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Dossier

Warming 'Up' or Warming 'Down'?





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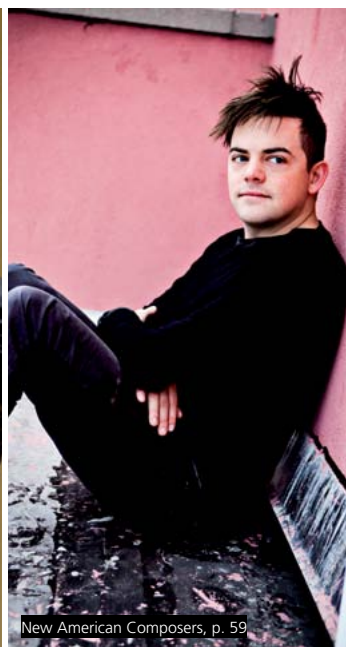
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Dear friends,

As we enter the 33rd year since IFCM was created, I am reminded of the fact that this organization is focused on **service**. In fact our *byline* is:
“We are . . . *Volunteers Connecting our Choral World!*”

People who give of their time, and sometimes treasure, to make sure others can have a richer existence, with particular focus on the important intangibles that make up our **culture**.

In the early years IFCM was all about exchanging cultural traditions, repertoire, conducting masterclasses, clinics, concerts, and more. Now it seems that IFCM is about all those things, but in 2006, added an extra emphasis, first brought into our consciousness by Daniel Garavano, and his South American colleagues. They invited people from around to world to attend the first meeting of WACCA: World Assembly of Choral Conductor's Associations. The attendees at this meeting examined a much deeper need in choral music; one that addressed more poignant social issues. It was obvious that the things that so many of us take for granted like simplified communication through advanced technology, and inexpensive, readily available means of travel, is not available to everyone. The result is a vast number of musicians around the world who know only what is happening in their immediate vicinity.

The outcome of this meeting was the IFCM project called *Conductors without Borders*.

Some of the attendees for years had been engulfed in the Venezuelan music education efforts of El Sistema, founded in 1975 by Venezuelan educator, musician, activist and Honorary IFCM Board member José Antonio Abreu. This “social action for music” provided free classical music education (using stringed instruments) to young people impoverished and challenged by their environment. Past IFCM President Maria Guinand, who participated in WACCA, later adapted an El Sistema-type program using choral music. The project was call the Andean Project that reached beyond Venezuela. In recent years, these same approaches have been adopted broadly as a powerful way to address the same issues in other societies.

In 2012, Yale University produced the *Yale International Choral Festival* (Yale University in New Haven Connecticut, US), led by Jeffrey Douma. The title of the program was “Choirs Transforming Our World,” organized in association with IFCM's *Conductors without Borders*. It addressed choral singing in such areas as: prisons, for people with developmental disabilities, in lesbian and gay communities, even at the bedsides of terminally ill patients, among others. And this was in the United States only!

IFCM Board Member Thierry Thiebaut has worked with IFCM Founding Member A Coeur Joie International taking *Conductors without Borders* to the French speaking countries of Africa. Several times each year he produces workshops, concerts, training for conductors and singers, for people whose love for choral singing outweighs the challenges of confined communities.

As you can see, IFCM is reaching into every aspect of choral music attempting to help where we can. The only way we can do this is with everyone's assistance. If you can volunteer your time and want to get involved we welcome you. We have established a database in which we put volunteer's information:

- Name
- Contact information
- Area of specialty
- How you think you can help
- Can you travel

If you want to place your name on this list of volunteers, please send this information in an email to IFCM Projects Manager Francesco Leonardi at leonardifra@yahoo.it. He will enter your information into the database and be in contact with you. In the near future, you will be able to log on to our new website (IFCM.net) and enter this information directly.

Choral conductors know, as well as anybody, how important and fulfilling it is to “give of yourself.” There are many people like you around the world either looking for HOW they can help, or looking FOR help. Please get involved—you'll be glad you did.



Dr. Michael J Anderson, President

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▲ Morning Sing with Johann van der Sandt at the WSCM10 © Moon Gi Kim for the Korean Federation for Choral Music (KFCM)

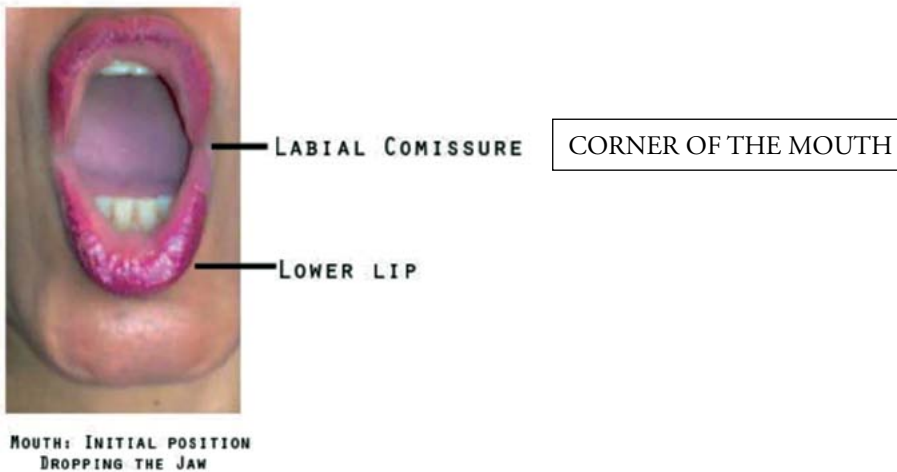
Warming 'Up' or Warming 'Down'?

Vocalizing with the Choir before Singing
Carmen Moreno

Choral Warm-Downs
Turning Tradition on its Head
Timothy Seelig

Vocalizing with the Choir before Singing

Vocalization is nothing more than a series of exercises over a variety of intervals which we carry out to gain an understanding of the strategic movements of: the drop of the lower jawbone, the lips, the corners of the mouth, the placement of sound and breath. Together these comprise the **vocal technique** that we apply when singing the intervals we encounter in musical compositions. The position of the mouth seconds before beginning the exercise is very important:



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Why must we vocalize?

So that the muscles have the energy and acquire the ideal muscular tone for singing. Muscles need energy to move. At the biochemical level this energy comes from the ATP (adenosine triphosphate) that is formed by the metabolism of carbohydrates and fats. The muscular metabolism required to obtain energy from ATP is activated by vocalization exercises. ATP goes through a process of hydrolysis using an enzyme to disconnect and reconnect the actin along the muscle fibre which causes the muscle to contract. During this hydrolysis of ATP heat is released (thermal energy); this released thermal energy is transferred to the musculature of the neck, face, larynx and pharynx. This facilitates an increase in the speed movements necessary for singing. In this way the tone and mechanical efficiency of the muscles used for singing are acquired and explains why lovers of singing use the term 'warming up' when referring to vocal exercises or vocalization. The muscles acquire the tone that is needed to sing any interval.

The choir's **Conductor** ought to have previously selected a series of exercises, beginning the vocalization with an exercise over short intervals (intervals of a 2nd for example), going up in semitones to a prudent tonal height for each of the voice parts (sopranos, altos, etc.) and then descending to the initial chord of the exercise for each voice. Moreover, he or she ought to explain the purpose of the exercise, demonstrate how it is done and correct, either in general terms or specifically, any errors observed as the exercise develops.

Carmen Moreno
Professor of Singing and
Conductor



Fig.2 Vocalization exercises: intervals of 2nd

The selection of the tonal height of the initial chord of the exercise is a decision which the Conductor should take according to the voices.

Vocalization should continue with an exercise covering intervals of a third. In this way the muscles involved are prepared progressively. It is not advisable to begin vocalization with exercises over large intervals. The effort involved in producing a sound of high intensity, without having prepared the muscles of the pharynx and larynx, can cause micro-ruptures in the muscle fibres and, if this happens repeatedly, it can lead to much more serious damage. Vocalization will continue with exercises of intervals of a 4th, 5th etc. until reaching leaps of octaves and arpeggios.

Vocalization ought to last for at least 30 minutes and can be repeated at a later stage if the Conductor considers this necessary to help the understanding of a particular interval in a piece of music.

Carrying out these vocalization exercises makes it easier to solve the problems that can arise from particular intervals in the piece of music being studied. With this in mind, the Conductor will have already studied the vocal score and will have analysed the intervals that are likely to present difficulties for the choir. It is perfectly acceptable for the Conductor to begin the study of the music with whatever bar he or she wants, but a vocalization exercise should have been prepared to help resolve any possible problem arising from singing the phrase containing the interval or intervals likely to cause difficulties.

A simple example: if the Director notices or predicts a difficulty in bar 7 of the work: Non nobis

Then he or she ought to devise a vocalization exercise with octave leaps:

The vocalization exercise ought, as far as possible, to go beyond the height of the same interval in the musical score.

During vocalization the movements of the muscles of the face, neck and larynx are synchronised and, just like the hands of a pianist, these muscles 'remember' how a particular interval is produced. In this way singing can be defined as: applying the habits acquired by vocalizing. Interpretation of the music is a different issue that involves adding colour through style etc., but the basic technique will always be the same. This is similar to the work of an architect. He can design a building however he likes, but whatever the construction, the bases and columns have to take account of the depth of the soil or the building will collapse.

Two interesting pieces of advice:

1. If the melodic phrase begins with a **vowel or a consonant such as K or C, on a high note**, then the position of the mouth has to be as follows:



The first sounds of the phrase will be well-placed, the phrase will stay in tune and the correct placing will be maintained.

2. If the melodic phrase begins with a **consonant such as N, M, P, G etc. on a high note**, then the initial position of the mouth has to be as follows:



Once the consonant has been produced in that position, let the jaw fall immediately to produce the vowel as in the previous image. If the consonant is well-placed, the phrase will not fall and tuning will be maintained.

In both cases the jaw bone protrudes.



Conductors ought to give due importance to vocalization. A well-delivered vocalization exercise will save time in rehearsals, provide an efficient learning method, make the choir feel secure and give the best possible results in concerts. Moreover, this approach provides a new way of working that will enhance both the group's musical development and the conductor's own professionalism.

Light-lyric soprano, **Carmen Moreno** was born in Cumaná, Venezuela and now lives in Barcelona. She undertook her musical studies in the Gómez Cardiel School of Music in Cumaná, the Juan José Landaeta Conservatory in Caracas, the Professional Conservatory of Music in Badalona (Spain) and the Liceu Conservatory in Barcelona. Her educational work has focused on the teaching of vocal technique and conducting choirs, which she combines with concert work. She has been Conductor for Sanchos Sinisterra's *Lope de Aguirre, the Traitor* under the stage direction of Karel Mena, *Animalmusic*, a co-production for the Barcelona Grec Summer Festival in 2003 and *La Korbata, Songs of Love and War* by Martínez Valls, and *María Moñitos*, a Cuban musical directed by Alejandra Egido. She has edited a book entitled *Mi Técnica Vocal Paso a Paso* (My Vocal Technique Step by Step) (Parnass Ediciones, Spain, 2012), along with various articles related to music and published by the online magazine ArtsEduca. She has given workshops on vocal technique to chamber ensembles and spoken at conferences on *El Canto, su Técnica, el Solista y el Coro* (Singing, technique, the soloist and the choir) at Aula University of Baix Guinardó and the Santa Clara International College in Barcelona. She has been invited to join the judging panel at international festivals in Poland (International Krakow Choir Festival and International Warsaw Choir Festival) and England (International Golden Nightingale Choir Festival). Currently she writes articles for the music magazine ArtsEduca, offers early music recitals and is Professor of Singing at the Escuela Estudi Musical as well as Conductor of the Esperit Cantaire Choir and of the Cantoria Requinto chamber choir. Email: sopranosun@yahoo.es



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Tired of the same old warm-ups? We all are. So let's start over — with a brand new look. There has always been much debate about whether it is necessary to do choral warm-ups at the beginning of every rehearsal as we were taught. This debate has been going on since there was such a thing called a choir.

Do choral warm-ups really get us to our ultimate goal, or are they really just killing time because our choir director did them?

What we really need are effective, efficient choral warm-**downs**! It's not your job, nor do you actually have the time, to warm **up** your singers.

First, a warning. This article is **not** for you saints who have choir rehearsals before school at 7:30 a.m. or sing for early church services. This article is for anyone who leads a chorus that rehearses any time after the respectable hour of noon!



The truth is that most people use their voices in their daily lives, whether at work, play, or home. Few people arrive at our rehearsals with a completely fresh, unused set of vocal folds. What they have been doing, however, is speaking, not singing.

There is a familiar adage from the historic Italian School: *Si canta come si parla* (One sings as one speaks). This could not be farther from the truth.



Here is the problem (and one that every speech therapist points out and charges you for): In normal speech,

- we rarely pay attention to posture
- we almost never breathe or use the breath correctly
- we speak too low in our register
- we do not enunciate or use articulators

Simply put, in daily speech we are just lazy. This won't work for singing — or speaking. What is our concern is that the habits our singers use in speech seven days a week need to be reversed in a very short **warm-down** before they sing.

If you look at those four major deficiencies in our speech patterns, it is the perfect regimen to reverse the bad habits your singers use when not in your presence. It outlines a very clear and succinct path of instruction.

It does not require a long, complicated set of warm-ups. On the other hand, they are reminders that you, as perhaps the only voice instructor many of your singers have ever had, share with them. This can be through warm-downs, modeling, or excerpts from the repertoire you will rehearse.

The absolute most important thing we do at the outset of the warm-down is simply to focus their attention. Our singers come to rehearsal from hectic, full lives unprepared for the task ahead. It is absolutely critical that they leave those distractions, and baggage, at the door.

If we consciously reverse the four bad habits listed earlier, it will lead us to a very simple warm-down. These steps should always be addressed in the same order.

Dr. Timothy Seelig
choral conductor and
teacher



Get them moving, stretching, massaging, interacting, jumping, running, and twisting, and most of all teach them how to stand! Ask them to slump back to their daily posture. Then ask them, on the count of three, to “hold your instrument for singing.” You’ll be shocked — as will they — how they respond.



Invite them to breathe. Remind them that we use only a small percentage of our lung capacity for daily life. We need more for singing. Show them how to find that extra capacity. Then ask them to sing a phrase from a song while blowing on their index finger. This gets them accustomed to using the breath as opposed to starving the vocal folds of air, as we so often do in speech.



As they sing gently, stretch them upward in their range. Have them sing a lovely phrase from the music they will be rehearsing. Then move that exact phrase up by half-steps, allowing them to stretch their vocal folds. Move it up two or three half-steps, releasing muscle each time. When they return to the original key, it will actually feel low and comfortable to them!



Have the singers speak in an exaggerated stage whisper a portion of text from one of the pieces you are singing — no vocal fold involvement at all. They will feel how the consonants and use of articulators require connection to the abdominal muscles and diaphragm. *Then have them sing the phrase.* You will be shocked at the result. Just for fun, ask your singers to sing a phrase holding their pencil in their lips throughout. They will see how truly lazy they have been. We are not ventriloquists!

When I was in school, I took typing. Perhaps you did as well. The first thing I learned was *Home Row*. As you know, Home Row was exactly what it implies. It is where your fingers rest — where they are most comfortable. Certainly your fingers stretch beyond Home Row to achieve all sorts of other wonderful things, but they return there often. It is where they are grounded and comfortable. To begin with, your fingers anywhere else would be outrageous.

Your singers should know where their “vocal” Home Row is. What does that mean? Ask them to sing any note in a chord you give them. It should be as perfect as they know how to make it. You then shape it, color it, describe it. That ideal sound resides in your mind’s ear. You must know enough vocal/choral pedagogy to communicate clearly to them exactly how to achieve the sound you desire. That is Home Row.

There are a few things I would do to play around with Home Row.

DYNAMICS

The first is numbered *Messa di voce*. Ask your singers to sing the vowel you choose, let’s say “ah.” Ask them to start pianissimo, move to fortissimo, and then move back. As they are doing this, you count with your fingers from 1 to 8 and back to 1. Then ask them, from their kinesthetic memory, to sing a 3, then a 5, maybe a 1, and then an 8. I never use dynamic terms anymore. I give them numbers.

There are just too many variables when I say, for example, “I want this to be piano.” It means different things to different people. But a 3 is always a 3 with everyone in the chorus. And, if you are having issues balancing your chorus due to personnel, you can ask the basses to sing consistently at around a 6 as their Home Row, the tenors a 4, altos a 5, and sopranos a 1 (just kidding).

This will help you enormously when one section is consistently louder than another. Ask them to sing one number less.

Exercise: Build from the bottom up. Start with a dynamic of 7 in the bottom, moving to a 4 in the top with each voice part. Voila! Reverse it just for fun. Bottom voices sing a 4, leading up to the top voices singing a dynamic of 7. This top-heavy chord will never blend.



TONE COLOR

Woofers/Tweeters. This is resonance adjustment — not placement. You can't actually "place a tone."

The tweeter is the front — the mouth with hard surfaces such as the hard palate and teeth. The woofer is the pharynx and soft surfaces. Choose a note. Ask your singers to place their index finger vertically in front of their mouth. Have them sing a very forward, thin, bright "ah." Ask them to move their finger back toward the jaw and then by the ear. As they do so, they will begin to open the pharynx (woofer) and limit the resonance in the mouth (tweeter). The first sound is "too bright." The final sound is "too dark." The mixed sound — in the middle — is "just right." I do not use terms about color much at all anymore. I ask for more woofer or more tweeter. Works like a charm.



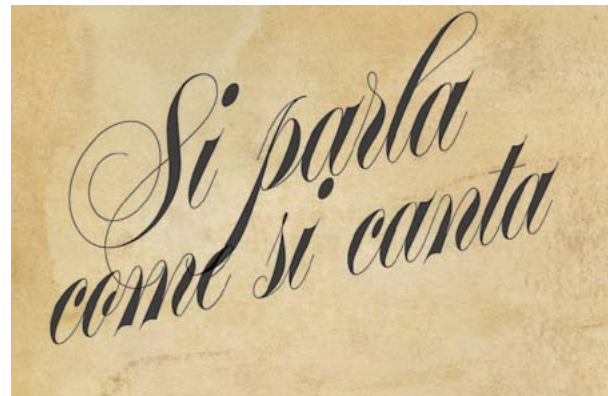
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Exercise: Again, build from the bottom up. Start with more tweeter in the lower voices, changing to more woofer as you move up the chord. Just for fun, reverse it. Ask your lower voices to use lots of woofer and to increase the tweeter as you go higher in the chord. You — and they — will notice immediately that there is no way to blend such resonance adjustment.

In summary, you have done some thinking about the old-school instruction of "You must start every rehearsal with 15 minutes of warm-ups — unrelated to the repertoire you are singing — or life for that matter."

Singing should come as natural as speech does to our singers. Certainly it should be as natural, but never as easy! Make very sure that every element of instruction you use is easily understandable and — most importantly — memorable. Your singers' speech habits may improve as well.

Best of luck in your warm-downs. ●



In addition to conducting the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, Dr. **Tim Seelig** keeps a busy schedule with appearances around the world. He is the Conductor Emeritus of the Turtle Creek Chorale in Dallas, Texas, which he conducted for 20 years. Dr. Seelig holds four degrees, including the Doctor of Musical Arts degree and the Diploma from the prestigious Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. He has seven books and DVDs on choral technique. He has conducted at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center annually since 1991. As a singer, he performed world premieres by John Corigliano, Conrad Susa and Peter Schickele (P.D.Q. Bach) in addition to European operatic debut as the lead baritone in the Swiss National Opera and solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall. He holds the Guinness Book Of World Records for conducting the Longest Choral Concert in history (20+ hours) and carried the Olympic torch. His recordings have reached the Billboard Top Ten classical chart and, most recently, the Independent Music Award for I Am Harvey Milk. He has also been featured in two PBS documentaries, the first of which one the national Emmy for Best Documentary. Known for his enthusiasm and sense of humor, *Grammy Magazine* says, "Dr. Seelig takes eclecticism to new heights." *Fanfare Magazine* writes "He raises singers from the ranks of amateur to receiving wide recognition for excellent performances of appealing, fresh repertoire." The *New York Times* calls Seelig an "expressive performer," and the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* quips, "Seelig slices a thick cut of ham." He is married to Dan England and is the proud grandfather of the amazing Clara Skye. Email: tgseelig@mac.com



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▲ Debra Shearer-Diri (Fusion) receiving the IFCM Ambassador Plaque — WSCM10 © Moon Gi Kim for the Korean Federation for Choral Music (KFCM)

Through its membership, IFCM brings together over fifty thousand choirs from throughout the world. This impressive number, which conveys to each of the members a sense of being part of a great family of choral enthusiasts which covers the whole earth, gives an idea of just how widespread choral singing is in all nations and continents.

However, one may note that not the entire world of choristers, directors, choirs, and composers is united in this common house of music. There are still choirs that have not heard of IFCM, that have not yet been made aware of the great work that IFCM carries out in promoting choral music.

Thus, making our work known, sharing our experience, making plans together while sharing, as much as possible, each person's resources - these are important goals of IFCM.

The IFCM Ambassador Program is one of the means by which IFCM wishes to render itself ever more present and visible in the world of choral music.

The program envisages the nomination of "IFCM Ambassadors" for those choirs invited by an IFCM arts commission to an event held by the federation. This role, which is valid for one year, will make the choir involved responsible, as much as it is able, for promoting IFCM's mission and logo wherever the choir may appear, from its web site to any printed materials it may produce.

Everyone who has had the good fortune to participate in the tenth World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul has been given a chance to participate in this program, since all those choirs invited were given the opportunity to become Ambassadors of IFCM.

The Federation expects those choirs chosen and invited to represent their countries before the entire world of choral music at WSCM10 to disseminate in detail, wherever their artistic careers carry them, news about the projects IFCM supports to help spread and cultivate choral music.

What is being offered these choirs is certainly a great honor: that of representing fifty thousand choral groups from throughout the world, of being considered worthy to represent choral music at its highest levels. Above all, this honor confers upon these groups the duty to work hard to see that the artistic level of their performances remains elevated.

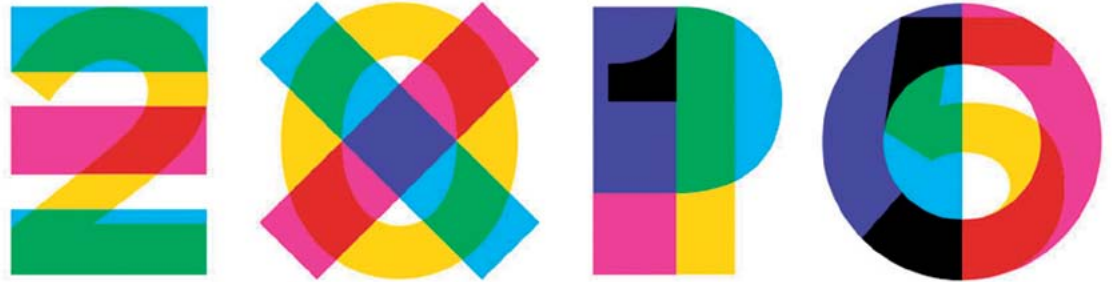
As always, with great honor comes great responsibility: that of maintaining the good name of IFCM and of working together to widen the great, world-wide family of choral art.

Translated from the Italian by Marvin Vann, USA ●

Francesco Leonardi, born in Legnano (Italy) in 1979, is a graduate in Public Relations and is completing a second degree course in Economics and Management of Cultural and Entertainment Assets. He speaks English, German, French and Spanish. For the last ten years he has been responsible for selecting choirs to take part in the International Choir Festival 'La Fabbrica del Canto' (The Song Factory), which takes place in June each year in fifty different municipalities in the Lombardy region of Italy. He is a registered journalist in Milan. In August 2011 he was nominated Project Manager for IFCM. Email: leonardifra@yahoo.it



Francesco Leonardi
IFCM Project Manager



MILANO 2015

Every five years, in varying parts of the world, an event is held that unites all nations around a common theme. This World's Fair is known as the World Exposition or Expo and it takes place in one city chosen from throughout the world much the same way as happens for the cities chosen to host the Olympics.

From the 1st of May to the 31st of October, Expo 2015 will be held in Milan, Italy, exploring the theme *"Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life"* involving 147 of the world's countries which will present their notions and greatest achievements pertaining to the exhibition's theme: Food. This event will doubtless be memorable, and we too would like to contribute by bringing to the overall theme a particular aspect: Choral Music.

Choral music is truly a part of the traditions and cultures of all peoples. Its origins can be traced back to the collective hope felt in sowing a field, to the spontaneous joy that comes with a good harvest, to the prayer for a season of fair weather, and to the exhaustion brought on by repetitive grinding work, when singing together gives the strength to see it through to the end.

Listening to a choir's song reminds us of those roots, those feelings that only in the fusion of voices by a group of persons can again find a means of expression and communication without barriers.

The theme of Expo 2015, *"Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life,"* leads us to rediscover these roots by exposing the basic needs of the human community, to rediscover those same values that are the origin of common song.

For this reason, we hope that Expo 2015 will be an event marked by a greater understanding of the cultures and traditions of choral music in all of the world's nations, a place in which to become aware of just how different cultures and traditions may be, and to come to understand that ultimately each culture and tradition was born of the same values and the same feelings.

The International Choral Festival, "Feeding Souls, Giving Thanks for Food," will be a historic event for choral music for two reasons: the artistic level and the magnitude.

The high artistic level will be assured by IFCM (International Federation for Choral Music) and by FENIARCO (National Federation of the Regional Choral Associations in Italy) and will see the participation of the best groups that choral music can offer all over the world.

IFCM as Artistic Director will ensure that the choirs invited are the élite of world choral music and for their part FENIARCO will act as Artistic Director for the Italian choirs participating in the event.

The entire project will be organized and coordinated by the Associazione Musicale Jubilate, which boasts over twenty years' experience in organizing and realizing choral events, experience gained mainly through organizing and realizing the International Choral Festival *"La Fabbrica del Canto"* which has been held in Legnano, Italy, for twenty-three years.

The aim of *"Feeding Souls, Giving Thanks for Food"* is first to demonstrate how choral music, the oldest of humanity's expressions, is a fundamental part of every people, reaching down into their deepest cultural roots. In choral music, all people know themselves to be alike, notwithstanding the great variety of expressions that this art has developed through the centuries.

Francesco Leonardi
IFCM Project Manager

Other notable aspects of this project are the quality and variety brought to it by the nations participating in Expo 2015; Choirs will be invited from scores of nations, ensuring thereby a continual variety of musical forms, repertoires, and schools of musical interpretation, always maintaining elevated levels of artistry.

A further aim of the project will be to allow an exceptionally vast public (attendance is estimated to be around twenty-one million people worldwide) to encounter choral music, thereby sharing the pleasure of listening to a choir with great numbers of people less accustomed to this genre of music

Because of this *"Feeding Souls, Giving Thanks for Food"* will be a unique event in the history of choral music, at which everyone passionate about this art form will want to be present.

The project will affect the entire Region of Lombardy, starting with the host city, Milan and its Greater Metropolitan Area, and thence spreading throughout the territory. The aim is also to direct the attention of visitors to the historic, scenic, and cultural wealth to be found in this part of Italy but which tourists often miss, by performing concerts in areas, buildings, churches, and other places which are part of the territory's history.

"Feeding Souls, Giving Thanks for Food" is composed of two main parts: the Choral Music of Italy and the Choral Music of the World.

Italian Choral Music will be highlighted through the activities held in the Italian Pavilion at Expo 2015, with performances by the finest choirs from each Region of Italy. Visitors to the Italian Pavilion will thus be enabled to appreciate the many different nuances of the culture and traditions of the different Regions, completing the overall exhibition.

The foreign choirs invited during Expo 2015 will have two distinct tasks to accomplish. First, as representatives of their own nations, they will exhibit the culture of their native land here in Italy, giving those present the opportunity to encounter various traditions often largely unknown, and second, to enhance through their presence and performances the value of places of artistic merit, becoming in the process centers of attraction for cultural tourism in Italy.

June and July will see the greatest numbers of choirs participating, but probably September too will be a 'choral' month.

Feeding Souls, Giving Thanks for Food will take place as follows:

Every weekend, in the Italian Pavilion at Expo 2015, an Italian choir will take part in two short performances during the day and a full concert in the evening.

Every day two foreign choirs will be invited to perform in the area (Milan, the Greater Metropolitan Area, and Lombardy).

So if you happen to be passing through Europe during the months of Expo 2015, alone or as a choir, write to fabbricadelcanto@jubilate.it. Our local partners will be happy to help you attend concerts and meet the choirs, in the spirit of IFCM: that is, to facilitate the exchange of choral music and choral culture throughout the world.

Translated from the Italian by Anthony Litchfield, USA ●



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Choral World News



▲ Manado State University Choir (Indonesia) one of the winners of Varsovia Cantat

Choral World News

Goodbye Dear Friend

Jean-Claude Wilkens

Changes in the Choral World over the past Ten Years

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The Spirit and Voice of Robert Schumann

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Towards Polyphony, Competition for Choral Conductors

Marta Kierska-Witczak

Eightieth Anniversary Celebrations at the Belarusian State Academy of Music

Natalia Arutyunova



Dr. Steve Zegree left us this Saturday 7th March, victim of a rapidly-spreading cancer. Music has lost one of its most faithful servants and hundreds of students, alumni, members of *World Youth Choir* and artists mourn his passing.

Steve was an accomplished musician. After an academic training in choral conducting and piano, he soon made it his mission to give modern-day music, and vocal jazz in particular, the place it deserves in the music curriculum. For thirty-four years, as a professor at the *Western Michigan University* in Kalamazoo, he trained generations of singers and pianists, many of whom are now the pride of the international jazz and pop scene. At the head of *Gold Company*, the vocal group of the school, he performed on stages around the world and received more than twenty awards for his recordings.

An advocate of vocal jazz, he continued to defend this living music until recently and had agreed to leave Kalamazoo to equip the prestigious and venerable *Jacobs School of Music* of Indiana University in Bloomington with a vocal jazz department.

Steve was involved in many projects. He founded the *Steve Zegree Vocal Camp for High School and College Students and Teachers*, led three sessions of the *World Youth Choir* and performed with *Gold Company* in many conventions for the *American Choral Directors Association*, the *Jazz Educator Association* and the World Symposium of the *International Federation for Choral Music*.

He leaves his many arrangements and recordings with the *Heritage Music Press* and *Hal Leonard*, among other publishers.

Jean-Claude Wilkens
Director of A Cœur Joie
France, publishing house
and association
Former IFCM Secretary
General



▲ Steve Zegree conducting the World Youth Choir in Hong Kong, July 2008 © WYC Foundation ▲



Beyond these facts, it is to the man and the teacher that we should pay homage. Steve would do anything for his students. His teaching was not only musical. He took the time to talk about the everyday lives of each student, advocating discipline and rigour, self-respect and respect for others, to make his students artists respected for their art, their personality and their role in society. Steve required 110 percent commitment but he was always positive, encouraging and inspiring in revealing their talent and creating confidence in everyone.

A quick search on internet is all that is required to discover the thousands of anecdotes that describe, better than this article, what Steve was like and what he represented. My story about him is probably trivial. We met by chance. I was looking for a group to take on a cancelled tour of thirty school concerts in Europe at the last minute. While nothing could foreshadow the beginning of a deep and loyal friendship, his first question was “Why are you doing concerts in schools?” I’ll leave you to imagine the sequel to our discussions.

Steve profoundly influenced the way I see my job, the direction it should take ... and he introduced me to vocal jazz backstage! I shall be eternally grateful to him.

Translated from the French by Mirella Biagi, Italy/UK ●



▲ Steve Zegree & Jackie Chan (WYC in Hong Kong, July 2008) © WYC Foundation



▲ Steve Zegree & Prof. Hak Won Yoon shared the direction of the WYC (Hong Kong, July 2008) © WYC Foundation

Changes in the Choral World over the past Ten Years



▲ Anima (Riga, Latvia) with conductor Ivars Krauze

Every year at the end of October, the International Warsaw Choir Festival, “Varsovia Cantat” (www.varsoviacantat.pl), takes place. I am lucky to have been a jury member of this event for many years and, last October, I was pleased to be a part of the tenth iteration of the festival that brings top a cappella choirs to the capital of Poland. It was a great occasion to reflect, together with my colleagues, on the last ten years. All of them are very active jury members and shared their opinion with me, basing their discussions not only on their experience in Warsaw of course, but on many other festivals and choral events they have attended. The jury panel consisted of Prof. Romuald Twardowski (Polish composer), Bernard Gfrerer (Salzburg, Austria), Agnes Gerenday (Budapest, Hungary) and Carmen Moreno (Barcelona, Spain).

Changes in attitudes towards competition singing and concerts

The main component of the “Varsovia Cantat” festival is competition singing. Ten years ago, choirs were of course interested in winning the prizes, but for many the main goal was to take part in as many additional concerts as possible. In the earlier years, with an average of eighteen to twenty-five choirs, the organisers had difficulty squeezing them into ten or twelve joint concerts. In recent years, with almost thirty choirs each time, they needed to provide for just four or five joint concerts. This obviously means that now choirs are more focused on competing than performing in general. Moreover, ten years ago during the additional joint concerts, choirs wanted to sing for as long as possible – often twenty-five to thirty minutes was not long enough for them. Nowadays, some choirs have difficulty singing a twenty-minute programme and quite often just repeat their competition programme. Why is that? Do they lack confidence? All the choirs selected for “Varsovia Cantat” are good or very good ensembles, which at one time or another have won top prizes at many choral festivals around the world. So, from my point of view, for many choirs becoming a champion is more important than performing to an audience. Because of this, the level of performance has been steadily increasing, but is singing in a choir only about winning points?

Changes in repertoire

As with the length of the additional concert programme, many years ago choirs tried to maximise competition time and chose as long a programme as possible; in many cases, this resulted in going into overtime quite significantly, which, as can be expected, did not make the jury happy. In my opinion, it is quite easy to measure the time of a performance based on rehearsals. Naturally, you may miscalculate by one or two minutes, but why did some choirs exceed performance times by five or more minutes? Now, this does not happen often and we even have cases of choirs worrying whether their repertoire is too short!

We noticed a slight tendency towards choirs singing more contemporary music, both international and originating from their own country, and more 15th or 16th century music, naturally including many performances of the “forever live” music of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. There has been a slight decline in performances of 18th-19th century music. Since the first festival, choirs from the former eastern bloc have had a tendency to sing quite a lot of spiritual songs or “entertaining music”;

Marcin Cmiel
Choral Society “Lira”
in Warsaw



▲ Golden Lyre statuettes



▲ Romuald Twardowski (left) congratulating Hristo Krotev (Bulgaria)

they were perfectly prepared vocally, however they had some style-interpretation problems, which, after a few years, almost disappeared. Later on, they started to use more and more songs from their own countries and, surprisingly, choirs from the north and west started to perform more and more “eastern” music, including pieces originating from the Orthodox Church. Many choirs fully understood that some compositions, although beautiful and quite famous, are not particularly suitable for the festival, as they are more appropriate for concerts. Choirs understood that selecting the repertoire is very important and should show the variety of vocal skills within the choir. Earlier choirs often sang repertoires which they had known for many years, but in many cases that was the wrong approach, as they felt too confident with their old repertoire and, consequently, they did not put in much effort during the preparation period. There was no new repertoire for the competition to refresh choristers’ brains. No challenges, no results!

Changes in the type of choir

As is commonly known, most choirs that performed at “Varsovia Cantat” were mixed choirs. Ten years ago, it was common to see a choir with forty-five to fifty or more singers. In recent years, there has been a decrease in the average number of choristers and a preference for more chamber forms. The dominating type of mixed choir in terms of high-level performance is still the university choir. More often than not, these choirs consist not only of students but also of graduates and university lecturers. Surprisingly, male and female choirs, which, year by year, have become increasingly rare, have returned to glory in recent years and started to appear more often in the competition. The average children’s choir age has risen – now fourteen to fifteen years, where earlier it was eleven to thirteen years. In some cases, it is difficult to call them children’s choirs; they should be named “youth choirs”. The young children’s choirs, with choristers aged seven to twelve years, have seldom performed recently.

Changes in the social life of the choir

During the festival, all choirs are accompanied by a local choir member or volunteer to help them move around a relatively big city such as Warsaw. After each festival, I also meet these people and we try to summarise the festival. Compared to the early festivals, when choirs enjoyed their free time so much that they barely made it for the competition singing or additional concerts, spending most of their time in the city, nowadays, more choirs spend their time rehearsing at the hotel. This is quite understandable, but curiously this happens even after the competition or additional concerts. Of course, they spend time together besides singing, but more often they split into small groups, rather than staying together as a whole choir. In some cases, the only choir photo they bring back from Warsaw is from the concert hall. Are singers becoming less sociable? Or is it just a general tendency around the world?

How audiences have changed

The audience, which is very important for the choir during the concert, does not always help during the competition. Audiences have become lazier with respect to those in the past. There are more and more people at the gala concert, as it is easier to come for two hours and listen to the best of the whole festival than it is to spend ten hours listening to competition singing – but this would be the place where they could listen to some new or lesser known compositions. The gala choirs of course choose very good repertoires, but usually they are pieces well known to choral lovers. Audiences at the evening concerts are as unpredictable as the weather, and in fact the weather is unfortunately the most important factor. In relatively warm weather, we have crowds at the concerts, but if it is raining or cold, fewer people come. Ten years ago, the weather was not so important for the audience. Can we blame climate change?



▲ Airlangga University Choir (Surabaya, Indonesia) ending performance at the gala concert

Marcin Cmiel (Warsaw, Poland) Choral conductor and music teacher. One of the founders of the Choral Society “LIRA” in Warsaw. In the years 1997-2008, he was the deputy conductor of the Choral Society “LIRA” in Warsaw. Since 2009, he has become its artistic director. He graduated from Warsaw Academy of Music in Prof. Ryszard Zimak’s class. For years, he worked with Warsaw University Choir and Stefan Wysznski University Choir, and composer Romuald Twardowski. He has been a jury member of choir festivals in Warsaw, St Petersburg and Krakow Advent Festival for many years. Email: mcmiel@poczta.onet.pl



I’m glad that, over the past ten years, almost 250 choirs from around the world have come to “Varsovia Cantat”, and the festival has remained loyal to its a cappella profile, which for me is the best type of choral performance – it is maybe not as spectacular as famous works with an orchestra, but it is the most demanding and beautiful at the same time.

Edited by Hayley Smith, UK ●



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• Ihlombe! South African Choral Festival, 17-26 July 2014

“Singing that Nourishes the Body and Soul” - Cape Times



▲ Choristers from Trinidad and Tobago

With packed audiences at concerts in Pretoria, Soweto, and Cape Town, the *Ihlombe!* South African Music Festival celebrated its sixth season in July of 2014. Each year festival participants come from near and far, including ensembles from U.S.A., Canada, Trinidad & Tobago, South Africa, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Our choir, The Children’s Chorus of Washington, has joined the ranks of the prestigious past participants. We exchanged choral traditions in gorgeous settings, performed our own diverse choral repertoire, and experienced other unique ensembles, all while bringing audiences to their feet.

Our choir had numerous outreach opportunities to choose from including choir exchanges, orphanage visits, school exchanges, home building projects, collaborations, and the opportunity to give back to youth choral and music programs. We choose to participate in a school exchange and youth after-school choral programs. We sang for each other and learned new songs as well as a better understanding of a different culture.

A few other choirs enjoyed singing at and assisting in daily activities at a local orphanage and daycare center.

Joan Gregoryk

Founder & Artistic Director,
Children’s Chorus of
Washington

Known in the choral world for diverse choral music, South Africa is the perfect home for this choral festival. Born from the inspiration of this rich choral singing tradition, *Ihlombe!* South African Choral Festival was inaugurated in 2009 and presented annually ever since, earning the status of the largest international choral gathering in Southern Africa. Classical Movements, producer and presenter, has been touring to South Africa since 1994, when Nelson Mandela became president. Cultural exchanges play a vital part in building friendships across nations and *Ihlombe!* reflects this sentiment. Through its consistent effort in bringing choristers together in venues accessible to various communities, the festival provides audiences with a mix of local and foreign choirs with rich diversity and high level of artistry.

We experienced some of the most prominent South African choirs as well as excellent international choirs while participating in this festival. Our concerts took place in Soweto, Johannesburg, Pretoria, as well as the greater Cape Town area, with other choirs having additional outreaches to Winterton, Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth, George, Paarl, Grahamstown, Bellville, and Stellenbosch. Since its inception, *Ihlombe!* has presented over a hundred choirs in 43 concerts, making it a sought-out festival for choirs of all nations to experience the cultures of this diverse nation at the tip of the African Continent. One of the aims of the *Ihlombe!* Festival is to offer South African audiences an opportunity to hear South Africans performing in concerts with excellent choirs from all over the world. All choirs have the opportunity to participate in choral workshops with exhilarating cultural interactions from African rhythms, dancing and drumming to sharing unique international choral pieces. We especially enjoyed our drumming workshop and learning about many of the traditional South African cultural performances. Each of our concerts featured different choir combinations with exciting programs and ended with a mass finale of a South African piece learned at the workshops conducted by leading South African conductors. This usually also included the entire audience standing and joining us in song. It is quite the experience and one that our choristers will never forget.

“Ihlombe” the Xhosa word has no equivalent in the English language, it describes the transcendental feeling induced by making music and singing together that transports one to a state of overwhelming joy in which you become so acutely moved that you are compelled to rise and participate. In Zulu “ihlombe” translates into applause, which is a wonderful way to describe the beautiful choral traditions of South Africa.

We had the opportunity to participate in workshops with traditional Cape Malay, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Afrikaans, and English choirs of various ages. Each of our concerts were hosted by a local South African choral ensemble, showcasing the musical facets of this country—including traditional choral techniques, drumming, rhythms, and international award-winning choirs. Concert proceeds usually benefit the hosting South African choirs.

South Africa boasts gorgeous nature and exhilarating activities that we were able to partake in during the festival. We visited the major sights including the Cape of Good Hope, Table Mountain, scenic drives, wildlife safaris, museums, the home of Nelson Mandela, Robben Island, Freedom Park, and many other historic locations. One of our favorite experiences was during our overnight stay at the Safari Lodge, where animals could roam freely and we experienced a traditional South African “braai” (cooking outdoors on an open fire).

Ihlombe! offers the festival participants an opportunity to work together to honor the great Nelson Mandela and his commitment to creating a better world in celebration of International Mandela Day. In remembrance of Nelson Mandela’s 27 years in prison, each choir donated 27 minutes of singing. Additionally, each participant donated 67 minutes of community outreach in commemoration of his 67 years of fighting for the rights of humanity.

We performed in benefit concerts held in honor of Nelson Mandela featuring choral groups from around the world, while choirs participated in community activities. Each of these choirs donated the gift of song and helped to spread the message of hope. A memorable moment of this monumental event was a flash mob, organized by the festival participants, which featured participating choirs in Cape Town to commemorate Nelson Mandela’s birthday. Choirs also stopped to sing outside the hospital in Pretoria where Mandela was hospitalized at that time. Every event was well-received and covered by local newspapers, radio, and television stations. Classical Movements continues to contribute the gift of song to the celebration of Mandela’s life and accomplishments for Africa and the world through *Ihlombe!*

Our choir left South Africa with a renewed sense of unification through the power of music.



▲ Children's Chorus of Washington participates in an Ihlombe! Finale Concert



▲ Children's Chorus of Washington visits the iconic sights of South Africa



▲ Award Winners

Joan Gregoryk, Music Director [Children's Chorus of Washington]

"The Children's Chorus of Washington has just returned from the Ihlombe! South African Choral Festival, and choristers, chaperones and staff all agreed that this was the most enriching and life-changing tour we have taken. The shared concerts with the other international choruses and the South African choirs were musically exciting and the visits to the historic sites that have shaped the recent history of South Africa, including Robben Island, were sobering. We all loved staying at the Game Park and going on the Safari, and were amazed by the physical beauty of the country, including Table Mountain, Cape Town harbor, and the Cape Peninsula. We at CCW are grateful to Classical Movements for having the vision to plan and carry out all the details that made this such a memorable tour."

Anonymous, Chorister [Children's Chorus of Washington]

"I loved the balance between sightseeing and actual concerts. I felt less like a tourist because I got to interact (and sing) with all the wonderful, different people of South Africa. Thank you so much--this trip has truly changed my life. I know I will be back to South Africa soon, maybe attending the University of Cape Town!"

Info: Stephanie@classicalmovements.com ●

Joan Gregoryk, Founder & Artistic Director of the Children's Chorus of Washington (CCW), is internationally recognized as a leading authority on children's vocal music. She founded CCW in 1995 with the goal of developing the top children's vocal ensemble in metropolitan Washington. She has prepared choruses for performances with leading conductors such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Helmuth Rilling, Leonard Slatkin, and Valery Gergiev. Ms. Gregoryk is in constant demand as a teacher, author, and guest conductor in the United States, Canada, and Europe. She has received numerous honors including Outstanding Arts Educator in the United States from the Rockefeller Brothers Funds Awards in Arts Education, Greater Washington Choral Excellence Award, Maryland Outstanding Elementary Music Educator Award, and the Conservatory Medal of Excellence from Shenandoah University.





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The Spirit and Voice of Robert Schumann

[for the Seventh International Robert Schumann Choral Singing Festival held from 15 to 19 October 2014 in Zwickau (Germany)]



▲ Pa Saulei, Latvia © INTERKULTUR

Robert Schumann was inspired by choral singing very early on, and it is true that in the first half of the 19th century the composer was particularly spurred on by choral music activity in the capital of Saxony, where he lived. Continuing the choral music tradition started by Heinrich Schütz's Kreuzschule in the 17th century, Robert Schumann dedicated himself to the practical development of choral music by becoming the musical director of two choruses: the *Männergesangverein*, a male *Liedertafel* in Dresden, and the *Chorgesangverein*, a mixed chorus that he founded in late 1847.

The preceding year (1846), Schumann had composed numerous choruses for Leipzig's *Liederkrantz*, another vocal ensemble founded by his friend Mendelssohn, but Schumann himself would also become an attentive, passionate choral conductor interested in the vast choral composition repertoire that existed at the time. In March 1848 he said, "I take great satisfaction in my Chorverein, whom I have on hand to interpret all my favorite music as my heart desires." He was composing and directing at the time. He composed numerous pieces for equal or mixed voices based on the poems of the leading German writers whom he admired: Rücker, Mosen, Heine, and Goethe. These would be sung by the *Chorgesangverein*, in which he took great pride, and by the male *Liedertafel* in Dresden, though he subsequently gave up the post of musical director for this chorus. He added not only multipart a capella *lieder* to his work but also choral pieces with piano or other instrumental accompaniment, as well as religious music, mainly in German.

Henri Pompidor
choral conductor
and instructor



▲ Tonica, Belarus © INTERKULTUR

The German choral organization Interkultur, in its creation of an international choral singing festival fourteen years ago in honor of the composer, has shown no visible sign of abandoning this tradition. The seventh Robert Schumann festival was held on October 15-19, 2014 in Zwickau (Germany), the composer's birthplace. This event certainly paid homage to him as a major choral music composer alongside Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, as well as Johannes Brahms.

Consequently, over twenty choruses from over nine countries, mainly from Europe, came together in this small town in Saxony to present this high-quality choral repertoire. The groups mainly consisted of equal-voice male choruses, such as the Croatian chorus "Brodosplit", as well as female choruses from Russia, Belarus, the Czech Republic, and Germany. A few mixed choruses from Switzerland, Norway, and many German *Länder* (states) were also seen there. A special place was reserved for Schumann's compositions within the repertoire of these ensembles. Consequently, it was not only possible to hear some of the *lieder* composed by Schumann for four male voices, particularly for his 1847 Dresden chorus, but also mixed-voice a capella pieces from the leading German composers of the Romantic era, such as Brahms or Mendelssohn.

From the very first days of the competition onward, in the large art deco room of the Neue Welt in Zwickau, the jury noticed the overall excellent level of the choruses present. During the mixed-voice competition, Norway's Kammerkoret Aurum was hailed for its musical precision in its performance of Schumann's "Bänkelsänger Willie," and Latvia's mixed chorus was hailed for its seemingly effortless vocal performance of "Am Bodensee" from the *Vier Gesänge*. The equal-voice Schumann pieces were certainly not to be outdone, given the very beautiful resonance of the Russian "Cantilena" chorus with "Der Wassermann." People were also impressed by the choral work of "Vox animae" in Brahms' "Wo ist ein so Herrlich Volk," the purity of the female voices of the Byelorussian "Lira" chorus during its interpretation of "Laudate Pueri" (one of the three Opus 39 motets of Felix Mendelssohn), and by the blending of voices of the Czech girls' chorus "Kühnuvdesky sbor" during its performance of Johannes Brahms' *Ave Maria*. Also worthy of note was the very welcome presence of "Pasargaad," an Iranian chorus, who also performed

a Mendelssohn motet. But the chorus that made the greatest impression in interpreting German Romantic music was, without question, the men's chorus "Gradski zbor Brodosplit." This Croatian group gave a remarkable interpretation of the second of his *lieder*, the "Freiheitslied" composed by Robert Schumann in 1847. This very lovely interpretation, coupled with solid vocal support and beautiful nuances, was awarded the Robert Schumann performance prize given at the end of each day of the competition.

In his compositions, Schumann did not shy away from technical innovations, daring rhythms, tempo changes, changes in interpretative markings, changes in tonality, use of dissonance, and changes in meter. The choruses present in the different categories of the competition – equal voice, mixed voice, children's or adults' chorus, sacred or secular music – knew how to bring this touch of modernity to the music in a way which would fit in well with the passionate work of the German Romantic composer and choral conductor. Numerous pieces, making use of the most advanced choral techniques, most certainly rounded out the performers' already very high overall technical level in the field of interpreting Romantic music. Worthy of note were the eight-part work of the Swiss "Vox animae" singers in their interpretation of vocal pieces by Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre, Valeri Gravilin's rhythmic pieces interpreted by the Byelorussian girls' group "Tonica," as well as the precise work of Latvia's mixed chorus "Pa Saulei" in its interpretation of a vocal piece by Peteris Vask. Within this spectrum of modern choral music, it was the Norwegian chorus that stood out with its performance of several contemporary pieces, particularly the *Laudes* by Odd Johan Overove. The chorus valiantly overcame the music's technical difficulties, and the piece was performed with flawless intonation throughout.

The jury set a high premium on the relevance of the selection of musical pieces performed to each different stage of the competition. Such selection was often made on the basis of chorus-specific qualities and criteria specific to what was being tested in the competition. A choral conductor must see to it that he always provides a varied repertoire of many types of pieces (preferably in many different languages), always selected on the basis of the vocal and musical capabilities of the competing choral group. And such criteria necessarily led the jury, in the championship competition, to select Latvia's mixed chorus "Pa Saulei" as the first prize winner of the 2014 Robert Schumann competition. This chorus most certainly won as a result of the originality, enthusiasm, and liveliness of its final choral performances, which garnered the votes of jury members and the audience alike.

Overall, the competition was an excellent example of Schumann's choral music, as well as German music in general. A case in point was the wonderful motet "Beim Abschied zu Singen" ("To be Sung in Farewell") for chorus and instrumental ensemble, which was written by Schumann in 1847 when he was living in Dresden, sung by all the participants at the opening ceremony, and performed again when the prizes were awarded. The music

was appropriate in the best sense of the words “Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rat” (“It is decreed by God that we must someday say farewell.”). Each person hoped, however, that this would only be until we meet again (“Auf Wiedersehen”). Written for the similar July 1847 Schumann festival in Zwickau, the *lied*-motet delicately wove together the indescribable emotions that came over each listener. The *lied* contained within itself the most essential qualities of Schumann’s choral repertoire, which is still often all but ignored by the world’s choral conductors. His musical framework emphasizes the syllables without any major contrapuntal display, but always with a masterful craftsmanship vis-à-vis the harmonies used. The polyphonic, homorhythmic singing thus becomes a sort of rallying call, encouraging a sense of togetherness which transcends differences so that the unifying force is no longer merely Germanic but universal. The choral music, so justly celebrated during these few days in Zwickau, reflects this ideal of “warm simplicity” which still prevails today as an ideal way of conveying friendship between nations. The *Volkslied* must now give way to contemporary choral pieces, from every country and

in every language. Indeed, it is these pieces which once again serve to unify people around the values of togetherness and global cultural exchange.



▲ Cantilena, Russia © INTERKULTUR



▲ Gradski Zbor Brodosplit, Croatia © INTERKULTUR

Member of the French Choral Directors Association, **Henri Pompidor** today teaches choral singing and choral conducting at the Charles Munch Conservatory in Paris (eleventh district). He is also the musical director of the Conservatory’s chorus and actively devotes himself to teaching choral singing internationally through numerous concerts and master classes in several countries of the world (e.g. China, South Korea, Spain, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam). As a juror, he is regularly invited to take part in international festivals and competitions in Europe and abroad (e.g. IFCM, A Coeur Joie, Interkultur). Email: henripompidor@hotmail.com



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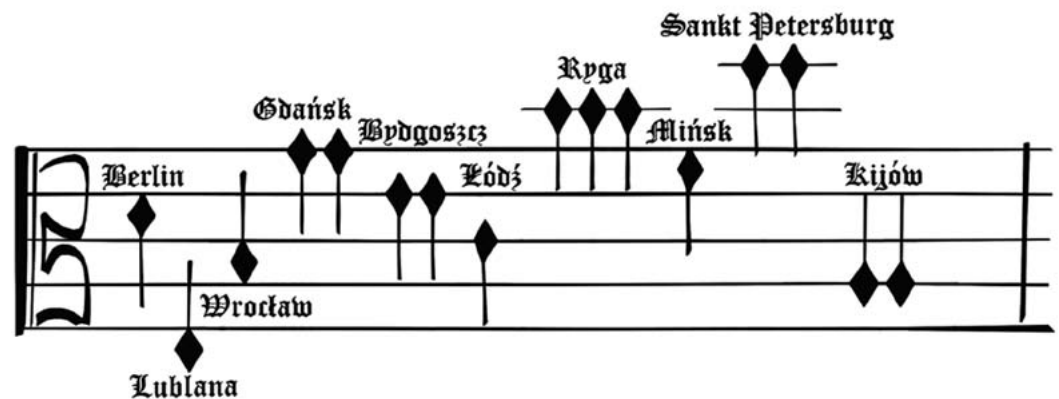
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In 2016, Wrocław will be the European Capital of Culture. The huge potential of this millennial Polish city,¹ located at a crossroads of trade routes, can be seen in its economy, education, science and culture. Cultural institutions, universities and art academies, experimental theatre performances in the Jerzy Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre, famous throughout Europe, or in the Henryk Tomaszewski's Pantomime Theatre, concerts, great music, theatre festivals and science festivals² – these have become a permanent element of the artistic landscape of Wrocław and the whole Lower Silesia area. The diversity and originality of these artistic events prove the huge creative potential of this “city of one hundred bridges”. Thanks to the effort of many generations of Poles, the historic capital of Silesia recovered from post-war decay³ and today it charms its visitors with dynamic, colourful and beautiful architecture, as well as a unique, intriguing and creative atmosphere.

Marta Kierska-Witczak
choral conductor
and teacher

Currently in Wrocław, there are many traditions and cultures living in harmony with each other. The choral art, whose history dates back to the exquisite tradition of the nineteenth century, is also pulsing with its pronounced rhythm. Back then, there were numerous active choral associations, *Singakademie*, appointed in 1825, as well as evangelical and Catholic Church choirs, *Liedertafel* choirs, used to create an image of a town that pulsed, almost “breathing” music. Performances of the greatest European oratorical pieces were prepared and presented regularly and with gusto – usually using the choir's own resources.

After World War II, in the changed geopolitical conditions, the choral art was still an unusually important culture-making instrument. It is worth mentioning that, already in July 1945, the first church ensembles had been formed on the rubble of the city. They were based on pre-war Lvov's great experience of academic choral art, which came to Wrocław together with the legendary professors of the local School of Technology. Academic, professional, sectorial, church, children's and youth choirs were formed. The superb conductor and Polish pioneer of the post-war performance of early music, Edmund Kajdasz, managed the choirs he established in Wrocław for forty years⁴. In Wrocław, in 2001, the All-Polish Development Programme of School Choirs *Singing Poland* was launched. Currently, more than a dozen academic choirs operate here, competing successfully in almost all Polish and European competitions. In addition, the Polish National Youth Choir, gathering young singers from the whole country, has its headquarters in Wrocław. Due to the initiative and creativity of many conductors, it is possible to listen to the chamber repertoire, early music, as well as great oratories, to

1 In the tenth century, a duke's borough had been established there, annexed together with Silesia to Poland before 990. The bishopric was mentioned for the first time in the year 1000. J. Harasimowicz (ed.), *Encyklopedia Wrocławia [Encyclopaedia of Wrocław]*, Wrocław 2006, p. 284.

2 The famous experimental Jerzy Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre operated in Wrocław in 1965-1982. See: www.grotowski-institute.art.pl. The Henryk Tomaszewski Wrocław Pantomime Theatre has been operating here since 1956. See: www.pantomima.wroc.pl. Wrocław is also the city hosting one of the most important festivals of oratorio music in Europe – the Wratislavia Cantans International Festival, established in 1966 by Andrzej Markowski. Every year it hosts the most exquisite groups, conductors and singers. See: <http://wratislaviacantans.pl>

3 Some districts of Wrocław were almost completely destroyed. J. Harasimowicz (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1028-29.

4 Edmund Kajdasz (1924-2009), conductor of the Polish Radio and Television Choir in Wrocław, the Polish Radio Children's Choir *Wrocław Radio Larks*, the Academic Choir and the *Cantilena* Choir, founder of the *Cantores Minores Wratislavienses* Choir. He recorded more than four thousand choral pieces for the Polish radio sound library and fifty records of early music. J. Harasimowicz (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 331.



▲ Yuval Weinberg (Israel), winner of the Competition



▲ Wiktorija Batarowska (Gdańsk), one of the competitors from Poland

which all the city's singers are invited, at numerous concerts and festivals. One of the sources of such a strong interest in the choral art in Wrocław is the fact that the conductors of the majority of Wrocław's choirs are graduates of the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław, Faculty of Music Education, Choral Art and Church Music, which has been educating teachers, instructors and conductors continuously for sixty-five years. In 1991, the initiative of International Competition of Choral Conducting TOWARDS POLYPHONY was established in that Faculty.

This is a unique polyphony of cultures: ideas regarding interpretation and sound, timbre, conducting technique, choral pieces performed in their original languages, and above all a 'polyvocal' meeting of young people from five countries and trainee conductors carrying the flickering glow of friendship and cooperation to their ensembles. "This is the idea behind our Competition, a meeting, a Europe without barriers or borders,"⁵ wrote professor Zofia Urbanyi-Krasnodębska, the founder of the competition, teacher at the Faculty and perennial head of its jury, almost twenty years ago. When teaching at the Wrocław Academy of Music, she was constantly looking for new, unconventional teaching methods for future choirmasters, founding new concert cycles and promoting the most talented musicians. Then, encouraged by her success, she established a new and ambitious choir-conducting competition, the Student's Musical Bridge East-West, based on the musical map of Central Europe. The tournament aimed at breaking down the then strong political barriers and drawing on the rich traditional repertoire, while at the same time looking to the future, to teach and educate the next generations of the most talented conductors and instructors, and indirectly many choristers, in noble competition.

The recent sixth edition of the Competition took place on 10-13 December 2014, with the honorary patronage of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Marshal of the Lower Silesia Voivodeship, the President of the City of Wrocław, the Rector of The Karol Lipiński Academy of Music (KLAM) in Wrocław, and the Honorary Consul of Italy in Wrocław. It

was organised, as always, by the Faculty of Music Education, Choral Art and Church Music and the Department of Choir and Ensemble Conducting of the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music. It should be emphasised that it is the only event of this rank in Poland that gathers young choral conducting students from throughout Europe. Representatives from Latvia and Ukraine (three competitors each), Russia (two competitors), Belarus, Israel and Slovenia (one competitor each) constituted a traditionally numerous group. Poland was represented by five competitors. After an initial classification of recordings (September 2014), sixteen conductors qualified to participate in the Tournament.

In three stages, they encountered a varied repertoire. They started with pieces by Karol Szymanowski (*Kurpie Songs* performed by the Academic Choir *Feichtinum* of the KLAM, twenty minutes of work), which posed a great challenge, particularly for foreign performers. The specifically Polish melodic and harmonic world of these relatively short pieces may be compared, for their difficulties in interpretation, with mazurkas by Frederic Chopin, which pose an exquisite challenge for all piano players, although their structure is seemingly simple. While honouring the above-mentioned difficulties, professor Krasnodębska founded *the Special Award for the best work on a piece by Karol Szymanowski*. It was granted to Viacheslav Larin (Minsk, Belarus).

Only eight conductors participated in the second stage, where they worked on madrigals by Claudio Monteverdi and motets by Heinrich Schütz (*Cantus Animae* Vocal Ensemble). In this stage, slightly easier for candidates (forty-minute rehearsal time), a very clear diversity of conducting personalities was revealed. They were assessed on their selected method of work, its effectiveness, the conductor's skills in developing an ensemble's sound, the selection of the most relevant articulation, the approach to the textual layer, followed by an assessment of their manual method and of their level of interpretation credibility – all these factors comprised the competition jury's final score. The jury also had an opportunity to choose the best performer – the *special award for the best performance of a piece by Claudio Monteverdi* was awarded to Dawid Jarzab (Wrocław, Poland).

⁵ *Cit. per.* Programme of the fifth International Competition of Choral Conducting TOWARDS POLYPHONY, Wrocław 2011, p. 8.

34 The third and last stage (sixty minutes of work) included the interpretation of Polish and European contemporary music – its programme contained pieces by Krzysztof Penderecki, Arvo Pärt, Ana Gnjatović and Paweł Łukaszewski, as well as two pieces by Wrocław citizens – Agata Zubel and Rafał Augustyn – performed by the National Music Forum Choir. It was a difficult repertoire, requiring real technical competence and a mature approach to the musical material. The five finalists were Jurgis Čabulis (Latvia), Dawid Jarzab (Poland), Viacheslav Larin (Belarus), Beata Śnieg (Poland), and Yuval Weinberg (Israel). They each had different personalities and came from different conducting schools, with different ways of communicating with an ensemble, more and less relevant interpretations. The jurors' final verdict corresponded with the overall winner, and apart from purely technical competence also took into consideration (as is usual when dealing with artists) that “something” extra, a non-verbal skill of winning over an ensemble, sharing with it and with the listener one's own passion and artistic fascinations. And so the first prize, the Award of Members of the Department of Choir and Ensemble Conducting of the KLAM, as well as the Competition Choirs Award, went to Yuval Weinberg, born in Israel and a graduate of the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, who is currently studying in Norway. The second prize was awarded to Viacheslav Larin, student at the Belarus State Academy of Music in Minsk, while third place went to Dawid Jarzab, a graduate of the Faculty of Music Education and a student of symphonic conducting at the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław. A representative of the J. Vītols Latvian Academy of Music in Riga gained the distinction and the special award in the form of a concert project, while the Special Award of the Honorary Consul of Italy in Wrocław went to a representative of the S. Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdańsk, Beata Śnieg.

The competition jury included superb experts and experienced conductors representing various European centres: prof. Inessa Bodyako (Belarus State Academy of Music, Belarus), prof. Jasenka Ostojić (Music Academy in Zagreb, Croatia), prof. Andrea Angelini (Rimini, Italy) and prof. Stanisław Krawczyński (Academy of Music in Kraków, Poland). The author of this text was chairing the jury as well as being the competition manager.

The three stages of the competition rehearsals and a concert of laureates took place in the new concert hall of the Wrocław Academy of Music, with its excellent acoustics. It was a great pleasure for us, the organisers, to observe that ensembles, conductors and listeners took much satisfaction from the competition and final performance. The great involvement of the students of the Wrocław Academy was also most enjoyable. Without them, such a large competition would be impossible.

While inviting you to visit the competition's website (www.towardspolyphony.pl) and to visit Wrocław for the next Tournament (December 2016), I want to share with you great optimism and hope. Once again we have discovered that the choral art still can be a young, fresh and fascinating area. More and more superb new conductors can enthuse singers. This year's Competition TOWARDS POLYPHONY corresponded with the celebration of World Choral Day. This shows that, together with thousands of young and older choristers, we want to create a new, better reality with music. As Polish poet, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, said:

*Because beauty is to delight to work. Work – to resurrect.*⁶

Let this delight and this work accompany each of us, providing us with satisfaction and true joy.

Marta Kierska-Witczak obtained her Master of Arts degree with honours from the Karol Lipinski Academy of Music in Wrocław, where she works as a Professor. She has cooperated with different choirs and chamber orchestras in many projects and also taught postgraduate studies, occasional workshops and lessons in the Erasmus scholarship and Ceepus Programme. She has held lectures in different music faculties (e.g. Bulgaria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Spain) and workshops with different choirs in Poland and abroad (France, Norway, Germany), taking programmes in old and contemporary Polish choral music. She is a leader of the Church Music Section in KLAM, organising many initiatives – concerts, symposiums, workshops, etc. She is the artistic director and the conductor of the CONSONANZA Chamber Choir of the Technical University of Wrocław (since 1993), which takes part in many festivals and competitions, being the recipient of different prizes and distinctions. She has received several distinctions as a guest director with other choirs. She also conducts two other choir ensembles (including Cantus Animae) and is an adjudicator at various choir competitions. She was a leader and chair of the jury (in 2014) of the International Choir Conducting Competition TOWARDS POLYPHONY, organised by KLAM in Wrocław. Email: mkierskawitczak@gmail.com



*Translated from the Polish into English by Agata Szczygiel
Edited by Mirella Biagi, UK/Italy* ●

⁶ C.K. Norwid, *Promethidion, Dialog 1, Bogumil*.

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Natalia Arutyunova

Deputy Director of the
Belarusian State Academy
of Music

In November 2014 the Belarusian State Academy of Music's Department of Choral Conducting celebrated the 80th anniversary of its foundation.

One of the oldest departments of the Academy of Music (then the Belarusian State Conservatory), the Department of Choral Conducting was founded in 1934.

The history of the Department is inextricably linked with some of the great names of Belarusian music. Among the founders of the Department are graduates of the Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory Isidor Bary, Lydia Schwartz and Nikolai Maslov. In the post-war years the Department was led for more than 20 years by Professor Ilya Gitgarts, a graduate of the Rimsky-Korsakov Leningrad (St Petersburg) State Conservatory, Honoured Artist of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR), and conductor of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of the BSSR. A number of outstanding figures, including Mark Schneiderman, Samuil Ratner (a graduate of the Leningrad Conservatory), Anna Zelenkova (a graduate of the Vilnius Conservatory and the Moscow Conservatory, where she worked with Professor A. Sveshnikov), and Victor Rovdo, worked on the formation of the Conservatory's Belarusian choir school. Members of the Department have included Alexei Kogadeyev (People's Artist of the BSSR), Vasily Vorotnikov (Honoured Worker of Culture of the BSSR), Konstantin Poplawsky (Honoured Artist of the BSSR) and many other masters of choral conducting, whose names belong to the history of Belarusian music.

From 1963 to 2007 the head of the Department of Choral Conducting was Professor Victor Rovdo, People's Artist of the USSR and Doctor of Arts. He was succeeded by Professor Valery Avramenko, and since February 2011 the Department has been headed by Associate Professor Inessa Bodyako.

The following are currently teaching at the Department: Professor Mikhail Drinevsky (People's Artist of the BSSR), Associate Professors Nickolai Hvisyuk, Larissa Shimonovich and Tamara Slabodchikova, and Svetlana Gerasimovich (Doctor of Arts). People's Artists of Belarus are constantly invited to work at the Department: recent invitees include the outstanding composer Leonid Zakhlevny as well as Nina Lomanovich, chief choirmaster of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. Our young teachers (Yuri Karayev, Kyrill Nosaev, Andrei Kuntsevich, Vladimir Glushakov, Olga Yanum, Olga Izhik, Andrew Savritsky, Victoria Krasovskaya and Denis Ivanov) play an active role in our pedagogical work.

The Department's staff, who represent different generations and branches of the Belarusian choir school, are involved in a variety of scientific and educational events, constantly work with teachers of musical colleges and children's art schools, and lecture on choral music at the Advanced Training Department of the Academy of Music. The Department of Choral Conducting produces highly-



▲ A lecture during the scientific choral conference



▲ Catherine Doulova, Rector of the Minsk Academy of Music, opens the scientific choral conference

qualified choral conductors who fruitfully work in concert halls, institutions of higher and secondary education, and music schools in Belarus and abroad. Graduates of the Department are principal conductors of the National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre of the Republic of Belarus, the State Academic Choir, the G. I. Tsitovich National Academic Choir, the Academic Choir of the Belarusian Television and Radio Company, the State Chamber Choir of the Republic of Belarus, the Belarusian Musical Capella 'Sonus', and other creative groups.

In the early years of the Conservatory's history, a student choir was formed. Its unchanged leader for 45 years (1962-2007) was People's Artist of the USSR Professor Victor Rovdo. Under his leadership, the departmental choir became a highly professional team which, with its greatly refined and skilful choral and ensemble singing as well as its high culture of singing in general, captivated listeners all over the Soviet Union. The most important creative achievements of the choir in the 1990s included winning the Grand Prix at the International Choral Competition for Musical Institutions of the CIS and Europe (Moldova, Kishinev, 1995), a Grand Prix Oscar and three Golden Diplomas at the II International Choir Competition (Germany, Darmstadt, 1997), the Grand Prix at the XVI International Festival of Sacred Music (Poland, Hajnówka, 1997), and the Grand Prix at the International Festival 'Mighty God' (Belarus, Mogilev, 2000).

Since 2007, the artistic director and conductor of the academic choir has been Inessa Bodyako, a former pupil of Professor V. Rovdo, laureate of various international competitions, and Head of the Department of Choral Conducting. This new era in the choir's history has seen some excellent results. During the past five years, the choir has won the Grand Prix and the Audience Award at the Yu. A. Falik Sixth International Choir Competition 'Singing World' (St Petersburg, Russia, 2010), three Golden certificates and a Silver certificate at the Fifth International Festival 'Harmony' (Limburg, Germany, 2011), First Prize, Audience Award and Special Jury Prize at the Fourteenth International Choir Festival (Neuchatel, Switzerland, 2012), Grand Prix and a Platinum

Medal at the K. Xinghai International Competition (Guangzhou, China, 2012), and a Diploma (second degree) in the Thirty-third International Festival of Sacred Music 'Hajnówka 2014' (Poland, Hajnówka, 2014).

The student choir of the Academy of Music was honoured to give the first performances in Belarus of Handel's oratorio *Israel in Egypt*, *Requiem* by A. Schnittke, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, *Mass in Buenos Aires* by M. Palmeri, and a series of cantatas entitled *Intimate Conversations* by N. Sidelnikov. Thanks to our Belarusian-German cultural projects, the student choir went on tour to Germany, where they performed Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* (Altenberg, 2006), Shostakovich's *Thirteenth Symphony* (Bonn, 2008), Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* (Altenberg, Dortmund, 2009), and Verdi's *Le Corsaire* (Dortmund, Cologne, 2011). In 2010, the student choir was awarded a special diploma for its remote participation in the festival 'Chorus Inside', 'for contributing to the development of peace and friendship through choral music and the establishment of friendly relations within the global choral community'.

At present, the student team is actively working on a project entitled 'Choral Pages of the Twentieth Century'. As part of the project, performances of contemporary Polish, Swiss, Bulgarian and Latin-American choral music have already taken place. Student choir members regularly take part in master classes with leading international choral musicians.

Teachers of the Department contribute a great deal of time to practical choral conducting and judge international and national competitions and festivals. The Department is the initiator of the city children's choral music festivals, which have taken place annually in recent years. Since 2009, the Department has conducted at the Academy of Music's V. Rovdo Open Competition for Choral Conductors.

On the occasion of our eightieth anniversary the Department organized and conducted many and varied events throughout 2014 which were a kind of creative report on the multifaceted activities of the Belarusian Choir School. They also served as a platform for communication between different generations of Belarusian choral conductors, as well as for meetings with renowned international masters of choral music.

The V. Rovdo Third Open Competition for Choral Conductors was the first of a series of commemorative events. The guests and judges of the contest were: the famous choral master Povelas Gilis, Professor of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, laureate of international competitions and artistic director and chief conductor of the Lithuanian Song Festival and of 'Gaudeamus', the International Song Festival of students of the Baltic States; Mikhail Shuch, Honoured Worker of Arts of Ukraine, member of the National Union of Composers of Ukraine, Associate Professor of the Dragomanov National Pedagogical University, and member of the International Federation for Choral Music. The contest, which was successfully supported by the student choir of the Academy of Music, gathered eighteen participants from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and China.

September 2014 saw an important event of the anniversary year for the Department: a large-scale arts project, the City Festival of choral music, held during the City of Minsk Day. Various musical groups performed at the Festival, which was held in the Upper Town on Freedom Square, including soloists, the student choir and orchestras of the Academy of Music, the Russian Folk Instrument Orchestra, the Belarusian Folk Instrument Orchestra, and the Wind Orchestra, as well as children's choirs and youth choirs from Minsk.

As a part of the commemorative events a very special concert was held. The student choir of the Belarusian State Academy of Music performed under the direction of Inessa Bodyako in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory during the B. Tevlin Tenth International Autumn Choir Festival. The student choir and its director brilliantly acquainted Russian listeners with the highest achievements of Belarusian choral music and received high praise from the directors of the Moscow Conservatory.

Our jubilee celebrations sounded a powerful polyphonic chord during concerts held during the Festival 'Viva Choir!' (November 15-22, 2014), which took place in the Great Hall of the Academy of Music. The festival opened with a concert given by professional and amateur choirs under the direction of a former pupil of Associate Professor Larissa Shimonovich. Over two and a half hours, the choirs performed vocal compositions of varied styles and characters written by both national and internationally-renowned composers.

The next concert brought together the creative forces of the Department's graduates, but – only men: K. Nosayev, A. Snitko, A. Kuntsevich, V. Glushakov, A. Klimovich, P. Shepelev, A. Savritsky and M. Drinevsky. Under their leadership, a concert entitled 'Men-Conductors!' featured unique creative teams: the boys' choir of the E. Glebov children's music school №10, the fantastic children's choir 'Tonic' of the children's music school №1, the boys' choir of the Republican Gymnasium College of the Belarusian State Academy of Music, the amateur choir of the State Minsk Linguistic University 'Cantus Juventae', the associate professors' and professors' choir of the Belarusian State Agrarian Technical Academy, as well as professional choirs, including the male voice chamber choir 'Unia', the Academic Choir of the National State TV and Radio Company (Honoured Group of Belarus), and the G. Tsitovich National Academic Choir of the Republic of Belarus.

The Festival ended with a reunion concert for graduates of the Department of Choral Conducting entitled 'Singing Together'. The concert included a performance from the choir of the Academy of Music under I. Bodyako, A. Savritsky, A. Kuntsevich and K. Nosaev and a theatrical performance entitled 'How it was – how it is – how it will be!'. Among the audience were graduates and teachers of the Department, budding musicians, venerable masters and ardent fans of choral music.

Along with the Festival a thematic exhibition, 'VIVA CHOIR!', was organised, timed to coincide with the eightieth anniversary of the Department of Choral Conducting of the

Belarusian State Academy of Music. The exhibition presented theses, research papers, monographs, books, and manuals on the history and theory of choral music and vocal-choral performance in Belarus.

The striking final event in the Department's jubilee celebrations was a creative and educational project organised by the Academy of Music with the participation of Andrea Angelini (Italy), eminent conductor and organist, well-known musicologist, conductor and artistic director of the professional vocal ensemble *Musica Ficta* and the *Carla Amori* chamber choir, and artistic director of the choral festival 'Voci nei Chiostrì', an international choral workshop held in Rimini. In mid-November 2014 he conducted master classes with the student choir of the Academy of Music and gave a lecture on the performance of Renaissance Italian choral music. Dr. Angelini also spoke at the plenary session of the International Scientific Conference 'Belarusian Performing Arts in the Context of Artistic Culture', organized by the Academy of Music, with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Belarus. Angelini's report, entitled 'From Monteverdi to Willaert: choral music in Venice in the Renaissance epoch, was of great interest to students and musicologists. The project was rounded off by a concert given by vocal and choral students from the Academy of Music, in which Dr Angelini featured as a conductor of the student choir.

The anniversary year of the Department of Choral Conducting of the Belarusian State Academy of Music is over, but the Department's team of teachers and students are already working on new creative projects, which will undoubtedly contribute to the glorious pages of the annals of this Belarusian choir school.

Natalia Arutyunova, PhD, is the Deputy Director of the Belarusian State Academy of Music. In 1997 she graduated from the Belarusian State Academy of Music in Musicology (PhD, Professor N.N. Yudenich's class) and finished her postgraduate studies at the Belarusian State Academy of Music in 2000. She wrote her PhD thesis on *Instrumental cantilena melodics and its stylistic reflections in Russian music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Tchaikovsky, Taneyev, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin)* (2001). Since 2000 Natalia Arutyunova has been teaching at the Department of Music Theory, and since 2011 she has been working as a Deputy Director for Scientific Research at the Belarusian State Academy of Music. Natalia successfully supervises the work of the Academy in the field of international scientific and cultural cooperation with foreign scientific and educational establishments and organizations, and also spearheads the organization of many international projects, master-classes, competitions, and festivals which are held at the Academy. Email: international@tut.by



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Choral Technique



▲ Latvian Voices at Maratona musica popolare (La Fabbrica del Canto 2014)

CHORAL TECHNIQUE

Conductors Who Cannot Conduct
The role of emotions and their excess in conducting
Aurelio Porfiri

Planning Interesting, Vital Rehearsals
Dr. John Warren

A Choir Revolution
When Technology Helps Tradition
Rune Nilsen

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

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

Email: aangelini@ifcm.net

Conductors Who Cannot Conduct

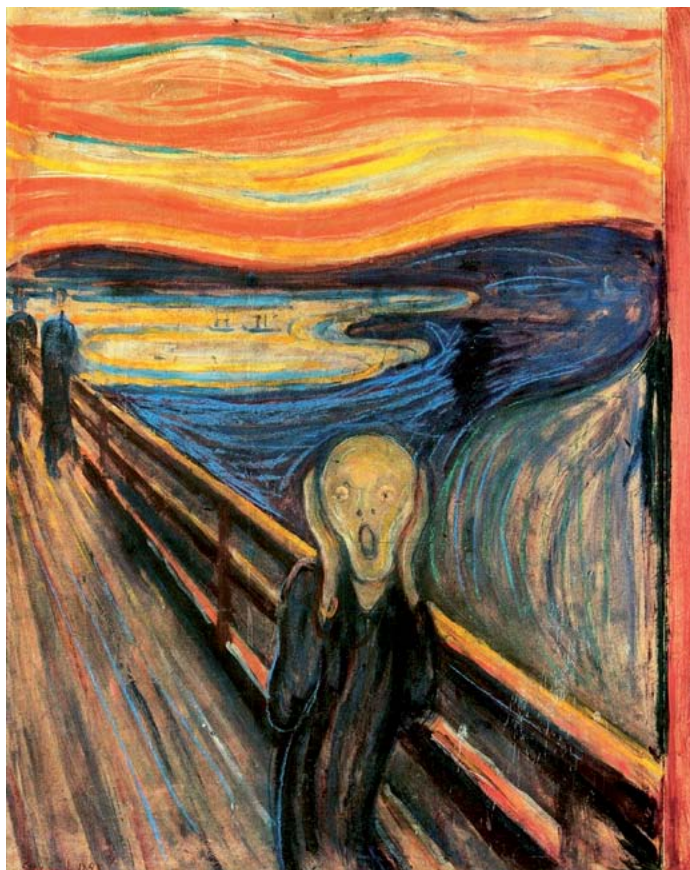
The role of emotions and their excess in conducting

When we are busy considering what a conductor does, we may observe the way he or she moves the hands, gestures, and the outcome of his or her conducting skills. Certainly we are fully aware that music is about emotions and we try to observe in which way the conductor is able to channel to the audience the ‘emotions’ represented by the notes sung by the singers. We do not often pause to reflect on this task of ‘channeling’ emotions which conductors have to be able to do if they are to achieve the desired result; we take it for granted and do not think about any possible ‘side effects’. But being an ‘emotional lightning conductor’ may be a challenging business and sometimes the emotionality of the conductor prevails over the rational part, putting at risk not only the outcome of a concert, but the conductor’s own health and putting also the performance in jeopardy.

Perhaps some people find it strange to talk about this, but nevertheless the ‘pathologies’ of conductors (and actors, dancers and so on) exist and we cannot pretend otherwise. When a conductor is in front of a choir or an orchestra many feelings and emotions, unusual in his or her daily life, start to come alive in the brain and soul. Our unconscious, this mysterious part of ourselves, starts to be filled with sensations that we can barely control. This was expressed well by an Italian psychiatrist in a recent book: ‘*The Unconscious is not only the one which Freud described, the one that includes in itself a second reality nourished from the needs of the species (sexuality and aggressiveness); it is also that abyss, that is our inner being, whose foundation we will never reach, as was said by Heraclitus, and on which not only Schelling, but also Augustine and Pascal have shed intermittent rays of light.*’ (Borgna 2015, 57, author’s translation). This was already contained in a popular book by Ernst Junger, when he described the human being as a tree: flourishing and luxurious at the top and in the hands of brutal forces at the base (Junger 2014). I have always wondered about the ‘brutal forces’ at work when a conductor is immersed in the music s/he is performing. For some conductors (probably the majority) it is possible to control these strong emotions but for others it is not. Usually this phenomenon of dizziness in consequence of emotional stress also involves several other effects: the most common is stomach ache (a problem that in the majority of cases is related to IBS, irritable bowel syndrome, one of the most common problems for sensitive people). It is most unpleasant to be overtaken by this sensation during a performance but we need to recognize that IBS is very common and of course is not only related to the struggles of artists but also to a stressful life, common to many other people. A good doctor can give suggestions on treatment that will help to relieve the symptoms.

Aurelio Porfiri
choral conductor
and teacher





▲ The imagery of *The Scream* (Edvard Munch) has been compared to that which an individual suffering from depersonalization disorder experiences, a feeling of distortion of the environment and one's self

Another problem related to emotionality usually takes the form of a panic attack. This is a bit tricky and also difficult to deal with. A friend, a quite well known conductor (who will of course remain anonymous here in the interests of privacy) has told me what happens when you have a panic attack during conducting: *'suddenly you start to feel a sensation of uneasiness, your heart starts to beat faster and your body and legs are not so strong and firm. Your body communicates to you the feeling that you are going to faint soon and if there is nothing you can grab to fight the fear that you are falling, you need to continue moving your hands and conducting, but at the same time your mind is busy thinking how to stop all the chaos going on in your brain. Sometimes the symptoms may last only a few minutes and then you can once more start to concentrate on the performance and not on yourself'*. Yes, it sounds terrible but it is not at all rare: panic attacks are indeed quite common and today there are many ways to deal with them and face the trouble they are causing in your life, including your professional life. There are also books which describe the experiences of people who have to cope with these issues (not all the books are useful but the fact that there are so many books on this issue helps us to realize how common the problem is).

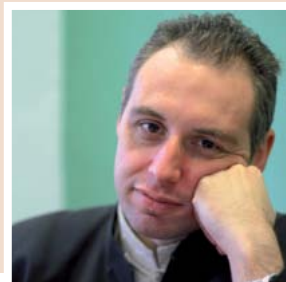
And there is also good news here, besides the fact that there is treatment available to deal with this problem: many famous people have to cope with panic attacks and they are still famous and very successful in their professional life. If you do some research about this you will see names of hugely popular entertainers, actors and actresses, public figures who have to struggle with this issue and yet still keep their popularity. Of course musicians (and conductors) are a sure target for these problems (IBS, panic attacks etc.) because we feel a great sense of responsibility and also because music is emotional in nature; it is an emotional language. There is no easy 'recipe' for avoiding these problems, just accepting that they exist and asking more experienced people for help in dealing with them. The first impact is of course discouraging and one may feel unable to continue a professional career, but this is not the case. Also, being aware of this phenomenon can help us also to advise soloists in our choir or instrumental group, because quite often they have similar problems too, even if sometimes these problems are only episodic.

We should not be surprised about all these problems: as we have said in the passage from the book by Eugenio Borgna quoted above, our interior being is an abyss which we can understand only up to a point. The moment we feel that we are not in control is the moment to take action and to deal with the problem without becoming too discouraged. Many people with these problems have tried various solutions and many have won the battle. And these issues may also help us to understand ourselves better, with our limitations and our weaknesses, helping us to see ourselves in a different light, perhaps destroying the image of the fully confident person, but shedding light on an image of ourselves certainly more reliable and true.

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Aurelio Porfiri is Director of Choral Activities and Composer-in-Residence for Santa Rosa de Lima School (Macao, China), Director of Musical Activities for Our Lady of Fatima Girls School (Macao, China), Visiting Conductor for the Music Education Department of Shanghai Conservatory of Music (China), and Artistic Director of Porfiri & Horvath Publishers (Germany). His compositions have been published in Italy, Germany and the USA. He has contributed more than 200 articles to several publications on topics related to choral and church music. He is the author of five books. Email: aurelioporfiri@hotmail.com



Planning rehearsals day after day can be a grind. It is helpful to have a formula or pattern as a starting point. In this article I present two rehearsal patterns that can help you develop consistently effective rehearsal plans.

The method I primarily use is based on variety.

1. Start with something fast and familiar so everyone can sing comfortably and feel positive. For morning rehearsals it is better not to start with an extremely high or loud piece. Do not spend too long on the first piece since it will be familiar. Usually, for me, this first piece is in a faster tempo, allowing the music to help create energy in the ensemble.
2. Vary tempo, difficulty, and familiarity throughout the rehearsal. It is impossible to vary all three characteristics with each selection, but changing at least one will help maintain interest. It is particularly dangerous to rehearse several slow works back-to-back. This will make the singers sluggish – they will likely sing poorly and lose focus. Rehearsing several easy or very familiar pieces consecutively can have the same effect. Often, if I have a group that tends to not rehearse with intensity and energy, I will begin with two fast works. The second one will require more vocal demands and need more work.
3. Follow a new or challenging piece with something familiar or easy. This prevents the choir from becoming frustrated and helps develop confidence.
4. End with something enjoyable or familiar so singers leave rehearsal with a positive feeling. Ending rehearsal positively is more important than ending with something familiar. If you sense a feeling of accomplishment among the singers after making substantial progress on a challenging work, stop. There is nothing better than the sound of choir members singing or humming music from rehearsal in the halls after rehearsal.
5. Cover lots of music. However, remember to teach the whole work. Run through pieces from time to time, occasionally without rehearsing. This takes little time and gives the choir a sense of the whole composition. It can be difficult to arrive at a good balance between rehearsing isolated passages and complete works. When a rehearsal is less effective than I had hoped, it is often because I spent too much time on too few pieces—maybe two or three in an hour. Rehearsals seem faster paced when moving quickly between pieces and having specific goals for each. I tend to rehearse five to seven works and have a warm-up in a fifty-minute period. When rehearsing a brief passage, it is important to tie it to the rest of the piece by starting a few measures before the section begins and continuing for a few measures beyond it. Rehearsing transitions is critical to successful, meaningful performance.
6. Vary tessitura and vocal demands. This is necessary for vocal health and growth.

When planning a rehearsal using this method, it helps to divide the music into four piles: slow and easy; slow and difficult; fast and easy; and fast and difficult. Choose the first and last pieces from the fast and easy pile. Choose the others from different piles in succession, usually alternating fast and slow. To use this method you have to select repertoire that fits these categories. A repertoire that is varied in style, historical or cultural origin, texture, and so forth, contributes to a successful, varied rehearsal.

Dr. John Warren
Director of Choral
Activities, Syracuse
University

Sample Rehearsal Plan
Syracuse University Singers

TITLE	COMPOSER	ACTIVITY	TIME
Warm-up			5-6 min
Star-Spangled Banner (moderate tempo) (easy)	Traditional	Circle formation Sing through Unify vowels	6 min
Gnome (fast tempo) (moderately difficult)	Bruno Regnier	Row seating in sections Affirm pitches and rhythms Start French text if time	10 min
Ubi Caritas (Slow tempo) (easy to moderate)	Maurice Duruflé	Circle Balance chant melody and 4-part tenor-bass parts Affirm pitches in SATB section Text accentuation	12
Unkown Region, pages 6-9 (fast tempo) (quite difficult)	William Schuman	Row seating — sopranos with tenors; altos with basses Speak text to affirm rhythm and phrasing Check pitches — very dissonant	13
I Got Me Flowers from 5 Mystical Songs (slow tempo) (easy)	Vaughan Williams	Regular row seating Sing on text — affirm phrasing and vowels	5
My Soul's Been Anchored (fast tempo, spirituals) (familiar)	Moses Hogan	Rows; clean introduction; work final 3 pages for precision	7

44

Additionally, not all music needs to be rehearsed with the singers in the same position. Most singers enjoy moving around and singing in different formations. Consider rehearsing in a circle – it allows the conductor to hear all parts equally and the singers to hear each other better. We frequently rehearse in section circles – each voice part makes its own circle. That way they hear their part very clearly but can still hear all parts. Alternating these formations with traditional rows or mixed parts is another way to keep rehearsal interesting and singers engaged.

Sometimes it is impossible to select a truly varied repertoire; examples could include: preparing an extended, multi-movement work; or rehearsing a program of works of one genre, period, or composer. The principles of variety can still apply, although it is certainly more challenging. One still should look for as much contrast as possible and plan rehearsal accordingly. Consider rehearsing music at different tempi than that of performance. Rehearsing slow music at a fast tempo can invigorate it and allow singers to have a broader sense of phrase. Rehearsing fast music at slower tempos allows for greater attention to precision.

Another effective way to organize a rehearsal is to create an arch-like plan.

WORK	TIME SPENT
Warm-up	4 minutes
Slow, easy, low tessitura	4 minutes
More challenging/demanding	7 minutes
More challenging, increasing intensity	10 minutes
Most demanding, priority, greatest intensity	15 minutes
Still challenging, but less intensity	10 minutes
Relatively easy or familiar	6 minutes
Easy, light	4 minutes

1. Start with something low-pitched that is easy, familiar, and vocally undemanding. Spend little time on this piece.
2. Increase vocal and mental demands with each successive piece and increase the amount of time spent on each.
3. Your highest priority work for the day should come in the middle of the rehearsal. This is when you are most demanding of the ensemble and where you will spend the most time.
4. After this central piece, decrease demands and time with each successive piece.
5. The last piece should have few demands and be light or fun. Spend little time on it.

An example of timing using this method for an hour-long rehearsal follows:

This method is especially useful on “low energy” days. It allows the conductor to bring the choir’s energy and focus along steadily instead of attempting to fill a listless group with instant intensity. The principle of increasing energy and expectations as the rehearsal progresses can be incorporated into the first type of rehearsal order as well. As one increases or decreases challenge and intensity, one can vary tempo, texture, style, etc. This produces an invigorating, well-paced rehearsal. Body language, facial expression, conversation level as singers enter, and speed of response indicate the energy level and mood of the singers. The conductor should be aware of these factors and adapt the rehearsal pace to the energy level of the choir, gradually increasing the pace to the desired level.

Regardless of how you choose to organize your rehearsals, it is important to keep the principles behind these methods in mind:

1. Maintain a quick pace.
2. Use a varied selection of music in each rehearsal.
3. Have a specific goal for each piece you rehearse.
4. Account for the vocal needs of the singers.

5. Be aware of the emotional state of the singers.
6. Allow the singers to feel successful.

Edited by Louise Wiseman, UK ●

John F. Warren is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Syracuse University, where he conducts three choirs, and teaches conducting, choral literature, and rehearsal techniques to undergraduate and graduate students. He holds conducting degrees from the University of Miami and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. In addition, Dr. Warren has worked with numerous outstanding conductors including Robert Shaw, Frieder Bernius, Christoph Eschenbach, Robert Page, Helmuth Rilling, Digna Guerra, Rodney Eichenberger, Jo-Michael Scheibe, and Elmer Thomas. Dr. Warren has served in various positions of the American Choral Directors Association and has lectured, adjudicated and conducted festival choirs throughout the Eastern United States and Cuba. Email: jfwarr01@syr.edu



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A Choir Revolution When Technology Helps Tradition



▲ Arctic environment. The Aurora Borealis, the Northern lights, flicker above Bodø, Norway, a small coastal town north of the Arctic Circle. A city where a host of new, creative businesses are starting to emerge – ChoralPractice amongst them.

In a small coastal town north of the Arctic Circle, a true revolution of choral singing was led by a former Norwegian car mechanic and a Swedish musician. The Northern lights flicker in the Arctic night.

At 67 degrees latitude, on a small peninsula facing the great Atlantic Ocean, lies Bodø - a city with a population of 50.000 that celebrates its 200th anniversary next year.

The foundations of this coastal community were laid down in the golden age of herring fishing during the 19th century. Today, Bodø is a pulsating small town with its own university and a flourishing commerce.

It was here, where the white-tailed eagle flies at low altitude over the city centre, where the RIB boats cut through the waves of the world's fiercest maelstrom, where you can play golf at night under the rays of the midnight sun, that ChoralPractice was created.

As often is the case, it all began with a Swede, Mikael Rönnerberg - a conductor, singer and musician who arrived in Bodø in 1995, originally for a one-year stay as a pianist. "I stayed a bit longer", Rönnerberg says, laughing.

A great challenge

He has always had a passion for choral singing. A long while ago, Rönnerberg had a thought which he never completely forgot; "Surely there had to be a way to make the rehearsals more effective, easier, more rewarding" "When conducting amateur choirs, the fact remains that the majority of singers can't read sheet music", Rönnerberg says. Thus, it becomes the conductor's duty to drag singers through the various works.

Rune Nilsen
journalist, photographer
and writer

“We used to operate with learning tapes. As the conductor you had to sit down and record the different voices manually. During rehearsals each voice had to be taught separately, which obviously meant having to spend a lot of time before getting to the fun part – interpreting the work, colouring the piece, so to speak.”

As the digital revolution spread to the recording studios, Rönnerberg had an idea.

It had to be possible to create a digital tool for choral singers. “It would prove to be much more complicated than I could ever have imagined”, he says today.

Could not read music

In 2004, Rönnerberg formed the “Alle kan synge” Choir (Everyone Can Sing Choir), specifically targeting amateur singers, most of whom had never sung before. They certainly did not know the difference between a C and a D. The need for an interactive tool to aid the singers became every more pressing.

“I had a solution delivered to me, but it never worked. It ended up at the back of my office drawer”, Rönnerberg says as he shakes his head. Four years later – in 2008 – he was introduced to a man called Jan Ivar Nilsen. “I gave him a call, and asked whether it was possible to create a software that would help choral singers to learn a piece.” Nilsen remembers that call well. “I was cleaning the attic. Then this Swede calls about something I can’t get my head around. I answered anyway; sure, I can fix it!” Afterwards, the magnitude of the task dawned on Nilsen. “What on earth was he asking me to do?”

Digital transformation

Jan Ivar Nilsen originally worked as a car mechanic, but health reasons forced him to choose a different path. As a devoted fan of Apple’s computers, Nilsen found his call to start creating music and develop software. The first baby steps of what today is known as ChoralPractice were made programming in Adobe Flash. “Everyone used it at the time”, Nilsen says. He himself did not know the first thing about choral singing, but he had experience from playing in marching bands and other musical outfits. Besides, he was in love with funk and the very proud owner of an Alembic bass guitar. From there sprang what was to become a happy and creative working relationship. “Today, there are probably few who know Handel’s “Messiah” better than Jan Ivar – at least no car mechanics!”, Rönnerberg laughs. Together, Nilsen and Rönnerberg have spent thousands of hours in search of the optimal solution. The road has been long and hard. “We set up a trial version in Flash, but then that program died”, explains Nilsen. This was around the time that the iPhone conquered the world. The obvious question arose: “Why don’t we make an app for the iPhone?” So they contacted Bodø-based iOS developer Jørgen Skar, who took on the task of programming this first-of-its-kind app. “To move the tool onto a smartphone was huge. Suddenly you could practice anywhere, anytime”, Rönnerberg says.

ChoralPractice is also available for iPad – as well as for PCs and Macs through your regular web browser.



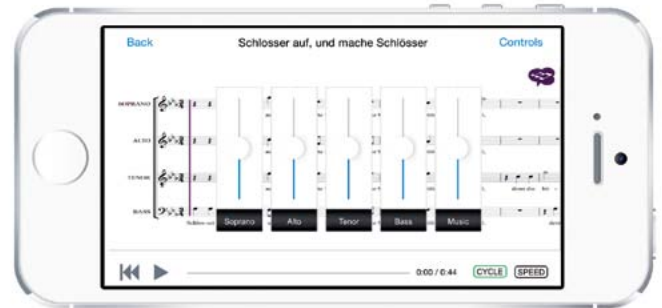
▲ Creative men. Mikael Rönnerberg and Jan Ivar Nilsen have lost count of the hours they have spent in the sound studio working on ChoralPractice. “Labor intensive, but mostly fun”, the two of them say.

Heavy investment

The company, ChoralPractice, was founded two years ago and around five million NOK (approx. \$ 650.000) have been invested in the project. “We’ve received incredible help from the likes of Innovation Norway (a government-funded financing organization, designed to help entrepreneurs)”, Rönnerberg states. The key to success? Well, the devil is in the details. “From the word go we wanted everything to be recorded and sung by professionals”, explains Rönnerberg. “Amongst others, internationally renowned Norwegian tenor Magnus Staveland. “ChoralPractice is as easy as it is brilliant. The app plays a multichannel recording in sync with a note sheet. The volume of the individual sound channels can be adjusted, and an animated marker on the note sheet helps keep track of the piece. There is also a loop function, perfect if you are rehearsing particularly difficult parts. A third trick is the app’s ability to play back the recording at a slower tempo to catch all the details. “This happens without the pitch changing, which is imperative”, Rönnerberg says. “That part demanded a whole lot of advanced programming”, Nilsen adds. So far the app hasn’t generated any profits for the entrepreneurs. Money, they say, is far from the main objective. “In a way we’re on a mission. We want to help choral singers all over the world”, Rönnerberg says.



▲ User friendly. A marker shows where in the piece you are. This is invaluable to inexperienced singers.



▲ A mixer in its own right. ChoralPractice gives you full control over the sound level of the different voices. This way you can tailor the playback to suit your personal needs.

Huge market

And there is no doubt that the potential market for ChoralPractice is huge. In Norway there are around 240.000 choral singers. In the EU, the number is 20 million people and in the US over 36 million people sing in a choir. "Our objective is to offer the existing free version of the app, and then add a separate Pro version", says Rönnerberg. ChoralPractice has made a list of the 25 most popular choral works throughout the world, every one of them pencilled in to be recorded for the app. The objective is to offer as many as possible of these large choral works, sung in choirs across the globe – again and again. So far, five pieces are already in place. The developers are also working on including content from other genres. In both cases, the process is very time-consuming. Hurry gets you nowhere in this project, every tiny detail must be checked twice or even thrice, whether it be the text or the musical notes. "After publishing Handel's *"Messiah"*, it was only a few hours before we received the first e-mail telling us there was an error", Rönnerberg explains. In the movement *"And with His stripes we are healed"*, a D suddenly appeared in a place where there should have been a D flat. The fact that someone discovered one single mistake that fast among the more than 20.000 musical notes our recording consists of, tells you all you need to know about our users' high demands in terms of quality.

Clear objectives

Where to from here? Nilsen and Rönnerberg have set themselves some challenging objectives. ChoralPractice's goal is to become the preferred provider of learning tracks/rehearsal aids around the globe. We want the quality of the recordings to be so good that they may be enjoyed as a "stand-alone" recording as well as for the learning purposes. The goal is to reach 100.000 users. The company will pursue strategic and financial partners. Even if the story of ChoralPractice is a story of stubbornness, drive and endless faith in the idea, the entrepreneurs admit that there have been rough patches. "We were scammed once. We paid for software we never got our hands on. We waited in vain for three years!" "Our advice to other entrepreneurs: Choose your partners with care", Nilsen and Rönnerberg insist. Seven years of hard work down the line, would the two of them have walked the same path once more, given the chance? Nilsen's and Rönnerberg's gazes meet briefly, before they simultaneously answer: "YES!"

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Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood ●

Mikael Rönnerberg, founder, CEO & Artistic Director of ChoralPractice Learning Tracks is a singer, choral conductor and musician born in Hoting in Northern Sweden. Since 1995 he has lived and worked in Bodø, Norway. He was educated as a pianist, organist and singer at the Universities of Trondheim, Tromsø and Bergen. He teaches music and singing at The University of Nordland and is the conductor of male choir Bodøoktetten and Alle kan synge-koret (the Everyone Can Sing Choir, a choir/singing course open for all), where he has had over 2500 participants. He is also choir master in Bodø for the Arctic Philharmonic and the founder of Bodø International Organ Festival, Piccadilly Operapub Festival and professional vocal ensemble VocalART. English translation by Markus André Jensen and Anders Alterskjær & Karina Gregersen.



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Composers' Corner



COMPOSERS' CORNER

The Pajama Composer
An Interview with Ivo Antognini
Nathan Windt

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Please contact **Cara S. Tasher, Collaborator**
Email: ctasher@gmail.com

The Pajama Composer

An Interview with Ivo Antognini

Nathan Windt: How would you describe your compositional style to those who may be unfamiliar with your music?

Ivo Antognini: I have many styles, and my choral music includes varying levels of difficulty. It can be something quite easy for two voices, or perhaps more difficult for sixteen voices. The most important thing for me when I compose is to have certain elements in my music. It *must* be beautiful - like a beautiful mountain or painting. It must be positive also, because we need positive things today, and I want to leave a positive memory with the audience. The spiritual element is also important, either in a human or religious way, but it must be profound and deep, and tell something important to our souls. And then, if we are speaking about choral music, I think it must be "singable." I normally sing all the parts of my composition and I must enjoy singing them. And the last point, which is the most important for me, is the emotional: I always try to write music with my heart, and I must move myself first of all, so it gives me "goose bumps." If it happens for me when I compose then probably the audience and choir - even when they are rehearsing - will feel this as well. For my style, I like harmony very much: complicated, but luminous chords, and I aim for variety, not to begin in D major and stay in D major for five minutes. I like to go "here and there."

NW: Your compositional output spans a wide variety of styles. Do you find that your experiences in jazz and film music - what we might stereotypically consider "non-classical" styles - influence your choral compositions, or do you find your choral writing moves in different directions?

IA: It's clear that I have jazz and soundtrack influences, and while I never studied composition *formally* - that is not to be confused with studying composition; I studied very much, and I have plenty of scores by the great masters of the past - but, I think composers should find a new way of writing, and of course, the way I write for choir is different from the way I write for piano. In every new piece that I compose, I try to find a new energy for each. If you listen to my "Ave Maris Stella" or "Lux Aeterna," they are very different pieces. I try to do different things with each piece - not better, just different. Every new piece is a plunge into the unknown, like a child playing with new toys. That's why I never get tired of writing.

Nathan Windt
choral conductor
and teacher

NW: Do you have any composers who particularly influence your compositions?

IA: I think that Johann Sebastian Bach is my first influence; the counterpoint is simply fantastic. Beethoven has energy and rhythm; Mozart's melodic inventiveness is beautiful; Chopin and Tchaikovsky are emotional; and Ravel, for the orchestration: these are my great masters. One thing that I don't do is to copy what other contemporary composers do. I think I have my own style and way of expressing music. I'm not a full-time composer, either: I'm a "pajama composer," because my composing is only from 5:30 in the morning until 7:00 in the morning, so I can stay alone in silence, completely in the dark, if possible, and this is the only way I can try to find inspiration.

NW: Your biography mentions an informal but important meeting in 2006. Could you tell us more about this?

IA: It was fantastic. The conductor of the choir Coro Calicantus is Mario Fontana. He was a piano student of mine. He always told me, "Ivo, you have to come see a concert." I never went to see a concert. I even told him I didn't really like choral music, because I was naïve, and had never gone to a choir concert. He insisted so much, I finally decided to go, even though I didn't really want to. When the choir began to sing, I was really captured. My wife looked at me and told me that I had to compose choral music in the future, and she was right! I told the conductor how wonderful the concert was, and that I would go home and write a piece for his choir that very evening. So, I wrote my first piece for them overnight. I went to the premiere of the piece, and normally, as a composer, my expectations for a premiere are a bit lower, perhaps fifty percent, so not very satisfied. But with this concert, it was one hundred and twenty percent. It's a very special choir, absolutely moving when you attend one of their concerts.

NW: Your choral writing varies from two-part music to more complex textures. Do you write your pieces with an ideal choir in mind?

IA: It depends on the piece. If it's a piece like my "O Magnum Mysterium," I would say any parish choir could sing this. "Lux Aeterna," or "I Am the Rose of Sharon," can be sung by a professional or university choir, but the most important thing is the conductor. The conductor must know the music really well; a chord with six different notes, eight voices, he or she must be able to say, "Sopranos, not so loud; basses, more." This is the problem. Sometimes it's difficult to manage and work the chords in my music, but the *conductor* must be professional, not necessarily the choir.

NW: You mention "O Magnum Mysterium," one of your best known compositions. In your notes to the piece, you write, "I had intended this piece to stay in the drawer until the following Christmas." What do you mean by this?

IA: It was a really easy piece, very different from the other pieces that I had previously published, so I didn't think the publishers would be interested in it. But when I put the performance on YouTube, many publishers wrote to me, saying they wanted to publish the piece. Then I understood not only that the piece was easy, but also that it was much more difficult to compose an "easy" piece which is also interesting and one that can be challenging for a professional choir. I really didn't think anyone would be interested in this piece.

NW: Another unique quality in your music is your frequent use of "spoken word," such as in "Ave Maria," as well as other devices like whistling in "There will come soft rains." Is there any particular reason for this, other than variety in vocal timbre?

IA: As I told you before, I am always trying new ways of composing, like a child playing with a new toy. This was a "toy" that I used about four years ago with my choral music; now I'm using other "toys" in my music. It was a way to characterize my music in that particular moment. Now I use other systems. I don't say that I regret having done that; it's just that now I'm trying other ways.

Ivo Antognini is currently a professor at the Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana, University of Music, in Lugano, Switzerland. DCINY is working with an international cast of choirs to produce a concert of Antognini's music at Lincoln Center, in New York City, on March 22, 2016. To audition, please contact Jason Mlynek at Jason@dciny.org. For more information about Ivo's music, please visit his website, <http://www.ivoantognini.com>



NW: Your output demonstrates a clear variety in setting sacred and secular texts, and even within those, a variety of styles. Is there any particular text "type" that resonates with you? What do you look for when finding a text to set to music?

IA: First of all, it must sound good to my ears. I speak Italian, so it must be attractive by the sound of the words. That's why I love to work with old Latin texts. Of course, it must tell me something in which I believe, otherwise there's no sense in writing music to it. I like to set texts in English, also, because it has a greater chance to be performed internationally. As an international composer, I want to compose a piece that can be performed anywhere. I have a special folder on my computer where I have many, many texts that I want to set to music in the future; if I had the chance, I would work until I was 200 years old!

NW: Do you have a favorite piece of yours that you have composed?

IA: I never thought about that! I think I can choose three pieces; I would choose "Lux Aeterna" for sure; the piece is dedicated to my parents, who are still living and listening to my music every day. I would also choose "O Magnum Mysterium," as an easy piece, but also a very good one. About every week, I have someone writing to me, telling me how much he or she enjoys performing this piece. The other piece would be "There Would Come Soft Rains," as the piece has a lot of everything. The first time I read this text I was fifteen years old; I read the poem in Italian, and I found again the text years later and thought it would be fantastic to set to music. I also love a piece I wrote for Coro Calicantus, "Wah-Bah-Dah-Bah-Doo-Bee," it was dedicated to a very good friend and student who died seven years ago, very young. Of course, this list may change. I will go to a world premiere in one month with the Trinity College Choir of Cambridge, conducted by Stephen Layton, and perhaps I will change my mind.

Edited by Irene Auerbach, UK ●

A versatile conductor of choral, orchestral, and operatic literature, **Nathan Windt** has sung with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the May Festival Chorus, the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati, the Chattanooga Bach Choir, and numerous church and synagogue choirs, performing masterworks under the batons of many of today's great maestros. His choirs have performed on radio and television, as well as toured in the United States and internationally, most recently to Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic. He currently serves as Director of Choral Activities at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. Email: nathanwindt@gmail.com



O magnum mysterium

Ivo Antognini

mf $\text{♩} = 84$

SOPRANO
O ma - gnum my - ste - ri - um et ad - mi -

ALTO
mf
O ma - gnum my - ste - ri - um et ad - mi -

TENOR
mf
O ma - gnum my - ste - ri - um et ad - mi -

BASS
mf
O ma - gnum my - ste - ri - um, ad - mi -

53

6

S.
ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men

A.
ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men

T.
ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men

B.
ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men

12

S. **A** *mp* tum ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi - *mf*

A. *mp* tum ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi - de - *mf*

T. *mp* tum ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi - de - rent *mf*

B. *mp* tum ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi -

19

S. *-de - rent Do - mi - num na - tum ia - cen - - tem*

A. *rent Do - mi - num na - tum ia - - cen - tem in*

T. *Do - mi - num na - tum ia - cen - tem in prae -*

B. *-de - rent Do - mi - num na - tum ia - cen - tem in*

24

S. *in prae - se - pi - o. Be - a -*

A. *prae - se - pi - o. Be - a -*

T. *- se - pi - o. Be - a - ta,*

B. *prae - se - pi - o. Be - a -*

B

30

S. *- ta, be - a - ta vir - go cu - ius*

A. *- ta, be - a - ta vir - go cu - ius*

T. *be - a - ta vir - go, vir - go cu - ius*

B. *- ta, be - a - ta vir - go, vir - go cu - ius*

mp *mf*

37

S. *p* vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re *mf* Do - - mi - num Chri -

A. *p* vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re *mf* Do - - mi - num Chri -

T. *p* vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re *mf* Do - - mi - num Chri -

B. *p* vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re *mf* Do - - mi - num Chri -

44 **C**

S. *f* stum. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

A. *f* stum. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

T. *f* stum. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

B. *f* stum. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

49 rit.

S. lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. _____

A. lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. _____

T. lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. _____

B. lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. _____

Repertoire



▲ Eric Whitacre at the Arizona State University Q&A event © Sean Deckert

Repertoire

After Eric: New American Composers after 1980 (part one)

Philip Copeland

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

**Please contact Andrea Angelini,
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After Eric: New American Composers after 1980

(part one)

Eric Whitacre dramatically altered the landscape of American choral music in 1996 with “Water Night.” Since then, many of us have probably programmed his most popular works: *Sleep*, *With a Lilly in Your Hand*, *Lux Aurumque*, *Leonardo*. With his Virtual Choir project, he showed us the power of YouTube to touch the world with choral music, reaching millions of viewers. In a sense, the composer has had such an enormous presence in the last twenty years that it is difficult to think of others that have come after him.

This article seeks to highlight the emerging and significant American composers that have come after Eric Whitacre. These composers, born in or after 1980, have found traction in the quickly evolving world of composition for choirs: Ted Hearne (b. 1982), Jake Runestad (b. 1986), and Nico Muhly (b. 1981).

Ted Hearne (b. 1982)



www.tedhearne.com

Ted Hearne (b. 1982) is a highly respected composer, having received numerous fellowships, commissions, and opportunities to serve as artist-in-residence across the country. He recently joined the faculty of the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music as Assistant Professor of Music. His training includes study at the Manhattan School of Music and Yale School of Music.

Ted Hearne grew up attending choir rehearsals and has a self-professed “deep connection” to choral music. He has this commentary on choral compositions from the United States: “It’s unfortunate that so much choral music in this country conforms to expectations without a fight, fails to challenge thinking musicians and thinking audiences, and is generally so . . . bland.”

Hearne’s music is anything but bland; it is jarring. In fact, he brands much of his music as “Unsettlement Music.” His compositions carry clear social messages, whether you agree with his politics or not. This message is embedded in his music through his textual sources, achieved primarily through his non-traditional choice of text or his juxtaposition of textual sources.

Three of his works are highlighted with their textual sources here:

“Consent” (2014, 7 minutes)

Textual source: Love letters from two time periods, authored by composer and composer’s father, wedding rites from Catholic and Jewish traditions, text messages between two convicted rapists from the Steubenville rape trial.

“Consent” was composed as a response to the Steubenville rape trials, a case where text messages became an important part of the evidence against the young men responsible for the attack and cover-up. The composer writes, “when these text messages and other evidence were released, I think we saw an urge to use the language of these teenagers to separate ourselves from them ideologically; to disown them completely, cast them out as an aberration, rather than to own them and their actions as an understandable product of our culture and the messages it sends.” He continues, “*Consent* was an attempt to ‘own’ those teenage rapists, and accept them as part of a shared problem. It got me thinking about the (very recent) history of marriage as a primarily financial/economic transaction that treated women as property . . . it also got me thinking about all the corruptive messages I myself have absorbed -- from the culture, from my own father -- and how they may be reflected in my own language. I set the text in a way that obscures and conflates their surface meanings and puts them forward in a way that makes all the messages part of a running current of ideas.”

57

Philip Copeland
choral conductor
and teacher

Ripple (2012, seven movements, 10 minutes)

Textual source: This work uses as its text a single sentence from one of the 400,000 internal military cables known as the Iraq War Logs.

"Ripple" uncovers the deeper emotional implications buried in a generic military report into the extremely emotional elements embedded in the sentence. The text is from a log entry that describes an incident when an American military officer opened fire on an unidentified vehicle that was driving toward a checkpoint in Fallujah: "The marine from Post 7 was unable to determine the occupants of the vehicle due to the reflection of the sun coming off the windshield." The occupants were a family of Iraqi civilians - a mother was killed, her husband and two children badly injured.

Privilege (2009, five movements, 14 minutes)

Textual sources: composer's poetry, an interview with David Simon on Bill Moyers Journal, and a traditional Xhosa anti-Apartheid song

The texts of "Privilege" highlight the darker side of capitalism, especially its impact on the plight of inner city youth and society's response (or lack of response) to the problem. In the first movement, the composer pens his own question to society, asking if anyone really cares about the poor, or whether they prefer to shut their eyes to the realities that are ever present. The second movement quotes David Simon and his description of capitalism as a one-armed winning slot machine that deceives people into thinking that everyone wins, a situation the composer likens to a "flashing window, empty street, and burning TV song" in the third movement. David Simon's words appear again in the next movement with a damning judgment on society: "we pretend to need them . . . to educate . . . but we don't . . . and they get it."

Of these three works, "Privilege," is the most accessible composition for many choirs, although it is far from the most acerbic in message. It was commissioned and premiered by the San Francisco choral group "Volti" and Robert Geary in 2010.

As an example of Hearne's compositional style, I will highlight a few excerpts from *Privilege* that show a musical depiction of the social message:

Hearne understands the profound commentary he can make on philosophical concepts with the simplest of musical gestures. In this example, he shows how our motives and our missions, although similar in nature, do not line up.

The differing rhythmic patterns, born of philosophical need, are difficult for many conductors and musicians.

On top of this disjointed motive/mission statement, the composer delivers his message "you were almost always kind" in staggered entrances by voices in different sections. This method of text declamation, reminiscent of Schoenberg's *Klangfarbenmelodie*, is very effective. He also seems to suggest a duplicitous meaning when he provides a two-part dissonance on the word "kind."

As the first movement progresses, the rhythmic complexity increases, shown in m. 42-45 (Example 3).

Hearne's music is complicated; he requires independent singers of very high quality.

Example 1, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," m. 12-15.

Musical score for Example 1, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," measures 12-15. The score is for a five-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass) in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - The music features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with multiple layers of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics are marked *mf* and *fp*.

Example 2, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," m. 27-29.

Musical score for Example 2, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," measures 27-29. The score is for a five-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass) in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive you al - al - . . . most - ways . . . were kind The music features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with multiple layers of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics are marked *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *fp*.

Example 3, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," m. 42-45.

Musical score for Example 3, Privilege, "Motive/Mission," measures 42-45. The score is for a five-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass) in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mo - tive mis - sion mis - sion mis - sion al - al - re - The music features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with multiple layers of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics are marked *mf*, *pp*, *pp f*, and *mf*.

Jake Runestad (b. 1986)



www.jakerunestad.com

Jake Runestad, from Rockford, Illinois, is one of the brightest stars among young composers in the United States. He has had extensive training with acclaimed composer Libby Larsen and holds degrees from Winona State University and the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University.

Although not yet thirty, he has received prestigious commissions from Seraphic Fire, VocalEssence, the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, and Cantus. Runestad's music is

performed often at conferences of the American Choral Directors Association. At the most recent National Conference in February 2015, five choirs performed three works: *Alleluia* (by Salt Lake Vocal Artists and University of Southern California Thornton Chamber Singers), *Nyon Nyon* (by Baylor University and Waukeech High School) and *I Will Lift Mine Eyes* (by Seattle's Choral Arts).

Jake's success has enabled him to compose full-time. He has a beautiful web presence; his fluidness with technology has allowed him to take advantage of the financial benefits of self-publishing and digital distribution.

This online connection allows the composer to have an immediate and potentially intense personal connection with each conductor. In his words, "With each order, I have direct contact with my customers and can answer questions about the works, rush orders (often within minutes), set up video chat sessions with choirs, provide practice tracks, and foster meaningful relationships with ensembles around the world."

Two works are featured here: *Nyon Nyon* and *The Peace of Wild Things*.

Nyon Nyon (2006, 3 minutes)

One of Runestad's most popular works is *Nyon Nyon*, a work that the composer described as an "exploration of the effects that one can produce with the human voice." It is a driving and exciting piece of music that incorporates a number of unique sounds that are similar to a flanger, wah-wah pedal, drum and bass, and synthesizer.

The work has a driving rhythm and excitement from the first few notes, and then has a synthesizer-like glissando in both voices; it captures the listener immediately. (Example 4)

One of the more electrifying moments in *Nyon Nyon* comes at the "Techno beat" portion of the piece. (see Example 5) The bass singers become an electronic tech drum, the tenors sound a drone, and the rest of the choir scoops and slides with ooh's and ah's. (Example 5)

Example 4, *Nyon Nyon*, m. 1-3.

With energy $\text{♩} = 108$

59

Example 5, *Nyon Nyon*, m. 27-28.

6 Groove!

Example 6, *The Peace of Wild Things*, m. 51-54.

© Jake Runestad, JR Music. jakerunestad.com

The Peace of Wild Things (2012, 4:30 minutes)

Runestad forges intimate connections between words and music. He describes the process of setting text as “trying to find the music that the poem has intrinsically inside it.” One of his accessible works of this type is *The Peace of Wild Things*, a piano-accompanied setting of environmentalist Wendell Berry’s famous text by the same name, a work that won the Grand Prize in the 2014 YNYC Composers Competition.

As beautiful and profound as Berry’s poem is alone, Runestad’s setting provides a new dimension to the words and enhances the message. The composer gives most of Wendell Berry’s words to the bass section; the rest of the choir provides an attractive harmonic background and occasional emphasis to the text. He adds power to each line of the poem and creates a radiant refrain by repeating the text “for a time, I rest in the grace of the world.”

The work’s accessibility does not diminish its quality; Runestad has created a deeply intelligent setting of the philosophical text; the music is haunting and memorable.

Jake Runestad is a prolific composer of choral music. Other high quality works to explore are his “*Alleluia*,” “*I Will Lift Mine Eyes*,” “*Why the Caged Bird Sings*,” and “*Spirited Light*.”

Nico Muhly (b. 1981)



www.nicomuhly.com

Nico Muhly’s recent splash in the opera world with *Two Boys* put his name on the lips of many in the classical music world. The opera’s subject matter, about the stabbing of one teenager by another, was called “a compelling opera for our time inspired by real-life internet crime” by author George Hall of *The Guardian*. It is a work that highlights the composer’s interest in diverse subject matter, sounds, and ideas to the world of classical music.

When it comes to choral music, the composer is heavily influenced by the English school of composition. On WQXR’s “Obsessive Choral” series, hosted by the composer, Muhly shared that “Choral music is my first love. Even though my voice broke in 1994, I still return to the emotional landscapes of Byrd, Tallis, Gibbons, Howells and Britten as a sort of home base for all of the music I write.”

Many of the choral works by Muhly show evidence of these great English composers, especially Britten.

First Service (2004, 9 minutes)

Muhly’s *First Service* was composed when the composer was just twenty-three years old, but it reveals a subtle complexity and maturity that one would expect from a composer more advanced in years. The *First Service* sets the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* and follows in the tradition of William Byrd and Charles Stanford. The composer describes the opening organ motive of the *Magnificat* as a symbol of one “nervously twitching in anticipation” in a marvelous portrayal of an expectant mother in the most unusual of circumstances. (Example 7)

Example 7, First Service (Magnificat), m. 1-7.

Example 8, First Service (Magnificat), m. 26-30.

Example 9, First Service (Magnificat), m. 66-71.

First Service (Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis) - Biblical Text
 -Music by Nico Muhly
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Example 10, Bright Mass with Canons (Sanctus), m. 195.

*Soprano and Alto do not synchronize with other singers within or between sections. Each singer sings the pattern, rests slightly, and continues repeating through bar 201. Tenor and Bass is conducted through this section.

Example 11, Bright Mass with Canons (Sanctus), m. 278.

Example 12, Bright Mass with Canons (Sanctus), m. 285-287.

Bright Mass With Canons - Words & Music by Nico Muhly
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There are several layers to this work. It is interesting to notice the slow pedal point type stasis in the lowest notes of the organ pedal as a foundation for more frenetic organ twitching while the choir proclaims the text. The sopranos highlight the prophetic message of the text, with occasional dissonances on the jarring philosophical ramifications of Mary's pregnancy. (Example 8)

At appropriate moments, Muhly shows creative skill in his setting of "he hath shewed strength with his arm" through dissonance and voice leading. (Example 9). It is interesting to note his use of dynamics in this section, asking the voices to enter loudly and then soften as each successive voice enters.

Bright Mass with Canons (2005, 13 minutes)

To date, Muhly has listed fourteen choral projects on his website, with fewer works listed in recent years. His *Bright Mass With Canons* (2005) is another organ-accompanied work that features some moderately advanced organ writing and more accessible writing for choir.

In the *Sanctus*, Muhly features some *senza misura* sections as a harmonic background to a canonic statement of "Dominus Deus Sabaoth," shown in Example 10.

Muhly concludes his Bright Mass with a haunting setting of the *Agnus Dei*. He features paired voices in canon, with sparse accompaniment by the organ. (Example 11).

Towards the end of the *Agnus Dei*, Muhly places the choral voices in long notes and adds a soprano solo that emerges from the choir in a final pensive plea, setting the text "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi" while the choir sings "Dona nobis pacem."

Hearne, Runestad and Muhly do not come close to encompassing the diversity of choral composition occurring in the United States in the time period after Eric Whitacre. They are, however, very bright stars.

As a part of researching this article, I polled choral professionals on Facebook and ChoralNet and I was introduced to many composers whom I had not heard of and was impressed by their accomplishments and creations. Several of these composers will be featured in the second part of this article, planned for July 2015. ●

Philip Copeland is Director of Choral Activities and Associate Professor of Music at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. His choirs are frequent performers and award winners in international competitions and conferences of the American Choral Directors Association as well as the National Collegiate Choral Organization. At Samford, he teaches classes in conducting, diction, and music education. Dr. Copeland holds degrees in music education and conducting from the University of Mississippi, Mississippi College, and Southern Seminary in Louisville, KY. In Birmingham, he directs music at South Highland Presbyterian Church and prepares the Alabama Symphony Chorus in performances with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. He is father to triplet nine-year old daughters: Catherine, Caroline, and Claire. Email: philip.copeland@gmail.com



es mi p... a... n... n... n...
es mi p... a... n... n... n...
es mi p... a... n... n... n...
Gubilate deo uniuersa terra uibilate
na bit nos. **Sciēt. Init**



Dixate ce li de

ca - ra e ter na - mente e - ter na - mente e
su per et nu bes plu it

la forja Alberto Grau
del **Compositor**

Método de composición para coros de niños y jóvenes



Book Review

The Forging of the Composer: The Art of Composing for Children's and Youth Choirs

To read *La Forja del Compositor (The Forging of the Composer)*, by Alberto Grau, is to have the feeling of listening to him speak frankly in conversation about his creative and interpretive thoughts on choral music. It flows naturally, where subjects follow no fixed structure but are rather treated with complete liberty; some are addressed in a reiterative manner throughout the text in order to consider a new aspect or to relate a topic to other examples or exercises, all in a light, accessible language aimed at the novice composer and the director who has uncertainties in the field of choral composition.



The author begins his overview with a statement about the purpose of his compositional method, pointing out that the objective of choral singing for children and young people is to develop in them a love for music through practice as a fun group activity which also provides the benefits of communication, teamwork, self esteem and discipline, as well as promoting thinking logically. Grau highlights the importance of a playful approach to experiencing the fact of music, instead of subjecting the student to long periods of academic study, and for this purpose suggests the use of such resources as eurhythmics, stage movements, irregular beats, dissonances, as well as challenges in interpreting poetic text and its details.

Grau shares a number of methodological notes, referring first to technical elements intrinsic to composition, such as imitation, divisi, irregular timing, dissonances, the use of silence, the fermata, the treatment of the text, eurhythmics. Second, thanks also to his vast experience directing chorales of diverse levels and profiles, he is able to offer the young composer keys to the comprehension and knowledge of the instrument from personal experience, having confirmed practically what can be most effective according to the characteristics of types of grouping, and therefore how to write for them. A product also of Grau's combined role as director and composer are his suggestions for modifying the interpretation of musical notation in order to get closer "to the always sought-after but never achieved perfection" (Grau, 2014, p.145).

The book sets out the steps to follow for both composition and arranging. In composition, the author establishes as primary the selection of poetry adequate to the constitution of children and young people, as well as repeated recitation and finding a useful rhythmic combination. Further, he indicates that work should be done on the text-rhythm relationship, even before thinking about melodic or harmonic elements. These, having a close connection, should be dealt with simultaneously. For arrangements, he states that it is necessary first to have a clear understanding of the characteristics of the chosen piece, and afterward, thought should be given to the different effects and rhythmic options, as well as to the eurythmic and choreographic formulas.

In *La Forja del Compositor*, the author explains his ideas in a practical manner, presenting a large collection of examples from seventy-two scores by authors of various eras and latitudes, as well as from his own work. The examples are given in a didactic way, from which it can be noted what is correct and incorrect in the specific use of a particular element. The reader will find choral works for children and young people (mixed, female, and male voices) which will also provide the opportunity for building a repertoire and becoming acquainted with the respective publishers. Additionally, various exercises are presented, some in the form of a workbook. For example, the author makes the invitation to complete imitations or incorporate a second voice, etc.

Grau's use of eurhythmics as a resource for composition deserves a special mention. The great contribution the author has made with his work in this regard is well known, particularly in the field of children's and youth groups. A part of the book is devoted to the development of this subject, explaining the philosophy at base in the use of movement and the importance of feeling music integrally with the whole body. In this context, the reader will be able to note multiple examples of the use of eurhythmics, learning its levels of difficulty and doing related exercises.

The last part of the book, titled Miscellaneous, is a compendium of pertinent citations attributed to three great Hispano-American musicians: Pau Casals (Catalonia), César Ferreyra (Argentina) and Carlos Vega (Argentina), which serve as a synthesis of composition and performance, two indivisible topics to consider in choral art, in that "... just as the separate letters, a,b,c, do not yet form words, written notation in the same way still does not compose 'music'" (Casals in Grau, 2014, p.129).

The author's comments on these quotes plant new concerns in the reader, which invite a continual and personal musical review and a reflection on one's own artistic work.

It is highly significant that a composer of such stature as Alberto Grau should share his legacy of teaching, motivating new generations to venture the necessary work in writing important, innovative works of beauty, which continue to set challenges for the children's and youth choirs of today.

Grau, A. (2014). *La forja del Compositor. Método de composición para coros de niños y jóvenes*, GGM Editores S.C., Caracas. ISBN: 978-980-12-7401-8

Ana María Raga, Venezuelan choral director, pianist and professor of choral conducting at the Unearte (University of the Arts). Some of her works have been published by Hinshaw Music, Inc. and Éditions À Coeur Joie. She holds a Master's degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Simón Bolívar University. She is currently studying for a degree in Music Therapy at the Universidad de los Andes. She is Professor of the CAF Social Action through Music Program, Latin America. Ana María Raga has founded several choirs (children's, women's and mixed) and was guest conductor at the World Youth Choir project in 2009. Ana María was a member for almost 30 years of the 'Fundación Schola Cantorum de Venezuela', with which she is still connected. She has given lectures and workshops in Venezuela, North and South America, Europe and Asia. Raga is the founder and president of the Aequalis Foundation, an organization that focuses on three lines of action: artistic, educational and health through choral singing. She currently heads Aequalis Aurea (female choir), the Colegio Humboldt Choral Project (children's choirs) and the UMA university choir (mixed). Email: anamraga@yahoo.com



Translated from the Spanish by Joel Hageman, USA ●



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Choral Music Recordings



▲ Information desk at WSCM10 © Moon Gi Kim for the Korean Federation for Choral Music (KFCM)

Choral Music Recordings

Critic's Pick 1

Jubilatio: The Riga Cathedral Girls Choir

Reviewed by T.J. Harper

Critic's Pick 2

Reincarnations: A Century of American Choral Music

Reviewed by Tobin Sparfeld

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

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

Email: aangelini@ifcm.net

Critic's Pick 1

Jubilatio: The Riga Cathedral Girls Choir

***Jubilatio*: The Riga Cathedral Girls Choir**

Featuring Vita Kalnciema, organ

Aira Birziņa, Artistic Director

Riga Cathedral

(2011/2012; 63' 29")

www.girlschoir.lv



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Reviewed by
T.J. Harper
DMA, teacher
and conductor

The Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir (RCGC) is the premiere ensemble of the Riga Cathedral Choir School, which was founded in 1994. The singers, who range in age from nine to nineteen, display tremendous vocal technical facility and their attention to detail is at times astonishing. Under the direction of Artistic Director Aira Birziņa since 2000, this ensemble has toured throughout Europe and has won numerous awards for excellence in choral performance. In their debut recording, *Jubilatio*, the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir presents a rich diversity of sacred compositions from the early Renaissance with *Ave Regina Caelorum* by Guillaume DuFay to modern compositions like the four-movement *Missa de Spiritu Sancto* by Rihards Dubra, and *O Salutaris Hostia* by Ēriks Ešenvalds. The rich assortment of choral offerings in this recording includes a small number of familiar selections like *Sound the Trumpet* by Henry Purcell, and *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* by John Rutter. Rather than diminish the overall quality of this recording, these familiar works provide increased awareness of this CD's central tenet: to have faith is cause for celebration.

Jubilatio is a celebration that opens the door to a complex musical exposition of faith through the lens of three cornerstone concepts: supplication, praise, and glory. The entire CD allows the listener to enter into a thoughtful exploration of faith where they are never pulled too far from these three conceptual cornerstones, which serve to enlighten and inspire, never to condescend or judge.

Representing the first cornerstone concept of faith and supplication, the following four works are performed with intensity by the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir and a controlled vocalism that rarely

imposes itself on the listener. *Hebe deine Augen auf* by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), sets a notable tone of reliance on the Lord and is performed with surprising vocal strength. *Salve Regina* by Hungarian composer Miklós Kocsár (b. 1933), is one of two Marian antiphons featured in this recording. This is a substantial composition by a composer deserving a much wider audience and is performed with tremendous skill. *Miserere*, by Basque composer Eva Ugalde (b. 1973), is piercing in its text setting and demonstrates the concept of supplication with acute conviction. In *O salutaris hostia* by Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977), the RCGC realize a full expression of earnest supplication just as the *turba* chorus cries to God, “O salutaris hostia...O redeeming Sacrifice... give us strength, send aid.”

The second cornerstone concept, faith and praise, is represented by a tremendous diversity of composers. There is a vocal vitality in these selections that benefits

from the youthful vigor and brighter sonority of the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir. *Sound the Trumpet* by Henry Purcell (1659-1695), is brought to great life and is extremely effective in its musical phrasing and in conveying a clear sense of celebration. The second Marian antiphon on this recording, *Ave Regina Caelorum* by Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474), is sung with confidence marked by rhythmic precision and clarity. Rounding out the earlier works, *Ecce Maria* by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), is the third selection in this collection devoted to Mary and is performed with a power and sensitivity not often observed in this setting. *Laudamus in Domine* by Ieva Alenčike (b. 1976), sings well and maintains an appropriate sense of vitality. Greatest and last of all the psalms, is Psalm 150, *Laudate Dominum*. Composed by Rihards Dubra (b. 1964), this is a very compelling treatment of the litany. Accompanied by accomplished organist, Vita Kalnciema, *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* by John Rutter (b. 1945), reaffirms the strength of conviction through the thoughtful use of unassuming organ registrations that convey an almost staid imagining.

Representing the third cornerstone concept, faith and glory, the following works are performed with emotional substance informed by thoughtful phrasing and a clear understanding of the text. *Gloria* by Danish composer Michael Bojesen (b. 1960), is a succinctly nuanced tripartite composition that captures the essence of the resurrection text. Composed for the Riga Cathedral Girls' Choir, *Exsultate Deo* by Vytautas Miškinis (b. 1954), brilliantly captures the complexities of the resurrection text while simultaneously showcasing the vocal abilities of the ensemble. Finally, composer Rihards Dubra is featured again with a composition that brings all of the *Jubilatio* concepts of faith (supplication, praise, and glory) together in his *Missa de Spiritu Sancto*. The performance of this *missa brevis* is reason enough to add this CD to your collection. Dubra's musical sensibility and textual comprehension combine to create a compositional voice that is rooted in tradition and still speaks with an authentic voice. Scored for organ and women's choir, this four-movement work (*Kyrie-solemn and mysterious, Gloria-hymn of praise, Sanctus-acclamation and honor, Agnus Dei-supplication*) is appropriately a celebration that skillfully balances the organ with the choir. The RCGC possess a youthful vitality and a rare sense of maturity that brings this work alive. The members of the ensemble are to be commended for their exemplary vocalism and dedication to each composition. Artistic Director, Aira Birziņa and organist Vita Kalnciema have collaborated to great effect and realized the full potential of this work.

Jubilatio was collected from recordings made in 2011 and 2012 at the Riga Cathedral. Built in 1211, the cathedral boasts architectural offerings from the Gothic, Romanesque and Baroque periods. The acoustic is obviously reverberant and bright, but does not obscure aural clarity for the voices or the organ. Of special note is the Riga Cathedral Walcker organ famous throughout Europe, which has 124 stops, 4 manuals, and 6,718 pipes. ●

T. J. Harper is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island. He conducts the college's three choral ensembles as well as holding courses in Conducting, Secondary Choral Methods, Applied Conducting, and Applied Voice. Dr. Harper received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Southern California where he graduated with honors. His dissertation entitled, *Hugo Distler and the Renewal Movement in Nazi Germany* focuses on the juxtaposition of Distler's personal beliefs and his political/professional obligations to the Nazi Party. His interests have led to funded research projects exploring the music of Johannes Brahms and Maurice Duruflé, and the folk music traditions of the Korean Peninsula. Dr. Harper is also a contributing author to the recently published *Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations* (Routledge). www.harperjtj.com





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Critic's Pick 2

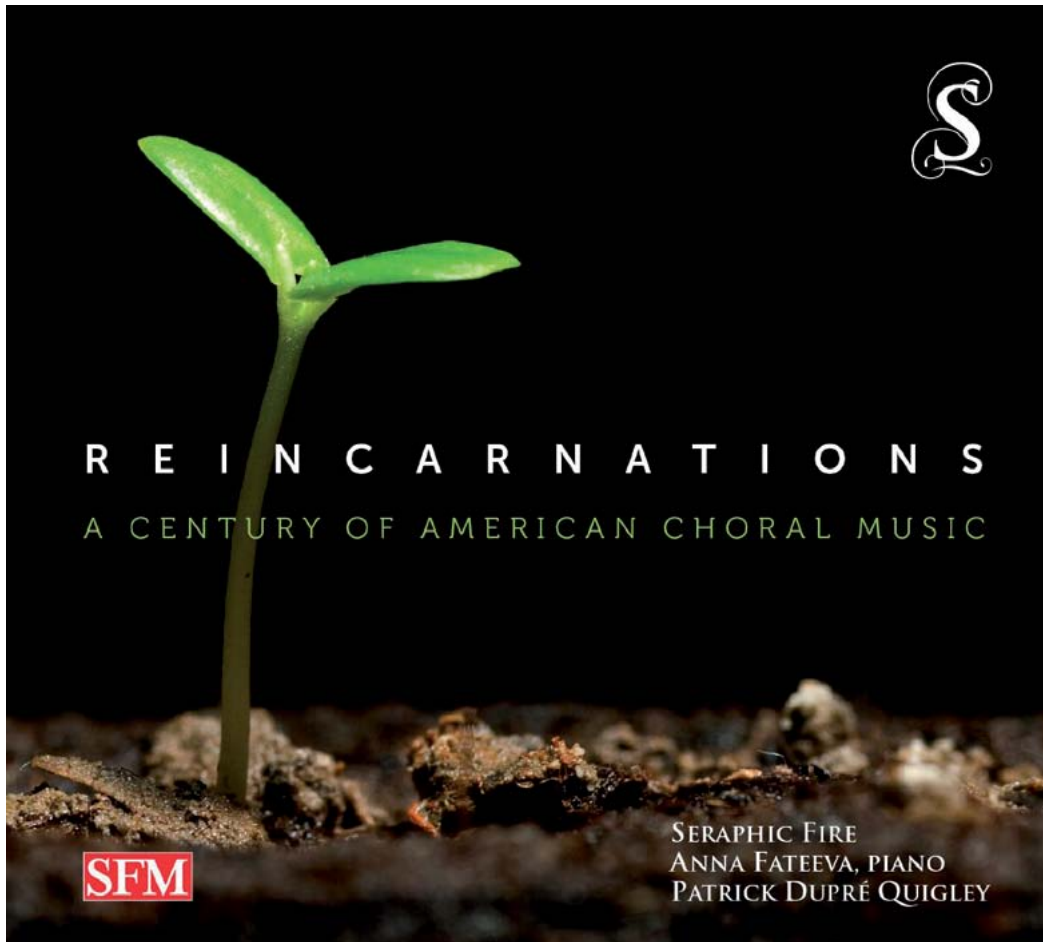
Reincarnations: A Century of American Choral Music

Reincarnations: A Century of American Choral Music

Seraphic Fire, Anna Fateeva & Patrick Dupré Quigley

© 2014 Seraphic Fire Media

(73:36)



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North America has seen a strong increase in support for professional choral ensembles. One of these is Seraphic Fire, an ensemble based in South Florida currently in its 13th season. Conducted by its artistic director and founder, Patrick Dupré Quigley, the Grammy-nominated ensemble has emerged as an important and innovative ensemble in the United States, bringing singers around the country for live performances as well as recordings. (In the interest of full disclosure, I sang with Seraphic Fire briefly in 2007 and 2008). The organization has also established the Firebird Chamber Orchestra, which collaborates with Seraphic Fire on choral-orchestral works as well as independent concerts of orchestral repertoire.

As the name of the ensemble is derived from a phrase from William Billings's *Invocation*, Seraphic Fire has always been a champion of American choral music. Their latest album, *Reincarnations*, is a collection of works within that tradition, featuring innovative works by emerging American composers as well as containing some traditional music from the large canon.

The album begins with two contemporary works. *I Cannot Attain Unto It* by Nico Muhly (b. 1981) is a tranquil work with expressive repetitive echo-like effects, and imitative vocal lines. While it contains many moments of bitonality and biting dissonances, there is an underlying consonant harmonic structure also supporting it. It is followed by *Light of the Common Day* by Shawn Crouch (b. 1977). Written in memory of the composer's late mother-in-law, the motor-like piano accompaniment provides energy under the sustained vocal lines, unwinding slowly from dissonances to consonances, pausing at parallel octaves.

Reviewed by
Tobin Sparfeld
teacher
and conductor

The following two recordings hearken back to a distinctive tradition of American choral music. These anonymous 19th-century Shaker tunes reflect the ideals of simple living, devoutness, and pacifism. *Give Good Gifts One To Another* features a basic joyful four-part hymn texture and open harmonies, while the arrangement of *Followers of the Lamb* merges the identity of a drinking song with the solemnity of Christian lyrics. The Seraphic Fire voices modify their singing to express the earthy vocal technique inherent in traditional American choral music.

The subsequent track is *Death and Resurrection* by Paul Crabtree (b. 1960). Using a collage of traditional American texts, this extended setting builds on a vocal motive to a emotional climax in the middle. The final section is a chordal declamation on the imperative “Do all your work as though you had a thousand years to live and as you would if you knew you must die tomorrow.” While Seraphic Fire’s intonation is very strong in most of the recording, it falters in sections of this piece.

Twentieth century composer Samuel Barber’s three *Reincarnations* are the next pieces recorded here. These well-known works use text by poet James Stephens, and their apparent simplicity is belied challenging tessituras, harmonic shifts, and unexpected rhythmic entrances. *Mary Hynes*, the first piece, is a tribute of love featuring impassioned exclamations on the line “She is a rune!” The middle setting, *Anthony O’Daly*, establishes an ostinato by the bass section as the upper parts mourn the unjust execution of a local farmer and community organizer. The piece builds to an emotional climax before falling away by dissonant leaps. *The Coolin*, a reference to one’s sweetheart, is a sensuous invitation of love to the author’s beloved.

Following this are four recordings are each by contemporary American composers. Dan Forrest’s *Good Night Dear Heart* is a simple, warm, homophonic benediction based on a text by Mark Twain. *As There Are Flowers* by Colin Britt features a rising melody that build in tension yet consistently resolve. It is one of several strong recordings on the album. *I Am* by Dominick DiOrio is more ambitious, using layered sound clusters accompanying a soprano solo in a dramatic and powerful setting of the familiar poem, “Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep” by Mary Elizabeth Frye. Jake Runestad’s *Fear Not, Dear Friend* is the next recording. Building from a soft beginning, the extended work grows to a powerful climax and finishes with a sumptuous conclusion.

Readers may be familiar with Frank Ticheli’s *Earth Song*, a consonant chordal work with modern extended dissonances. Its repeating harmony is both expressive and somber, and is one of the album’s most moving selections.



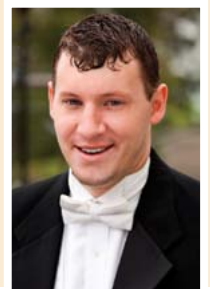
Reincarnations concludes with Morten Lauridsen’s *Mid-Winter Songs*. Appropriately described by Quigley as the “senior statesman of American choral music,” Lauridsen’s song-cycle from 1980 sets five texts by poet Robert Graves. The first song, *Lament for Pasiphaë*, displays more biting dissonances along with its expressive vocal lines, while later songs display evidence of Lauridsen’s more well known sonorities. In the middle are extended solo sections for the accompanying piano, which pianist Anna Fateeva delivers with similar rubato and nuance as Lauridsen himself.

While many recordings do not sufficiently consider the recording order of each track, *Reincarnations* consistently finds an appropriate balance of contemporary and more traditional sections to provide order. The contemporary selections, while not well known, will be found compelling by most readers, and are representative of the bright future of American choral music. Additional compliments must be given to the exquisite work of the album and program notes booklet. It is unfortunate that while blend and intonation issues are infrequent with this elite ensemble, they happen to occur during the album’s title composition.

Listeners who are fond of American choral music will want this recording, while those unacquainted with contemporary choral composers such as Dominick DiOrio, Jake Runestad, Nico Muhly, and Dan Forrest should certainly examine this album to learn more about the musicians shaping the future of choral music.

Info: <http://goo.gl/vk3suP> ●

Tobin Sparfeld has toured all over the world, from as far west as Vancouver, British Columbia, to as far east as Moscow, Russia. Tobin has also sung with Seraphic Fire and the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, in addition to working with choirs of all ages, serving as Assistant Music Director of the Miami Children’s Chorus and as the Associate Director of the St. Louis Children’s Choirs. In addition, he taught at Principia College and was the Director of Choral Activities at Millersville University of Pennsylvania, and 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 has also received an Artist Teacher Diploma from the CME Institute led by Doreen Rao. He is currently the head of the Music Division at Los Angeles Mission College, which is part of the Los Angeles Community College District. Email: tobin.sparfeld@gmail.com





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Events



▲ El León de Oro (Asturias, Spain), conducted by Marco Antonio García de Paz at La Fabbrica del Canto © Associazione Musicale Jubilate

Events

Conferences, Workshops & Masterclasses

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
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Singing in Venice, Italy, 3-8 May 2015. A week of choral music in a church on the Grand Canal directed by Chris Watson. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org/html/venice.html

International Masterclass for Choral Conductors, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 27-31 May 2015. Seminar led by Volker Hempfling (Germany) and Jonathan Velasco (Philippines) for experienced choral conductors to improve their skills and knowledge at the highest level. Participants must have experience of choral conducting. The decision on active or passive participation will be taken on the first day, a piece for examination will be sent out in advance. Conductors can apply for active or passive participation by observing the Masterclass. The Masterclass is not suitable for beginners. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org/masterclass2015

Choir Conducting Workshop, Filzbach, Switzerland, 6-7 June 2015. For beginners and advanced. Contents: contemporary conducting technique, creative rehearsal technique, efficient vocal technique for choirs, team leadership. Languages: German, English, French. Teacher: Felipe Cattapan (www.cattapan.ch). Contact: Mrs. Simona Kolozeti, Email: info@kosi-musik.ch - Website: www.cattapan.ch/index.php/en/n/

Music at Monteconero, Sirolo Ancône, Italy, 7-13 June 2015. A week of choral singing in a mountain-top former monastery on the Adriatic directed by Erik Van Nevel. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org/html/monteconero_vw.htm

Symposium: Choirs Transforming Lives, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA, 16 June 2015. Organized in association with the International Federation for Choral Music's Conductors Without Borders Network, the American Choral Directors Association International Conductors Exchange Program, and the Yale International Choral Festival, our symposium will explore the ways in which people throughout the world are using choral music to create positive social change, promote mental well-being, and foster community. Contact: Yale School of Music (Yale Glee Club), Email: jeffrey.douma@yale.edu - Website: www.yaleinternationalchoralfest.org/

6th Summer Academy in Choral Conducting, Corfu Island, Greece, 1-7 July 2015. Intensive choral conducting seminar (36 tuition hours). Applies to choral conductors and choral conducting students. Clinician: Zimfira Poloz (Canada, Æi Hamilton Children's Choir). The seminar is constructed in 4 sessions: a) Choral Pedagogy - Methodology b) Vocal Techniques for Choral Sound c) Choral Conducting Techniques d) Participant's Choir. Official seminar language: English. Tuition: 250 euro. Contact: Ionian University Music Department, Email: chortherini@gmail.com - Website: <http://music.ionio.gr/gr/academy>

Come and Sing! For the Restoration of St. Stephen's, Vienna, Austria, 8-11 July 2015. Artistic Director: Gerald Wirth (Vienna Boys Choir). Workshop piece: The Creation (Joseph Haydn). Contact: Kunst & Kultur - ohne Grenzen, Email: office@kunstkultur.com - Website: www.kunstkultur.com

Summer Choral Workshop Music and Mountain 2015, Les Diablerets, Switzerland, 11-25 July 2015. Open to singers of all levels with knowledge of the scores to work on. Program: Requiem in c, MH 155 of Johann Michael Haydn and MISATANGO 'Misa a Buenos Aires' of Martin Palmieri. Workshop combined with Mountain excursions. Working language: French. Contact: Christophe Gesseney, Email: chgesseney@bluewin.ch - Website: www.musique-montagne.com

Choral Conductors Workshop with Rod Eichenberger, Cannon Beach, Oregon, USA, 13-17 & 27-31 July 2015. A 5-day professional development workshop, designed for conductors of choirs at all levels, giving special emphasis to the important role non-verbal skills can play in rehearsal and performance. Contact: George Fox University, Email: CCW@georgefox.edu - Website: www.choralconductorsworkshop.com

Big Sky Choral Initiative, Gallatin Gateway, USA, 19-25 July 2015. A seven-day mountain training and performance experience for aspiring singers and conductors and a career development opportunity for high caliber professionals. Auditions on March 7 in Chicago and in Philadelphia. Contact: Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, Email: john@warrenmillerpac.org - Website: <http://warrenmillerpac.org>

International Choral Music Camp-Retreat Sacred Music of Lithuanian Composers, Vilnius, Lithuania, 19-26 July 2015. For individual singers or choirs. The repertoire will consist of sacred music pieces composed by Lithuanian composers for mixed choir a cappella (in Latin). Music sheets will be sent via email within 5 days after registration. Contact: Gratulations, Email: info.gratulations@gmail.com - Website: www.gratulations.lt

Europa Cantat Festival 2015, Pécs, Hungary, 24 July-2 Aug 2015. Spectacular vocal festival with participants from Europe and beyond. Workshops by international conductors in all vocal genres. Open singing, concerts: sing & listen, international contacts. Contact: Æi European Choral Association, Æi Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecpecs2015.hu - Website: www.ecpecs2015.hu

Jimena de la Frontera Music Week, Spain, 9-15 Aug 2015. Choral music in an Andalusian pueblo blanco directed by Eamonn Dougan. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Norfolk Festival Chamber Choir and Choral Conducting Workshop, Norfolk, CT, USA, 16-23 Aug 2015. Workshop with Simon Carrington, for advanced singers and choral conductors. Repertoire ranges from the Renaissance to the 21st century and includes both choral and instrumental music. Conductors sing as members of the choir and have the opportunity to conduct instrumental as well as choral ensembles. Singers receive a Fellowship covering tuition, housing and meals. Conductors receive a Fellowship covering housing and meals. Contact: Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Email: norfolk@yale.edu - Website: norfolkmusic.org

Rimini International Choral Workshop with Gary Graden, Andrea Angelini and Lykke Anholm, Rimini, Italy, 25-30 Aug 2015. Talks and workshops including: history of the polyphony of the Renaissance, directing your own group, Carpe Diem: impromptu chats with Gary Graden, gala concert by participants directed by Gary Graden and Andrea Angelini, CD recording of the gala concert. Contact: Musica Ficta, Email: info@musicaficta.org - Website: www.musicaficta.org

Trogir Music Week, Croatia, 6-11 Sep 2015. Directed by Justin Doyle. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Individual Coaching with Karen Brunssen, Zürich, Switzerland, 20-23 Oct 2015. For singers, amateurs or professionals, who are interested in a one hour individual coaching with Karen Brunssen for the development of their voice. No imposed repertoire, bring your own materials. Contact: Zürcher Sing-Akademie, Email: misa@sing-akademie.ch - Website: www.sing-akademie.ch

Contemporary Composition in America NDSU Choral Symposium, Fargo, USA, 22-24 Oct 2015. Three day symposium with composer, conductor and lecturer Eric Whitacre, presenting sessions on his music and working with NDSU choral ensembles. Topics to include commissions, publishing, second-performances, composition competitions and programming. Guest presenters will include nationally and internationally known composers. Contact: Division of Performing Arts, North Dakota State University, Email: jo.miller@ndsu.edu - Website: www.ndsu.edu/performingarts/choralsymposium/Contemporary_Composition/index.html

Ludlow Winter School, United Kingdom, 27 Dec-1 Jan 2015. A week of choral singing directed by Robert Hollingworth in a Shopshire town. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

2nd International Christmas Music Festival Cantate Angeli, Vilnius, Lithuania, 27 Dec 2015-2 Jan 2016. For choirs, vocal ensembles, instrumental Chamber ensembles and orchestras. Contact: Gratulations, Email: info.gratulationes@gmail.com - Website: www.gratulationes.lt

11th World Symposium on Choral Music, Barcelona, Spain, 22-29 July 2017. Eight days to listen to 26 of the world's premiere choirs, 30 outstanding lectures on choral music, music exhibition, gala concerts, open sings - all in the exciting city of Barcelona. Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: office@ifcm.net - Website: www.ifcm.net



Queen of the Adriatic Sea Choral Festival and Competition, Cattolica, Italy, 7-10 May 2015. Competition for Equal Voices, Mixed, Chamber, Youth, Children, Sacred Music, Folk and Spiritual Choirs. Concerts at the beautiful San Leo medieval cathedral. Contact: Queen Choral Festival and Competition, Email: office@queenchoralfestival.org - Website: www.queenchoralfestival.org

4th International Pop Choir Festival Berlin, Germany, 9 May 2015. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Music Events Unlimited, Email: info@musicEVENTSUNLIMITED.de - Website: www.ipcf-berlin.com

Vaasa International Choir Festival, Finland, 13-17 May 2015. Top performers from Finland and other countries, joyful singing atmosphere, workshops. With King's Singers & The Swingle Singers (UK), Wiener Sängerknaben (Austria), China Broadcasting Children's Chorus, YL Male Voice Choir, EMO Ensemble, Philomela, Tapiola Choir, Club for Five, Seminaarimäen Mieslaulajat "Semmarit" & Rajaton (Finland), Chamber Choir Lege Artis & Svetilen Vocal Ensemble (Russia), The Estonian Philharmonic and many more. Contact: Vaasa Choir Festival, Email: erkki.mendelin@vaasa.fi - Website: www.vaasachoirfestival.fi/

CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 14-18 May 2015. Open to mixed voices 16-40 singers and equal voices 12-40 singers. Apply before December 15. Contact: Stichting Kerkrade, Email: info@cantarode.nl - Website: www.cantarode.nl

International Choral Festival Barcelona 2015, Spain, 15-16 May 2015. For all kind of choirs. Contact: Music Events Unlimited, Email: info@musicEVENTSUNLIMITED.de - Website: www.musicEVENTSUNLIMITED.de

International Choral Festival Barcelona 2015, Spain, 15 May 2015. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Music Events Unlimited, Email: info@musicEVENTSUNLIMITED.de - Website: www.choralfestivalbarcelona.com

Mayo International Choral Festival, Ireland, 20-24 May 2015. 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

11th International Choir Festival Mundus Cantat, Sopot, Poland, 20-24 May 2015. 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.pl

Festival Filadelfia 2015: The Musical City of Europe Featuring the Paolo Serrao Special Award Competitions, Filadelfia, Italy, 21-25 May 2015. For equal voices, mixed, children and youth, folk, Gospel/Spiritual choirs. Contact: Associazione Musicale Melody, Email: associazionemelody@libero.it - Website: www.associazione-melody.com

5th International Wroclaw Choir Festival Vratslavia Sacra, Poland, 22-24 May 2015. Festival focusing on sacred music of different style and origin. Choirs can compete in one of the 7 categories for St Cecilia statuettes. Evening concerts. Apply before Nov 15, 2014. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@vratislaviasacra.pl - Website: www.vratislaviasacra.pl

14th International Chamber Choir Competition, Marktobendorf, Germany, 22-27 May 2015. Two categories: Mixed Choirs and Female Choirs. Compulsory work for each category. Apply before October 11, 2014. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

World Choir Celebration of Orff's Carmina Burana, Budapest, Hungary, 23-25 May 2015. Be a part of hundreds of singers from all over the world performing together Orff's Carmina Burana in the most famous concert hall of Budapest. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirooska Horváth e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.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

44th International Competition "Florilège Vocal de Tours", France, 29-31 May 2015. 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

Join Karen Kennedy in Vienna, Austria, June 2015. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Choral Odyssey Greece 2015 with Anna Hamre, Greece, June 2015. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Join Mary Breden in the France Choral Festival, Paris, Versailles & Normandy, France, June 2015. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Italy's Notes of Joy Choir Festival, Rome, Italy, June 2015. Artistic director: Gregory Gentry. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Henry Leck Choral Festival - Passion of Italy, Rome, Italy, June/July 2015. Individual concerts combined with festival concerts, sing mass at St Peter's Basilica. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

43rd International Choir Festival of Songs Olomouc, Czech Republic, 3-7 June 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: info@festamusicale.com - Website: www.festamusicale.com/eng/festival-of-songs-olomouc-2015

Venezia Music Festival 2015, Italy, 3-7 June 2015. International festival of choirs and orchestras. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

International Choral Festival Chernomorski zvutsi, Balchik, Bulgaria, 3-7 June 2015. Festival and competition for all kind of choirs. Apply before 10/02/2014. Contact: Valentina Georgieva, President, Email: festival@chernomorskizvutsi.com - Website: www.chernomorskizvutsi.com/

International Anton Bruckner Choir Competition and Festival, Linz, Austria, 3-7 June 2015. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Tampere, Finland, 3-7 June 2015. Chorus review, contest, workshops, concerts. Contact: Tampere Sävel, Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Email: music@tampere.fi - Website: www.tamperemusicfestivals.fi/vocal

57th International Festival of Choral Art Jihlava 2015, Czech Republic, 5-7 June 2015. Competition of chamber choirs, non-competitive concerts, workshop, meetings. Contact: NIPOS Artama, Email: dankova@nipos-mk.cz - Website: www.nipos-mk.cz

Perform Don Giovanni in Prague, Czech Republic, 7 June-6 July 2015. For individual singers all over the world. Coaching by Sherrill Milnes, Opportunity to sing in an opera gala with the orchestra, participate in a fully staged scenes program, and perform in a cabaret program of works from the American songbook in one of Prague's famous jazz clubs. Contact: Classical Movements, Inc., Email: stephanie@classicalmovements.com - Website: www.praguesummernights.com

17th International Festival D'Canto, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, 10-14 June 2015. Non-competitive festival for choirs in all categories. Contact: D'Canto Foundation, Email: festivaldcanto@hotmail.com - Website: http://festivaldcanto.tripod.com/festival

¡Canta! Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica, 10-14 June 2015. Under the artistic direction of Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, rehearsals are interspersed with hikes and zip-lines, wildlife and hanging bridges, all culminating in a mountain-top concert experience together with the National Youth Choir of Costa Rica. Contact: Witte Travel & Tours, Email: groups@wittetravel.com - Website: cantacostarica.com

Musica Sacra Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 11-14 June 2015. International Sacred Music Festival. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches, sightseeing. Apply before 01/03/15. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

6th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 11-14 June 2015. For all kinds of choirs, 9 categories, many concert opportunities. Gala concert in Krakow Philharmonic. Apply before Dec 15, 2014. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl

Krakow International Festival, Poland, 11-15 June 2015. For all kind of choirs. Performances at prestigious churches and venues. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

5th European Forum on Music, Riga, Latvia, 11-14 June 2015. Theme: Access to music is digital? It will explore how new technologies facilitate the work of cultural institutions, how improved access to culture helps raise people's interest in music, and explore the interplay between the digital world and 'real' life. Contact: European Music Council, Email: info@emc-imc.org - Website: http://www.emc-imc.org/efm/

Sea Sun Festival & Competition, Costa Brava, Spain, 13-20 June, 4-11 July, 19-26 Sep 2015. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Yale International Choral Festival, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA, 16-20 June 2015. Featuring Voces Nordicae (Sweden), Entrevoceos (Cuba), Jerusalem Youth Choir (Israel), the National University of Singapore Choir, the Yale Alumni Chorus, and the Yale Choral Artists, along with the symposium Choirs Transforming Lives (June 16), organized in association with IFCM and ACDA, and Conducting 21C, organized in association with the Eric Ericson International Choral Centre. Contact: Yale School of Music (Yale Glee Club), Email: jeffrey.douma@yale.edu - Website: www.yaleinternationalchoralfest.org/

International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Italy, 18-22 June 2015. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Eufonia International Choral Festival, Bordeaux Region, France, 19-27 June 2015. Bordeaux and some nearby cities will welcome about 20 concerts performed by some famous groups such as Voces8, Têtes de chien, choirs from China and Germany, professional orchestras in a variety of musical styles and periods. The festival will also include workshops, conferences and many public events in town. Contact: Eufonia International Choral Festival, Email: contact@eufoniabordeaux.fr - Website: http://eufoniabordeaux.com

Rome International Choral Festival, Italy, 20-24 June 2015. Featuring Mass participation at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and a formal finale concert at Rome's famed Saint Mary above Minerva Basilica under the baton of Z. Randall Stroope. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

The Sound of Music 50th Anniversary Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 22-27 June 2015. Celebrate the 50th anniversary of this musical in the Mozarteum Salzburg. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.som50fest.org/contact-us.html

18th Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy, 24-28 June 2015. 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

The Rhythms of One World 2015 Festival, New York City, USA, 24 June-1 July 2015. For youth and adult choirs from all nations with programs that include choral works in folklore, regional sacred, contemporary and national pop music. Contact: Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Email: TheRhythmsOfOneWorld2012@faf.org - Website: www.faf.org

12th International Festival of University Choirs UNIVERSITAS CANTAT 2015, Poznań, Poland, 24-27 June 2015. 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 or www.facebook.com/universitas.cantat

Mozart International Choral Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 24-28 June 2015. Three days of festival rehearsals, mingling side-by-side with singers from a variety of backgrounds under the direction of Jo-Michael Scheibe (USA). János Czifra, Domkapellmeister of the Dom, will conduct Mozart's Mass in C Major, "Coronation," KV 317, accompanied by the Salzburger Domorchester. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: www.musiccelebrations.com/festivals/2015/mozart.html



Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 25-29 June 2015.

For youth and adult choirs, concerts, workshops, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm>

Sing A Mile High Children's Choral Festival, Denver, CO, USA, 25-29 June 2015. 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, 25-28 June, 2-5 July, 9-12 July & 16-19 July 2015. 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: Hanna Valkonen, Email: hanna.valkonen@phnet.fi - Website: <http://gardaestate.altervista.org>

Singin' America PDM-Choir Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 26 June 2015. Musical exchange of European and American choirs, under the direction of Dr. Karen Kennedy. Contact: PDM Tourism Group, Email: office@pdmtourismgroup.com - Website: www.pdmtourismgroup.com

3rd Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, 26-29 June 2015. For choirs of all traditions and nationalities to come together for a wonderful three days of non-competitive singing. Contact: Limerick Sings, Email: information@limericksings.com - Website: www.limericksings.com

4th Summer Choral Fest 2015, Lisbon, Portugal, 26-29 June 2015. As part of the annual festivities of the Festas de Lisboa '12, organised by EGEC and SourceWerkz Pte Ltd, Singapore, this Festival is a platform for choirs to partake in high-level competition as well as work under the tutelage of an artistic panel of 5 judges drawing from all corners of the world. Contact: SourceWerkz, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: <http://pscf.sourcewerkz.com/>

3rd Per Musicam Ad Astra, International Copernicus Choir Festival and Competition, Toruń, Poland, 27 June-1 July 2015. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 15 April. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Piroška Horváth e. K., Email: constanze@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

6th Musica Sacra a Roma International Choir Festival and Competition, Rome, Italy, 1-5 July 2015. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 28 Feb 2015. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Piroška Horváth e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

International festival of choirs and orchestras in Budapest, Hungary, 2-6 July 2015. For choirs and orchestras from all around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

International Folklore Festival, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 2-5 July 2015. Festival of folklore music and dance ensembles. Apply before 15/04/15. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Cantus Salisburgensis Kaleidoscope of Nations, Salzburg, Austria, 2-6 July 2015. Kaleidoscope of Nations. For choirs and orchestras. Contact: Cultours Europe GmbH, Email: Karin.Pfliegler@cultours.at - Website: www.cultours.at

17th International Cantus Music and Culture Festival Choir Competition Meet Mozart, Salzburg, Austria, 2-5 July 2015. For all kind of choirs. Contact: MusiCultur Travel GmbH, Email: info@musicultur.com - Website: www.musicultur.com

Cantus Salisburgensis Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 2-6 July 2015. 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

Claudio Monteverdi Choral Festival and Competition, Venice, Italy, 2-5 July 2015. Competition for Equal Voices, Mixed, Chamber, Youth, Children, Sacred Music, Folk and Spiritual Choirs. Concerts in beautiful churches in Venice. Sung Service for the winners at the St. Mark Basilica. Contact: Claudio Monteverdi Choral Competition, Email: office@venicechoralcompetition.it - Website: www.venicechoralcompetition.it

6th International Sacred Music Choir Festival & Competition Laudate Dominum, Vilnius, Lithuania, 2-8 July 2015. For all choirs around the world. Contact: Gratulations, Email: info.gratulations@gmail.com - Website: www.gratulations.lt

Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, held in the Musikverein in Vienna, Austria, 3-8 July 2015. Festival held in Vienna's main concert venues, the Golden Hall of the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus. Cross-cultural and musical exchange event including workshops, lectures, concerts in and around Vienna, competition or celebration (non-competitive) with an international and highly renowned jury. Contact: Mr. Jürgen Partaj, Email: office@sclfestival.org - Website: www.sclfestival.org

Festival of Voices, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 3-12 July 2015. Performance such as concerts to clubs, cabaret venues and pop up performances for participants and singers of all ages and backgrounds. Contact: Festival of Voices Tasmania, Email: info@festivalofvoices.com - Website: www.festivalofvoices.com.au

17th International Cantus MM Choir and Orchestra Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 3-6 July 2015. 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.cantusmm.com

12th Vivace International Choir Festival, Veszprém, Hungary, 3-5 July 2015. Open to all choir-types. Focus: the pleasures of life, the joy of living. Possibility for adjoining choir camp. Friendly conditions. Apply before Feb 28, 2015. Contact: Viktoria Dely, Vivace organizer, Email: vivace@hangvilla.com - Website: www.hangvilla.com/vivace2015

Carmina Burana - Canto a Roma Choral Festival, Italy, 4 July 2015. For all kind of pro and amateur choral ensembles from all over the world. Contact: Sechrist Travel, LLC, Email: info@sechristtravel.com - Website: www.sechristtravel.com

Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Nashville, TN, USA, 4-10 July 2015. 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@crossroadschildrenschorusfestival.com - Website: www.crossroadschildrenschorusfestival.com

2nd European Choir Games, Magdeburg, Germany, 5-12 July 2015. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Parallel to the European Choir Games, Grand Prix of Nations, a competition for the best amateur choirs in the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

50th International Days of Choral Singing, Barcelona, Spain, 6-12 July 2015. Concerts and workshops with Elisenda Carrasco (Catalonia), Salvador Brotons (Catalonia), Karmina Silec (Slovenia). Apply before 15 Jan 2015. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: fcec@fcec.cat - Website: www.fcec.cat

Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, United Kingdom, 7-12 July 2015. 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/

33th International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Greece, 9-18 July 2015. 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 - Website: http://festivalofkarditsa.blogspot.gr/

International Youth Music Festival I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 9-12 July 2015. 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. Apply before 15/04/2015. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Rhapsody! International Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic & Vienna, Salzburg, Austria, 9-19 July 2015. Performances in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities, workshop, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing tours. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm

3rd International Choral Festival of Antonin Dvorak 'DVORAK'S CHORAL SUMMER', Prague, Czech Republic, 10-11 July 2015. Competition open to amateur female, male, youth, mixed and children's choirs. Contact: OR-FEA Festival and Organisational Agency, Email: incoming@orfea.cz - Website: www.or-fea.cz

International Choir Festival InCanto Mediterraneo, Milazzo (Sicily), Italy, 12-18 July 2015. First part of the festival non competitive, second part competitive in various categories. Contact: Associazione Corale "Cantica Nova", Email: festival@canticanova.it - Website: www.festivalincantomediterraneo.it

International Festival of Choral Music: For a Strengthened and United Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 12-19 July 2015. Conferences, workshops, masterclasses, concerts. Contact: African Federation for Choral Music, Email: info@famuc.org - Website: www.famuc.org

Africa Sings Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya, 12-19 July 2015. Concerts, meetings and workshops for choir from Africa and all over the world. Contact: African Federation for Choral Music, Email: info@famuc.org - Website: www.famuc.org

10th Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choir Festival, San Francisco Bay Area, USA, 12-18 July 2015. For children's and youth choirs from all over the world to perform, compete, and build international friendship. Competition for Historical, Folk, Contemporary, Spiritual/Gospel, Vocal Solo categories. Artistic Director: Robert Geary (USA). Festival conductors and adjudicators: María Guinand and Stephen Leek. Apply before: Oct 2014. Contact: Piedmont Choirs, Email: info@goldengatefestival.org - Website: www.goldengatefestival.org

Hong Kong Word Youth and Children's Choir Festival, Hong Kong, China, 13-18 July 2015. 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@hktriblechoir.com - Website: www.hktriblechoir.com/wyccf

St George International Choir Festival, Thessaloniki, Greece, 15-21 July 2015. Non competitive event for any kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music Company of Northern Hellas - Website: www.stgeorge-music-festival.com/choirfestival.htm

International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival and Competition, Wernigerode, Germany, 15-19 July 2015. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

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: fimc@fimc.es - Website: www.fimc.es

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 17-24 July 2015. 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

2nd Singapore International Choral Festival, Singapore, 18-21 July 2015. Competition, workshop, performances. With Jennifer Tham (Artistic Director, Singapore), Chen Yun-Hung (Taiwan), Jonathan Velasco (Philippines) and Mark O'Leary (Australia). Contact: SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: http://sicf.sg/

Choralp 2015, Briançon, France, 18-25 July 2015. For choirs or individual singers. Atelier 1: Te Deum de Dettingen de G.F. Haendel with Il Falcone Orchestra, conducted by Jean Marie Puissant (France). Atelier 2: Babel, roots and traditions, conducted by Marleen de Boo (Belgium). Contact: Association A Coeur Joie France, les Choralies, Email: choralp@gmail.com - Website: www.choralp.fr

Istanbul International Chorus Competition and Festival, Istanbul, Turkey, 21-26 July 2015. For children, female, male, mixed choirs and folk groups. Contact: Istanbul Harman Folklor, Email: istanbul@istanbulchorus.com - Website: www.istanbulchorus.com

World Peace Choral Festival Vienna 2015, Austria, 22-25 July 2015. Concerts, workshops, mass concert with the Vienna Boys Choir for children's and youth choirs. Contact: Stefanie Rauscher, Email: info@wpcf.at - Website: www.wpcf.at/



7th International Festival of choirs and orchestras in Tuscany, Italy, 22-26 July 2015. International festival of choirs and orchestras in Tuscany. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

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/eng/grand-prix-pattaya-2015

4th Florence International Choir Festival, Florence, Italy, 22-24 July 2015. For choirs of all categories from all around the world. Contact: Florence International Choir Festival, Email: director@florencechoirfestival.com - Website: www.florencechoirfestival.com

Andrea O. Veneracion International Choral Festival, Manilla, Philippines, 22-25 July 2015. This Festival, named after the founder of the renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers will gather Filipino and foreign choirs who will compete in the Folk Song, Chamber Choir, and Vocal Ensemble categories. Contact: Artist Training Division, Arts Education Department of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Email: choralfestmnl2013@yahoo.com.ph - Website: www.culturalcenter.gov.ph

Oriente Conventus VIII, Singapore, 23-26 July 2015. Competition for mixed, equal voices, children's, folklore and chamber choirs. Artistic Director: Toh Ban Sheng (Singapore). Contact: ACE 99 Cultural Pte Ltd., Email: niki@ace99.com.sg - Website: www.ace99.com.sg

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23-31 July 2015. Combined choirs performances in top venues, optional choral competition. For all kind of choirs. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

Belgian Summer Sing, Ghent, Belgium, 23-27 July 2015. 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

5th International Children's and Youth Choir Festival "Touch the future", Dannstadt / Ludwigshafen, Germany, 24 July-2 Aug 2015. For children's and youth choirs (upper voices) from all over the world to perform an build international friendships. Combined rehearsals, individual concerts and Gala Performance. Workshops with top European clinicians bringing together the voices of talented young singers from around the world for a unique musical and cultural experience. Contact: Juventus Vocalis, Judith Janzen, Email: judith.janzen@t-online.de - Website: www.touch-the-future.org and www.juventusvocalis.de

Europa Cantat Festival 2015, Pécs, Hungary, 24 July-2 Aug 2015. Spectacular vocal festival with participants from Europe and beyond. Workshops by international conductors in all vocal genres. Open singing, concerts: sing & listen, international contacts. Contact: European Choral Association — Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecpecs2015.hu - Website: www.ecpecs2015.hu

Young Event Management Program at the Europa Cantat Festival XIX, Pécs, Hungary, 24 July-2 Aug 2015. A selected group of international young arts managers will visit the Europa Cantat Festival. As observers they will get to know different ways of festival management and learn from and exchange ideas with other managers. Contact: European Choral Association — Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecpecs2015.hu - Website: www.ecpecs2015.hu

54th International Seghizzi Choral Competition and Festival, Gorizia, Italy, 24-26 July 2015. 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. Apply before 1 Mar 2015. Contact: Associazione Corale Goriziana "CA Seghizzi", Email: info@seghizzi.it - Website: www.seghizzi.it

15th Taipei International Choral Festival, Taipei, Taiwan, 25 July-2 Aug 2015. Concerts performed by 5 international invited choirs and local groups in National Concert Hall and different cities. Lectures & Workshops for choral singers, conductors and conducting master class, led by international clinicians. Artistic Director: Dirk DuHei. Contact: Taipei Philharmonic Foundation, Email: ting@tpf.org.tw - Website: www.ticf.tw

31st Takarazuka International Chamber Chorus Contest, Takarazuka City, Hyogo, Japan, 25-26 July 2015. For choirs with a minimum of 8 and maximum of 20 singers, excluding conductor and accompanists. Apply before 15 November 2014. Contact: Takarazuka Vega-Hall, Email: ticc@takarazuka-c.jp - Website: http://takarazuka-c.jp/page0161.html

International Youth Music Festival II, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 26-29 July 2015. 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. Apply before 15/04/2015. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Nordic Song Festival 2015, Hudiksvall, H^Vslingland, Sweden, 28 June-5 July 2015. Master classes, workshops, lectures, individual lessons, concerts. Festival centered around the Nordic song tradition with songs and romances in the Nordic languages. For individual singers. Apply before Apr 10. Contact: Gitta-Maria Sjöberg, artistic director, Email: gitta-maria@nordicsongfestival.org - Website: www.nordicsongfestival.org

4th Bali International Choir Festival, Indonesia, 29 July-2 Aug 2015. 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/

2015 Taiwan International Choral Workshops and Concerts, Taiwan - China, 7-9 Aug 2015. Choral exchange programs and concerts to achieve culture exchange and friendship, featuring three international choral groups and six local groups. Apply before Jan 31, 2015. Contact: Taiwan Crystal Children's Choral Association, Rita Lu, Email: tcca0105@gmail.com - Website: crystalchoir.org.tw

9th International Choral Festival San Juan Coral 2015, Argentina, 13-18 Aug 2015. Non-competitive choral festival organized by the Universidad Católica de Cuyo's Choir every two years, for 8-10 selected mixed, female, male and chamber choirs (16 voices or more). Concerts, conferences and workshops for choirs, singers, conductors and other individual musicians. Apply before March 15, 2015. Contact: María Elina Mayorga, Email: mariaelinamayorga@gmail.com or sanjuancoral@gmail.com - Website: www.sanjuancoral.com.ar

8th Choral Singing Contest of South American Folk and Popular Music, La Plata, Argentina, 14-17 Aug 2015. Competition dedicated to Eduardo Falú and Carlos Gardel, open to amateurs choirs from over the world. Register before Mar 30, 2015. Contact: Asociación Argentina para la Música Coral, Email: aamcantp@ciudad.com.ar - Website: www.aamcant.org.ar

International Festival of choirs and orchestras in Paris, France, 19-23 Aug 2015. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

International Choir Festival Coralua, Trondheim, Norway, 22-28 Aug 2015. Festival and workshops for choirs, individual choral singers and choral conductors. Apply before April 15. Contact: Coralua, Email: trondheim@coralua.com - Website: www.coralua.com

Guido d'Arezzo International Polyphonic Competition, Arezzo, Italy, 23-30 Aug 2015. For amateur choral ensembles. Categories: Christian plainchant, polyphony, polyphony for children's voices, special competition, int'l choral festival of folksong. Contact: Competition secretariat, Email: fonguid@polifonico.org - Website: www.polifonico.org

2nd Choral International Festival Under the Sun of Sardegna, Sant Antioco Island, Sardegna, 26-30 Aug 2015. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu - Website: www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu

1st Choir Festival in Salzburg Cathedral, Austria, 28-30 Aug 2015. Mozart's Coronation Mass for choirs as well as individual singers. Contact: Kunst & Kultur - ohne Grenzen, Email: office@kunstkultur.com - Website: www.kunstkultur.com

International festival of choirs and orchestras in Vienna, Austria, 9-13 Sep 2015. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/international-festival-of-choirs-and-orchestras-in-vienna-austria.phtml?wmf

17th EUROTREFF 2015, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 9-13 Sep 2015. Concerts and 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/eurotreff2015

International Festival Concordia Vocis, Cagliari, Italy, 10-13, 17-20, 24-27 Sep 2015. For vocal ensembles and mixed, male and female choirs up to 20 members. Invited choirs' local costs covered by the festival. Contact: International Choral Festival Concordia Vocis - Website: www.concordiavocis.it

5th International Choir Competition and Festival Canco Mediterrania, Barcelona & Lloret de Mar, Spain, 15-20 Sep 2015. 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

11th Trelew International Choral Competition - 20th Anniversary, Trelew, Chubut, Patagonia, Argentina, 15-20 Sep 2015. 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: cictrelew@yahoo.com.ar - Website: www.fundacioncic.org

The Voice of Wealth, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 19-26 Sep 2015. International choir festival and competition for all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Monolit Festivals, Email: info@monolitfestivals.com - Website: http://monolitfestivals.com/

4th Choral Festival for Peace, Abuja, Nigeria, 21 Sep-2 Oct 2015. Competition including opening ceremony, national symposium for peace and choral music dedicated to children, youth and women victims of conflict, cultural exchange and exhibition, award dinner. Contact: Annual Festival of Nigerian Choirs, Email: afncnigeria@gmail.com

4th International Choir Festival Music and Sea, Paralia, Greece, 21-26 Sep 2015. Competitive and non-competitive festival featuring open air concert in the streets and the squares of Paralia, Olympic Beach and Katerini. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: MAG Culture and Experience, Email: info@magculture.mk - Website: www.magculture.mk

The Inaugural London International A Cappella Choir Competition, St John's Smith Square, London, United Kingdom, 22-25 Sep 2015. Festival bringing together 16 choirs from around the world to compete in a series of public concerts. A jury of renowned experts, chaired by the founder and director Tallis Scholars Peter Phillips, will select a winning choir from four preliminary rounds to compete in a prestigious final with the opportunity to win substantial cash prizes and further concert dates. For mixed-voice choirs of 16 members or more. Apply before May 15. Contact: Joanna Innes-Hopkins, Email: joanna@sjs.org.uk - Website: www.sjs.org.uk

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 24-27 Sep 2015. Competition for Equal Voices, Mixed, Chamber, Youth, Children, Sacred Music, Folk and Spiritual Choirs. Festival under the Patronage of the EU Parliament and the President of the Republic of Italy. Common Sung Service at the Renaissance Rimini Cathedral. Contact: Rimini International Choral Competition, Email: info@riminichoral.it - Website: www.riminichoral.it

International Video Competition for Treble and Women's Choirs, Germany, 30 Sep 2015. Performance competition of a compulsory piece by Schronen in two different levels of difficulty (medium and high). Applicant choirs must record the performance on video and upload it on Youtube. In addition to the jury award, there will be an audience award (number of "likes"). Apply before July 31. Contact: AS Musikverlag, Marion Scherer, Email: management@as-musikverlag.de - Website: www.wac-contest.eu

Cracovia Music Festival 2015, Cracow, Poland, 30 Sep-4 Oct 2015. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

1st International Choir Festival Puccini 2015, Torre del Lago, Italy, 30 Sep-4 Oct 2015. Whether you participate in friendship concerts or in the competition, singers will find specific programs tailored to their needs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 1-4 Oct 2015. 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 August 1st 2015. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Festival Magic Mozart Moments, Salzburg, Austria, 1-4 Oct 2015. Voices from all over the world and the Salzburg Cathedral Choir & Orchestra. Singers are required to have sung the performed piece before. Contact: Cultours Europe, Email: office@cultours.at - Website: www.cultours-europe.com



Symposium on Singing and Song, St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada, 1-4 Oct 2015. Performing artists, conductors, musicologists, studio teachers, scholars, ethnomusicologists, music educators, music therapists, students,... are coming together within The Singing Network to create, develop, and explore the many and varied aspects of singing and song. Contact: The Singing Network, Email: singingnetwork@mun.ca - Website: www.facebook.com/SingingNetwork

13th International Choir Contest of Flanders-Maasmechelen, Belgium, 2-5 Oct 2015. 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

International Choral Festival Singing Together Iso-Polyphony in Albania, Durres, Shkodra and Apolonia, Albania, 6-10 Oct 2015. Festival for non professional choirs featuring a diversity of international choral music, sacred music, traditional/folk music & Iso-Polyphony. Participants will enjoy the experience of learning & singing Albanian folk iso-polyphony proclaimed by UNESCO a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Contact: National Choral Center, Email: singingisopolyphony@gmail.com - Website: www.choral-isopolyphony.com

John Paul II International Choir Festival of Sacred Music Mundus Cantat, Gdansk, Poland, 8-11 Oct 2015. 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.pl

12th In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda, Italy, 10-14 Oct 2015. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 June 2015. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Piroška Horváth e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

International Choir Competition and Festival Kalamata 2015, Greece, 14-18 Oct 2015. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories of difficulty, line-ups and musical genres. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 14-18 Oct 2015. International festival of music for choirs and orchestras on Lake Garda. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

11th Busan Choral Festival & competition, South Korea, 14-17 Oct 2015. Categories: classical mixed, classical equal, ethnic (traditional) music, pop & a cappella, Children and youth (under 18). Contact: Busan Culture Center, Email: busanchoral@gmail.com - Website: www.busanchoral.com

8th Thracian Choir Festival, Yambol, Bulgaria, 15-18 Oct 2015. Non-competitive, annual event for all kind of choirs and all styles of music. Apply before 30 March 2015. Contact: Mrs. Vessela Pastarmadjieva, Director of the festival, Email: choirschool@gmail.com

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 16-20 Oct 2015. Performances, friendship concerts and workshops. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: info@musiccontact.com - Website: www.musiccontact.com

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2015, Spain, 19-25 Oct 2015. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: info@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es ►

Canta al mar 2015 International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 21-25 Oct 2015. Competition for mixed, male, female, children's and youth choirs. No compulsory pieces required. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Derry International Choral Festival, Ireland, 22-25 Oct 2015. 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 - Website: www.codichoral.com

11th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 23-25 Oct 2015. For a cappella choirs. Choirs can compete in one of 5 categories for statuettes of Golden Lyre and Special Romuald Twardowski Prize. Festival takes place in Porczynski & Chopin Halls. Additional concerts in Warsaw churches. Apply before May 31, 2015. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@varsoviacantat.pl - Website: www.varsoviacantat.pl

International Choral Festival London 2015, United Kingdom, 24 Oct 2015. For all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Music Events Unlimited, Email: info@musiceventsunlimited.de - Website: www.icf-london.com

Malta International Choir Festival, Malta, 29 Oct-2 Nov 2015. Singers from around the world come together in competition and festivals. Choose from the categories: Musica Sacra, Secular Music, Children- and Youth Choirs and Folklore. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Piroška Horváth e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

International Choir Competition of Tolosa, Spain, 29 Oct-1 Nov 2015. Its aim is to bring together the best choirs in the world: exchange of styles, interpretation, choral literature, vocal education and ways of each country and information about the musical and cultural traditions of the Basque Country. Contact: Centro de Iniciativas de Tolosa, Email: cit@cittolosa.com - Website: www.cittolosa.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@festamusical.com - Website: www.festamusical.com

Sing'n'Joy China 2015 International Choir Festival and Competition, Shunde, China, 4-8 Nov 2015. Competition in the following categories: adult, children's and youth choirs, and folklore. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Cantate Dresden, Germany, 5-8 Nov 2015. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music&Friends, Email: info@musicandfriends.org - Website: www.musicandfriends.net/html/cantate_dresden1.html

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Rome, Italy, 7-10 Nov 2015. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

IFCM Asia Pacific World Choral Expo, Macau, Macau SAR (China), 12-15 Nov 2015. International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), Asia Pacific Choral Council and Macau Choral Art Association are collaborating together to debut the first ever World Choral Expo, in Macau S.A.R from the 12th to 15th of November 2015! World-class conductors, composers and choirs will convene to share their experiences, techniques, and voices to the Asia Pacific Region. This event is co-sponsored by the Chinese Culture Association, the China Choral Association, and Canton Province Choral Association. Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: info@ifcm.net - Website: www.ifcm.net or www.worldchoralexpo.com

International Choir Festival Corearte Brazil 2015, Caxias do Sul, Brazil, 15-21 Nov 2015. Non-competitive event open to choirs of various backgrounds from all over the world. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: Info@corearte.es - Website: www.corearte.es

Prague Advent Choral Festival, Czech Republic, 20-23 Nov, 27-30 Nov, 4-7 Dec, 11-14 Dec, 18-21 Dec 2015. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music&Friends, Email: info@musicandfriends.org - Website: www.advent-choir-prague.info

International Advent Singing Festival Vienna 2015, Austria, 26-30 Nov 2015. For choirs from all around the world. Other possible dates: 3-7 & 10-14 December 2015. Contact: MusiCultur Travel GmbH, Email: info@musicultur.com - Website: www.musicultur.com/en/trips/reisen/chorfestival-salzburg-2013.html

Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 26-30 Nov, 3-7, 10-14, 17-21 Dec 2015. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: vienna@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

A Voyage of Songs, Penang, Malaysia, 26-29 Nov 2015. Choral Competition in 11 categories, gala opening, closing and friendship concerts, masterclasses and conductors' forum. Apply before 31st July 2015. Early Bird Special: 30th April 2015. Contact: Konzert Pte Ltd, Email: info@konzert.com.sg - Website: www.konzertchoral.com.sg

25th International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music with Petr Eben Prize, Prague, Czech Republic, 27-28 Nov 2015. Competition open to amateur female, male, youth, mixed and children's choirs. Contact: OR-FEA Festival and Organisational Agency, Email: incoming@orfea.cz - Website: www.or-fea.cz

6th Winter Choral Festival, Hong Kong China, 29 Nov-2 Dec 2015. Competition, performances and workshops conducted by Festival Chair Ms Lim Ai Hooi. Contact: SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: pscf.sourcewerkz.com or [facebook/sourcewerkz](https://www.facebook.com/sourcewerkz)

Gospel in Spain, Spain, 1-7 Dec 2015. For all kind of pro and amateur choral ensembles from all over the world. Contact: Sechrist Travel, LLC, Email: info@sechristtravel.com - Website: www.sechristtravel.com

International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 3-6 Dec 2015. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches and on the Christmas markets stage. Your songs and performances will contribute to a truly heart-warming atmosphere of Christmas. Apply before October 1st 2015. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

6th Krakow Advent & Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 4-6 Dec 2015. For all kinds of choirs. Competition in 5 categories for the statuettes of Golden Angels or non-competitive participation. Apply before June 30, 2015. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: www.christmasfestival.pl

1st Florence Advent Choir Festival, Italy, 9-11 Dec 2015. International festival for youth choirs and orchestras. Contact: Florence International Choir Festival, Email: director@florencechoirfestival.com - Website: www.florencechoirfestival.com

International Choir Festival of Advent & Christmas Music Mundus Cantat, Sopot, Poland, 11-14 Dec 2015. 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.pl

1st International Festival and Competition In Anticipation of Christmas, St. Petersburg, Russia, 11-14 Dec 2015. For female choirs. Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: interaspect@mail.ru - Website: www.interfestplus.ru

Sing in the New Year - Greece Choir Festival with Simon Carrington, Greece, 27 Dec 2015-3 Jan 2016. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Anders Wall & Allmänna Sängen Composition Award, Uppsala, Sweden, 7 Jan 2016. An international competition exclusively for female composers within mixed choir a cappella music. Deadline for notification of participation in the composition: 1 Dec 2015. Deadline for submission: 7 Jan 2016. The premiere performance of the winning composition, as well as the prize ceremony, takes place in May 2016 at the Spring Concert of Allmänna Sängen in Uppsala. Contact: Allmänna Sängen, Email: info@allmannasangen.se - Website: www.allmannasangen.se

The Eric Ericson Award 2016, Uppsala and Stockholm, Sweden, 18-21 Feb 2016. In cooperation with the IFCM. The Eric Ericson Award is a competition for young choir conductors aged 20 to 32. The repertoire is chosen from Western choral art music, with some emphasis on recent Swedish choral music. Apply before 1 Sep 2015. Contact: Eric Ericson International Choral Centre, Email: info@ericsonchoralcentre.se - Website: <http://www.ericsonchoralcentre.se>

Roma Music Festival 2015, Italy, 9-13 Mar 2016. International festival of choirs and orchestras. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 9-13 Mar 2016. An international panel of directors adjudicate this Festival for youth choirs, bands and orchestras in its thirteenth year. Over one thousand participants travel to Prague from around the world to perform in venues such as St. Nicholas' Church and the National House. Enjoy a culturally rich and educational experience while you meet and perform with youth ensembles from around the globe. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Rome, Italy, 9-14 Mar 2016. Concerts and friendships. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com



5th International Gdansk Choir Festival, Poland, 11-13 Mar 2016.

For all kinds of choirs. Competition part in 5 categories, concerts, non-competitive participation possible, meeting of choirs in the famous city of Solidarity. Apply before Oct 15, 2015. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@gdanskfestival.pl - Website: www.gdanskfestival.pl

Sing'n'Joy Provo 2016 The American International Choral Festival, USA, 16-20 Mar 2016. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on chamber choirs. Contact: Föderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Istra Music Festival 2016, Croatia, 16-20 Mar 2016. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: https://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/international-festival-of-choirs-and-orchestras-in-istria-croatia.phtml

13th International Choir Festival of Sacred and Clerical Music, Olomouc, Czech Republic, 16-20 Mar 2016. 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

Golden Voices of Montserrat! International Contest, Montserrat Monastery, Catalonia, Spain, 20-24 Mar 2016. Taking place in Spain, this is one of the most biggest and incredible contest for choirs from all over the world. Contest day, master class, recording of the song in studio, flash mob and gala concert is waiting for you! Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

14th In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda, Italy, 20-24 Mar 2016. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. PirokCE± HorvCE`th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

2016 Emerald Cith Choral Festival with René Clausen, Seattle, USA, 30 Mar-3 Apr 2016. For all kind of pro and amateur choral ensembles from all over the world. Contact: Sechrist Travel, LLC, Email: info@sechristtravel.com - Website: www.sechristtravel.com

Verona International Choral Competition, Verona, Italy, 30 Mar-3 Apr 2016. Sponsored by the Association of Choirs of Northern Italy, this festival offers an adjudicated performance for an international panel of choral experts. Enjoy the opportunity to receive informed feedback from the knowledgeable judges. Exchange with a local Italian choir, sing individually at a school or senior center, and meet choirs from around the world. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

19th International Festival of Children's and Young Choirs Rainbow, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 1-3 Apr 2016. Festival with many categories for choirs and vocal ensembles with singers below 35 years old. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@petersburgfestival.com - Website: www.petersburgfestival.com

Slovakia Cantat 2016, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 21-24 Apr 2016. 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 December 15th 2015. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

62nd Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 27 Apr-1 May 2016. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

2nd International Choir Festival Guam Pacific, Guam, 27 Apr-1 May 2016. 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

5th International Messiah Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 28 Apr-1 May 2016. 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: http://messiah-salzburg-festival.blogspot.co.at

63rd European Music Festival for Young People, Neerpelt, Belgium, 29 Apr-2 May 2016. Categories: children's, single-voice youth, mixed-voice youth, pennant series children, pennant series single-voice youth, pennant series mixed-voice youth, free series: vocal and vocal-instrumental ensembles such as close harmony, vocal jazz, folk music, gospel & spiritual. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: info@emj.be - Website: www.emj.be

International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 30 Apr-4 May 2016. The comprehensive and friendly support by members of the choirs of Bad Ischl creates a family and relaxed atmosphere for this festival which features competitions gala concerts, friendship concerts and participation in masses. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

World of Choirs, Italy, 1-4 May 2016. All the participants will demonstrate their skills on one of the best stages of the Adriatic coast. Invites all amateur choirs! Italy will not leave you indifferent. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Budapest/Vienna Choir Festival, Hungary/Austria, May 2016. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Larry Wyatt. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Sea Sun Festival & Competition, Costa Brava, Spain, 1-6 May, 12-17 June, 3-8 July, 18-23 Sep 2016. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

14th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 1-5 May 2016. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 Nov 2015. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. PirokCE± HorvCE`th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Sing'n'Joy Vienna 2016 3rd Choir Festival & 30th International Franz Schubert Choir Competition, Austria, 4-8 May 2016. 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

Costa Barcelona Music Festival, Spain, 4-8 May 2016. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

10th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 4-8 May 2016. Renowned platform for 18 highest qualified children and youth choirs (age limit 25) from Europe. During five days the participating choirs give over 40 concerts for an enthusiastic audience of around 25,000 spectators. All singers are accommodated in local host families. They meet other outstanding choirs in workshops, at parties and on a boat trip. Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: info@ejcf.ch - Website: www.ejcf.ch

International Festival of Choral Singing Nancy Voix du Monde, Nancy, France, 4-8 May 2016. Festival for all choir categories. 1600 singers from all over the world. Invited choirs' local costs covered by the festival. Contact: Festival International de Chant Choral de Nancy, Email: festival-choral@orange.fr - Website: www.chantchoral.org

Sing Along Concert in Vienna, Austria, 6-8 May 2016. For singers from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Mayo International Choral Festival, Ireland, 25-29 May 2016. 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

11th Festa Choralis Bratislava, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 25-29 May 2016. 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/eng/festa-choralis-bratislava-2016

Festival Riviera 2016 Nice Choir Festival, France, June 2016. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Henry Leck. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Notes of Joy Austria 2016 Choir Festival, Austria, June 2016. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Rollo Dilworth. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

International Choral Espoo Festival, Espoo, Finland, 1-7 June 2016. Concerts, workshops and events around choral music. Artistic director: Pasi Hyökki. Contact: International ChoralEspoo, Email: info@vocal espoo.fi - Website: www.vocal espoo.fi

Ireland 2016 Choir Festival, Galway and Dublin, Ireland, June 2016. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Elena Sharkova. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Passion of Italy Choral Festival with Craig Hella Johnson, Rome, Italy, June 2016. Individual concerts, immersion in the great history of Rome, sightseeing and performances with peers in the greatest venues. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

6th International Wroclaw Choir Festival Vratislavia Sacra, Poland, 3-5 June 2016. Wroclaw is European Capital of Culture 2016. Festival focusing on sacred music of different style and origin. Choirs can compete in one of the 7 categories for St Cecilia statuettes. Evening concerts. Apply before: 15th Dec 2015 Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@vratislaviasacra.pl - Website: www.vratislaviasacra.pl

44th International Choir Festival of Songs, Czech Republic, 8-12 June 2016. 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

7th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 9-12 June 2016. For all kinds of choirs, 9 categories, many concert opportunities. Gala concert in Krakow Philharmonic. Apply before Dec 15, 2015. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl

Musica Sacra Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 16-19 June 2016. 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 March 1st 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

2016 Prima Voce Itali'a, The Maestro Festival Tour, Milan, Venice, Florence, Siena, Rome, Italy, 20-28 June 2016. With artistic directors Anton Armstrong and Karen Kennedy, workshops, rehearsals and concert performances for choirs from around the world. Contact: Choirs of America, LLC, Email: info@choirsofamerica.org - Website: www.vocalmusic.org

Rome International Choral Festival, Italy, 22-26 June 2016. Featuring Mass participation at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and a formal finale concert at Rome's famed Saint Mary above Minerva Basilica under the baton of Z. Randall Stroope. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

Féile Córúil Dublin Choral Festival with Dr. Kevin Fenton, Ireland, 22-26 June 2016. Facing the haunting outline of the Wicklow Mountains, Ireland's Fair City holds true to a 1,000-year Celtic heritage that inspires her music and artistry to this day. This festival will celebrate this great heritage of Celtic musical inspiration. For mixed-voice choirs and individual singers from a variety of background joining together to sing en masse. Three days of rehearsals will lead participants to a grand finale performance in the historic medieval cathedral, Christ Church Cathedral Dublin. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: http://dublinchoralfestival.org/

Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 23-27 June 2016. For youth and adult choirs, concerts, workshops, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm



International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Italy, 23-27 June 2016.

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

The Power of Song 2016 Baltic Choral Festival, Vilnius, Riga & Tallinn, Lithuania, Latvia & Estonia, 25 June-3 July 2016.

Performance in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn, and at the Song Festival Grounds under the direction of Dr. Geoffrey Boers. Contact: Perform International - Website: www.perform-international.com

1st Annual Prague Choral Celebration Sing Dvořák, Rutter, Brubeck, and more, in the world-renowned Smetana Hall, Czech Republic, 27 June-1 July 2016.

A Trio of Te Deums celebrating the great heritage of Czech musical inspiration and featuring a large chorus consisting of individual singers and mixed-voice choirs. Three days of rehearsals under the baton of esteemed choral conductor Dr. William Skoog will culminate in a grand performance at the Smetana Hall, home of the Prague Symphony Orchestra. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://praguechoralcelebration.org/>

Mozart International Choral Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 29 June-3 July 2016.

Three days of festival rehearsals, mingling side-by-side with singers from a variety of backgrounds under the direction of Jo-Michael Scheibe (USA). János Czifra, Domkapellmeister of the Dom, will conduct Mozart's Mass in C Major, "Coronation," KV 317, accompanied by the Salzburger Domorchester. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: www.musiccelebrations.com/festivals/2015/mozart.html

Slovakia Folk 2016, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 30 June-3 July 2016.

Festival of folklore music and dance ensembles. Apply before April 15th 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Join Janet Galván in the Ireland Choir Festival, Dublin & Belfast, Ireland, July 2016.

Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion, tour Dublin and discover Belfast. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, held in the Musikverein in Vienna, Austria, 1-6 July 2016.

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@sclfestival.org - Website: www.sclfestival.org

IFAS 2016 — 24th International Festival of Academic Choirs, Pardubice, Czech Republic, 1-6 July 2016.

Competition with possible Grand Prix for university and college choirs or youth choirs (age 18-30). Free Bohuslav Martinu Award competition for all kind of choirs (except children's choirs) Contact: IFAS - Alena Mejstříková, Email: ifas.pardubice@seznam.cz - Website: www.ifas.cz

International Choral Kathaumixw, Powell River, Canada, 5-9 July 2016.

Join choirs from around the world in 20 concerts, competitions, common singing, conductor's seminars and social events on the shores of Canada's magnificent Pacific Coast. Guest Artists and International Jury. Extension Tours available. Application Deadline November 1, 2015. Contact: Powell River Academy of Music, Email: info@kathaumixw.org - Website: www.kathaumixw.org

9th World Choir Games, Sochi, Russian Federation, 6-16 July 2016.

Large competition for choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

SINGMIT! Festival in Vienna, Austria, 7-9 July 2016.

For choirs and singers from around the globe, rehearsals with artistic director Gerald Wirth, workshops and performance of Mozart's Requiem. Contact: Encore Performance Tours, Email: encoretours@acis.com - Website: www.encoretours.com/go/singmit.cfm

International Youth Music Festival I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 7-10 July 2016.

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. Apply before 15/04/2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Melodia! South American Music Festival, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 7-15 July 2016.

Combined choirs performances in top venues, optional choral competition. For all kind of choirs. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: http://classicalmovements.org/s_am.htm

Rhapsody! International Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic & Vienna, Salzburg, Austria 7-17 July 2016.

Performances in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities, workshop, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing tours. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm>

International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 13-16 July 2016.

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, Email: info@choralfestival.org - Website: www.choralfestival.org

Belgian Summer Sing, Ghent, Belgium, 21-25 July 2016.

The city of Ghent welcomes choirs from Europe and North America to perform in the stunning St. Michael's Cathedral. Celebrate choral music as part of the "Ghent Arts and Music Festival" Europe's largest open-air cultural festival. Visit and perform in the capital city of Brussels and the beautiful and historic city of Bruges. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 22-30 July 2016.

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

International Youth Music Festival II, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 24-27 July 2016.

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. Apply before 15/04/2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

5th Summer Choral Fest 2016, Lisbon, Portugal, 24-27 June 2016.

As part of the annual festivities of the Festas de Lisboa '12, organised by EGEAC and SourceWerkz Pte Ltd, Singapore, this Festival is a platform for choirs to partake in high-level competition as well as work under the tutelage of an artistic panel of 5 judges drawing from all corners of the world. Contact: SourceWerkz, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: <http://pscf.sourcewerkz.com/>

13th China International Chorus Festival Come to Beijing, Listen to the Songs of the World, Beijing, China, 26 July-1 Aug 2016. Opening Ceremony and concert in the Great Hall of the People, IFCM Choral Education Conference, IFCM Executive Committee meeting, judge panel meeting, group competition, choral exchange program, high level choir concert, new choral work concert, master classes, workshops, training camp, choral club, choral public and charitable events, concert tours, sightseeing (Great Wall, Temple of Heaven, Palace Museum), Square performances, and much more. Contact: China International Chorus Festival, Email: cicfbj@163.com - Website: www.cicfbj.cn/en

27th Béla Bartók International Choir Competition and Folklore Festival, Debrecen, Hungary, 27-31 July 2016. The only competition in contemporary choral music for five categories. The winner of the Grand Prize will be invited to the competition for "The Grand Prix for European Choral Music" held every year alternately in Arezzo, Debrecen, Maribor, Tolosa, Tours and Varna. Folklore festival, world-premiers, church concerts, conducting master class and social meetings. Halfboard catering and accomodation for the invited choirs free of charge. Apply before: 31 October 2013. Contact: Fonix Event Oraganizing NP LLC., Email: info@bbcc.hu - Website: www.bbcc.hu

1st Africa Symposium on Choral Music, Accra, Ghana, 1-9 Aug 2016. Conferences, workshops, masterclasses, concerts and African choral music exhibition. Contact: African Federation for Choral Music, Email: info@famuc.org - Website: www.famuc.org

22nd Choralies, Vaison-la-Romaine, France, 3-11 Aug 2016. 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: inscriptions@choralies.org - Website: www.choralies.fr

3rd Singapore International Choral Festival, Singapore, 10-13 Aug 2016. Competition, workshop, performances. Contact: SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: http://sicf.sg/

Bratislava Cantat I, Slovak Republic, 18-21 Aug 2016. 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 summer. Apply before April 15th 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

America Cantat 8, Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas, 21-31 Aug 2016. During one week, renowned choirs of local and international prestige are engaged in artistic and academic activities, meeting colleagues and building and exchanging friendship. Contact: American Choral Directors Association, Email: acda@acda.org - Website: http://acda.org

Tonen2000 International Choir Festival, Westland, Netherlands, 23-25 Sep 2016. Contest for non-professional mixed choirs (up to 36 members) and male and female ensembles (up to 24 members). Categories: sacred and secular music (compositions from Middle Age/ Renaissance, Romantic period and modern); folk music optional. Contact: Tonen2000, Jos Vranken, Email: info@tonen2000.nl - Website: www.tonen2000.nl

7th International Choir Festival & Competition "Isola del Sole", Grado, Italy, 28 Sep-2 Oct 2016. Competition, international friendship concerts, evaluation concerts and individual coaching. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 6-9 Oct 2016. 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 August 1st 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

2nd Beira Interior International Choir Festival and Competition, Fundão, Portugal, 8-12 Oct 2016. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 April. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Piroška Horváth e. K., Email: deborah.bertoni@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Canta al mar 2016 International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 19-23 Oct 2016. Competition for mixed, male, female, children's and youth choirs. No compulsory pieces required. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 21-24 Oct 2016. Choirs from across the globe participate in this annual festival. Share your music in towns throughout Spain's Costa Brava region. Make new friends during an evening of music with a local choir, and sing at the beautiful Auditori Palau de Congressos in Girona. Taste the local Paella and enjoy the rhythms for which the region is famous at the festive Closing Ceremony! Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

12th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 28-30 Oct 2016. For a cappella choirs. Choirs can compete in one of 5 categories for statuettes of Golden Lyre and Special Romuald Twardowski Prize. Festival takes place in Porczyński & Chopin Halls. Additional concerts in Warsaw churches. Apply before May 31, 2016. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: info@varsoviacantat.pl - Website: www.varsoviacantat.pl

Cantate Dresden, Germany, 3-6 Nov 2016. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music&Friends, Email: info@musicandfriends.org - Website: www.musicandfriends.net/html/cantate_dresden1.html

The Golden State Choral Trophy 2016, Monterey, California, USA, 20-24 Nov 2016. American International Choral Festival for all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 24-28 Nov, 1-5, 8-12, 15-19 Dec 2016. Vienna welcomes choirs from around the world to share their voices in the music capital of Europe. By invitation of the Cultural Affairs Department, sing in the magnificent City Hall and breathtaking Melk Abbey. Exchange with local schools and senior centers and experience the festive pre-holiday atmosphere in this enchanting city with Christmas markets filling the city squares! Contact: Music Contact International, Email: vienna@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

7th Winter Choral Festival, Hong Kong China, 29 Nov-2 Dec 2016. Competition, performances and workshops conducted by Festival Chair Ms Lim Ai Hooi. Contact: SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: pscf.sourcewerkz.com or facebook/sourcewerkz

International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 1-4 Dec 2016. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches and on the Christmas markets stage. Your songs and performances will contribute to a truly heart-warming atmosphere of Christmas. Apply before October 1st 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk



7th Krakow Advent & Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 2-4 Dec 2016. For all kinds of choirs. Competition in 5 categories for the statuettes of Golden Angels or non-competitive participation. Apply before June 30, 2016. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: www.christmasfestival.pl

Fest der Kulturen 2017 Grand Prix of Nations, Berlin, Germany, 18-22 Jan 2017. The competition initially starts with an Open Competition, in which all choirs can participate regardless of their cultural background and their level of proficiency. If they have qualified for the following "Grand Prix of Nations" they will compete in an exciting challenge for the Grand Prix. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Sing'n'Joy Princeton 2017 The American International Choral Festival, USA, 16-20 Feb 2017. 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

63rd Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 26-30 Apr 2017. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

Slovakia Cantat 2017, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 27-30 Apr 2017. 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 December 15th 2016. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

15th International Chamber Choir Competition, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 2-7 June 2017. Two categories: Mixed Choirs and Female Choirs. Compulsory work for each category. Apply before October 11, 2016. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

8th International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 8-11 June 2017. For all kinds of choirs, 9 categories, many concert opportunities. Gala concert in Krakow Philharmonic. Apply before Dec 15, 2016. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl

Musica Sacra Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 15-18 June 2017. 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 March 1st 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 29 June-3 July 2017. For youth and adult choirs, concerts, workshops, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm>

Slovakia Folk 2017, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 29 June-2 July 2017. Festival of folklore music and dance ensembles. Apply before April 15th 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

International Youth Music Festival I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 6-9 July 2017. 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. Apply before 15/04/2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Rhapsody! International Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic & Vienna, Salzburg, Austria, 6-16 July 2017. Performances in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities, workshop, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing tours. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm>

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 21-29 July 2017. 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

11th World Symposium on Choral Music, Barcelona, Spain, 22-29 July 2017. Eight days to listen to 26 of the world's premiere choirs, 30 outstanding lectures on choral music, music exhibition, gala concerts, open sings - all in the exciting city of Seoul and in the National Theatre of Korea. Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: office@ifcm.net - Website: www.ifcm.net

International Youth Music Festival II, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 23-26 July 2017. 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. Apply before 15/04/2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Bratislava Cantat I, Slovak Republic, 17-20 Aug 2017. 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 summer. Apply before April 15th 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 5-8 Oct 2017. 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 August 1st 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

Miami Voice 2017, Florida, USA, 1-5 Nov 2017. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories and difficulties with a focus on children's and youth choirs. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 3-6 Dec 2017. Competition, workshop, concerts in churches and on the Christmas markets stage. Your songs and performances will contribute to a truly heart-warming atmosphere of Christmas. Apply before October 1st 2017. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: www.choral-music.sk

64th European Music Festival for Young People, Neerpelt, Belgium, 27 Apr-2 May 2018. Categories: children's, single-voice youth, mixed-voice youth, pennant series children, pennant series single-voice youth, pennant series mixed-voice youth, free series: vocal and vocal-instrumental ensembles such as close harmony, vocal jazz, folk music, gospel & spiritual. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: info@emj.be - Website: www.emj.be

64th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 2-6 May 2018. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

Serenade! Washington, DC Choral Festival, USA, 28 June-2 July 2018. For youth and adult choirs, concerts, workshops, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/dc.htm>

Rhapsody! International Music Festival, Prague, Czech Republic & Vienna, Salzburg, Austria, 5-15 July 2018. Performances in three of Europe's most musical and historical cities, workshop, musical exchanges, optional choral competition and sightseeing tours. Contact: Sara Casar, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Sara@ClassicalMovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm>

IHLOMBE South African Choral Festival, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg & Game Park, South Africa, 20-28 July 2018. 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

65th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 1-5 May 2019. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

16th International Chamber Choir Competition, Marktobendorf, Germany, 7-12 June 2019. Two categories: Mixed Choirs and Female Choirs. Compulsory work for each category. Apply before October 11, 2018. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: office@modfestivals.org - Website: www.modfestivals.org

66th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 29 Apr-3 May 2020. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

65th European Music Festival for Young People, Neerpelt, Belgium, 30 Apr-4 May 2020. Categories: children's, single-voice youth, mixed-voice youth, pennant series children, pennant series single-voice youth, pennant series mixed-voice youth, free series: vocal and vocal-instrumental ensembles such as close harmony, vocal jazz, folk music, gospel & spiritual. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: info@emj.be - Website: www.emj.be

67th Cork International Choral Festival, Ireland, 28 Apr-2 May 2021. For 5 wonderful days Cork City and County will welcome some of the finest amateur Competitive and Non - Competitive choirs from around the world for a programme of choral concerts, national and international competition, and internationally renowned performers as thousands of participants bring Cork to life. Closing date for the Fleischmann International Trophy Competition is 31st October 2014. Closing date for Non- Competitive entries is 30th November 2014. Join us in Cork for one of Europe's Premier Choral Festivals. Bringing a city to life with song since 1954! Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

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