contact: Vox Laci, Myguel Santos e Castro, Email: info@voxlaci.com - Website: www.voxlaci.com

13th Festival Musica Religiosa Olomouc, Czech Republic, 25-29 Mar 2015. International choir festival of sacred and clerical music, Musica Religiosa Competition for choirs in all categories from all around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: festamusicale@atlas.cz - Website: www.festamusicale.cz

61st Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 29 Apr-3 May 2015. Founded in 1954, the Cork International Choral Festival in Ireland is a world class festival celebrating the very best of choral and vocal music. The programme includes a series of excellent international and national competitions, world class gala concerts, vibrant fringe and public performances, non-competitive choirs and an education programme. Top international choirs compete in the prestigious Fleischmann International Trophy Competition. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

3rd Guam Pacific Choral Festival Hagatna, Guam, 29 Apr-3 May 2015. International choir festival and competition including 9 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

10th Festa Choralis Bratislava, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 27-31 May 2015. Festival and competition including 19 categories. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

43rd International Choir Festival of Songs, Czech Republic, 3-7 June 2015. Mundi Cantant: international choir competition; Mundi Cantant superior: international choir competition with obligatory songs. For all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

9th Grand Prix St Petersburg, Russia, 17-21 June 2015. Festival and Grand Prix competition including 21 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

Cantus Salisburgensis Kaleidoscope of Nations, Salzburg, Austria, 2-6 July 2015. Kaleidoscope of Nations. For choirs and orchestras. Contact: Cultours Carl Pfliegler, Email: office@cultours.at - Website: www.cultours-europe.com or www.cantussalisburgensis.at

33rd International Music Festival, Cantonigròs, Barcelona, Spain, 16-19 July 2015. Competition and exhibition of music for mixed choir, female voices, children's choir and popular dances. Contact: Joana Gonzalo & Irina Isern - FIMC 2013, Email: fmc@fmc.es - Website: www.fmc.es

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 16-25 July 2015. Experience African rhythms, dancing and singing. Open to all choirs, each conducted by their own music director. Contact: Jayci Thomas, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: jayci@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_af.htm

8th Grand Prix Pattaya, Thailand, 22-26 July 2015. Festival and Grand Prix competition including 15 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

4th Mediterranean Choral Festival Gibraltar, 19-23 Aug 2015. Festival and competition including 13 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

42nd Choir Festival Pampa Canta Tandil, Argentina, 4-8 Nov 2015. Festival and competition including 11 categories for all kind of choirs from around the world. Contact: Festa Musicale, Email: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com

62nd Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 27 Apr-1 May 2016. Founded in 1954, the Cork International Choral Festival in Ireland is a world class festival celebrating the very best of choral and vocal music. The programme includes a series of excellent international and national competitions, world class gala concerts, vibrant fringe and public performances, non-competitive choirs and an education programme. Top international choirs compete in the prestigious Fleischmann International Trophy Competition. Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

A regularly up-dated list of all events may be found on our website: www.ifcm.net

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Organizing Committee of
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World Children's Chorus Festival In Suncheon, Korea

- ✧ The Time : **Aug. 2.**(Fri), 2013 ~ **Aug. 3.**(sat)(2days)
- ✧ Place : Dong River Stage of
2013 Suncheon Garden Expo Site



www.2013expo.or.kr ☎ 센터 1577-2013



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