



International Choral Bulletin

ICB

Dossier: Movable Do and Fixed Do Technique: Performing Polyphony (part 1)





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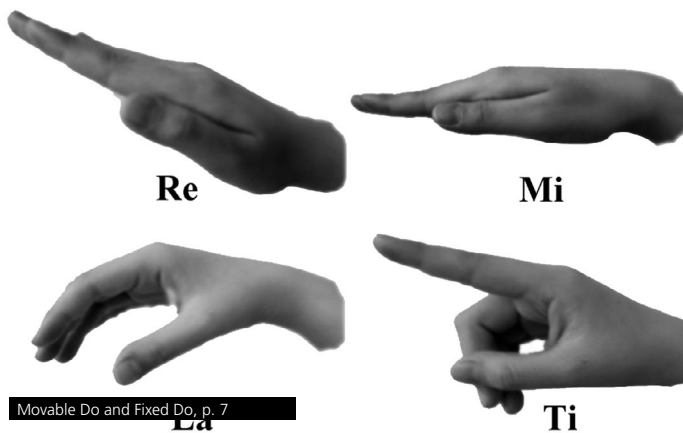
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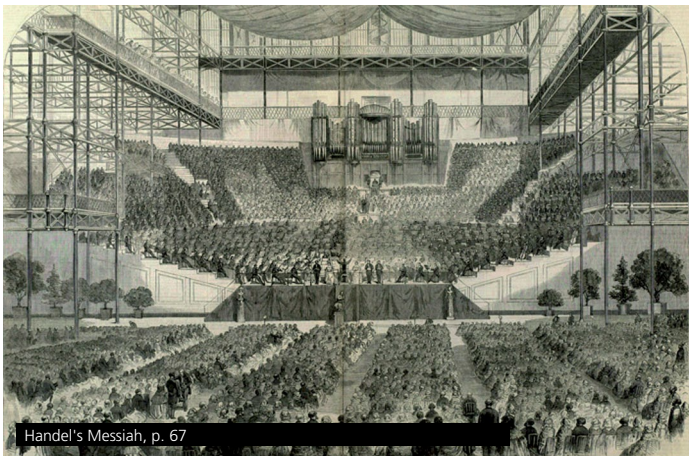
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President's Column

Dear friends,

As a university professor, it is my job to take young people through the challenges of advanced learning in an environment that demands embracing professional awareness, musical skills, and conduct. This requires an unrelenting positive methodology—working to add to what the students bring to the table, and ensure that they leave with a more robust and professional “bag of tools”. The students are taught to think differently and pay attention to those around them; something analogous to the responsibilities of the IFCM leadership initiatives. Recently, I participated in an activity here in the United States that draws an interesting comparison to same kind of positive approach.

In April, I was one of 25 leaders from the choral world who met for two days in New Haven, Connecticut, USA. The project was called *The Choral Ecosystem Forum* sponsored by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), and Chorus America, hosted by Yale University.

This innovative project included participants from all categories of choirs, choral organisations, music educators, composers, singers, conductors, and administrators. Each of these people was asked to interview three people who represented a specific category of the choral world. The organisers carefully crafted the interview questionnaire using an ecosystem as a metaphor for our interconnected choral world. The results of the interviews served to stimulate energetic and enthusiastic discussions.

I know that Chorus America will be publishing the findings and announcing plans for continuing the research. However, I thought it would be worthwhile to reflect on a few of the conclusions, since I feel that the outcome actually represents the entire choral world. In general, it was the opinion of the participants and the interviewees that people:

- Participate in choral music because it fulfils something intangible.
- Get satisfaction from making music with others.
- Are less concerned about being recognized for their work.
- Appreciate having the opportunity to participate in a group-oriented activity with common goals.
- Feel that being paid for their work is second to doing it.

It is interesting to compare these five aspects of participating in choral music to the many international festivals, workshops, master classes, and symposia that I have witnessed through the years. It defines participation in a way that talks about the **humanity of choral music**. It takes the “I” out of the equation and continuously substitutes it with “we.”

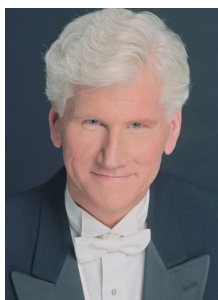
In my mind, this encapsulates what the IFCM leadership is implementing for colleagues around the world: to provide opportunity, remove ego in favour of ensemble, find ways to be recognized as a group rather than an individual, worry less about finances and more about working with people, and being able to tap into the power of music repeatedly.

As we move to the next season (be that summer or winter) and plan events for future months, I encourage us to think differently and pay attention to others. Strive to grow humanity back together using our “bag of tools,” (choral music), and to share the positive peace that comes from making music ... together. With positive wishes for our future,



Dr. Michael J. Anderson, President

Edited by Karin Rockstad, USA ●



Cover

Ko Matsushita

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Dossier

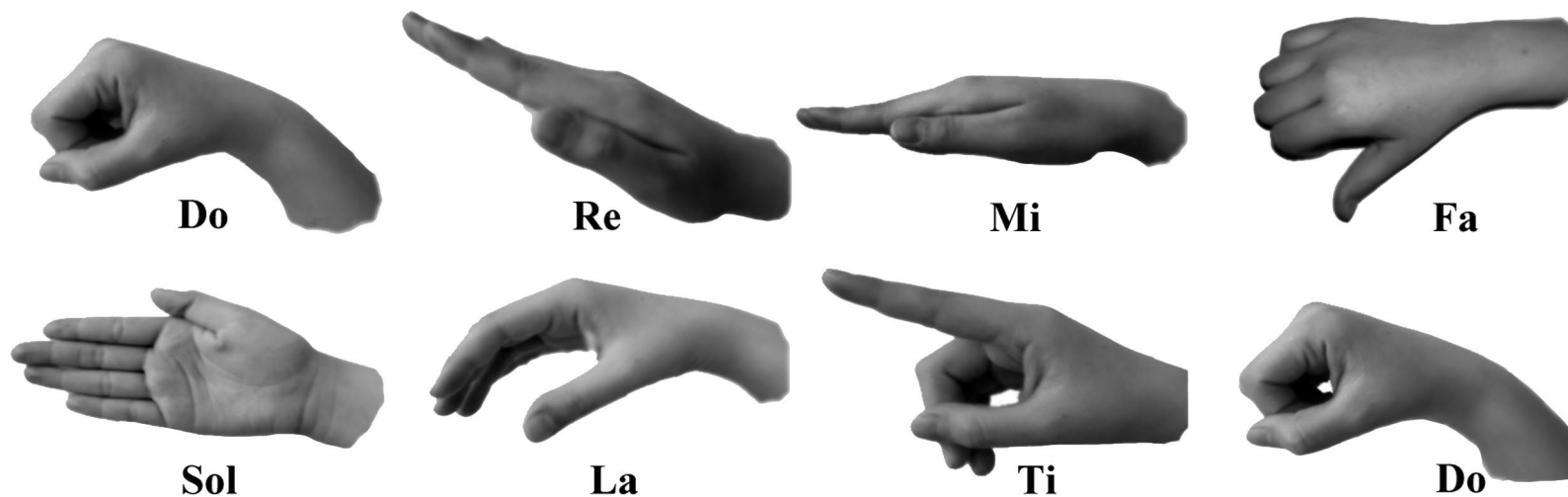


▲ Consono Chamber Choir (Germany) photo by Dolf Rabus © Choral Festival Network

Movable Do and Fixed Do:
What they are, what they aren't,
and why "movable do" should be used as the basis for musicianship training
Art Levine

Movable Do and Fixed Do:

What they are, what they aren't, and why "movable do" should be used as the basis for musicianship training



▲ John Curwen created hand signs for each of the tones in the solfege scale

PART I - SYSTEMATIC

"Movable do"

The "movable do" system is based on the understanding that the names given to the notes serve as reminders and aid the singer in correctly establishing the distance between the various scale degrees. The syllables are: "do re mi fa sol la ti". In some common misrepresentations of this method, the seventh syllable is given as "si" instead of "ti". The latter is obviously a better choice, since it does not reuse the consonant "s".

In the major-minor key system, central to the language of European art-music from 1700 to 1900, and still thriving in certain streams of popular music, chromatic alteration of the "natural" scale degrees comes about mainly because of modulation, in which the tonic note shifts to a new pitch, or else because of scale coloration, in which the new notes are used simply to vary the character of the prevailing scale without suggesting a change of tonic.

The boundary between these two procedures is not always clear, but the "movable do" system addresses that line, however fine, in a way that leaves the perceptual and analytical processes open to productive discussion. When chromaticism is locally based, that is, without modulation, the solmization syllables are:

- ascending: do di re ri mi fa fi sol si la li ti do
- descending: do ti ta la le sol fi fa mi ma re ra do

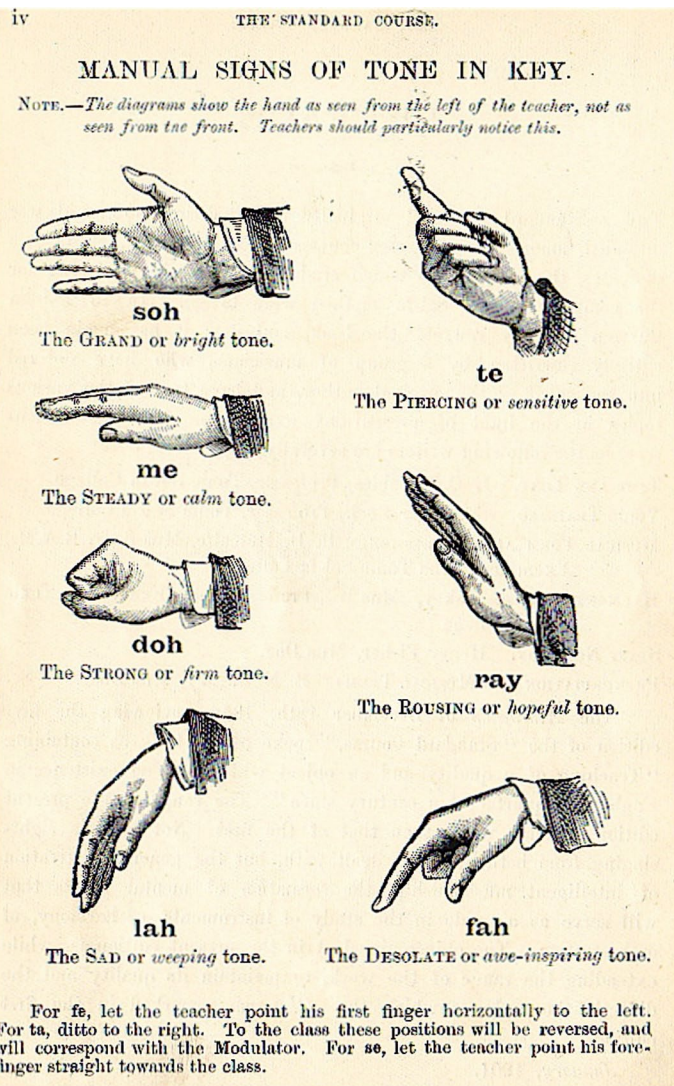
When modulation is involved, the system tends to grow progressively more flexible in its application and, as the harmonic style itself, more complex.

A common misunderstanding of the "movable do" system is that the tonic note is always called "do". This opinion, held by many poorly informed critics of the system, is likely responsible for the erroneous belief that "movable do" is not suited to "complex" music. In order to unburden ourselves of this error, it should be made clear that, in the "movable do" system, the names do not impose any hierarchy with respect to scale degrees. In other words, the solfa names are nothing more than reminders of the intervallic relationships between the various notes. To put this another way, one need only generate the seven well-known modes, as follows:

Scale type	Tonic note (Note "#1")
"Major" (Ionian)	Do
Dorian	Re
Phrygian	Mi
Lydian	Fa
Mixolydian	Sol
"Minor" (Aeolian)	La
Locrian	Ti

What we see here is that, for one thing, the "natural minor" scale, i.e. the official "relative minor", uses La as its tonic. Even for individuals raised more or less exclusively on a diet of major-minor music, it can require some mental discipline to hear "la" as the tonic note, and to hear "do" as the minor third of that scale. Beyond these two, basic to most

Art Levine
teacher and musicologist



students whose experience with the Western tradition is often confined to music written post-1700, the remaining modes may require even more substantial perceptual overhauls at the outset. For instance, in the Phrygian scale, “do” functions as the flattened sixth degree, and so on.

Another reason why it must be considered a blunder to designate the seventh note of the major scale as “si” rather than “ti” should now be clear. The syllable “si” -- “sol” raised by a semitone -- occurs as the raised leading note of the minor scale, not the major. This confusion of nomenclature is again probably a result of the incorrect notion that, in all scales, the tonic is “do”. It is not, and never has been.

“Fixed do”

On the surface, the “fixed do” method appears to be a model of simplicity. All the singer is required to remember is that the pitch “C” is “do”, “D” “re” and so on. One of the much advertised virtues of “fixed do” is that it contributes to the development of absolute pitch. Quite apart from the fact that this claim has never and cannot ever be proven, and quite apart from the foreshortening of historical awareness entailed in accepting A 440 or any other frequency as a standard, the “fixed do” system is so ridden with inconsistencies that it turns out to be no system at all.

The problem: what to call sharps and flats. Operating on the absolute pitch principle, each note should have its unique name. Thus “C” would be “do”, “C-sharp” would be “di” (one supposes), “C-sharp-sharp” would be “di-i” (one supposes), and “C-flat” would be “da”, and “C-double-flat” would be “da-a”.

So far as I am aware, no one has ever seriously advocated such a system, or anything like it. Commonly, adherents of “fixed do” accept a sort of compromise with absolute pitch nomenclature, such that any C, whether natural, flat, or double sharp, is named “do”. This adjustment surrenders any claim to pitch-specificity that “fixed do” might have had -- since “do” is no longer “fixed” -- and has perhaps contributed to the backtracking of many teachers of “fixed do”, who now inform us that absolute pitch is irrelevant. But more than that, the use of the same syllable for several

different sounds, under the conditions imposed by “fixed do”, makes it impossible for anyone to apply the system usefully to any but the simplest melody in the C major scale. This problem may be encapsulated simply by looking at “mi-fa”. In the “movable do” system, these names always imply a semitone. In “fixed do”, they might be not only E-F, but also E-F-sharp and E-flat-F-sharp. While we cannot doubt the ability of certain singers to learn any melody they wish with any words they feel like singing, clearly the use of these “fixed do” syllables has no demonstrable or linear connection with the cognitive process itself.

But things become even murkier when we reflect on the fact that, for many defenders of “fixed do”, absolute pitch is irrelevant. Once this particular genie is let out of the bottle, the “fixed do” user is left with a notational symbol only, and nothing in terms of sound at all. That an approach to musical perception so patently at odds with the very basis of musical experience itself -- sound -- can have found adherents indicates the degree to which many musicians, perhaps because of an addiction to notation, have forgotten that visual and aural information are fundamentally distinct.

The need for a system of mnemonic pitch-names and rhythm-names as a means of developing and controlling the musical imagination has been widely experienced, especially among those groups who have evolved sophisticated musical languages. Instances may be found in China (see the CD “Buddhist Music of Tianjin”, Nimbus NI 5416, track 7), Indonesia, and some African drumming traditions. But the most obvious instance is India, where the average musician’s mastery of “sargam” puts to shame anything found in his/her Western counterpart, and where the language for articulating rhythm -- the basis for the rather desiccated “taka taka” business attempted by many Western teachers of musicianship -- lies well beyond the range of Westerners, including composers. No doubt, part of the Indian musicians’ strength lies in the fact that their tradition is not based on notation, so that they rely much more than the Westerner on their ear alone. In the West, because access to musical experience is mediated through printed documents, and machinery

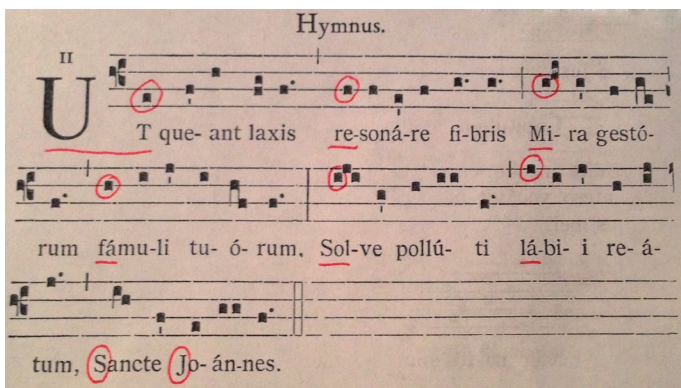
▲ Depiction of Curwen’s Solfege hand signs. This version includes the tonal tendencies and interesting titles for each tone

such as the piano, the average musician's mind has become flabby -- or stupid, if one prefers. And it is regrettable to have to suggest that "fixed do" has aided and abetted that collective decline.

PART II - HISTORICAL

"Movable do"

The terms "movable do" and "fixed do" go back, as far as I know, to controversies over music pedagogy which took place in England a century or so ago, involving John Curwen and others. The details of what Mr. Curwen and friends were up to are of far less interest to me than the fact that the principles embodied in "movable do" or "tonic sol-fa" or whatever may be traced back in European music for some eight centuries before "movable do" was so named. Partly because accurate information regarding the history of sight-singing systems is evidently in short supply among both friends and critics of "movable do", the following paragraphs offer a brief summary of what happened.



▲ "UT QUEANT LAXIS" from a contemporary copy of the antiphonale monasticum

ee						la
dd					la	sol
cc					sol	fa
bb / bb flat					fa	mi
aa				la	mi	re
gg				sol	re	ut
f				fa	ut	
e			la	mi		
d		la	sol	re		
c		sol	fa	ut		
b / bb flat		fa	mi			
a	la	mi	re			
g	sol	re	ut			
F	fa	ut				
E	la	mi				
D	sol	re				
C	fa	ut				
B	mi					
A	re					
G	ut					

▲ Example 1 - The gamut, consisting of seven overlapping hexachords set on G, C, F, g, c, f, gg, and showing the composite names for the pitches, and the variability of the pitches b/b-flat and bb/bb-flat. (Source: F. Gaffurius, *Practica musicae* (1496), ed. Irwin Young, p.16)

The average music-lover-on-the-street will be familiar with Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Do re mi song" ("Do, a deer") from *The Sound of Music*. In a very real sense, this tune is nothing more than a 20th-century reflection of an idea initially fleshed out almost a millennium ago -- 1026, according to most guesses. That is the date usually assigned to the letter sent by Guido of Arezzo to Michael, in which he describes the teaching success he has had by getting his students to learn a certain hymn to John the Baptist ("Ut queant laxis"), in which each line begins with a progressively higher scale degree. Using the song as a mental model, the students learned to generate a system of memorization based on the syllable occurring at the beginning of each line. Those syllables are underlined here (see *Liber Usualis*, p.1504):

Ut queant laxis, Resonare fibris, Mira gestorum, Famulorum, Solvi polluti, Labii reatum

Guido's six-syllable method, ut re mi fa sol la, became the basis for "hexachordal solmization", a method of singing according to overlapping sets of six notes each, which was the sole system used in Europe for the next five centuries, and which continued well beyond that date, even into Mozart's time. With only six syllables, even to sing through a simple scale, as we call it, required some adjustment. The nature and technique of this adjustment may be described in a number of ways, but one particular dictum which comes up again and again in treatises of the period is "Mi et fa sunt tota musica". This little rule of thumb attempts to reduce the business of sight-singing to a single cognitive principle, namely that Mi and Fa, wherever they are found, are always to be sung a semitone apart. EXAMPLE 1 shows the entire repertory of officially sanctioned pitches known to sixteenth-century musicians, set out in a "gamut" diagram (the origin of the term "to run the gamut") of seven overlapping hexachords. Singing an actual piece of music with syllables entailed the capacity to negotiate one's way from one of these sets to another, as the incidence of semitones required. One of the remarkable things about the gamut is that, in generating its various "ut's" on "G", "C", and "F", and their octaves, it adumbrates the concept of the cycle of fifths and the modulatory schemes associated therewith, by several hundred years.

It will be self-evident that the technique used, if not by Guido himself, then by his heirs, was "movable ut". While most 20th-century musicians would be fairly agonized at the idea of having to sing with only six names, your basic Medieval and Renaissance

composer found, in the capacity of each note to bear two or three different names and thus two or three intervallic associations, a source of intellectual engagement. Examples 2 & 3 show how this system of “movable ut” was supported by arguably the best musical thinkers of the time. [EXAMPLE 2a](#) is a canon at the seventh below. A single line is given; the first singer proceeds literally, beginning on sol; the second singer waits a bit and then -- looking at the same single line of music -- begins on the syllable la, a seventh lower. (See [EXAMPLE 2b](#) for a resolution of the canon). Another sort of compositional play to which the concept of “movable ut” lent itself may be seen in [EXAMPLE 3a](#). Here Josquin’s canon is a single voice which is to be imitated a fifth higher, after a single beat. The canon may be realized in two ways, either “diatonically” in which the voices sing a different syllable but adhere to the same set of pitches ([EXAMPLE 3b](#)), or else in a sort of “real” imitation, in which the voices sing the same solmisation syllables, causing some divergence in pitch materials ([EXAMPLE 3c](#)).

Clearly, the ability to negotiate this sort of music, on either the compositional or performance sides, was contingent on a complete flexibility of perception. The written notational symbol had no fixed association whatever with either a specific solfa name or a specific pitch.

10 After a period of further refinement of the hexachordal method in the sixteenth century, the seventeenth century saw the emergence of controversies over the addition of a seventh syllable, as well as the advocacy of rival sets of syllables, such as “bocedisation” and “bebisation”, if not of rival methodologies. Both the hexachordal names, and the motion of “ut” which the system facilitated, remained a fixture of European musical thought for a long time. With regard to the latter, one need only consider that the normal modulation scheme leading to either the dominant or subdominant keys or their relatives, which one finds in piece after piece by Bach, is mirrored in the relationship of the three ancient “ut’s”. But Bach provides us with even more direct evidence of his affiliation with the old system, and the fact that he did not in any sense associate a given syllable with any particular letter-name. The 1722 title-page of the *Well Tempered Clavier* reads: “Preludes and fugues, through all the tones and semitones, both as regards the tertia major or Ut Re Mi, and as concerns the tertia minor or Re Mi Fa.” (see *The Bach Reader*, p.85). Bach is using the solfa names to distinguish between what later came to be known as the major and minor keys. The terms back to sixteenth-century discussions of the quality of the modes according to whether they possessed major or minor third degrees. For Bach, any notated pitch could bear any name. Context and relationship were all that mattered.

“Fixed do”

It would perhaps be unfair to characterize any idea, however ill conceived, as an “historical accident”. However one chooses to estimate the “fixed do” method, it remains safe to say that the notion of assigning the solmisation names to specific pitches and notational symbols arose in the nineteenth century, with much of the initial impetus occurring in France. And although I am no economist or cultural historian, I think that much of the reason behind the spread of “fixed do” must be sought in those broader realms, rather than purely pedagogical or music-theoretical ones. At least this theory fits the facts.

The nineteenth century saw a dramatic shift in the patronage system for music, a shift in the economic basis of its support away from powerful oligarchies towards an ever-expanding middle class. Both musical styles and musical organizations developed in response to this changed environment. An increase in the size and spectacle of productions, in the size and number of professional groups, and in the availability of instruments and publications intended for the huge market of “unwashed” amateurs generated, collectively, a climate in which sales-driven expediency became the order of the day. For the professional instrumentalist, what was needed was a type of training consistent with the goal of producing marketable product with a minimum amount of costly rehearsal. For the amateur, the goal was convenience, and any teaching method or device consistent with creating that sense of easy access to music was thus supported.

What links the situation of the professional with that of the amateur is the use of a mechanical device -- a piano, or violin, etc. -- as a medium for musical experience. If instruments were, at some point in their mythical past, considered to be extensions of the human imagination, it would be fair to say that, for many, they gradually came not to extend that imagination, but to stand in for it, and ultimately to replace it altogether.

A second link, perhaps more critical in discussing the nature of musicianship and the economics of music-making, was the use of notation. In an age when the best performers and composers were known for their improvising, the vast majority of career musicians were relegated to the role of re-creators, unthinking reproducers of printed data. Notation thus constituted a second medium, another layer through which the musical mind was not only disciplined (a good thing) but also enslaved (a bad thing).

“Fixed do” was a willing accomplice in this process. As we have seen, the system makes no demands on, and has no connection with, the cognitive and “re-cognitive” faculties of the aural imagination. Rather, the “fixed do” names served as a sort of rough-and-ready cipher or, if one prefers, a system of general analogues intended to inform the instrumentalist about which key to depress or how long to make a vibrating string. As a means of training the imagination, “fixed do” is of no use; but the imagination is not what its early advocates were interested in.

A consideration of the present-day situation should begin by pointing out that the dynamics set in motion in the last century continue to operate. Clearly, nowadays, the average music lover’s “convenient” access to music comes in the form of a CD player rather

than a piano; and with the steady decline of orchestras and the ossification of the canonized repertory, instrumental sight-reading may be a less critical skill than it once was. With respect to “fixed do”, however, a newer impetus has come from the presence of a few illustrious adherents at some of the more prestigious schools.

How this situation came about is a story in itself. Just as Russia, acting in the 19th century as a cultural tributary of France, tended to follow the French lead in musical pedagogy as in all else (hence the present activities of a number of dutiful “fixed do” trainers from Russia), so it came to pass that several Americans studied with a famous and highly esteemed pedagogue and “fixed do” disciple by the name of Nadia Boulanger. On returning to the USA, these people set up shop in a number of big-league American schools, where their status as composers tended to lend credence to their teaching ideas. Now, it may or may not be the case that Ms. Boulanger’s reputation as a teacher (and certainly as a conductor and historian) is due for some sort of revision, but I think there is another reason, beyond simple student-teacher loyalty, which supported the ongoing allegiance of these otherwise intelligent people to “fixed do”. That reason lies in the musical “language” utilized in the compositions they produced.

As much as one may generalize, the musical style of these composers, and of much contemporary art-music, is atonal, highly complex and, for many, incomprehensible. Contemporary composers have worn themselves out fighting off charges that their so-called “language” amounts to little more than an overly rationalized set of decisions about what not to do. Questions of intellectual or philosophical integrity aside, the fact remains that the music itself is highly challenging, particularly for vocalists who are forced to operate without the mechanical devices available to their orchestral and piano-playing colleagues.

“Fixed do” exerts an obvious appeal for such composers, who, as pointed out, are often concurrently responsible for teaching courses in sight-singing and musicianship at universities. Faced with a “language” lacking in any readily perceivable syntax, such as exists in the major-minor system, “fixed do” surreptitiously allows the beleaguered composer to fall back on a much lower denominator of perceptual sufficiency, whereby the most competent musician -- and this holds doubly true for singers -- is the one who most closely approximates a machine, with laser-like precision in timing and rigorously accurate intonation based on equal temperament and a pitch standard of A 440. All due apologies if this description seems a somewhat chilly one, but it often seems to me that, at its core, “fixed do” promises little more than a curious display of marksmanship, a display in which the syllables themselves have no cognitive role, and in which the music is dealt with as a sort of “intervallic sweepstakes”.

PART III - QUESTIONS OF METHOD

1) Psychological & cognitive aspects

“Movable do”

What happens when you sing a melody at sight? In the “movable do” system, each note is named according to specific notions of cognitive economy, in response to considerations of harmonic structure, contrapuntal factors, and so on. Since the “movable do” system attempts to draw on the musician’s prior experience of various voice-leading events and other types of musical relationships, the syllables used often reflect an important aspect of the composition itself. [EXAMPLE 4](#), [EXAMPLE 5](#), & [EXAMPLE 6](#) clearly illustrate this sense of economy. All three contain passages of “real sequence” in which the same line is transposed without alteration to a different key. The “movable do” system mirrors this compositional device, and supports the analytical insight through which it is identified, by having the singer re-cycle the same set of syllables.

In the “movable do” system, priority is given to the aural imagination over the visual, and to aural information over visual. The process of singing at sight involves relating the visual datum to a body of experience already active in the imagination and the memory. In a very real sense, sight-singing amounts to nothing more than the fluent retrieval of information, more or less the same thing that occurs when reading a printed language. Because the “movable do” system does not posit any visual analog, nor any particular hierarchy of pitches (since the tonic can be anything from “do” to “ti”), the musician has the opportunity to develop a wide range of “re-cognitive” skills. By separating the hearing of music from its visual representation, the “movable do” system reflects a very human aspect of music-making. How else to explain the mass popularity of the “Doe a deer” song some nine centuries after Guido secured the original rights to the idea?

“Fixed do”

In “fixed do”, the process of singing is also evidently straightforward. One identifies the letter-name and assigns the syllable accordingly. The syllables do not respond to either chromatic inflection or harmonic context. Accepting the A440 standard for “la” (or not, if one regards absolute pitch as irrelevant), one then proceeds to sing by a sort of inchoate mish-mash of interval target-practice and harmonic second-guessing. Since the interval between “re-mi” may be anything from 0-5 semitones, the names given to the notes contribute nothing at all. Obviously the results can be ludicrous. [EXAMPLE 7a/7b](#) offers a well known ditty, notationally altered to bring out the best in “fixed do”. On a more serious note, [EXAMPLE 8](#), the fugue subject from Bartok’s Music for P.S. & C., shows, from the point of view of aural-cognitive development (aka ear-training) just how unhelpful “fixed do” is.

2) Suitability for various repertoires

"Movable do"

It is frequently stated that "movable do" is suited only for "simple (without- pejorative-intent) music" and no good for complex music. Of course, it is a little difficult to define "simple" in this case, but one might assume the absence of modulation, the absence of any chromaticism, the use of a single scale (probably major: a single "key" is often the term incorrectly applied) and a small range. Certainly, this view seems to inform [EXAMPLE 9](#), which was used, presumably without tongue in cheek, by a University of Toronto music "fixed-do" professor in a privately circulated paper to demonstrate the sort of "simple" music which "movable do" is capable of handling. Astonishing. The example is poorly chosen, not least because it misses the very point it is attempting to corroborate. Surely, the "evidence" of the putative incapacity of "movable do" to deal with "complex" music should have been "complex" music, and not a little Irish song. More generally, the example suggests some unwillingness to acknowledge the centuries- old history of the "movable do" method, if not a simple ignorance of it (after all, the author of this paper was an artist, not an academic!).

To leaven the argument about simplicity somewhat, it should also be pointed out that modulation, the tiresome rallying mantra of "movable do" critics, can not only be achieved in an obvious way without accidentals, but is child's play for the average pre-schooler. ([EXAMPLE 10](#))

As already suggested, the application of "movable do" to highly chromatic tonal music can often produce compelling insights into both the work itself and broader aspects of composition. Real sequence is an especially clear case of this sort of thing, but there are others. In [EXAMPLE 11](#), bars 9 and 11 show Bach's repeated setting of the word "unaussprechlich", or "inexpressible" when translated, on two diminished sevenths, the first a viid7 of C-sharp minor, the second a viid4/2 of F-sharp minor. By singing these two chords with the correct syllables, we discover that the diminished seventh is rather more than a stack of minor thirds. It is a contrapuntal event whose analysis (and hopefully whose notation) imparts to each of its components a very specific voice-leading directionality.

For "movable do" detractors, the ultimate reckoning comes in the confrontation with atonal music. To be sure, part of the sense that "movable do" is utterly and completely unsuited to this repertoire derives from the ignorance of its critics of the historical background, and the rather blinkered notion that anything not atonal must be either major or minor -- a chauvinistic view, from both the historical and cultural sides.

At any rate, before attempting to suggest that "movable do" is in fact the ideal system for dealing with atonal music, I must quote from the preface of a widely used manual on that very repertoire, namely Lars Edlund's *Modus Novus*. On page 15, he writes:

"From the point of view of method there is no cause for great alarm because of a pupil's possible tendency to read major/minor cells in to the melodies, or to feel them. If the pupils will only accustom themselves to the frequent 'mutations' between these cells, it will promote their routine music-reading in spite of this feeling of major/minor tonality. With increased experience, the need for it will disappear."

This all seems pretty sensible, from a psychological point of view, since it does not commit the error of denying the student's experience. To be sure, Edlund seems unaware of the possibility that a pupil might have experience with forms of tonality not based on the major/minor systems, such as anything from before 1600 or not by white Europeans like him. Similarly, he seems blind to the very important possibility that, in intoning a note as "do" one might very well be mentally cueing up its major scale, but not -- and there is a world of difference here -- its major "key". But the general implication, namely that two notes a semitone apart, whether by Pope Gregory or Pierre Boulez, might better be sung as "mi-fa" than incorrectly as, say, a whole tone -- especially if saying "mi-fa" helps to fix the notes in one's mind -- seems like a good one. Edlund's use of the term "mutation" is also noteworthy, since it is precisely the same term, "mutatio", which our old Medieval and Renaissance friends used to describe motion from one hexachord to another. I like to imagine that Edlund did not know this, although I suppose he should have, rather than choosing to suppress the information. It is my fantasy that the term came to him out of his meditation on the music. A long way from Guido d'Arezzo to Lars Edlund, but there it is.

Taking our cue from Edlund, [EXAMPLE 12](#) offers a Webern song as I teach it. There is a fair amount of room for alternate solmisation, but what you see there worked for me, and for some of my students, when I produced it. A couple of points of interest: the first eight notes might be fairly said to come from a D minor scale (there is even a V4/3 arpeggio in descent). The fact that the passage, for me at least, doesn't sound like the key of d minor at all indicates that my own sense of tonality is conditioned by more than the mere palette of pitches. Note also that the name of one inflected note -- the B flat at the end of line 2 -- shows that I hear it as an A sharp, perhaps because the implicit B natural is integral to the E-e octave outlined in the tune. What would the custodians of atonality say? Am I allowed to imagine an acoustical frame E-B-e without instantly falling into the key of E major? Can it be that "fixed do" proponents are unaware of any other ways of hearing?

“Fixed do”

“Fixed do” prides itself on being perfect for atonal music and therefore, adding a positivist bias, for everything that preceded it. The plain reality is that “fixed do” is equally unsuitable for all music. The basic problem is that, by avoiding any sort of analysis beyond the dull business of identifying the letter- names, “fixed do” denies the presence of any but the most rudimentary compositional syntax. By turning a deaf ear to the notion that our perception is determined by context on a number of levels, advocates of “fixed do” wish to suggest that their method is universally applicable. By suppressing any notion of context, they have arrived at the erroneous belief that their method is equally representative of all contexts, when the truth is that it represents none. This is the same sort of twisted logic which has produced another well known pedagogical dead-end, namely those “ear-tests” where one is expected to produce various intervals on demand. If “denial” is too strong a term, whatever connection may be said to exist between “fixed do” and actual musical experience is surely tenuous at best, confined, as I suggested above, to accidental-free melodies in the C major scale -- n.b. not the C major “key”.

3) Clef Reading & Transposition

Both clef reading and transposition will give the user of “fixed do” major difficulties. To begin, a clear distinction should be drawn between the use of the voice and the use of an instrument since, though related, there are different skills involved. Thus we have four overlapping areas to consider: i) Clef reading vocally; ii) Transposition vocally; iii) Clef reading instrumentally; iv) Transposition instrumentally.

- i) Clef reading vocally. It is necessary that the notational symbols be translated into letter-names at all times. The choice of the standard clefs avoids the fact that many more than these were actually used throughout history. But even given the usual limitation to four clefs (or not, as the case may be), the role of the “fixed do” names is highly problematic, because the relationship between the chosen syllable and the pitch is always an ambiguous one.
- ii) Transposition vocally. [EXAMPLE 13](#) shows the English folk-song *Lovely Joan* (see Vaughan Williams’ *Fantasia on Greensleeves*). The tune is written in D dorian. What happens when a student of “fixed do” wants to take it up, say, a minor third, to F dorian? Do they change the solfa to match the new pitch level, or do they simply shift the tune, without changing the names? If the former, the end result is that they are still looking at a D, but now calling it “fa”. Is this “fixed do”? Or perhaps they train themselves to imagine a bass clef. In the second scenario, the entire “fixed do” system suffers a major cave-in, only partly salvageable by invoking the “absolute pitch is irrelevant” clause. Because the “fixed do” user is so hard-wired to visual symbols, he cannot admit that, effectively, his “do” -- or “re” in this case -- has moved.
- iii) Clef reading instrumentally. This is just an extension of the vocal situation, complicated by what is probably taken by many to be the central challenge - how to get the sounds out of a piece of machinery. Such a challenge, however interesting from a technical point of view, has no bearing on the “fixed do” question. Again, the “fixed do” syllables have no connection with the process. As described earlier: the mediated, instrumental performance has been elevated to the status of the real “meat and potatoes”, the supposedly true hallmark of the real musician. Unfortunately for the “fixed do” diner, the main course has gone missing.
- iv) Transposition instrumentally. The absurdities which emerge in vocal transposition become more and more obvious here, since any idea of applying “fixed do” syllables immediately trips over the dilemma of having to represent either the written symbol or the sounding pitch. I do not know enough about “fixed do” to say how this problem is resolved, but it seems to me that, either way, the syllables must be more of an encumbrance than a help. Perhaps one would be better off just dropping the whole solfa thing altogether. And that, I suspect, is what most “successful” students actually end up doing. Return to Shangri-la-la.

“Movable do”

- i) Clef reading vocally. Clef reading was originally used as a means of avoiding ledger lines. In “movable do”, the approach is as simple as it is old: just identify the solfa syllable of the first note and press go. Whether you are singing an A or a C is immaterial, and whether you know which pitch you are singing is similarly immaterial. If a student has much more experience with one particular clef than the others, as is almost always the case, extra care will have to be taken with accidentals.
- ii) Transposition vocally. Since “movable do” is not tied to any concept of absolute pitch, transposition is determined by nothing more than one’s physical capacity to produce the notes.
- iii) Clef reading instrumentally. Because “movable do” is a relational system, the names tell one everything one needs to know in order to undertake transposition at, say, a keyboard. Again, one must ask a question about who actually needs to do this, and to what extent the problem itself is a product of curriculum-building rather than a response to a need most musicians will experience in real life. It is easy to say that it is important; the real issue is whether it is important enough.
- iv) Transposition instrumentally. Ditto. By singing the “movable do” syllables while playing, and by applying the principles according to which the semitones are located, even musical novices can be up and running with all of the scales and modes, starting on any pitch, in a short time. This is valuable when one is at the early stages of cultivating the aural imagination. Beyond this, the more sophisticated the demands in this area become, the more I get the sense that the skill no longer answers a widely felt need, or perhaps any need at all.

4) Enharmonicism

Another area where “fixed do” runs into a collision with perception is enharmonic spelling. [EXAMPLE 14](#) is the beginning of the “Marcia Funebre” from Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata, Op. 26*. The piece begins in A-flat minor, modulates to C-flat major, at which point the notation switches to B major. In bar 8, the top line jumps a doubly-augmented fourth from the pitch C-flat to the fifth note of the C-flat scale, namely G-flat, but notated as F-sharp. Presumably, the “fixed do” singer is constrained to call the note “fa”. From the “movable do” point of view, one can only marvel at the degree of indoctrination it must take to convince oneself that “fa” is the dominant note. For the benefit of the more orthodox believers in absolute pitch, it is also of some interest to point out that Beethoven’s piano was about a semitone lower than the much-trumpeted A440. (see Rosamond E.M. Harding, *The Pianoforte: Its History Traced to the Great Exhibition of 1851*, 2nd ed., 1978, p.213 - A somewhere between 415 & 427.7). So what does one call a C-flat-flat?

Now, let us dare pretend for a moment that the supposed “fixed do-ite” is listening to the piece, rather than looking at the score. Reckoning with the experience of the ear (perhaps in the context of a melodic dictation test), as opposed to that of the eye, one sees (hears, actually) that the issue simply dissolves, since the listener will unquestionably refer to the fifth as “sol”. As a system in which visual and aural information lead to opposing conclusions, “fixed do” is literally nonsensical. More to the point, it is dishonest about the nature of musical experience.

“Movable do”

In “movable do”, decisions about what to call notes are based on analysis, not on notation. Support for this approach, if it were needed, comes from one particularly interesting source, namely Aldwell & Schachter’s *Harmony & Voice Leading*, the textbook for many university-level materials courses. In the chapter on the Neapolitan chord, they write:

“Composers, therefore, will sometimes adopt an enharmonic notation for bII: in Gb major, for instance, they might write it as G-natural - B-natural -D-natural instead of A-double flat - C-flat - E-double flat. To understand such passages you must be guided by the sound, not the visual pattern.”

One wonders whether teachers of “fixed do” realize the subversive nature of this directive.

The Beethoven example involves enharmonic respelling without a change of harmonic function. [EXAMPLE 15 & EXAMPLE 16](#) show two instances where the respelling is related to a dramatic harmonic shift. In the first, from a Schumann song, the tonic of A-flat major becomes the mediant of E major. The “movable do” person sings “do-mi” on the repeated pitch. In a reverse of the Schumann procedure, at the end of the bridge from Jerome Kern’s *All the Things You Are*, G-sharp “mi” becomes A-flat “do”. It is difficult to explain to someone using as unresponsive a system as “fixed do” just what the “movable do” singer gets out of changing the names in this way. Sceptics will just have to accept that there can be an affective, psychological, and perhaps even a physiological response to the verbal articulation of a note’s “spin”.

5) Intonation & Equal temperament

“Fixed do”

A further aspect of the systemic difficulties of “fixed do” is the claim that it is particularly suited to equal temperament, and thus able to exercise special rights when it comes to contemporary music. Whether the first part of this claim is either supportable or particularly laudable is a matter for debate, but it seems more than likely that the assertion itself derived from individuals whose primary contact with music-making was by way of instrumental media, particularly the piano. Because the piano is among the least flexible of all instruments with respect to intonation, its limitations necessarily establish a base-line, or lowest common denominator, when the piano is present. But when it is not, that is another story. For singers, violinists, and indeed the majority of instrumentalists apart from pianists, the notion that the use of any tuning system is analogous to choosing from a variety of dishes on a menu (equal temperament, just, 1/4-comma mean tone, Werckmeister 3; my Kawai K-11 synth offers 55 tuning systems, plus transposition, at the touch of a button or two!) is flatly absurd. (see J. Murray Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament: a Historical Survey*, p.199 ff, on “Present Practice”)

In point of fact, the invocation of equal temperament in defence of “fixed do” amounts to little more than a variation on the old absolute pitch shibboleth, and constitutes a vain attempt to make a virtue of the rigidity of one system by partnering it with the rigidity of another. [EXAMPLE 17 & EXAMPLE 18](#) show a couple of short excerpts which were cited as proof, by the U. of T. professor referred to earlier, that only “fixed do” can manage the music of this century. Thinking back to the *Modus Novus* preface, however, we see that this assertion has no merit. Although various solmisations are made possible through the “movable do” method (I have supplied one for each example), it is the very flexibility of “movable do” which makes it a more powerful tool for dealing with contemporary music than “fixed do” could ever be.

And even if the “equal temperament” claim were not hollow, consider what, by implication, “fixed do” would relinquish as a consequence. Any musically sensitive vocalist will verify from direct experience that, in singing a chromatic scale or a portion thereof, it transpires that some semitones are larger than others. In the days before the piano, with its “one size fits all” tuning system, it was a

commonplace that the size of the semitone depended on the context. And although this fact was widely documented several centuries ago, it is still the case that, when a piano is not around to impose its intonational strait-jacket on the proceedings, the tuning becomes a much suppler affair than the 12th root of 2.

“Movable do”

EXAMPLE 19 & EXAMPLE 20 illustrate the large semitone in its natural habitat. The first is taken from Cherubino’s aria, where the ascending chromatic line from “mi” to “sol” is repeated from “re” to “fa”. Mozart’s use of D-flat rather than C-sharp not only reflects the sequential symmetry of the line, but also fixes the location of the large semitone in the middle of the ascent. From the singer’s point of view, this understanding of the large semitone is crucial to correct intonation. For an overheated adolescent, as Cherubino is, this sophisticated demonstration of the use of the large half-step is decidedly heady stuff, and perhaps Mozart composed the line deliberately so as to delineate Cherubino’s character more deeply.

The opposite procedure is seen in example 20, in which the notation does not reflect the symmetrical construction of the line. The reason, again, is the necessity of showing the location of the large semitone. Thus, where the descent C-B-B-flat-A in measure 6 might presumably have been answered, in measure 14, by B-flat-A-A-flat-G, the composer chooses instead to use a G-sharp. The reason is that A is the dominant note of the scale and does not, under normal conditions, allow a chromatic semitone (i.e. one using the same letter) below it. Another way of looking at this is to say that A-flat is lower in pitch than G-sharp and, in this context, it just sounds wrong. To be sure, this whole discussion presumes a level of perception which may be beyond the level of some readers. However that may be, “movable do” at least provides room for the ear to develop towards achieving that level. In contrast, “fixed do” and its weird sister “equal temperament” remain sullenly silent throughout.

6) Development of the ear

Because the “fixed-do” system has no basis in cognition, the use of the “fixed do” syllables offers nothing by way of mental reinforcement, or perceptual redundancy. It is precisely this sort of redundancy which lies at the root, not only of language acquisition -- a close parallel to what is being discussed here -- but of learning itself. Indeed, “fixed do” has no basis in any musical processes either, beyond one’s ability uncritically to report on which letter-names are currently appearing on the page. This would be a great starting point for an optically-sensitive computer, but not for a human being. Once again, it is difficult to escape the idea that “fixed do” attempts to approach the human imagination as a sort of machine manqué.

In the “movable do” system, there are often several valid sets of syllables possible. A simple example is the use of F-sharp in the key of C: is it “fi”, or is it “ti” in the key of V? Both answers might be correct, depending on matters of proportion, rhythm, and so on. But another critical factor in this process is the perception of the person doing the singing. “Movable do” not only paints the singer into the picture, but it allows the singer to try different solutions, different analyses, and different points of view, perhaps over a period of years. Something like looking at different facets of a gem. Perhaps this is part of what is meant when we talk about living with a piece for a long time. “Movable do” is a system which accepts the possibility of one’s personal growth as a musician.

7) Curriculum Considerations

At the rate of a single one-hour class per week spread over two years of 26 weeks per year, minus 8 hours for exams, the typical university student has a grand total of 44 hours to get his or her ear together (This statement represents the situation at the University of Toronto). One has to question whether, for many, this is really enough to accomplish much of anything. On the other hand, there can be little doubt that, given the amount of time available, “movable do” will achieve better results than “fixed”. One reason is that, in the “movable do” system, a clear distinction is made between aural and visual information, so that exercises may be developed to address them in an organized and coordinated manner. Second, because “movable do” is based on the cognitive capabilities of the ear, and not the eye, and because it places no premium on absolute pitch, the student can practice anything anywhere -- a rather roundabout way of saying that, just like ordinary people, the student can just go ahead and sing. It is the use of the solfa names which qualitatively changes the experience. Third, by becoming accustomed to the application of specific names to specific aural images, the student develops a powerful cognate skill with respect to dictation and transcription, since to be able to sing back an unknown piece, or even a known one, with solfa is a critical step towards being able to write it down. It is for this reason that “movable do” should be used as the basis of dictation courses as well as sight-singing and ear-training.

“Fixed do” has nothing to offer to this discussion. Since it already posits a notational model, it is useless for dictation. The sole point on which a defence of “fixed do” as a tool for dictation rests is absolute pitch, long since abandoned by many of its spokespersons. In any case, the appeal to absolute pitch has always been a form of “snake-oil” pedagogy. For the vast majority of students, there is no indication that it is achievable, nor that it is of any musical, as opposed to freak-show utility. “Fixed do” is a difficult system, but for all the wrong reasons. Buttressed by unfortunate statements to the effect that university students are not children (thanks again to my esteemed U. of T. colleague), followers of “fixed do” have unwisely created an elitist line of demarcation, one based on the most fundamental pedagogical error of all with respect to both pitch memory and pitch relationships, namely the denial of experience. And further on the

snake-oil theme, it is interesting to note the public misconception that “absolute pitch” is a true indicator of musicality, when in reality it might amount to little more than a variation on the “idiot savant” phenomenon. It is unfortunate that “fixed do” -- notwithstanding the expedient claim that absolute pitch is irrelevant -- has assisted in cordoning off what we do from the aspirations, and ultimately the interest, of “ordinary” people.

A final point on the curriculum business concerns the ease of switching from one system to the other, since students come from such a wide variety of backgrounds. In my experience, it is easier to switch from “fixed” to “movable” than the other way around. The reason is simply that, since “fixed do” is not a system, insofar as it makes no demands on the cognitive processes and contributes nothing to the development of those processes, it is fairly simple just to leave it behind. With a few hours of work, even someone under the impression that they have learned “fixed do” will discover to their relief that it can be scuttled permanently.

PART IV - Conclusion

Perhaps the central goal of all teaching, of music or anything else, is to produce students who can think and act for themselves. It is to this end that hours upon hours are devoted to analysis, memorization, discussion, debate, and simple reflection. In university music programmes, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the development of analytical skills, in the hope that such skills will enhance all aspects of a musician’s work, from teaching, to conducting, to criticism.

Perhaps the greatest virtue of the “movable do” system is that it participates in and reinforces other forms of analysis; indeed, the simple decision about which syllables to use is analytical in itself. Moreover, experience demonstrates that musicians using “movable do” develop prodigious memories for music. This is hardly surprising, since by singing the pitches of a melody and coupling these at the same time with analytically determined mnemonics produces a situation where, in effect, the singer is operating with twice the brainpower of either a “la- la” singer or a user of “fixed do”.

The “fixed do” method was arguably one of the great miscalculations in the history of music teaching. When one considers the importance of analytical skill in developing musicianship, it is astonishing that, for many, the opportunity to use the solfa system as a learning tool was squandered in this perceptual wasteland. It is almost as if “fixed do” has found its way into the present day curriculum through an entirely different route than that followed by other disciplines; and in fact I believe this to be the case. “Fixed do” derives from a time and a set of conditions which favoured the mass production of musicians who were capable of acting as precision cogs in a corporate machine -- an orchestra. The method was never designed to encourage thought or analysis, having been biased from the beginning towards the nurturing of platoon-like instrumental reading, in which “successful” students were those who ended up relating to music solely through their instruments. In the nineteenth century, with its proliferating orchestras, opera houses, and amateur audiences, this may have been a pragmatic response to an actual set of circumstances. In 1997, however, “fixed do” advocates are left with a glaring contradiction between the desire to impart analytical skills on the one hand and, on the other, recourse to a retrograde ear-training pedagogy based on a denial of precisely the same thing. Moreover, under the weight of the “three tenors” (especially Big Lucy) and other parallel developments (see Norman Lebrecht’s *When the Music Stops: maestros, managers, and the corporate murder of classical music*), one must question whether and to what extent the rigid and unthinking fixed-do regimen is preparing students for a world which, for most, will have ceased to exist by the time they are ready to enter it. Perhaps when the smoke from the demise of many of these nineteenth-century institutions clears, we will see music assume a more human scale, in which the development of the mind is given precedence over the small-muscle Olympic training that passes for much of music education at the present time. Needless to add, it is “movable do”, with its roots in the voice and in the very processes of musical perception, which can make a central contribution to any such trend.

This article has been published on the website www.artlevine.com

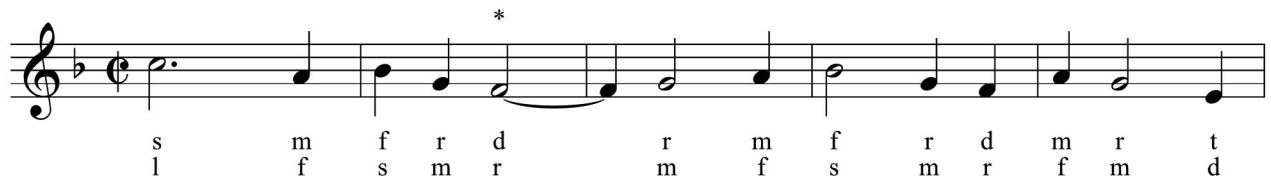
Art Levine was born in 1948. Showed interest in music at age of 12 seconds (details shrouded in myth). Studied variously, including an ARCT in Theory from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, a few years as a performance major on classical guitar, and a Master’s in Musicology from the University of Toronto. PhD Dissertation, not completed, on Solmization from 1475-1600. Teaching since ca. 1970, both privately and at University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University Since 1986, Royal Conservatory, including Professional School (musicianship and theory). 2000 – 2013, music department at York; became tenured, made associate professor, and promptly retired. Also studied North Indian vocal music for ten years, and a founding member (11/95) of Gamelan Toronto, a central Javanese-style ensemble. Also loves jazz (mainly vocal standards) and Brazilian music. Also, since 1991, host of “This is Art” on CBC, where all of these experiences smash into each other to produce something like splitting the atom.

ex. 2a - M. Prolationum - Pleni

J. Ockeghem

canon: 7th below, after 3 beats

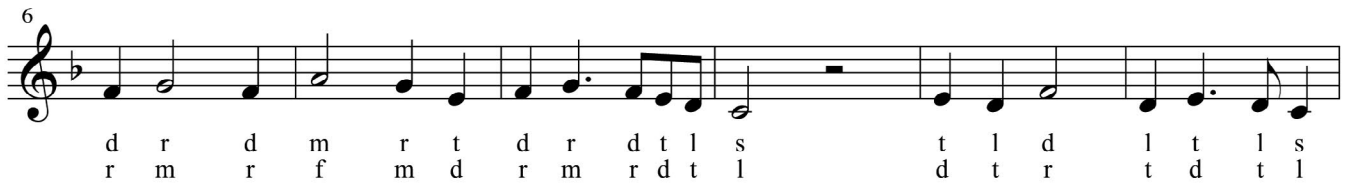
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s l m f r d r m f r d m r t d

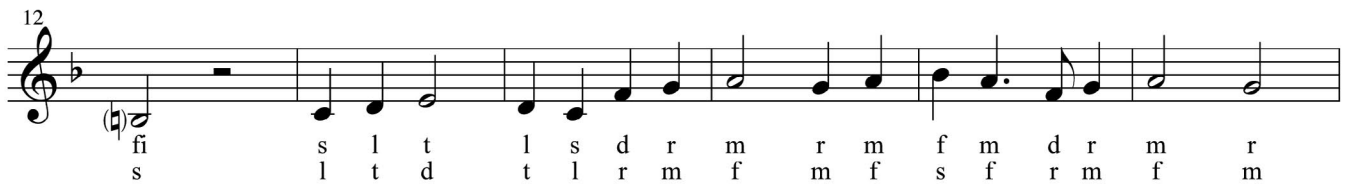
17

6



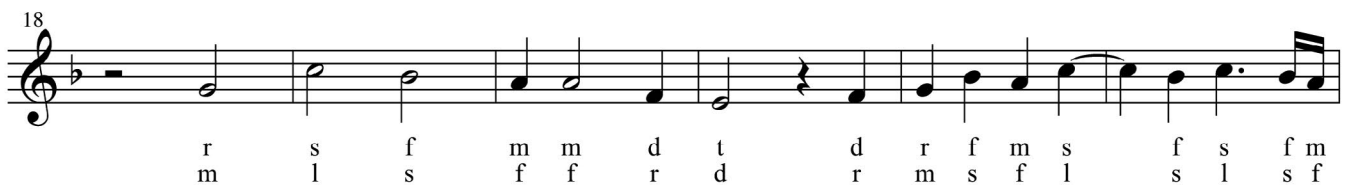
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12



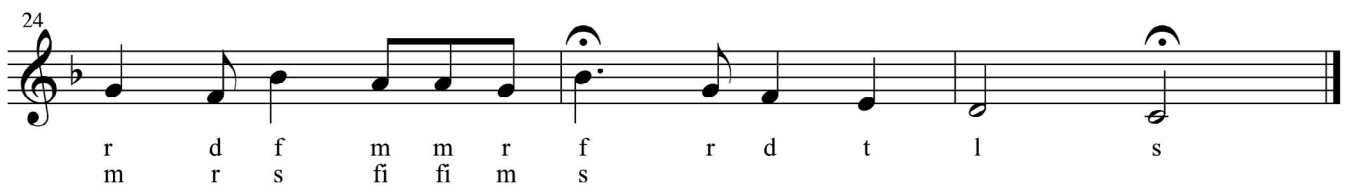
f i s s l t d t l s d r m r m f m d r m r

18



r m s f m m d t d r f m s f s f m m l s f f r d r m s f l s l s f

24



r m d f m m r f r d t l s

Ex. 2b - M. Prolationum - Pleni - resolution

J. Ockeghem

1
s m f r d r m f r d m r t
l f s m r m f s

18

6
d r d m r t d r d t l s t l d
m r f m d r m r f m d r m r d t l

11
l t l s (b) fi s l t l s d r m r m
d t r t d t l s l t d t l

16
f m d r m r r s f m m d
r m f m f s f r m f m m l

21
t d r f m s f s f m r d f m m r f r d t l s
s f f r d r m s f l s l s f m r s fi fi m s

ex. 3a - M. Hercules Dux Ferrariae - Pleni

Josquin des Prez

canon: after 1 beat, 5th above

*

19

r f m s f m r m f s l r l l

d t r d t l t d r m l m m s f l

s f m f s l r l l s l f m l s m s f s m

r s f r r m f s m f s l r l s l t s l l

s l t s l l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l l s l r l l

s l t d t d l t l t d r t l r d r m f m f r m r m f s m r

r d r m f m f r m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m r

ex. 3b - M. Hercules D. F. - Pleni - diatonic res.

Josquin des Prez

l d t r d t l t d r m l m m s f l
r f m s f m r m f s l r l l d t r d t

20

8 s f m f s l t m t t r d m r d t d r m l m m
8 l t d r m l m m s f l s f m f s l r l l s

15 r m d t m r t r d r t l r d l l t d r t d r m l m r
15 l f m l s m s f s m r s f r r m f s m f s l r l s l t

23 m f r m m r m f r m m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m m r m l m
23 s l l s l t s l l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l l s l r l l

30 m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l l
30 s l t d t d l t l t d r t l r d r m f m f r m r m f s m r r d r m

36 s l t d t d l t l t d r d r t d t d r m d t l
36 f m f r m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m r

ex. 3c - M. Hercules Dux Ferrariae - Pleni - real resolution

Josquin des Prez

r f m s f m r m f s l r l l d t r
 r f m s f m r m f s l r l l d t r d t
 8 d t l t d r m l m m s f l s f m f s l r l l
 8 l t d r m l m m s f l s f m f s l r l l s
 15 s l f m l s m s f s m r s f r r m f s m f s l r l s
 15 l f m l s m s f s m r s f r r m f s m f s l r l s l t
 23 l ta s l l s l ta s l l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l l s l r l
 23 s l l s l t s l l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l l s l r l l
 30 l s l t d t d l t l t d r t l r d r m f m f r m r m f s m r r
 30 s l t d t d l t l t d r t l r d r m f m f r m r m f s m r r d r m
 36 d r m f m f r m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m r
 36 f m f r m r m f s f s m f m f s l f m r

ex. 4 - JS Bach - Cantata 208, mov't 4, meas.6 - "real sequence"

G- f m m r d si l r d t l
 A- f m m r t si l r d t l l

ex. 5 - J.S Bach - Cello suite #1, G major, Menuet I - "real sequence"

(t) r s r m f f r m d d t (t) r s r m f f r m d d s

ex. 6 - Laura (D. Raksin, 1945) - "real sequence"

G+ m m ri m ri t d r r l
 F+ m m ri m ri t d r

ex. 7a - mystery melody with fixed do syllables -
 singing with the correct solfa, name the tune!

Two staves of music in G major, 2/4 time. The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The syllables are: d m d t l t d s t t t l r.

ex. 7b - same melody, as heard, i.e. with movable do syllables

Two staves of music in G major, 2/4 time. The melody is the same as in ex. 7a. The syllables are: s l s f m f s r m f m f s.

ex. 8 - Bartok - M. for Percussion, Strings & Celesta - mov't 1 - syllables according to fixed do

Two staves of music in G major, 2/4 time. The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The syllables are: l t d d t l t d r m d t t.

ex. 9 - "simple music" - Irish song "Haigh didil dum" - intended to show limits of movable do
 - note: fixed do solmization is the same

One staff of music in 3/4 time. The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The syllables are: s m d d d d m s l s.

ex. 10 - "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" (J. Kennedy, J.W. Bratton, 1947)
 = "simple music", or "modulation for pre-schoolers"?

If you go down in the woods to-day You're sure of a big sur- prise If
 m l d t d t l d t d l t d t d l s

you go down in the woods to-day You'd bet- ter go in dis- guise
 d m r m r d m r m d r m r m d

ex. 11 - J.S. Bach - Cantata 116, mov't 2, meas. 17

B- t r m f t si l t d d F#- fi=t f m l si l l t d r

f m r d t l r t si l t m C#- l=r m f si t r f m d l

F#- m=t d r f si t r d l m B- ta=f r si si l t d C#- s=f r si si l t

d f t m l s f l s d r m f m r m m l t d r d t l m f t l l

ex. 12 - A. Webern - Four songs, op.12. #1 (1925) - Der Tag ist vergangen

d d r d si m r t=m fi si r si d s m=l si t l ri

ta l f si=m r d t di ta=t s le d s t=r m f t

r ra d s f l=s f t l t l m d s l le

ex. 13 - Lovely Joan - "The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs, ed. R. Vaughan Williams

r l l t d m s f r d r r m f f s f m r d s s f r r

l l t d r d t l s m s m f s l t d m s s f r d r

Ex. 14 - Sonata, op. 26 - mov't 3

Beethoven

The first system of musical notation shows measures 1 through 3. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The treble clef part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The bass clef part consists of a series of chords, with some marked with a fermata.

26

The second system of musical notation shows measures 4 through 6. The treble clef part continues with the eighth-note accompaniment. The bass clef part features a sequence of chords, with some marked with a fermata.

The third system of musical notation shows measures 7 through 9. The treble clef part continues with the eighth-note accompaniment. The bass clef part features a sequence of chords, with some marked with a fermata.

ex. 15 - R. Schumann - "Widmung", op.25, #1

m m r m d m r m f m r m d s

ex.16 - from "All the things you are" (J. Kern, 1939)

s d s s f f s i l f m s d m m r r
fi s f m d f d t t t t m

27

ex. 17 - C. Debussy, Preludes, bk. 1 - "Voiles" - various syllables possible, because whole steps only

m r d=m r d d=m r

ex. 18 - E. Carter, "A mirror on which to dwell", #4: "Insomnia"

d r d r r f= t s d ta

ex. 19 - Mozart - Marriage of Figaro, Act II, Cherubino's aria "Voi che sapete"

d s s r s m d r m f r m f fi s m d r ma m f

ex. 20 - "Insensatez" (A.C Jobim, 1963)

m f m f m f m f m ri m

s fi f m m r r m r m r

m r m r di r f m ri r r d

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World Youth Choir Tour Announcement 2016





▲ World Youth Choir, July 2009 (cond. Ana Maria Raga & Johan Duijck) — Photo by Marianne Grimont © Namurimage.be

The World Youth Choir is a genuine educational and social experience that draws on diverse vocal traditions, aiming for the highest artistic level. Since its creation in 1989, the World Youth Choir (WYC) has established itself as one of the most interesting musical and intercultural experiences offered to young musicians. Through music education, a professional artistic approach and multicultural social interaction and exchange, the World Youth Choir this year will unite 42 young choral singers, from 19 to 27 years of age, from 26 different countries to perform a mixed sacred and secular repertoire, under the artistic direction of world-renowned conductor, Filippo Maria Bressan.

The 2016 Summer Session of the World Youth Choir will take place from July 13th to August 2nd, first at the great venue of the Weikersheim castle, Germany, one of JMI's World Meeting Centres, and then in a tour of concerts that will take the Choir on an unforgettable experience throughout Germany and Belgium. The concerts will take place from 24th to 31st July in Weikersheim, Mainz, Cochem, Brussels, Bonn and Wolfenbüttel and will also include an intercultural element, with Arab pieces being performed in selected concerts. If you are interested in attending one of the concerts, follow our social media channels and website (www.worldyouthchoir.org) for the latest updates!

Edited by Mirella Biagi, Italy ●

▼ World Youth Choir, July 2006 (cond. Peter Broadbent & Gunnar Eriksson) — Photo by Marianne Grimont © Namurimage.be



● The 12th IFCM World Symposium on Choral Music 2020 goes to . . .



New Zealand!

After a successful bid by the New Zealand Choral Federation, the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) is very excited to announce that the world's most prestigious, non-competitive, choral event will take place in Auckland in 2020.

Every three years since 1982 the World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM) has brought the finest choirs, conductors, presenters, composers, and choristers from around the globe together to share in a celebration of the art and community of fine choral singing. The WSCM has been presented in cities around the globe including Seoul, Minneapolis, Rotterdam, Sydney, Vancouver, Copenhagen and preparations are now well underway for 11th WSCM in Barcelona, July 22-29 2017.

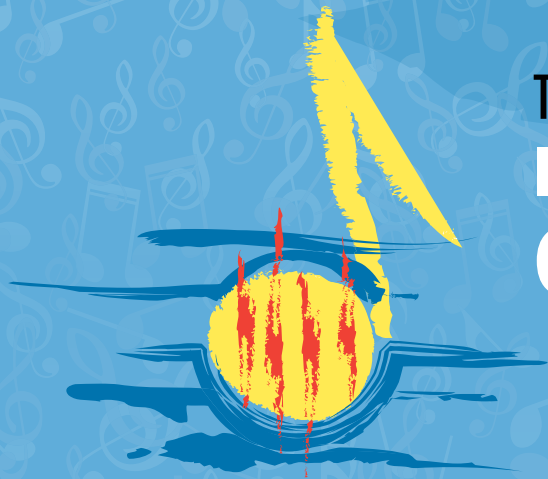
The lengthy and detailed application process to determine the winning bid spanned the past 12 months with extensive examination by the IFCM of all details of the city, the venues, levels of support, and, most importantly, the generosity and energy of the national choral community to mount such a large undertaking.

Spearheaded by the New Zealand Choral Federation, choral music is very much alive and well in New Zealand and supports a community of singers, conductors, and composers that, per capita, rivals the best choral centers of the world.

Situated on New Zealand's North Island, and ranked in 2014 as the 3rd "Most Livable City" in the world, Auckland is the most populated city outside of Australia in Oceania with good air links and easy access from major centers around the world. This picturesque harbor city boasts a rich and diverse cultural life of music, art and song that is built on a history of traditional and contemporary life.

The international choral community through the IFCM congratulates the New Zealand Choral Federation on their winning bid and wishes them every success and support in their preparations for this unique event in 2020. ●

Press Release by
Stephen Leek
IFCM Vice President



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Choral World News




▲ Adolf Frederiks Flickkör (Sweden) cond. Bosse Johansson during the WSCM8 (Copenhagen, Denmark 2008) © Dolf Rabus

Choral World News

Bosse Johansson, in Memoriam
Christian Ljunggren

"Ars Choralis", Fourth International Choral Music Symposium, Zagreb,
March 31 to April 2, 2016: From choral "art" to choral "science"
Henri Pompidor

Prestigious Award for Frieder Bernius
Press Release

A portrait of Bosse Johansson, a middle-aged man with a full white beard and mustache, wearing a white button-down shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression. His right hand is partially visible, gesturing as if speaking.

My very good friend and colleague, Swedish conductor Bosse Johansson, passed away suddenly in the beautiful month of May in his home in Sweden.

Bosse was a real artist among us Swedish choral conductors; the main “theme” of his life was to show that working with children and young voices really is a way to express deep artistic thoughts and values. He made Adolf Fredrik’s Girls Choir an instrument for this artistic ambition of his and led the choir to exceptional success in appearances all over the world. To take just one example, I can mention the impressions he made with the choir on Hong Kong and China on several occasions. His philosophy as a conductor was to look upon the singers as individual personalities, and liberate them from the tendency to unification that can be an obvious threat when working with a choir. The sound of the choir – although made up of young voices – was very mature.

Early on in his career, Bosse worked with the mixed Bromma Chamber Choir, and from that time on had a great interest in contemporary music. Many Swedish composers have written work for his ensembles.

Adolf Fredrik’s Music School is unique and in many ways a frontrunner – including from a broad international perspective. With different political situations in Sweden over the years, it has not always been easy to keep this kind of school going but, together with his colleague Jan-Åke Hillerud, Bosse led the fight to keep the school open during some hard times.

Bosse has been officially recognised for his work several times. He was the first conductor to be announced Choral Director of the Year in Sweden (1986). He also won the prestigious Norrby Medal (1986) and became member 930 of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music (1999).

He will be greatly missed, not only by me and many choral director colleagues around the world, but first and foremost by the many singers whose lives, I am sure, changed during the years they sung in his choirs.

Christian Ljunggren
Choral Conductor and
Artistic Director at
Interkultur

“Ars Choralis”, Fourth International Choral Music Symposium

Zagreb, March 31 to April 2, 2016: From choral “art” to choral “science”



Henri Pompidor
choir director and teacher

Choral music is the subject of significant, unprecedented growth in contemporary societies, extending to the four corners of the world. Assuming a variety of forms, it is practiced in conservatories of music, schools, universities, and places of worship, and within a framework of cultural activities overseen by both secular and religious associations. It undeniably plays a social and educational role in transmitting values and creating and reinforcing bonds in societies that may be experiencing a weakening in their social fabric. Viewed at surface level, choral music is a vocal practice founded on the experience, that is to say on the tradition, as well as the knowledge and charisma, of the choir director. The role of this central figure, the pivot point for transmission, is to accompany the singers in their vocal work and to transmit the knowledge he or she has acquired over many years as a director.

Beyond the eminently particular nature of choral practices, however, it is interesting to look more deeply into their inductive dimension. Should choral music be reduced to musical practice isolated from scientific knowledge? Would it not be relevant to dig deeper into a corpus of more objective information? In most cases, the knowledge represented by what is today designated by the term “choral art” flows from the choir director’s empirical work. Its practice, including its most particular aspects – whether that be the director’s conducting gestures or musical interpretation, or the actual management of the choir – is analysed and conceptualised from a subjective standpoint (the “gut instincts” of the choir director). The diversity of situations and their specific cultural features enrich the experience of the choir director in the choral group’s musical and human conduct. However, these experience-based approaches could benefit considerably from – and be validated by – the contributions of scientific and

experimental methods. The question is not so much whether to place choral “art” in opposition to the new choral “science”, where the former would reflect the fruit of tradition, history and practical experience, while the latter would draw on the contributions of scientific disciplines such as physics, acoustics, physiology, medicine, sociology, psychology, etc. or even some combination of them – but rather to ponder what is at stake, notably in terms of legitimacy and credibility, of this movement from art to science. It is rather a question of acknowledging the staunchly complex, transverse and transdisciplinary nature of choral music as a subject or field of research. Because the goal of the entire endeavour is in fact to articulate its complexity, in order to assemble and transmit knowledge as a corpus in a form that can be grasped and understood at all levels, by choristers as well as choir directors.

In reality, the work of the choir director cannot be reduced to knowledge founded on experience alone. The director must explore and expand upon the contributions of other disciplines in order to better grasp the musical and human dimensions of his or her work. With all the advantages of a scientific approach towards choral practice, which would confer a more rational dimension upon choral art, thrown into the bargain. The contribution to music of both the exact and human sciences was fundamental throughout the 20th century. Every aspect of the act of making music and of singing – notably the historical and linguistic ones – can be analyzed by the scientific method. As a constituent element of music, choral music is in a position to surpass this methodological state, going on to suggest that practitioners take steps towards a truly rationalized knowledge base. It is this rational knowledge base that should be compared, filled out and disseminated, finally achieving the creation of “chorusology”, a new discipline defined by Branko Starc at the opening of the First Symposium of Choral Music in Zagreb in 2010. This transdisciplinary field of “chorusology”, located at the junction of scientific research work on the natural and cultural dimensions of the collective voice, proposes to the choral world a closer connection between choral practices and the sciences.

But does the choral art really need scientific understanding in order to improve? Yes, without a doubt, considering all the domains of knowledge that a choir director is presumed to understand – acoustics, physiology, medicine, music history, musicology, and many other social sciences. At the most recent “Ars Choralis” choral music symposium, held last March 31 to April 2 in Zagreb, choir directors, university professors, doctors, physicians, acousticians, and school directors shone a more objective light on contemporary choral practices, enriching a corpus of knowledge that extended beyond “choral art” and paved the way for a scientific analysis of choral practices.





This fourth symposium made known the latest contributions of anatomy and physiology, notably on the characteristics and conditions of vocal production (*Overtone singing*, Anna-Maria Hefele, Germany), breathing and the position of the larynx (*Flow-Ball, a new tool for practicing semi-occluded vocal tract gesture*, Filipa La, Portugal), as well as on problems related to its aging (*Aging of the vocal tract*, Irena Hočevar, Slovénie) and the anatomical interactions of vocal support (*A review of singing voice sub-system interactions*, Christian Herbst, Austria). New discoveries were also reported on the acoustical conditions of choral singing (*Tuning considerations in capella choir singing*, David Howard, United Kingdom), as well as on vocal production and the relationship with well-being that it induces (*Singing, brain and emotion – how do they connect*, Per-Åke Lindestad).

The physiological, anatomical and acoustic dimensions of choral singing did not obscure another fundamental dimension, that of the social and human sciences. Many speakers recounted the historic and ethnic dimensions of gathered voices within this framework, with a sociology lecture on choral practices presenting the collective voice as a vehicle for transmitting values and norms associated with a society or group (*Choral singing and sociology: Sociology's contribution to art choral*, Henri Pompidor, France). Choral singing participates so much more in this social field that it must be equally understood within a historic and analytical context (*Influence of Gregorian chant in Duruflé's music*, Andrea Angelini, Italy).

This double dimension (social and historic) was also found in presentations by actual choral education institutions, notably in the Czech Republic (*Boys choir of the Czech Republic*, Jaroslav Slais, Czech Republic), in South Africa (*Boys choirs: do they still matter?*, Johannes Van der Sandt, South Africa) and in India (*Music education in India*, Anjana Abraham, India). These schools find their raison d'être in the beneficial contributions of choral singing to a broader musical education (*Cooperation between the music school and the environment*, Martina Prevejšek, Croatia) and in the development of choral cooperation and the creation of networks (*The European network for professional chamber choirs*, Babette Greiner, Netherlands).

Other talks focused on the ethnological and musicological analysis of vocal practices, including presentations on the national repertoires of host country Croatia (*Techniques of Croatian traditional singing*, Bojan Pogrmilovic, Croatia), and of Malta (*Music practice in Malta*, John Galea, Malta), Hungary (*The style of Gyorgy Orban*, Katalin Kiss, Hungary) and Russia (*Russian contemporary choral performing and repertoire*, Alexander Soloviev, Russia).

Participants were able to learn about specific vocal practices, such as the use of “clicks” that characterize South African vocal music (*Click sounds in South African languages*, Anne-Marie Van Der Walt, South Africa). Workshops allowed participants to learn and perform Gospel numbers (*Lift every Voice*, Reginald Golden, United States), traditional South American songs (*Let's sing! Music of Mexico and Latin America*, Marco Antonio Ugalde, Mexico) and even excerpts from American musical comedies (*How to sing American musicals?*, David McShane, United States).

To sum up, the fourth Zagreb Symposium made clear the importance of scientific research in the development of choral practices. Scientific disciplines, both “hard” and “soft” (human), were able to be in dialogue and inform one another about choral singing in an unprecedented way (*The Learning conductor*, Thomas Caplin, Norway). These approaches, which do not in any way call into question the experiential nature of the choral art and the particular practices of thousands of choir directors throughout the world, aim at proposing an objective and complementary corpus of knowledge that choirs can draw from to improve themselves. This is the wish expressed by Branko Starc and the participants, who hereby invite all involved in the choral music world to return to Zagreb in 2018 for the Fifth International Symposium (cf. *Choralis* 2018).

Member of the French Society of Choir Directors, **Henri Pompidor** teaches choral singing and choir direction at the Conservatoire de Paris Charles Munch (11th district) and serves as music director of its choir. He is also devoted to teaching choral music on the international level, through numerous concerts and master classes in many countries (China, South Korea, Spain, Indonesia, Japan, Malasia, Taiwan, Vietnam, etc.). He is regularly invited to take part in international festivals and competitions as a jury member, both in Europe and abroad (IFCM, A.C.J, Interkultur...). Email: henripompidor@hotmail.com



Translated from the French by Anita Shaperd, USA ●



Prestigious Award for Frieder Bernius

Press Release



Carus-Verlag has awarded the conductor Prof. Frieder Bernius a Golden CD for his recording of the complete sacred music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The award was presented to him by the music publisher, Dr. Johannes Graulich, during the German Choir Festival, which took place in Stuttgart, Germany, in May 2016.

As Graulich stressed in his Laudatio, Bernius has succeeded, especially in this recording, in achieving a specific, distinctive sound which enjoys the status of having set an international standard. The sale of over 250,000 recordings, which have been recognised with a number of awards, has made a not insignificant contribution to what today is the obvious presence of Mendelssohn's complete opus in the concert repertoire.

Carus has released over 50 recordings of works conducted by Frieder Bernius, most recently a recording of Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion with the Kammerchor Stuttgart and the Barockorchester Stuttgart, as well a recording of Max Reger's motets for choir, op. 110, performed by the SWR Vokalensemble Stuttgart. A further new recording of music by Mendelssohn, entitled "Lieder im Freien zu singen," is now in preparation for release in 2017.

Edited by Caroline Maxwell, UK ●

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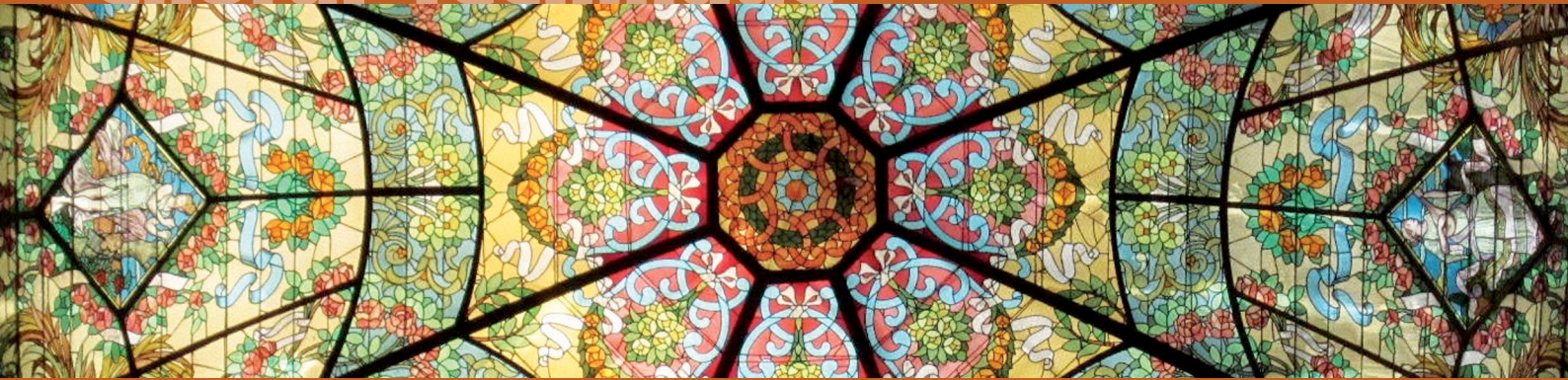
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Performing Polyphony (part 1)
Peter Phillips

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

Performing Polyphony (part 1)



Brodsky's misgivings about Ezra Pound's Cantos could stand for many old-fashioned interpretations of polyphony: take a piece of music that looks simple, something apparently elementary in its technique and naive in its expression by comparison with what one knows, and impose beauty on it. Louds, softs, rubatos, crescendos, diminuendos, the works. Then the ordinariness - that simplicity which can yield beautiful results - will surely be crushed.

The discussion which follows is more concerned with how to avoid a boring performance of polyphony than a bad one. It might be thought that the two were the same, but that is not true. A bad rendition, which shows no respect for the very nature of the music by destroying the clarity of the lines, obliges the sensitive observer to leave the room immediately. The experience is completely hideous. A boring performance by contrast is likely to be one which indeed shows rather too studied respect, where the singing is 'white' rather than colourful, where the performers are putting on a 'renaissance' tone of voice which means only half-singing in order to secure a more successful blend.

There is little I can say to those in the former category, now fewer in number than they were 40 years ago. Perhaps I have said all I can say by building up a following for the 'clarity' approach, and broadcasting it as far and wide as possible. It is the boring practitioners who are so prevalent, encased in self-confidence, subtly turning audiences everywhere against the music, and taking

Peter Phillips
Director of
the Tallis Scholars

their vision of polyphony just so far but never further, making it pretty. It is easy enough to be misled by the sheer beauty of renaissance music into thinking that that is all there is to it. What more is needed? Religion is the place where we shunt off all our good thoughts and fragrant wishes, surely this custom-made old music was designed to complement this? Such a point of view forgets that for almost all the composers we have chosen, sacred music was the only music that they composed, compared with the contemporary situation when sacred composition is relatively rare, often forming only a small part of a composer's work. Renaissance composers had no other outlet for their emotions, good, tempestuous and bad, than their church music. They may not have been as highly trained as we are in self-analysis, with all its attendant anxiety-inducing complexes, but there surely was more to them than prettiness.

44 In what follows, I shall try to address the practical problems of achieving clarity in polyphonic singing. None of what I say refers to choirs which only rehearse and perform with some kind of instrumental accompaniment - piano, organ or orchestra. The moment instruments are involved more than half the work is taken out of the singers' hands, the spotlight is off them, and their chances of maturing as a group sharply reduced. Every choir that aspires to high standards needs to sing a cappella as a basic necessity - after that they will find choral society work a doddle. And I would add that when they rehearse they should consider singing Palestrina in the same way that pianists practise Mozart, for the detail. In their own fields these two composers wrote the same kind of music, in which absolute precision is the only way to do them justice. In their textures, where clarity is paramount, every tiny slip is magnified, so that, in one crucial sense, to perform them well is to confront the ultimate technical challenge. Of course there is more difficult music to play on the piano than Mozart's, and more difficult choral writing to sing than Palestrina's; but with both of them what one acquires in learning to articulate their pristine textures will be invaluable for every repertoire.

A short history of recent performance practice

There can be few things in music-making more opposite than the amateur and professional approaches to rehearsing polyphony. The amateur view, at its most extreme, sees polyphony as an adjunct to later 'choir music', maybe sung by people who cannot read music, and conducted by maestri who don't know what to say if they cannot lead by melodramatic and probably egocentric example. This view has clearly developed from 19th century choral practices, when community singing from musical scores was new, and it tends to find the reserved nature of polyphony — the lack of accessible melodies and exciting chromatic harmony — unhelpful. The sheer number of unmemorable notes in the simplest polyphonic motet may require countless hours of rehearsal for singers who are not used to sight-reading, a process which runs the risk of overwhelming a gentle piece and killing it stone dead. The professional approach is that the notes are so easy one hardly needs to rehearse them at all, which runs the opposite risk of the singers never really getting to know the music in its finer points, a kind of death by underwhelming. In amateur singing, rehearsals are exciting, physically communal events of elastic length; for professionals they don't exist without a concert that day or the next and even then are viewed as a necessary evil. The irony is that despite the vastly different routes to the eventual performance, when the concert begins we are all in exactly the same situation. The time for histrionics, perfumed or threatening exhortations is past. The only question is whether the notes will be right, and whether the singers have acquired any feeling for them.

The old-fashioned assumption that choirs are a load of sheep who need shepherding, and that their conductors are Romantic heroes, has retreated in recent years. Chamber choirs singing a cappella have become more common, as has general knowledge of how much they cost. I think it has now been generally accepted that The Tallis Scholars are not amateur — and that I am not a Romantic hero; nonetheless, we do still encounter the notion that we cannot be taken as seriously as an orchestra (hence the title of this book) presumably because, as I explain later, it is too much of a stretch for many people to imagine that a group of singers could be as professional as a group of instrumentalists. For this reason we instinctively dislike being called a 'choir', preferring 'ensemble'. Ironically — not that I wish to labour the point — most of my singers come from the hyper-professional training required at cathedral evensong, when the rehearsal will not be long enough for all the music of the day to be sung through even once. Many orchestras would balk at that regime.

One misunderstanding which can come out of the conjunction of polyphony with a choral society mentality is that polyphony must be suited to the big-choir approach: it looks so simple on the page. It may do, but this simplicity disguises the fact that in performance it is essential that everyone taking part can not only hold a line, but can sing through the line to the cadence with the necessary support and projection, as if singing solo. Even in the simplest four-part music there is no place to hide: no orchestra or organ to keep the pitch or to tidy over imperfections, no camouflage for passengers to wander about or fall off their part. And if this is true in Tallis' *If ye love me*, how much more is it true in his *Spem in alium* which, with its vast structure, has long provided choral societies with a temptation? But the reality is that *Spem* needs not 250 people throwing themselves at it, but 40 (or 80) people capable of singing unusually difficult polyphonic lines with confidence. It is the ultimate test for an ensemble which is the antithesis of a 'choir', and to this day is rarely performed to the highest standards even when entirely sung by professionals.



▲ Unusual performance of *Spem in Alium* (T. Tallis) by 40 loudspeakers at SFMOMA

The role of the conductor has also needed to change to accommodate the demands of polyphonic writing; and it has changed in partnership with the new understanding of the singers' role. While it is true that at best the 19th century autocratic hero figure can produce highly disciplined performances from a large number of participants, it is also true that it will have to be the kind of music on which he can impose his will — this is the only way he can justify being an autocrat. This means choosing music which can withstand the imposition of louds and salts, special attacks and sudden diminuendos, holdings-up and rushings forward. Letting things happen unscripted in performance is not an option for such a conductor. Many choirs have rehearsals for many weeks before a performance, which means a lot of time for the conductor to impose his will on the music and the singers. He has to fill this time and, not least because the notes are not as difficult as in many later repertoires, little choice but to 'do' something with them. He needs to find new corners to tease out, new perspectives to unveil, to inspect the words further and further for the most hidden of meanings. I have known a kind of competition develop between conductors to find these meanings, especially when the language in question is Latin, who then devote hours trying to express them in a romantic way, instead of spending the time building up a good basic choral sound which can be used as a reliable instrument in many differing situations.

Polyphony cannot be made to work like that because, ironically given its elitist origins, it has a fundamentally democratic style. The equalness of the voice parts in renaissance music should condition every approach to it, remembering that, in the most effective democracies, the voters think about what they are contributing to. It is inimical to this idiom that the singers should slavishly obey what one outsider — for the conductor is not singing — chooses to impose on them. A satisfying interpretation of polyphony can only come from a reactive group of people who are listening to what is going on around them, and then, when the music calls for it, adding something of their own. This has serious repercussions for the role of the conductor, the nature of rehearsal, the secularisation of something that was originally sung in church, authentic performance, everything from top to bottom of what it takes to perform polyphony well.

Why have a conductor for polyphony?

The role of the conductor in polyphony is ambivalent in a number of ways; but underneath it all his or her problem is essentially how to retain his sense of purpose while doing a job which of necessity commands instant obedience when there are, say, over 20 people present, yet which requires something rather different when there are fewer. It is my opinion that he must cede a lot of that power to his performers, which may well make him uneasy, caught between controlling everything and leaving the singers to get on with it as a self-directing vocal ensemble. In fact, in both the amateur and the professional world, the conductor

has the apparently menial but actually crucial task of acting as a kind of aesthetic umpire. Groups of singers left to themselves in rehearsal can rapidly degenerate into argument, since everybody can easily have an opinion about what they are doing when they are asked. The astute conductor will allow discussion, for example about the phrasing of a point of imitation which everyone will eventually have to sing, pick the view which seems both the most prevalent and the nearest to his ideal, and impose it. This way he will maintain a sense of progress where anarchy would often be the only alternative. In the theory of democracy there should be unlimited time to discuss what everyone feels, but rehearsals are of finite duration, as is the patience of people who lead busy lives. In this sense the skilful conductor has a difficult, unconventional but ultimately essential job to do. He must have enough ego to quieten the egos of everyone else present, not because it is his divine right as conductor, but because that is simply his task as the person called conductor. No one else will do.

In the professional world it is a commonplace attitude for singers to want to rehearse as little as possible, not least because rehearsals tend to be badly paid. They will know how much a rehearsal is worth in advance and, once they are confident their singing will not be ridiculously exposed in the performance, will want to do the bare minimum once they are at it. Sending them home early is always good for morale, which contrasts dramatically with the point of view of the keen amateur. In the professional climate the conductor needs to make quick and transparently fair decisions, knowing that he will always have the full attention and co-operation of those present, since any other approach vitiates the principles by which they agreed to attend the rehearsal in the first place. An academically inclined singer might well violently disagree with the line I customarily take about any number of issues to do with the music in theory pitch, tempi, phrasing, scoring, *ficta* — but will only say so in rehearsal if their preferences will force them to give a substandard performance. Otherwise they are trying their hardest to do what is wanted, which should be something stylish and individual with what the composer has given them. In some ways this does resemble what I imagine a 19th century orchestral rehearsal must have been like, with the difference that the whole process of command and obedience has been deconstructed and built up again from scratch. In this version the performers know themselves to be on an equal footing with the conductor, but have voluntarily pooled their talents for the period of the project in question in the service of an artistic ideal.

The only disappointment for me in directing amateur or semi-professional performances of polyphony is that the singers often lack the experience to take responsibility for the lines they are singing, and the eventual standard of their performance will depend on how willing they are to acquire that experience. The rank and file chorus singer is probably never going to be prepared to take the necessary risks, and will need to be told everything that is expected of him or her, familiar from rehearsing oratorio choruses. The problem is that polyphony cannot be prepared like this. It is impossible to attach a dynamic to every note, an exact contour of phrasing to every point, a reliable scheme of ebbing and flowing which the habitual chorus member and his or her inevitable pencil can record in the copy and reproduce precisely in every performance. Anyone who has tried to map out a detailed dynamic scheme for a renaissance motet will know how time-consuming and ultimately self-defeating such a process is. Phrases that look on paper as though they might start loudly and diminuendo before building to the next set of entries rarely obey such neatness in the heat of the moment. But if everyone's copy says it must be so, then to some degree it probably will be so, and the result is likely to be forced and unconvincing. The best answer is to dare to leave just about everything to the heat of the moment.

The history of publishing renaissance music, incidentally, has reflected the move towards this understanding. The oldest editions gave a piano reduction and detailed dynamic markings attached to the voice-parts themselves. It is difficult to sing from these editions if one does not intend exactly to follow what Fellowes, or whoever the editor was, felt about the piece, and one notices how often the very best choirs of yesteryear recorded polyphony with all the dynamics of the leading editions of those days meticulously in place. The King's College 1964 recording of Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* and the coeval Novello edition are a case in point (and if the editor of that publication was following the enormously influential markings which Richard Wagner had imposed on the piece in his 1848 edition, then one can see how necessary a new approach to editorial interference had become). Clearly, in the early stages of the general dissemination of polyphony it was felt the rank and file could not be trusted to make interpretative decisions of any kind so that, following tradition, someone in authority must do it for them. We will never know how justified that rather condescending attitude was, since general knowledge and understanding of this music is now quite widespread, not least as a result of Fellowes' efforts. At some stage it was recognised that it is hard to sing anything other than *forte* when the copy tells you to, and the next stage was that the markings were confined to the piano reduction. The piano reduction anyway had its merits: it could be useful in giving a second reading where the printed polyphony clearly had errors in it; and the suggestions for dynamic schemes could be useful, or ignored. But even this came to be seen as extra to requirements (and piano reductions were time-consuming luxuries for the new one-man editor/publisher to produce) and now one buys copies which are completely clean of any such helps. I favour this in principle because it leaves me and my performers to take the risks I am advocating; but I accept that at some level of amateur endeavour it makes the music seem more daunting and unfamiliar. One very simple way a modern editor can facilitate access to the music is to put an accent on the syllables one would stress in speech, throughout the text. This device can make phrases come alive in rehearsal immediately, without the natural lie of every textual sub-clause having to be laboriously explained by the conductor.

I have been asked, sometimes with more than a hint of irony, whether a conductor is really necessary in the performance of polyphony, a question which the conductorless British group *Stile Antico* has recently brought to the fore. Certainly it is anachronistic to have a conductor standing out in front of the performers, waving his arms around and ‘interpreting’ the music. The very most our predecessors in the 16th century would have had in the way of direction was someone keeping the pulse, probably in an audible form like tapping the stand or the choir-stall with a finger or a roll of parchment. I have already said that in modern rehearsals having someone in control is always going to save time; but in performance the issue is less clear-cut. The tempo and the first down-beat need to be given at the start, but they could be indicated by one of the singers. Since polyphony in theory rarely changes tempo in the middle of a movement there should be no difficulty in the singers directing themselves, assuming they watch each other carefully; and this method, in so far as we understand original practice, would have the merit of being authentic. Indeed the chambermusic-like nature of polyphony would seem to be well served by this way of doing things: string quartets achieve their subtleties by intense listening within the group, small chamber choirs should do the same.

How do I justify what I do on stage? The self-conducting method has been known to work well, but rarely with groups which employ more than one voice to a part. I am certainly surplus to requirements on the rare occasions that we sing, as for example the Hilliard Ensemble does, with four or five people in total on the stage. But the moment there are eight or ten standing there, and two singers are responsible for one line, the director gains a new importance. The two ends of the line begin not to be able to hear each other; the two singers performing the same part cannot look into each other’s eyes without turning their backs on other singers; the sheer number of people begins to make an on-the-spot consensus about the minutiae of the performance less achievable. It is true that much of the time all I’m doing is setting and keeping the tempo, but there are moments when suddenly the presence of a conductor is absolutely crucial, by which I mean that a conductor not being there would instantly lower the standard of the performance. Although the singers may not always seem to be watching me directly, I have the power, with a single movement of the hand or expression in my face, fundamentally to change what they are doing, in speed, dynamic level or strength of interpretation. An ill-considered gesture from me can instantly disrupt the flow of the music; a deliberate look or gesture can up the ante in a split second.

Many good singers instinctively think they can do their job perfectly well without outside cajoling from a conductor, and that there would be a perceptible gain in the chamber-music subtleties if they were left to present the music as a group. Assuming the performing conditions were ideal (which is rare, especially in churches) so that everyone could clearly hear and see everyone else, and that the group was prepared to accept one of their own number as a kind of leader, then some of the time they would be right and I have no doubt some of the results, the phrasing, the dialogue within the music, would be very exciting. The drawbacks are that no one is in a position to comment on the balance of the ensemble, because this leader, while singing, can only ever have a very partial impression of the overall picture, and the ‘interpretation’, however democratically arrived at, would inevitably be in danger of losing its way. Also I gather, though it is outside my experience, that taking responsibility both for one own line as a singer, as well as for the ensemble as a whole, is almost impossible to do properly.

The article is taken from the book ‘What We Really Do’ (second edition) and has been published by the ICB with permission from its author Peter Phillips. If you are interested in purchasing the book, please visit:

<http://www.gimell.com/news-what-we-really-do-peter-phillips-tallis-scholars.aspx>

Edited by Emily Wood, UK ●



▲ Peter Phillips

Composers' Corner



Interview of Ko Matsushita
Composing music for God and to unify
the heart of people around the world
By **Andrea Angelini**

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

Please contact **Cara S. Tasher, Collaborator**
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Interview of Ko Matsushita

Composing music for God and to unify the heart of people around the world

Andrea Angelini (AA): *Expressing his/her own inner world is important for a musician. He/she must learn to channel this inwardness through musical writing, performing a song, or with a personal interpretation. What do you think of inspiration and how do you live your relationship with the 'Muse'? Basically, is there something that inspires you, in a particular way?*

Ko Matsushita (KM): Obviously, I think that writing music is not only done based on inspiration, and music is 'composed' based on composition methodologies. However, behind, or in other words, surrounding that 'composition', the life of the composer is reflected three-dimensionally. This would be the source of the inspiration. It could also be said that the composition technique lies in the life of the composer. The same could be said not only for composers, but also for authors, teachers, company presidents, and so on. The music of a composer, the novel of an author, the words of the teacher to a pupil, all who went through trials and tribulations, encompass 'reality'. This 'reality', alone has the power to move many people's feelings.

While performing as a conductor, I feel that much inspiration and many suggestions are given by the 'Muses'. On the other hand, I thank God each time that agony and sorrow are placed upon my life, as these become the driving force of the next composition. As mentioned in the beginning, it is possible that composition comes from a smooth and sailing life, full of happiness. As long as the composer has an appropriate level of technique, it is possible to write music. However, what really defines the value of a piece is the depth of humanity that surrounds that technique.

However, if I may add a comment about this, there is no such person with a 'life full of happiness'. We are living on ground that has absorbed the blood of the people that have died tragically through endless bloodshed and conflict.

How we composers seek to live - this may be to live a more oppressive life than anyone else. If not, we cannot understand the feelings of one who is in difficulty. With absolute preparation to bear all sorrow, we place the first note on a blank music sheet.

AA: *The art of sound, the expressiveness of the voice, the intensity of the message you want to communicate... what relationship do they have with the lyrics?*

KM: I think that when you compose a piece that has a text, i.e. vocal or choral, the content must perfectly harmonise with oneself. The role of the composer is to amplify and to ease communication of the meaning of the words in the text, the feeling within the words that the poet wants to convey, just like an amplifier or speaker of an audio system.

Therefore, I try to communicate this meaning through a multitude of rhetoric. Here what needs care is that a poem is the 'personal' feelings of a poet, stated by the words of the poet himself. When composing this in a choral piece, the poet may feel some confusion because of the fact that there are multiple performers. Normally, there are many ways of experiencing a poem, and it is enjoyed individually, so the story ends there. To make this into a choral piece is to change this story into a performance by multiple people, to convert it into multiple feelings, and to deliver it to multiple audiences, so there is a risk of making the mistake of misinterpreting the text. I always keep in mind to remain in line with the heart of the poet as much as possible.

When you take a text from the Bible, though the wording may lead to confusion, it is a little bit easier, as composition work having been absolved by God and filled with the Holy Spirit psychologically puts me in a reassured state.

Having said this, in most cases when I select a text by a poet, I choose the text by myself. I choose poems with faith and high spirit, so in many cases I get satisfactory results.

AA: *When did you begin to realise that your life would be about music? Was there any particular event that made you feel the need to compose? What about your studies, and what was so crucial for your education?*

KM: During my youth I received an intense education in piano and acoustics, but it was when I became a high-school student that I really started to love music. By entering the choral world that I had not known before then, I fell in love with music at once. The musical education that I had received until then was at a high level but placed emphasis on technique, and I did not often feel joy at that. It was like I was doing it because it was my duty.

By joining the choir in high school, I experienced the true excellence of music. You have companions in music. What could not be done individually could be accomplished with colleagues. I learnt this fact in high school. It was also the first time I realised that music is a mental activity. Another charm of choral music is the ability to perform a number of compositions by a composer who is living in the same era as you. When I was learning piano, it was like I only knew Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven.



My high school was a normal municipal school, not a specialist musical school, but meeting one music teacher here determined my musical life. Without his iron grip to pull me into the choir, I would not be as I am now. I am still thankful to this teacher from the bottom of my heart.

AA: *What are your main achievements?*

KM: I have accomplished a number of achievements under God's guiding hand. To have my music performed across borders by many people, to have my choirs win multiple competitions, the list goes on, but nowadays I am filled with a joy that I have never experienced before.

Last year in 2015, I was able to start a small children's choir in the town where I live. This is my biggest accomplishment recently. Currently there are around 30 members from age 4 to 15. No one has previous experience of a choir, and it is still even difficult to make a harmony, but I am feel very affectionate to see their hard work, and feel rewarded to hear the certain, steady improvement of their singing capabilities. I am currently applying as much of my time and effort as possible to this completely voluntary activity. One day, my dream is to present their performance to all of you that are reading ICB. I would fondly like to ask for your cheers and prayers.

AA: *Which activity do you dedicate more time to, between conducting and composition? Why?*

KM: I dedicate exactly the same time to both conducting and composition. I dedicate much of my time on weekday evenings and weekends to conducting, and the rest of my time to composing.

I guess that I'm living quite a lucky life, because when I feel it is tough to be alone, I can work with my choir, and when relationships become bothersome, I can be preoccupied by composition!

AA: *Are there some works, among your own, which most represent you and your personality?*

KM: This is a very good question. I have five themes (categories) when composing. The first is traditional music using the sound structure of Japan. The second, Catholic religious music. The third are etudes aimed to improve the skills of choirs and leaders. Fourth are arrangements of pop music and Japanese school songs, as I aspire to make a piece that anyone can enjoy. And the fifth category is original choral music that does not fit into any of the other categories, so this may be A cappella, with piano accompaniment, or with orchestral accompaniment.



Songs that fit into any of the categories above are my sound, and represent my personality and me. Even in arrangements, I try to express my world within it.

My works in Latin are nowadays performed frequently around the world. This is a very happy thing. Along with this, many of my Japanese works are published in Japan, so I would like to invite you to read these scores and listen to the performances.

AA: *What kinds of projects have you already taken part in?*

KM: As a composer, some memorable projects are the World Sun Songs Festival at Riga (Latvia), held in 2008, and my personal exhibition at Shenzhen (China), held in 2011.

The World Sun Songs Festival was a huge, national-scale project, to hold world premiere performances of 17 composers at once. I presented *Jubilate Deo*, wonderfully performed by Choir KAMER (Latvia) and the premiere of my piece concluded in great success. Since then, they have kindly performed this piece in multiple events such as the World Symposium on Choral Music, and many choirs have now added this piece to their own repertoires.

In Shenzhen, I was able to perform many of my works, including my orchestral work with the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra. Both projects are unforgettable to me.

I am writing this article on 23 May 2016, but just the day before yesterday, I conducted the concert of Taipei Male Choir, hosted by the Taiwan National Theater and Concert Hall at Taipei (Taiwan). The concert hall, with a capacity of 2,000, was completely filled with audience members and, with great enthusiasm, we were able to hold the concert with an all-Japanese composer program. I felt utmost joy. This concert would also be a great footprint in my life.

AA: *What is the relationship with the performers of the music you compose?*

KM: my music performed by my choir with myself as conductor, my music performed by another choir with myself as conductor, my music performed by my choir with another conductor, my music performed by another choir with another conductor

These are the four patterns of performance of my music, but the lower it gets, the more intriguing and interesting it becomes. In terms of expressing the composer's feelings, it may be that the first pattern is the best, but the last pattern is when 'the expression transcends the feeling of the composer'. Thus, I like to listen to performance by many choirs led by many composers. Music interferes



in the process of understanding people-to-people, so the relationship between the composer and the performer should be good. This is the reason why I think that my piece will become a happy one only after it has been performed, not only by my choirs, but also by many other choirs.

AA: *For whom in particular, are you writing your compositions?*

KM: to devote to God, to the Church, to those who abhor hatred and war, to those who protest that there is no need of weapons, to those who cannot escape from agony or sorrow, to those who cannot hold hope, to those who believe that music is the way to unify the heart of people around the world, to my ancestors, who led me to exist in this world

AA: *What are your future projects?*

KM: With my trustworthy colleagues, I am hosting the Karuizawa International Choral Festival. Wonderful choral friends gather from around the world. You can also exchange with high-level Japanese choirs. I would humbly recommend you to come to this festival, held every August. Karuizawa is a place that represents Japan, a beautiful and comfortable place. Please refer to the festival website for details: <http://karuizawa.koyukai.info/en/>

Furthermore, we hold the annual International Choral Composition Competition in Japan. The winning piece is guaranteed to be premiered and published. This is a new competition that started in 2015 so this is only the second year but, in both years, a large number of submissions have been handed in from around the world. We look forward to your submission. Please refer to the competition website for details. <http://icccj.org>

Last but not least, I am working as a member of the artistic committee for the 11th World Symposium on Choral Music. To make the WSCM a wonderful symposium, I am enjoying the meaningful work with the great members of the committee. An excellent list of lecturers and choirs has been selected for the event in Barcelona. Hope to see you there next July!



Ko Matsushita, Conductor and Composer, born and raised in Tokyo; graduated top of his class from the Kunitachi College of Music, Department of Composition; finished his Choral Conductor master course at Kodály Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary; studied under Yuzuru Shimaoka, Koichi Uzaki, Thomas Meyer-Fiebig, Mohay Miklo's for composing, the late Reményi János, Erdei Péter for choral conducting, Masamitsu Takahashi for orchestral conducting, and Somoriai Paula for singing. Mr Ko Matsushita is taking multifaceted approaches to choral music by conducting, composing, and teaching. He composes and arranges choral pieces, which are performed not only in Japan but all around the world. He also acts as resident conductor and artistic director of ten choirs, which perform both in Japan and abroad, achieving excellent reports in the competitions they participate in. Recently, one of his choirs, Vox Gaudiosa Chamber Choir, won the Grand Prix at the international competition 'Concorso Polifonico Internazionale Guido d'Arezzo 2011' in Italy. He receives many invitations from around the world to act as a guest conductor, judge competitions, and teach in choral lectures and workshops. In 2010, he became guest conductor of Beijing University Student Choir. Furthermore, he has won best conductor's awards and prizes for superior composition in various international competitions. In 2005, Mr Matsushita became the first Asian to receive the "Robert Edler Prize for Choral Music". This award is bestowed on the best conductor, composer, or choir for their extraordinary endeavors throughout that year around the globe. He has dedicated his works to American, Hungarian, Spanish, Norwegian, Latvian, Polish, Dutch, Taiwanese, Singaporean, Chinese, and Japanese choirs and ensembles. Mr Matsushita's works are performed by a large number of choirs from all over the world. He is a jury member of the Japan Choral Association, NHK (Japan Broadcasting Association) School Choir competition, JCA (Japan Choral Association) National Choir Competition, Singapore Youth Festival 2007, Hong Kong Youth Choir Competition 2008, Seghizzi International Choral Competition in Italy 2008, Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain 2009 and 2010, and Florilège Vocale de Tours in France 2011. He is the author of a Junior High School music textbook published by Kyoiku Publishing. Additionally, he is a vice-president of the Tokyo Choral Association and a member of the Japan Choral Directors Association, The Japanese Society for the Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers, Japan Composers and Arrangers Association, The Japan Kodaly Society and the International Kodaly Society. Also, he is a representative of the Workshop for Choral Expression. His works are mainly published by Edition KAWAI (Japan), Ongaku-no-tomo Edition (Japan), Carus-Verlag, Stuttgart (Germany), Sulasol (Finland) and Annie Bank Edition (Holland).

With special permission for *International Choral Bulletin* (ICB), July 2016

For SYC Ensemble Singers 50th anniversary
and my friend Jennifer Tham



Ubi caritas

Antiphon für Gründonnerstag
Antiphon for Holy Thursday

Ko Matsushita (*1962) 2014

Text: St. Gallen, 8. Jh.

A Moderato con tenerezza ♩ = ca. 60

Soprano *mp* U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, *p* Con - gre - ga - vit nos in
 Alto *mp* De - us i - bi est. *p* Con - gre - ga - vit nos in
 Tenore *mp* U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, De - us i - bi est. *p* Con - gre - ga - vit nos in
 Basso *mp* U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, *p* Con - gre - ga - vit nos in

4 *mp* u - num Ex - sul - te - mus, et in i - pso ju - cun - de - mur.
mp u - num Chri - sti a - mor. Ex - sul - te - mus, et in i - pso ju - cun - de - mur.
mp u - num Chri - sti a - mor. Ex - sul - te - mus, et in i - pso ju - cun - de - mur.
mp u - num Ex - sul - te - mus, et in i - pso ju - cun - de - mur.

Wo Güte ist und Liebe, da ist Gott. Christi Liebe hat uns geeint. Lasst uns frohlocken und jubeln in ihm. Fürchten und lieben wollen wir den lebendigen Gott und einander lieben aus lauterem Herzen. Da wir allesamt eins geworden, hüten wir uns, getrennt zu werden im Geiste. Es fliehe der Streit, böser Hader möge entweichen. Christus, der Herr, sei in unserer Mitte. Dürften wir alle mit den Heiligen schauen in der Herrlichkeit, Christus, dein Angesicht. O welch unermessliche Freude durch die grenzenlose Weite der Ewigkeit.

Where there are charity and love, there is God. The love of Christ has brought us together. Let us rejoice and be joyful in Him. Let us fear and love the living God. And with a sincere heart let us love each other (and Him). Therefore, whenever we are gathered as one: Let us be wary, lest in mind be divided. Let all malicious quarrels cease, let strife fall away. And in the midst of us let Christ dwell. Together with the blessed may we also see, the glory of thy countenance, O Christ: Let there be joy immeasurable, and worthy: Through ages of ages evermore. Amen.

Aufführungsdauer / Duration: ca. 3 min.

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7 *p* *più p*

Ti-me-a - mus, et a-me-mus De - um vi - vum. Et ex cor-de di - li - ga-mus nos sin - ce -

p *più p*

Ti-me-a - mus, et a-me-mus De - um vi - vum. Et ex cor-de di - li - ga-mus nos sin - ce - ro.

p *più p*

8 Ti-me-a - mus, et a-me-mus De - um vi - vum. Et ex cor-de di - li - ga-mus nos sin - ce - ro.

p *più p*

Ti-me-a - mus, De - um vi - vum. Et ex cor-de di - li - ga-mus nos sin - ce - ro.

11 **B** *pp*

ro. De-us i - bi est. con-gre-ga - mur:

mp

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, Si-mul er - go cum in u - num

mp

8 U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, De-us i - bi est. Si-mul er - go cum in u - num

mp

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, Si-mul er - go cum in u - num

15 *mf* *mp*

Ne nos men - te di - vi - da - mur, ca - ve - a - mus. Ces-sent jur - gi - a ma - li -

mf *mp*

Ne nos men - te di - vi - da - mur, ca - ve - a - mus. Ces-sent jur - gi - a ma - li -

mf *mp*

8 Ne nos men - te di - vi - da - mur, ca - ve - a - mus. Ces-sent jur - gi - a ma - li -

mf *mp*

Ne nos men - te di - vi - da - mur, ca - ve - a - mus. Ces-sent jur - gi - a,

18 *p* *rit.*

- gna, ces - sent li - tes. Et in me - di - o no - stri sit Chri - stus De - us.

- gna, ces - sent li - tes. Et in me - di - o no - stri sit Chri - stus De - us.

- gna, ces - sent li - tes. Et in me - di - o no - stri sit Chri - stus De - us.

ces - sent li - tes. Et in me - di - o no - stri sit Chri - stus De - us.

21 **C** *a tempo* *pp* *p*

U - bi ca - ri - tas Si - mul quo - que cum be - a - tis vi - de - a - mus.

U - bi ca - ri - tas Si - mul quo - que cum be - a - tis vi - de - a - mus.

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, De - us i - bi est. Si - mul quo - que cum be - a - tis vi - de - a - mus.

U - bi ca - ri - tas Si - mul quo - que cum be - a - tis vi - de - a - mus.

25 *mf* *f*

Glo - ri - an - ter vul - tum tu - um, Chri - ste De - us: Gau - di - um, quod est im -

Glo - ri - an - ter vul - tum tu - um, Chri - ste De - us: Gau - di - um, quod est im -

Glo - ri - an - ter vul - tum tu - um, Chri - ste De - us: Gau - di - um, quod est im -

Glo - ri - an - ter vul - tum tu - um, Chri - ste De - us: Gau - di - um, quod est im -

28 *mf* *p* *poco rall.* . . .

men - sum, at - que pro - bum, sae - cu - la per in - fi - ni - ta sae - cu - lo -

men - sum, at - que pro - bum, sae - cu - la per in - fi - ni - ta

men - sum, at - que pro - bum, sae - cu - la per in - fi - ni - ta

men - sum, at - que pro - bum, sae - cu - la per in - fi - ni - ta

57

32 **D** **Con moto** ♩ = ca. 68

rum. A - men,

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor, De - us i - bi est. U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,

et a - mor, De - us i - bi est. U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,

38 *rall.* . . . **Tempo primo** *rit.* . . .

a - men.

De - us i - bi est. A - men.

De - us i - bi est. A - men, a - men.

De - us i - bi est. A - men, a - men.

Composers' Corner

Interview with Jake Runestad
When the text always comes first!
By Cara Tasher

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

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

His music in one word: Relevant. Jake Runestad, composer and conductor, is one of the leading voices in choral music. He has already received thousands of performances around the world and he is only 30. Quite remarkable. Jake and I corresponded via email in May and June.

Cara Tasher (CT): *To paraphrase a good book: “what has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun,” yet you are one of several living composers writing music that sounds new and fresh. What makes your music sound unique and how did you develop this sound?*

Jake Runestad (JR): First of all, thank you for your kind words! I know that many of us composers continue to search for our truest voice and it’s a thrill to hear that you consider my music to be unique! When it comes to writing vocal music, I feel that my duty as the composer is to find the music inherent in the text itself — for me, the text always comes first. I improvise singing the texts that I choose in order to find lines that utilise the natural prosody of the words, that feel good in the voice, and that allow the words to be understood as clearly as possible. Because of this, I hope that the performers and listeners find that each of my works is unique to the text to which it is set. I am also extremely interested in themes that are current, globally relevant, and socially conscious. This has resulted in works such as “We Can Mend the Sky” which is a setting of a poem by 14-year-old Warda Mohamed and explores the journey of an immigrant, “And So I Go On” which delves into the intense sadness of losing one’s life partner, and “Dreams of the Fallen” which tells the story of those who have experienced war and attempt to live with the lasting impact of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Each of these works has a completely different sound world based on the emotions surrounding the human experience they communicate, as well as the specific sounds relating to the texts themselves.

CT: *How did you begin composing and how did you get where you are today?*

JR: I grew up in Rockford, Illinois in a very musical family — both of my parents are amateur musicians with beautiful voices and strong musical sensibilities. We would sing together around the house and my parents would bring me and my sister along to their choir rehearsals (in lieu of paying for a babysitter). I’m sure the sounds at these rehearsals seeped into my brain and helped to create the foundation of my musical understanding and love for vocal music! We had a piano at home and I began playing by ear and plunking out melodies that I heard on the radio. This developed into adding accompaniment and then exploring my own sounds and creating short piano pieces. In high school, I played keyboards and sang in a few bands, created works utilising multi-track recording, and wrote some *terrible* love songs (I knew nothing about love)!

My senior year of high school, I wrote a piece for my school’s wind ensemble (I played saxophone) and during the performance, I felt one of the most invigorating, purposeful feelings I had ever felt. In that moment, I knew that composing for others would be an integral part of my life. I attended college in south-eastern Minnesota to study instrumental music education, and met composer Libby Larsen while she was in residence for a premiere with my school’s orchestra. The orchestral conductor, knowing I was a budding composer, set up a meeting with Libby. During our meeting, Libby perused my music, asked me many questions about my work, and showed great interest in me. At the end, she said, “Jake, I’d like for you to study with me.” As you can probably imagine, I was astonished and thrilled! I had several lessons with Libby at her home in Minneapolis and she encouraged me to attend graduate school and pursue life as a composer. After I completed my student teaching in Lima, Peru, I went directly to the Peabody Conservatory where I received a master’s degree in composition studying with Kevin Puts. Throughout my schooling, I wrote choral music in addition to works for wind band, orchestra, and opera. After graduate school, I developed strong relationships with several choral conductors who really supported me and believed in my music. They began performing these works and sharing them with others, and this circle began to grow and grow and now stretches across the globe!

CT: *In your online video for American Composer’s Forum Next Notes, you advised budding composers to “always write from your heart.” Based on the music that I’ve heard from your pen, your heart must be beautiful, vibrant and exciting. What inspires you to write and where do you find the texts for your works?*

JR: My world view is made up of a collection of my life experiences as well as interactions with each person that I have encountered along the way. I believe that the most powerful music is a direct expression of life — with all of its complexities, all of its joy, all of its pain, and all of its beauty. If we are to be honest with ourselves (and with others), the art must not shy away from difficult subjects or truly authentic feelings. We cannot merely gloss over the surface of these complex emotions — we must engage with them deeply in order to hear and feel something profound. In my work, I try to hone in on the essence of the human experience and be completely honest and vulnerable in bringing that out through the marriage of text and music.

There are so many engaging texts that have been written but not all lend themselves to being set to music. Many writings already contain all of the information (or too much information) one needs to experience their meaning. When searching for a text for a vocal work, I seek words that are simple, direct, and communicate something about the human experience. These words must not be too flowery or too descriptive so that there is room for the music to add meaning of its own.

One of my favourite ways to create is through collaboration with living writers. I have written three operas with living librettists, and many of my choral works have been projects with living poets including Brian Turner, Warda Mohammed, and Brian Newhouse. One of my most frequent collaborators, the über-talented poet and librettist Todd Boss, has written original words for several works including “And So I Go On,” “Waves,” “One Flock,” and a forthcoming work about the 276 young women who were stolen from their school in Nigeria by the terrorist group Boko Haram. I love feeling the electrifying energy that is volleyed back and forth when collaborating and I find the resulting work to be far greater than the sum of its parts.

CT: *You’ve already amassed an enormous output of music. Which of your works are your favourites to see and hear performed?*

JR: Oh my! That’s like choosing a favourite child! I don’t think that I can choose favourites, but I will tell you about two works that have taken on a life that I never expected.

When I was in college, I put together a small choir of my friends in order to practise conducting and to perform new music. I wrote a work for them called “Nyon Nyon” that incorporates unique vocal sounds, beatboxing, and nonsense words. At the time, I thought it was just a fun way to make music, but little did I know that this work would become my most-performed piece, receiving thousands of performances around the world! 2016 is the tenth anniversary of this work and it is just as thrilling to hear it today as it was when it was first created!

In November of 2015, just after the terrorist attacks in Paris, France, California State University at Long Beach found that one of their students, Nohemi Gonzalez, was killed there while studying abroad. The chamber choir, under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Talberg, shared music at Nohemi’s vigil held on campus. The following day, the choir was to begin rehearsals on holiday music but Dr. Talberg, after considering the previous day’s event, felt that the choir needed more time to grieve the loss of their colleague. At the beginning of rehearsal, Dr. Talberg passed out my SATB work “Let My Love Be Heard,” and the choir sight-read, rehearsed, and recorded this piece — in a single rehearsal. They posted the recording on SoundCloud and the president of the university shared it with the entire school community as an offering of love, hope, and peace in this difficult time. I received countless messages from listeners stating how much this music meant to them and helped them to feel more deeply, to name their grief, and to provide a bit of solace. I had never intended this work to carry that specific message, nor to serve that specific purpose, but that is the beauty of music — it can speak in so many ways and the composer never knows what life it will have beyond the printed page. Each time I listen to their recording of “Let My Love Be Heard,” I can hear the pain and emotion in the singers’ voices — it is one of the most beautiful interpretations of my music I have ever heard.

CT: *Are there any specific performances of your pieces that you have attended that you can identify as being especially poignant for you?*

JR: In 2013, I had the world premiere of a new work at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus. Entitled “Dreams of the Fallen,” this work, scored for solo piano, chorus, and orchestra, is an exploration of the impact war has on an individual. The work features poetry by Brian Turner, an award-winning poet and veteran of the war in Iraq. The performance was held in a large space at the museum with military planes hanging from the ceiling and tanks flanking the orchestra. There were hundreds of veterans in the audience and many more around the world watching a live stream of the event. Just before the performance, I was backstage thanking the choir and a singer in her late 80s stood up and addressed me and the choir: “My father and my brother served in WWII- my brother never came back. I want to tell you what an honour it is to sing this piece for my brother, for my father, and to be alive to sing it today with all of you.” Until that moment, I didn’t fully understand the reach that this work would have or the way it would allow others to engage in the countless stories of those affected by the war experience. I spent the better part of the performance in tears while I thought about this woman, her brother and father, and the brave individuals around me whose lives have been changed by war.

CT: *Share with us a look into the mind of the composer. How do you approach a new composition?*

JR: I’ll give a specific example with my work “Come to the Woods.” I was commissioned by Craig Hella Johnson and Conspirare to write a new work for a concert experience dedicated to exploring human relationships. After conversations with Craig about potential themes, we settled on the human relationship with the natural world. I am a lover of nature and spend much of my time hiking, backpacking, camping, and cycling outdoors. One of my favourite writers about the natural world is John Muir — a naturalist who helped to establish Yosemite National Park in California and founded the Sierra Club to protect wilderness areas in the USA. Muir has become a kind of folk hero in North America and I decided to create a work that captures the depth and uniqueness of his own human condition — his adventurous spirit, his passion for the wilderness, and the peace he received from living amongst the trees.

I pored over Muir’s journal writings and kept a collection of my favourite passages. At one point, I came across a story in which Muir saw a storm coming and in order to experience it fully, he decided to climb a large fir tree. Yes, he climbed a tree in a storm. You may

think of him as crazy, but I found this to be such a poignant metaphor and a beautiful image for a musical work. I worked and worked to refine various excerpts from my favourite passages in order to create a libretto with a clear narrative (yet room for the music to speak!). When it came time to compose, I improvised singing Muir's words attempting to capture the unique energy of each moment. These melodic lines became the main musical material and I paired them with a soundscape clarified by the piano. "Come to the Woods" has become one of my favourite pieces thanks to the meaningful collaboration with Conspirare as well as the depth with which I engaged in John Muir's life story — for me, the music feels like a pure extension of his words.

CT: *The incorporation of sometimes oppositional devices adds great power to your message: shouting, whispering, overtone singing, über-nasality, vocal sirens, body percussion, clapping, minimalism, maximism without excessiveness, dissonance, extreme consonance, speech-like rhythms, and soaring melodies... How did you come to utilise this diversity of musical expression?*

JR: I love finding new techniques and/or new sound palettes that help to enhance the meaning of the music. One of the amazing things about the human voice is its versatility — it can do almost anything! Thanks to the advent of the internet, we as listeners and creators are now exposed to music from around the world at the click of a button. This has allowed many musical cultures to move beyond their traditions and incorporate new ideas, new sounds, and new techniques into their music. I work hard to encourage singers and composers to consider more than just strict, four-part harmony and to explore the myriad of sounds that are possible with the voice. I have found that this freedom to incorporate diverse techniques helps to make a greater impact, to more clearly tell a story, and to more fully engage the performers and listeners.

CT: *How do you manage your publishing company on top of your composing requirements and conducting engagements?*

JR: I consider myself extremely lucky to be a full-time composer and I really love the freedom and sense of engagement and community that my own publishing company offers. At the same time, there are a lot of moving parts to handle with my commissions, residencies, and conducting engagements, in addition to publishing my music. I have a fabulous assistant who helps in handling many of the business elements of my company — store orders, setting up video clinics, reporting performances to my performing rights organisation, facilitating residencies, etc. With all of the travel that I do, my assistant is a lifesaver in helping me to stay sane and to have time to compose! With that said, I am still very hands-on with my music distribution and I love the ability to connect with those who are performing my music in order to answer questions and establish relationships. These relationships make our musical collaborations all the more meaningful.

CT: *It seems to be your tenth anniversary of your first publication. What do the next ten years hold for you?*

JR: Wow, ten years is a long time! Honestly, I have no idea what the next ten years hold for me; however, I hope to continue to create meaningful musical experiences and to engage in projects that help us all to think more deeply, love more wholly, and live more fully.

Considered a "choral rockstar" by American Public Media, **Jake Runestad** is one of today's most popular and often-performed composers of choral music. He has received commissions and performances from leading ensembles including Conspirare, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Seraphic Fire, the Phoenix Chorale, the Netherlands Radio Choir, the Taipei Philharmonic Choir, as well as hundreds of collegiate, community, and high school choirs around the world. Jake's visceral music and charismatic personality have fostered a busy schedule of commissions, residencies, workshops, and speaking engagements, enabling him to be one of the youngest full-time composers in the industry. Jake Runestad holds a Master's degree in composition from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University where he studied with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts. Find out more at: JakeRunestad.com



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



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(Dancing ♩ = 176)

5

24

S. *mf* *mp*
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

A. *mf* *mp*
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

T. *p* *mp* *p* *mp*
Al - le - lu - ia. Ah Al - le -

B. *p* *mp* *p* *mp*
Al - le - lu - ia. Ah Al - le -

Pno. *mp*
(Dancing ♩ = 176)

24

29

S. *p*
Ah *gliss.*

A. *p*
Ah *gliss.*

T. *mf*
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B. *mf*
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Pno.

29

62

6

Musical score for measures 33-36, featuring Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), Bass (B.), and Piano (Pno.). The score includes lyrics: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, Ah!* Lu!* Al - le - lu - ia. Ah! Lu! Al - le - lu - ia." Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *mp*, *f sim.*, and *mp*. Performance markings include *poco* and *gliss.*

33

* Unvoiced/whispered, guttural shout.

Musical score for measures 37-40, featuring Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), Bass (B.), and Piano (Pno.). The score includes lyrics: "al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - Al - le - Al - le - lu - - - ia. Al - le -". Dynamics include *mf*, *fp*, *f*, and *mf*. Performance markings include *gliss.*

37

63

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43

S. *p* lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *mf*

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

T. *p* lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *mf*

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

Clap *mp*

Pno.

47

(Optional: a few singers.) *p* Ah ———— *mf* al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. (All)

S. Ah ————

A. *mf* lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

T. *p* Ah ———— al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B. *mf* lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Clap *mf*

Pno.

64

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Repertoire



▲ WSCM10 Choral Expo 2014, Seoul, Rep. Korea — Photo by Moon Gi Kim © Korean Federation for Choral Music KFCM

Repertoire

Pathways and Traditions concerning Handel's *Messiah* 1742 - 1876 - 2015
Comments on the programme of the "International Choir Academy 2015" in Spoleto
Torsten Roeder

Lorenzo Perosi's *Mystery*
Celebrating a great master 60 years after his death
Aurelio Porfiri

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▲ Teatro Nuovo di Spoleto

Prologue

In the summer of 2015 one hundred choristers, solo singers and instrumentalists from all over Europe met in the Umbrian town of Spoleto in the heart of Italy to take part in the *International Choir Academy* under the directorship of Prof Dr Bodo Bischoff. This institution, in existence for the last 25 years, was intended, in this its jubilee year, not only to take place in an unusual place but also to offer a special musical programme that would represent the international framework of the project in a particularly apt way: the rehearsal plan for the week was dedicated to George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*, one of the most famous oratorios in music history. The project ended with a fully fledged evening concert in the Teatro Nuovo in Spoleto (illustration 1); as an encore, the Hallelujah chorus was sung together with numerous Italian choir singers.

It is possible to establish many links between the project of the *International Choir Academy* and the eventful history of performances of the *Messiah*, during which customs and practices evolved, some of which are alive and well to this day. These links supplied the inspiration to this essay.

Torsten Roeder
musicologist and choir
conductor



▲ Handel statue in Halle (Illustration 2)

The long path to Rome

Handel (Illustration 2) had composed the great oratorio in 1741 and had it performed in the years that followed first in Ireland and then in London. Within a few decades it had then also spread abroad, reaching Florence in 1768, 1770 New York and Hamburg in 1772. Within only a few decades the *Messiah* had conquered many – and, in the 19th century, nearly all – the important musical cities of the Christian world – not, however, the world centre of church music: in Rome the oratorio was only first heard in 1876, after it had already been performed for a long time in every nook and cranny of the world, and more than 130 years after its creation. Why so late? We would have expected the work really to have been accepted immediately into the musical repertoire of the Roman churches because of its thoroughly spiritual subject – after all it retells the life story of the Saviour.

One of the reasons was the Protestant background of the work. Handel's *Messiah* had come into existence within the Protestant sphere, with its text based on the *King James Bible*, a product of Anglican church's split from Roman Catholicism. To this day the *Messiah* – this is its original title – stands for the tradition of the English-language oratorio as no other piece of music does. It is remarkable that it is with this work that Handel had introduced the – originally Roman-Catholic – tradition of the oratorio into the Anglican world in the first place.

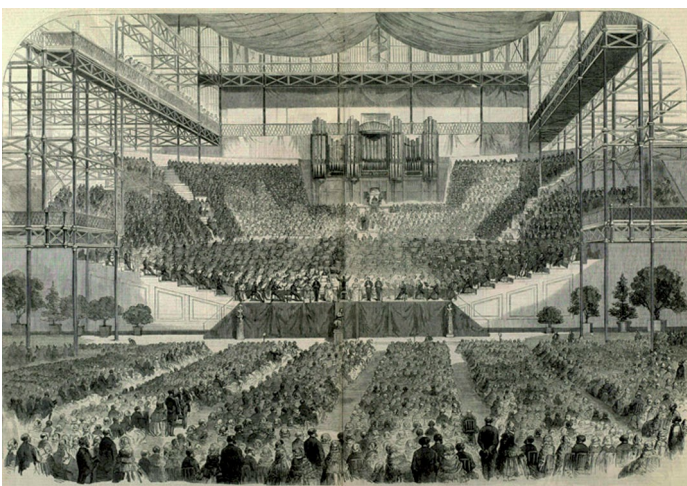
From blasphemy to massed choirs

A further reason is to be found in the genre of the work. Being an oratorio, at the time it was hardly ever performed in churches, as is the custom now, but primarily in concert halls, supplying edifying entertainment and cash for charity. Thus it possessed religious qualities, but no liturgical ones. In the 18th century – even in England – it remained the target of criticism for a long time, as the use of words from the gospels for an evening's entertainment was considered blasphemous.

It was only with the start of the establishment of a civic musical culture in the 19th century that this was to change. Choral singing increasingly established itself as a new expression of cultural and religious identity. Now, in the English-speaking world, the *Messiah* was performed using choral and orchestral forces whose size increased steadily. Spectacular concerts with hundreds, sometimes even with several thousands, of singers were no rarities (Illustration 3).

In 1876, the year of the first performance in Rome, the Centennial Exhibition opened in Philadelphia, then one of the largest cities in the USA, with an extensive celebration. Alongside numerous speeches and various musical offerings, the *Hallelujah* from the *Messiah*, together with a doxology, provided the festive culmination of the event, performed by 1000 singers and 150 orchestral musicians: a celebration that was at the same time religious and festive.

In papal Rome, however, Handel was known primarily as a composer of operas, his name virtually non-existent in concert programmes. Handel himself had been forced to witness the Roman opera having to close at the very time he was staying in Rome, because of a ban.



▲ Monumental performance in London (Illustration 3)

Early music newly taken care of

Nor was it under the roof of a church that the *Messiah* did eventually get staged in Rome for the first time, but within the framework of a select musical society, the so-called *Società musicale romana*. This society was an academic musical association particularly keen on supporting “early music”. In this year, they inaugurated their new building, now in the Palazzo Doria-Pamphilj (Illustration 4) in the south-western corner of the Piazza Navona (in our day the Brazilian Embassy) with a performance of the *Messiah*.

The director of the *Società musicale romana*, who had selected the *Messiah* and now performed it in the association’s new premises, was called Domenico Mustafà (Illustration 5). He was born in 1829 in Sellano, close to Spoleto in the province of Perugia. He was one of the last castrati singers to live into the 20th century. The real peak of castrato singing was in Handel’s time, the 18th century; in the course of the 19th century the practice dwindled more and more (and finally, at the start of the 20th century, the Vatican forbade it).

Ambition and talent soon took Mustafà to the Sistine Chapel in Rome (“Cappella Sistina” describes not only a sacred building, but also its resident choir). In 1860 he was appointed Maestro Direttore della Cappella Musicale Pontificia Sistina, the director of the papal musical establishment - one of the top jobs available at the time for church musicians. Above him was only the Direttore Perpetuo (“eternal choir conductor”), a post to which he was then appointed two years later.

For two months Mustafà rehearsed his Roman choir which consisted of about a hundred female and male singers (and thus bears some resemblance to the *International Choir Academy*). In this respect alone the performance differed from the mass productions customary within the realm of the Anglican tradition. The 25 sopranos, 24 female altos, 25 tenors and 33 basses (the names of all of whom were listed in the programme) also came from well-off, educated backgrounds [whereas particularly in the north of England, many of the singers would have been poor - translator].

Another unusual feature was the fact that - something that in our days is fairly rare - all 51 items were performed. The scale of concerts of the time can indeed be compared to that of epic cinema films. Today, complete renderings are quite rare. For the *International Choir Academy*, too, a selection was made - a legitimate way of proceeding as Handel, too, was in the habit of adapting his performances, time and again, to the local conditions. *tutto buona, tutta bella, e tutta difficile ...*

The performance of the *Messiah* on 5 May 1876 (Illustration 6), which was to be followed by two more, achieved - according to the enthusiastic reports - an excellent standard. The periodical *Boccherini* wrote that the concert had not only been very good, but extraordinarily so (“non fu soltanto ottima, ma eccezionale”); the critic of *Il Mondo Artistico* reported a “fanatismo indescrivibile” (Illustration 7), an indescribable fanaticism, and remarked, concerning the piece: “tutto buona, tutta bella, e tutta difficile” - roughly: cool composition, really beautiful, and damn tricky. He also emphasised the fact that for one thing, you needed people



▲ Palazzo Doria-Pamphilj (Illustration 4)



▲ Domenico Mustafà (Illustration 5)



▲ Program booklet dated 5 May 1876 (Illustration 6)

Telegrammi al Mondo Artistico

Roma, 6. — Società musicale romana inaugurò sua nuova residenza colla esecuzione del *Messia* di Haendel — fanatismo indescrivibile — due numeri ripetuti. — Maestro Mustafà dichiarato direttore sommo, benemerito.

▲ Newspaper article dated 9 May 1876 (Illustration 7)



▲ The 'Choir Academy' in the 'Sala Accademica del Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia' (Illustration 8)

who really knew what they were doing, not dabbling amateurs ("professori e non dilettanti"), and also a conductor who really understood the music ("che capisca bene la musica").

The critic even referred to the performance in Philadelphia, where the *Hallelujah* had recently been put on with 1000 singers on the occasion of the world exhibition. Though the number of the American singers was fifteen or twenty times higher than here - so he wrote - it would be physically impossible to achieve a better result. The *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* attributed the success primarily to Maestro Domenico Mustafà, not only a great artist but capable of transferring to his singers his own way of feeling, of motivating them to the necessary rehearsals, and above all managing to instil into them a holy enthusiasm for the music ("accenderli di sacro entusiasmo").

1742 - 1876 - 2015

The first performance of the Messiah in 1742, the local première in Rome of 1876 and ours of 2015 by the *International Choir Academy* (Illustration 8) are separated from each other by more than 130 years respectively. In the intervening periods, the classical music business and Handel reception have undergone several renewals. Handel's time and also that of the castrati is long over; but although towards the end of the 19th century a consciousness of historical performance practice started to emerge, becoming increasingly acute and often objecting successfully against monumentalism, the custom of massed concerts with huge *Hallelujah*-choruses has survived to our day. Handel's composition, however, permits very different manners of reception: as even when Handel himself was in charge, the work absorbs ever-new contextualisations and today, in numerous arrangements, moves effortlessly from performance practice strongly influenced by academic insight to *Hallelujah* flash mobs in shopping centres.

The project of the *International Choir Academy* proves that this needs to be seen neither as a dilemma nor as a contradiction, by - in the performances in Rome and Spoleto - falling back on features from both traditions. The week of rehearsals comprising the *International Choir Academy* (Illustration 9) drew on the learned and music-educational singing tradition of a Domenico Mustafà. However, it was only in the union with the Italian singers for the culminating Hallelujah-chorus that the project reaches its symbolic finality. Not could it have been any different even back in 1876: at the Roman first performance, too, it was not only that "All we like sheep have gone astray" that was encored, but also the famous No 41: "Hallelujah".



▲ Rehearsals with Prof. Bodo Bischoff (Illustration 9)

Epilogue

The *International Choir Academy 2015* was run in close co-operation with the Italian cultural organisation BISSE in Spoleto. This would have been impossible without financial support by the Goethe-Institute [an official German institution with branches all over the world, working to spread knowledge and understanding of German culture and the German language - translator] as well as the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany. Two orchestras were available: the *Junges Philharmonisches Orchester Niedersachsen* and the chamber ensemble of the *Accademia Santa Cecilia di Roma*. Original is unclear as to whether they amalgamated to form one huge orchestra. The German sounds as if it was a beauty contest and the conductor eventually chose one.

Performances of the *Messiah* took place on 4 September in the Sala Accademia in Rome (Illustration 10) and on 5 September in the Teatro Nuovo in Spoleto; there, the Coro dell'Associazione Culturale BISSE under the directorship of Mauro Presazzi also performed Vivaldi's *Magnificat*. Repeat performances were put on in Berlin on 6 November in the Kapernaum Church (Wedding) and on 7 November in the Auenkirche (Wilmersdorf).

Torsten Roeder is a musicologist and choral conductor. He studied musicology and Italian in Hamburg and Rome, graduated from the Humboldt-University in Berlin and attended courses in choral conducting at the University of the Arts and the Federal Academy Wolfenbüttel. In Berlin he founded two choirs with which he worked for many years, focussing particularly on the Renaissance, the Romantic period and Neoclassicism. Since 2014 he has been working in the Institute for Musical Research at the University of Würzburg as a specialist for the digital aspects of music and the other humanities. Email: musik@torstenroeder.de



▲ Poster of the concert in Rome (Illustration 10)

Announcement

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Translated by Irene Auerbach, UK ●

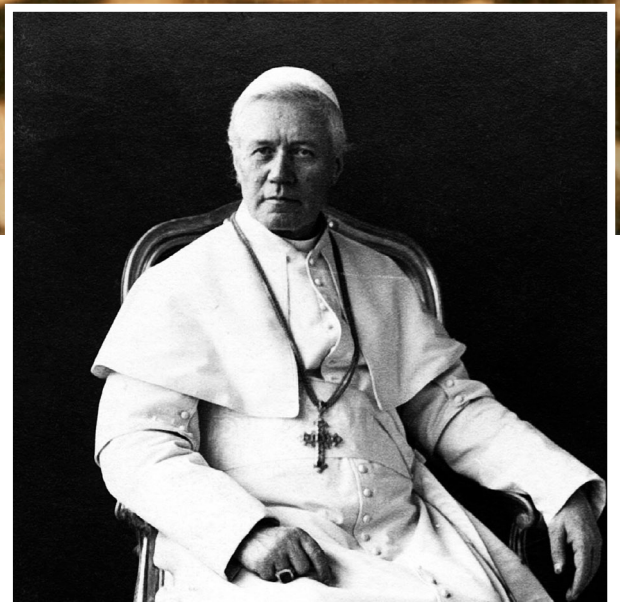
Lorenzo Perosi's Mystery

Celebrating a great master 60 years after his death



The composer Lorenzo Perosi ▲

Pio X, the Pope who issued the Motu Proprio ►



Aurelio Porfiri
composer, conductor,
writer and educator

The world of Church Music has seen several turning points between the 19th and 20th centuries. Most readers will probably know of the reforms following the Second Vatican Council that have deeply affected the music we hear in Catholic churches. But indeed the first turning

point was on November 22, 1903. On that day Pope Pius X issued a Motu Proprio (meaning a document done on his own initiative, without going through the offices of the curia).

This Motu Proprio was concerned specifically with Sacred Music, and had the intention of reforming the practice of Church Music by implementing a “purification” from the strong influence of the opera style in the temple of God: *“It is with real satisfaction that We acknowledge the large amount of good that has been effected in this respect during the last decade in this Our fostering city of Rome, and*

in many churches in Our country, but in a more especial way among some nations in which illustrious men, full of zeal for the worship of God, have, with the approval of the Holy See and under the direction of the Bishops, united in flourishing Societies and restored sacred music to the fullest honor in all their churches and chapels. Still the good work that has been done is very far indeed from being common to all, and when We consult Our own personal experience and take into account the great number of complaints that have reached Us during the short time that has elapsed since it pleased the Lord to elevate Our humility to the supreme summit of the Roman Pontificate, We consider it Our first duty, without further delay, to raise Our voice at once in reproof and condemnation of all that is seen to be out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of public worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices. Filled as We are with a most ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit flourish in every respect and be preserved by all the faithful, We deem it necessary to provide before anything else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable font, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. And it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us, when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odor of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges wherewith of old the Divine Redeemer drove the unworthy profaners from the Temple”.

Despite the somewhat diplomatic words of the Pontiff, the theatrical style had entered the repertoires of countless organists and choirs and so the task of restoring authentic Church Music (whose supreme models are the Gregorian Chant and Renaissance Polyphony), despite the help of men of the (Caecilian) societies, would not be an easy one. The Pope certainly needed a man who would help to renew the repertoire, offering those choirs that would struggle with Chant or the complex polyphony of Palestrina, something more accessible but still in tune with the dignity of the Temple. Or even offering to good choirs some modern compositions that are not unworthy of those of ancient times.

When Pope Pius X was still the Patriarch of Venice, his Choir Master was a young priest whom, in 1898, he would suggest for the position of Choir Master in the Sistine Chapel Choir. This very talented man, who would encounter the Patriarch again at the time of his accession to the Pontificate, was Lorenzo Perosi. He was born in Tortona (Northern Italy) in 1872. His father, a Choir Master himself, gave him his first musical instruction. He then studied at the Milan Conservatory and at the Sacred Music school in Regensburg (with the famous teacher Franz Xavier Haberl).



▲ A young Lorenzo Perosi



▲ A bust of Lorenzo Perosi in the park of the Pincio in Rome

From a very young age he had felt the necessity for the reform in Church Music and he would go on to contribute to this aim with his own compositions. He also became a priest in 1894. After serving with some choirs (among these the famous choir in Saint Mark in Venice), in 1898 he was called to be Vice Master at the Sistine Chapel in Rome. In 1902 he became the Master. He held this position until 1956, the year of his death, but not without big struggles, the main one being his mental disorders that made him sometimes unable to perform his duties properly. Certainly he was, in his time, hugely popular, and indeed his music entered the repertoires of countless churches around the world. Still today his music is widely performed by choirs internationally. He was a great composer of Oratorios (*Il Natale del Redentore*, *La Risurrezione di Cristo*, *Transitus Animae*, *L'Entrata di Cristo in Gerusalemme* etc.) that gave him a huge following among singers, organists and choir conductors. But certainly, besides the Oratorios, the liturgical music was the key to his success. Masses, Motets, Responsories and countless compositions serving the Catholic liturgy, these compositions gave him a status in Church Music that even today is almost unparalleled.

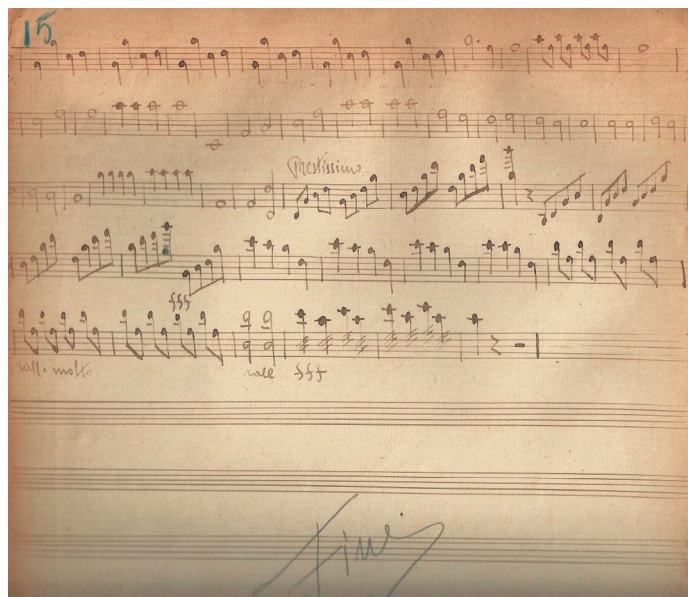
Dr. Michael Dubiaga Jr. remembered him in an essay in the journal *Seattle Catholic* (November 30 2005): “Lorenzo Perosi was a youthful musical prodigy whose remarkable talents and personal piety brought rapid advancement at an early age. Known and respected throughout Europe, Don Perosi was frequently sought out by musicians traveling to Rome. Of his multi-dimensional activities, his prolific compositions are remembered today by enthusiasts from many countries. His output seems staggering — more than a dozen oratorios for soloists, choir and orchestra, perhaps thirty Masses, hundreds of motets, psalms and hymns, orchestral suites, concertos for violin, piano and clarinet, dozens of string trios, quartets and quintets, and sundry occasional pieces as well. He maintained a multilingual correspondence throughout his life, which has been preserved in the Vatican Library. Few individuals have had as great an influence on the course of Catholic sacred music in the first half of the twentieth century”.

So, what was the secret of his success? Why do I refer to him as a mystery? Indeed his detractors notice an excessive simplification of musical means in some of his pieces, accusing him of not being technically up to the standard required. This, according to his detractors, would lead to a decline in the necessary “goodness of form” (as requested by St. Pius X, *Motu Proprio*) introducing elements of banality in the sacred realms of Liturgical music. Some of this may be true. It is also true that he was intending, as noticed before, also to serve choirs that were not advanced. But the danger denounced by his detractors had a real dimension, because his many imitators started to

produce similar compositions but without the inspiration that is present in the Perosi's works. This was a mystery for me, in my many contacts with the music of this Master: in his music there is a mysterious quality that, in the end, "saves the day". You feel that even if the technique is not always as it should be, everything is supported by a sort of "spiritual magic" that makes his music full of a prayerful atmosphere. If we think of the simple motets like Ave Maria, Iubilate Deo, Ecce Panis Angelorum and many others, we cannot avoid being struck by their simple beauty and huge effectiveness. Anyone who wants to try something more challenging, besides the hugely popular Masses (Prima Pontificalis, Secunda Pontificalis, Te Deum Laudamus, Benedicamus Domino, etc.) can turn to his Magnificat for mixed choir and organ, where melodic inspiration and an instinctive sense of musical form is present in every bar. Or the beautiful O Sanctissima Anima, a mesmerizing motet for mixed choir whose spiritual quality is so preponderant that you would prefer to listen to it while kneeling.

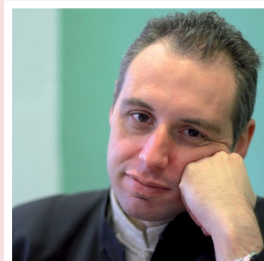
Today, when we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of his death, what remains of him? Certainly he is still very popular and not only in Italy. Many choirs around the world still perform his music but certainly less than before, due to the crisis that Catholic Church Music is undergoing in general. I do not think his name will ever disappear from the repertoires, but certainly his influence is weaker than before. Let us hope for a rediscovery on an international level of the contribution to Church Music of this humble priest, a thorough study to define the "mysterious" quality of his music, the sources of his inspiration and his place in music history.

Edited by Caroline Maxwell, UK

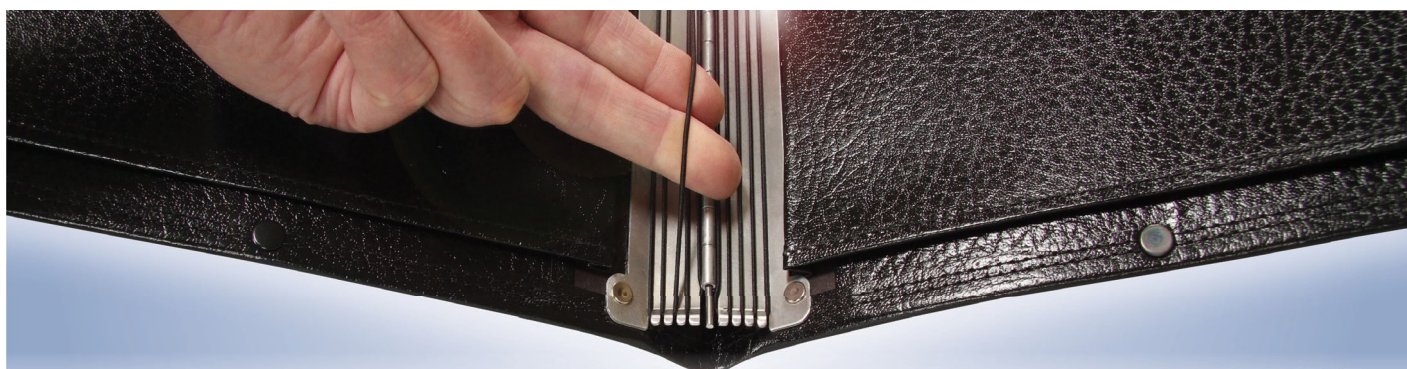


▲ The manuscript of 'La Resurrezione di Cristo' by Lorenzo Perosi

Aurelio Porfiri is an Italian composer, conductor, writer and educator. He has published 13 books and more than 300 articles. His compositions are published by several publishers in Italy, France, Germany, USA and China. He lives in Rome. Email: aurelioporfiri@hotmail.com



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AVE MARIS STELLA

Lorenzo Perosi (1872-1956)

76

soprano

1. A - ve ma - ris stel - la, De - i Ma - ter
 2. Su - mens il - lud a - ve Ga - bri - e - lis
 3. Sit laus De - o Pa - tris Sum - mo Chri - sto

contralto

1. A - ve ma - ris stel - la, De - i Ma - ter
 2. Su - mens il - lud a - ve Ga - bri - e - lis
 3. Sit laus De - o Pa - tris Sum - mo Chri - sto

tenore

1. A - ve ma - ris stel - la, De - i Ma - ter
 2. Su - mens il - lud a - ve Ga - bri - e - lis
 3. Sit laus De - o Pa - tris Sum - mo Chri - sto

basso

1. A - ve ma - ris stel - la, De - i Ma - ter
 2. Su - mens il - lud a - ve Ga - bri - e - lis
 3. Sit laus De - o Pa - tris Sum - mo Chri - sto

7

al - ma at - que sem - per vir - go,
 ho - re Fun - da - nos in pa - ce
 de - cus spi - ri - tu - i san - cto

al - ma at - que sem - per vir - go,
 ho - re Fun - da - nos in pa - ce
 de - cus spi - ri - tu - i san - cto

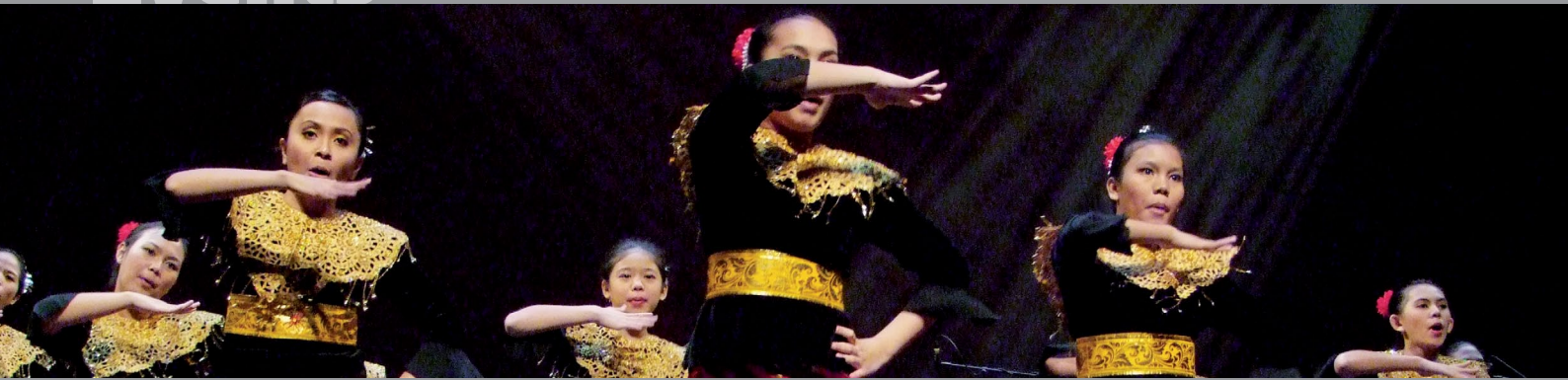
al - ma at - que sem - per vir - go,
 ho - re Fun - da - nos in pa - ce
 de - cus spi - ri - tu - i san - cto

al - ma at - que sem - per vir - go,
 ho - re Fun - da - nos in pa - ce
 de - cus spi - ri - tu - i san - cto

77

fe - lix coe - li por -
Mu - tans bus He - vae nor no -
tri - bus ho - nor u -

- - ta! men. A - men.
- - nus. - - nus.
- - ta! men. A - men.
- - nus. - - nus.
- - ta! men. A - men.
- - nus. - - nus.



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
Email: nrobin@ifcm.net

Conducting 21C, Stockholm, Sweden, 19-24 Aug 2016. This course aims to provide conductors with professional development by combining artistic excellence and social justice. Emerging and experienced conductors alike will develop powerfully creative, profoundly artistic, and compassionate approaches for musical leadership through master classes and workshops. Apply by June 12, 2016. Contact: Conducting 21C, Email: info@conducting21c.com - Website: www.conducting21c.com/

Early Music Workshop, Utrecht, Netherlands, 24-29 Aug 2016. For individual singers and conductors. Will focus on different aspects of performing early music. Apply before 15 May 2016. Contact: ZimiHC Podium voor Amateurkunst, Email: a.alferink@zimiHC.nl - Website: www.zimiHC.nl/eng

Trogir Music Week, Croatia, 4-9 Sep 2016. A week of choral singing in an old Venetian port in Croatia directed by Erik Van Nevel. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

2nd (Inter)national Congress for Choral Conductors, Paris, France, 9-11 Sep 2016. For conductors, students, teachers and publishers to discover new techniques, repertoires and practices. Apply before 5 Sep 2016. Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: activites@choralies.org - Website: www.congreschefsdechoeur.com

International Choir Academy and International Conductor's Academy, Saarbrücken, Germany, 12-17 Sep 2016. For young choir singers who wish to gain experience in professional choral singing and for young choir conductors who wish to gain experience in professional choral conducting. Contact: Chorwerk Saar, Email: info@chorwerksaar.de - Website: <http://chorwerksaar.de>

Reine Männersache, a project of the World Festival Singers, Leipzig, Germany, 30 Sep-3 Oct 2016. 4-day workshop for individual singers and small groups of singers to gather intensive insights into new and old choral literature for male choirs. In cooperation with the music publisher Peters Edition. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Second Annual Retreat Come All Ye, Port Rexton, Canada, 21-26 Oct 2016. Sing in the stunning setting of Trinity Bay, led by Dr. Doug Dunsmore. Final concert at the Garrick Theatre in Bonavista. Contact: Growing the Voices: Festival 500, Email: growingvoicesnl@gmail.com - Website: www.growingthevoices.com

Corsham Winter School, United Kingdom, 28 Dec 2016-2 Jan 2017. Week of choral singing between Christmas and New Year in the small Wiltshire town of Corsham, near Lacock, directed by Will Carlsake. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Music Education Expo, London, United Kingdom, 9-10 Feb 2017. The Music & Drama Education Expo is Europe's largest conference and exhibition for anyone involved in performing arts education. Spanning two days, the event will offer you the chance to attend over 60 seminars, workshops and debates, the chance to meet and browse the services of over 150 exhibitors, and the chance to network with 2,500 of your peers. An essential experience for any music or drama educator! Contact: Rhinegold Media & Events, Email: musiceducationexpo@rhinegold.co.uk - Website: www.musiceducationexpo.co.uk/

Corsham Voice Workshop, United Kingdom, 19-24 Mar 2017. A mixed-ability course on vocal technique in Wiltshire led by Ghislaine Morgan. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

EuroChoir 2017, Utrecht, Netherlands, 8-15 July 2017. 60 singers (18-30 years old) selected by member organisations of the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat rehearse and sing together. Contact: FENIARCO, Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

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. Also on <https://www.facebook.com/wscm11bcn/> and <https://twitter.com/simposibcn> Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: office@ifcm.net - Website: <http://www.wscm11.cat/>

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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Madrid, Spain, 18-21 Aug 2016. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Madrid your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

International Choir Festival Coralua, Trondheim, Norway, 20-26 Aug 2016. 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

America Cantat 8, Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas, 21-31 Aug 2016. America Cantat is the premier cultural music festival of the Americas, and is the only non-competitive choir festival to unite singers, clinicians, and festival choirs from North, Central, and South America in a ten-day cultural and musical immersion program. Over ten days, singers of all ages and abilities are invited to participate in overlapping five-day-long workshops, led by some of the most prestigious choral clinicians in the world such as Daria Abreu (Cuba), Anton Armstrong (USA), Gisela Crespo (Mexico), Elisa Dekaney (Brazil), Cristian Grases (Venezuela & USA), Rosephanye Powel (USA), Maria van Nieuwerkerken (Netherlands) and many others. Contact: American Choral Directors Association, Email: ac8@acda.org - Website: america-cantat.org

International Festival of choirs and orchestras in Paris, France, 24-28 Aug 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-paris-france.phtml>

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Brussels, Belgium, 8-11 Sep 2016. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Brussels your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Indonesia Choir Festival, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia, 8-11 Sep 2016. Friendship concert, grand prix competition, choir competition, closing gala concert, choral clinic, workshop, seminar. Contact: Bandung Choral Society, Tommyanto Kandisaputra, Email: mailbcsevents@gmail.com - Website: www.bandungchoral.com

6th International Choir Competition and Festival Canco Mediterrania, Barcelona & Lloret de Mar, Spain, 13-18 Sep 2016. 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

7th International Festival of Choirs and Orchestras, Prague, Czech Republic, 14-18 Sep 2016. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Lisbon, Portugal, 15-18 Sep 2016. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Lisbon your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Frankfurt, Germany, 16-19 Sep 2016. As a huge multicultural metropolis, Frankfurt offers countless opportunities, not only for young people. Frankfurt takes pride in having one of the leading opera houses in Europe which belongs to the Wilhelminian era and is famed for its excellent acoustics. Voted as the best "Opera House of the Year" several times since 2003, it offers all kinds of music, from early baroque to avant-garde. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Paris, France, 22-25 Sep 2016. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Paris your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

2nd World Chorus Fair, Beijing, China, 22-24 Sep 2016. For choirs from all around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: liling.zhang@volkskulturkreis.de - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 22-25 Sep 2016. 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

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

5th International Harald Andersén Chamber Choir Competition, Helsinki, Finland, 23-24 Sep 2016. International choir competition for mixed chamber choirs (16-40 singers). Participating choirs may include professional singers. Contact: Terhi Luukkonen, Email: terhi.luukkonen@uniarts.fi - Website: www.uniarts.fi/en/harald-anderssen-choir-competition-2016

1st World Chorus Fair, Shenyang, China, 23-26 Sep 2016. For choirs from all around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: liling.zhang@volkskulturkreis.de - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

The Voice of Wealth, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 23-28 Sep 2016. International choir festival and competition for all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Monolit Festivals, Email: info@monolitifestivals.com - Website: <http://monolitifestivals.com/>

1st International Baltic Sea Choir Competition, Riga, Latvia, 23-25 Sep 2016. For 15 high level male, female and mixed amateur choirs (16-49 singers). Competition in two categories: compulsory and free program. The compulsory piece will be composed by Latvian composer Rihards Dubra. Apply before March 31, 2016. Contact: International Baltic Sea Choir Competition, Email: info@balticchoir.com - Website: <http://www.balticchoir.com>

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

Cracovia Music Festival 2016, Cracow, Poland, 29 Sep-3 Oct 2016. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

International Video Competition for Male Choirs, Germany, 30 Sep 2016. 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 June 30, 2016. Contact: AS Musikverlag, Marion Scherer, Email: management@as-musikverlag.de - Website: www.wac-contest.eu

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

Song & the City International Choir Festival, Berlin, Germany, 6-9 Oct 2016. For all kind of choirs. Contact: MusiCultur Travel GmbH, Email: info@musicultur.com - Website: www.musicultur.com/en/trips/reisen/chorfestival-berlin.html

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 2016. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: deborah.bertoni@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

9th International Choral Festival Mario Baeza, Valparaíso, V Región, Chile, 11-15 Oct 2016. Non competitive Festival for choirs in all categories. Apply before 15 April. Contact: Asociacion Latinoamericana Canto Coral Chile, Email: alacc.chile@gmail.com

Corfu International Festival and Choir Competition, Greece, 12-16 Oct 2016. Competitions in different categories with a special attention to jazz music. Also programmed an exclusive participation in a concert in one of Athens most famous concert halls, the Megaron. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2016. 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 International Choral Festival, Nice, France, 13-16 Oct 2016. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Concerts in prestigious places including a Baroque Cathedral located in the old part of town. Contact: Destinations Chœurs - transglobe, Email: contact@destinations-choeurs.fr - Website: www.destinations-choeurs.fr

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2016, Spain, 17-23 Oct 2016. 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

12th Busan Choral Festival & competition, South Korea, 18-21 Oct 2016. 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

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

1st Lanna International Choir Competition, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 19-23 Oct 2016. For many hundred years Chiang Mai was the capital of Lanna Thai. It is Thailand's second biggest and important city today. It is not only a popular tourist destination, but also an impressive venue for an international competition, where choirs from all over the world will sing together and will get to know the Thai culture. Cooperation program with renowned conductors and choirs from the Southeast Asian region. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Codichoral 2016, Derry, Ireland, 19-23 Oct 2016. 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@codichoral.com - Website: www.codichoral.com

International Festival of Choirs Cantus Angeli, Salerno, Italy, 19-23 Oct 2016. Friendly meeting between groups of various musical and territorial origins. Contact: International Festival of Choirs Cantus Angeli, Email: info@cantusangeli.com - Website: www.cantusangeli.com

Cantate Barcelona, Spain, 21-25 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

John Paul II International Choir Festival of Sacred Music Mundus Cantat, Gdansk, Poland, 21-23 Oct 2016. 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

International Festival of choirs and orchestras in Vienna, Austria, 27-31 Oct 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-paris-france.phtml>

Prague Cantat, Czech Republic, 27-30 Oct 2016. International choir competition and festival for all kind of choirs. Contact: MusiCultur Travel GmbH, Email: info@musicultur.com - Website: www.musicultur.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 Porczynski & 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

International Budgetary Festival/Competition The Place of Holiday, Spain, 4-7 Nov 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@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Prague, Czech Republic, 10-13 Nov 2016. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Prague your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Sligo International Choral Festival, Ireland, 11-13 Nov 2016. Competitions for mixed choirs, male voice, female voice, youth folksong, madrigals, sacred music, gospel choirs and barbershop. Contact: Sligo International Choral Festival, Email: sligochoralfest@eircom.net - Website: www.sligochoralfest.com/

International Choir Festival Corearte Brazil 2016, Caxias do Sul, Brazil, 13-19 Nov 2016. 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

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. A festival targeted at Youth Choirs with workshops, masterclasses and choral competition. Round off the festival with a performance in Hong Kong Disneyland Park as part of the Disney Performing Arts Programme. Organised by Rave Group and SourceWerkz. Contact: SourceWerkz, Ong Wei Meng, Email: info@sourcewerkz.com - Website: www.winterchoralfestival.com

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

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 4-7 Dec 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@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

International Festival/Competition Talents de Paris, France, 6-9 Dec 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@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

6th International Festival of choirs and orchestras in Baden, Germany, 8-11 Dec 2016. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Gozo (Malta) International Choir Festival, Malta, 8-11 Dec 2016. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: EuroArt Production, Email: euroart@interfree.it or euroartproduction@gmail.com - Website: www.euroartproduction.it

2nd International Festival and Competition In Anticipation of Christmas, St. Petersburg, Russia, 9-12 Dec 2016. For choirs and ensembles from around the world (without limit of age) to perform the best pieces of choral singing, to share professional experience and to sing together to the thankful audience. Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: interaspect@mail.ru - Website: www.interfestplus.ru

24th International Sacred, Advent & Christmas Music Festival and Choir Competition Cantate Domino Kaunas, Kaunas, Lithuania, 15-18 Dec 2016. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories, workshops. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

International Choir Festival of Advent & Christmas Music Mundus Cantat, Sopot, Poland, 15-18 Dec 2016. 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

Sing in the New Year 2016-2017 with Karen Kennedy, Greece, 26 Dec 2016-2 Jan 2017. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 8-11 Jan 2017. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

13th International Festival of Sacred Music Silver Bells, Daugavpils, Latvia, 13-15 Jan 2017. For choirs in the following categories: children's, boy's, young children's, youth, adult (equal voices) and mixed choirs. Also for vocal groups, children's and adult vocal ensembles, chamber choirs, Orthodox and old believer religious music, Catholic and Protestant religious music, polyphonic music, contemporary sacred music, spiritual, gospel, jazz and pop, and folklore. Contact: Silver Bells, Email: kultura@daugavpils.lv or sb2@inbox.lv - Website: www.silverbells.narod.lv

Fest der Kulturen 2017 Grand Prix of Nations, Berlin, Germany, 1-5 Feb 2017. Event is embedded in the Berlin "Fest der Kulturen" 2017 where the Rundfunkchor Berlin and further top class choirs and orchestras will be performing. The chamber music hall of the Berlin Philharmonie, one of Germany's best concert halls, will offer a dignified ambiance for the „Grand Prix of Nations“. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

European Spring International Music Festival, Stuttgart, Germany, 9-11 Feb 2017. Concert Goldener Saal for all kind of choirs around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: kripp@volkskulturkreis.de - Website: www.musikverein.at

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

7th International Sacred Music Festival Kaunas Musica Religiosa, Kaunas, Lithuania, 23-26 Feb 2017. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

23th International Choir Festival of Paris, France, 2-5 Mar 2017. Friendship concerts with local choirs and choirs from all over the world. Final concert of all attending choirs at La Madeline Church. Contact: Music&Friends by Emile Weber, Email: musicandfriends@vew.lu - Website: www.musicandfriends.lu

Roma Music Festival 2017, Italy, 8-12 Mar 2017. International festival of choirs and orchestras. Apply before 15 Jan 2017. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

ACDA National Conference 2017, Minneapolis, USA, 8-11 Mar 2017. ACDA will hold its biennial conference for choral conductors. Included in the event will be choral performances, interest sessions, reading sessions, networking and other special events. Contact: American Choral Directors Association, Email: acda@acda.org - Website: <http://acda.org>

Windy City Choral Festival with Z. Randall Stroope, Chicago, USA, 16-18 Mar 2017. For mixed (SATB) choirs to sing together in one of the world's great concert halls – Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@windycitychoralfestival.org - Website: www.windycitychoralfestival.org

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Castelli Romani, Italy, 16-20 Mar 2017. Sing together with local Italian choirs as well as choirs from around the world. The Festival of Peace and Brotherhood facilitates a deeper sense of respect and understanding between cultures through the common language of music. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

Golden Voices of Montserrat! International Contest, Montserrat Monastery, Catalonia, Spain, 19-23 Mar 2017. Taking place in Spain, this is one of the most biggest and incredible contests 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@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 22-26 Mar 2017. An international panel of directors adjudicate this festival for youth choirs, bands and orchestras. Now in its thirteenth year, the festival joins over one thousand musicians from around the world to perform in Prague's stunning 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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Nice, France, 23-26 Mar 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Nice your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Verona, Italy, 30 Mar-2 Apr 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Verona your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

International Choir Festival for Children & Youth Mundus Cantat, Gdansk, Poland, 30 Mar-2 Apr 2017. 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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Bilbao, Spain, 6-9 Apr 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Bilbao your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

International Choir Festival and Competition of Lithuanian Music Patriarch Juozas Naujalis, Kaunas, Lithuania, 6-9 Apr 2017. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

Dublin International Choral Festival, Ireland, 6-10 Apr 2017. Individual workshop with one of Ireland's highly acclaimed conductors. Friendship Concert with an Irish host choir. Closing Concert Rehearsals with all participating choirs. Closing Concert Performance and Massed Sing. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: ireland@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

16th Budapest International Choir Festival & Competition, Hungary, 9-13 Apr 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 Nov 2016. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Istra Music Festival 2017, Croatia, 19-23 Apr 2017. For choirs and orchestras from around the world. Apply before 31 Jan 2017. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <https://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/>

Verona International Choral Competition, Verona, Italy, 19-23 Apr 2017. Performances before an international panel of esteemed judges at a friendly choral competition. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Voices for Peace, Assisi, Italy, 19-23 Apr 2017. To Compete or not to Compete. Opportunity to participate in both non-competitive and competitive activities. The Friendship Concerts will give choirs the chance to perform together with other international choirs. Whereas the competition includes six categories, among which sacred choral music and folklore. 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. 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

3rd International Choral Festival Canta en Primavera, Málaga, Spain, 26-30 Apr 2017. Outstanding concert halls, churches and theatres are available for this competition in different categories and difficulties. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

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

Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival, United Kingdom, 27 Apr-1 May 2017. With over 60 choirs involved in 50 events at 40 locations, there is something for everyone. Contact: Rob Elliott, Festival Director, Email: rob@cimcf.uk - Website: www.cimcf.uk

15th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 28 Apr-2 May 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 Nov 2016. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

The Voice of Wealth, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 28 Apr-3 May 2017. 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/>

World of Choirs, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 30 Apr-3 May 2017. 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

Sea Sun Festival & Competition, Costa Brava, Spain, 30 Apr-5 May, 18-23 June, 9-14 July, 17-22 Sep 2017. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Apply before 1 Apr 2017. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Queen of the Adriatic Sea Choral Festival and Competition, Cattolica, Italy, 4-7 May 2017. Competition for Equal Voices, Mixed, Chamber, Youth, Children, Sacred Music, Folk and Spiritual Choirs. Concerts at the beautiful San Leo medieval cathedral. Apply before 31 Mar 2017. Contact: Queen Choral Festival and Competition, Email: office@queenchoralfestival.org - Website: www.queenchoralfestival.org

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Stockholm, Sweden, 11-14 May 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Stockholm your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Voices United Austria 2017 Choir Festival, Vienna & Salzburg, Austria, 14-21 May 2017. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Ian Loeppky. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

"On The Lake" First International Choir Festival, On the shores of the Sea of Galilee in the Holy Land, Israel, 16-18 May 2017. A three night program. Choirs are welcome to join in this exciting celebration and participate in the festival. Contact: Vered Hasharon Travel and Tours Ltd, Email: keren@vrdrtrvl.com - Website: www.holylandchoir.org

7th Kaunas Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Kaunas, Lithuania, 18-21 May 2017. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

13th International Choir Festival Mundus Cantat, Sopot, Poland, 18-22 May 2017. 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

2017 Emerald City Choral Festival with Rollo Dilworth, Seattle, USA, 18-20 May 2017. 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

Harmonie Festival 2017, Limburg-Lindenholzhausen, Germany, 25-28 May 2017. 13 different competitions for choirs and folk groups, concerts and folk performances with an audience of up to 4,000 people and the hospitality of a whole region. Jury members: Virginia Bono (Argentina), Juergen Budday (Germany), Volker Hempfling (Germany), Theodora Pavlovitch (Bulgaria), Robert Sund (Sweden) and Will Todd (United Kingdom). Contact: Harmonie Lindenholzhausen, Email: information@harmonie-festival.de - Website: www.harmonie-festival.de

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Florence, Italy, 25-28 May 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Florence your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

7th Šiauliai Cantat International Choir Festival and Competition, Šiauliai, Lithuania, 25-28 May 2017. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

Choir Worldwide/Gold Choral Festival, Shanghai, China, 26-28 May 2017. For youth choirs from all around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: kripp@volkskulturkreis.de - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

21th Ankara Choral Festival, Turkey, 27 May-4 June 2017. For choirs from 7 to 77. Contact: BilgeSistem Bil. ve Yay. Hiz. Ltd. Sti., Email: info@musicfestinturkey.com - Website: www.musicfestinturkey.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Barcelona, Spain, 1-4 June 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Barcelona your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

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

Countdown to the 2020 Olympiad, Tokyo, Japan, 6-11 July 2017. With Henry Leck and Robyn Lana. Contact: Perform International, Email: info@performinternational.com - Website: www.perform-international.com

5th Vietnam International Choir Festival & Competition, Hô An, Vietnam, 7-11 June 2017. H i An is one of the most beautiful and charming destinations you can visit in Asia. In cooperation with the Vietnamese Central Government, the Provincial Government of Quang Nam and the City Government of H i An, choirs will again have the chance to discover the beauty of the country, combined with an international choral event. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Tampere, Finland, 7-11 June 2017. Chorus review for all non-amplified choirs, competition with feedback from an international jury, competition for acoustic and amplified ensembles, workshops, concerts. Contact: Tampere Sävel, Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Email: music@tampere.fi - Website: www.tamperemusicfestivals.fi/vocal/en

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

Krakow International Festival, Poland, 8-12 June 2017. Perform alongside international choirs during adjudicated and non-adjudicated performances in Poland's medieval center of culture, art and academics. Perform in the Karłowicz Music School, the Krakow Philharmonic, and some of the city's most beautiful churches! Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Notes of Joy Austria 2017 Choir Festival, Austria, 10-15 June 2017. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Sandra and Timothy Peter. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Sing Mass at St Peter's Basilica with Catherine Sailer, Rome, Italy, 12-15 June 2017. Individual concerts and combined festival concerts. Option to tour Florence and Venice. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

International Anton Bruckner Choir Competition and Festival, Linz, Austria, 14-18 June 2017. For choirs from all over the world to come and sing at the International Anton Bruckner Choir Competition & Festival. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Salzburg International Choral Celebration and Competition, Salzburg, Austria, 14-19 June 2017. For mixed choirs, male and female choirs, children's and youth choirs, sacred music and folklore. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: <http://meeting-music.com/>

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

Luther 2017 Choral Festival, Berlin, Germany, 15-17 June 2017. Join internationally-renowned conductor Helmuth Rilling on June 17, 2017, for a choral extravaganza at the magnificent Berliner Dom. Singers from across the globe are invited to join a grand festival chorus to sing the music of Mendelssohn, including Wir glauben all an einen Gott and Psalm 42 Wie der Hirsch schreit, and Johann Sebastian Bach's Eine Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott, in celebration of 500 Years of Reformation. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@luther2017choralfestival.org - Website: <http://luther2017choralfestival.org/>

SINGMIT! Festival in Vienna, Austria, 15-17 June 2017. For choirs and singers from around the globe, rehearsals with artistic director Gerald Wirth, workshops and performance of Handel's "Messiah" commemorating 275 years since its premiere. Contact: Encore Performance Tours, Email: encoretours@acis.com - Website: www.encoretours.com/go/singmit.cfm

International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 15-19 June 2017. Join choirs from around the world in the heart of Tuscany to perform in venues throughout the region. Hear the other guest choirs sing at the Tettuccio Spa, and exchange with Italian choirs during friendship concerts in churches and theaters. By invitation of the city of Montecatini Terme, this festival includes time to explore Florence, Pisa and Lucca during an amazing four days of choral music in the rolling Tuscan hills. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

Eine Feste Burg, a Choral Celebration, Leipzig, Germany, 17-23 June 2017. Prof. Rilling, pre-eminent scholar and conductor of works by J.S. Bach and Dr. Anton Armstrong, Conductor of the St. Olaf Choir, will lead a Gala Concert Performance at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig in commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Contact: Perform International, Email: info@performinternational.com - Website: www.perform-international.com

Join Randall Stroope to sing in Barcelona and Madrid, Spain, 17-25 June 2017. Combined rehearsals and gala concert, individual concerts, cultural immersion. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

International Contest Sun of Italy, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 18-21 June, 9-12 July 2017. 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

Ireland 2017 Choir Festival, Cork and Dublin, Ireland, 20-27 June 2017. Individual and festival concerts under the direction of Henry Leck. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Pura Vida Costa Rica!, San José, Costa Rica, 20-24 June 2017. Festival designed for service, singing and international friendship, Combining exchange concerts with local choirs, an opportunity for community service and culminating in a festival of international song led by esteemed conductor, Dr. Cristian Grases. Contact: Perform International, Email: zfranciscus@perform-international.com - Website: <http://perform-international.com/festivals/#pura-vida-costa-rica>

Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, 20-25 June 2017. Limerick Sings hosts both Irish and International choirs for three days of non-competitive music and song. Opportunity for choirs to present Informal performances with a professional Irish orchestra under the direction of Dr. André Thomas. Contact: Perform International, Email: info@performinternational.com - Website: www.perform-international.com

International Choral Competition Ave Verum, Baden, Austria, 22-25 June 2017. Baden is a spa and has been a historical meeting point for artists such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Strauss, Lanner and many more. Only 10 choirs worldwide can join this extraordinary Grand Prix competition. For all amateur choirs (mixed, female, male, treble, men) of at least 20 singers, maximum 50 singers. Apply before May 1st, 2015. Contact: Wolfgang Ziegler, chairman, Email: office@aveverum.at - Website: www.aveverum.at

8th Rome International Choral Festival, Italy, 22-24 June 2017. Featuring Mass participation at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and a formal finale concert at Basilica of Saint Mary above Minerva. The festival chorus will include mixed-voice singers and choirs that will come together to rehearse and perform en masse under the baton of maestro Z. Randall Stroope. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@som50fest.org - Website: www.romechoralfestival.org

Requiem for the Living, Bayeux, Normandy, France, 24-30 June 2017. For choirs to perform a choral work in close collaboration with the composer (Dan Forrest), working with a French orchestra and one of the finest choral educators of our time (Dr. Pearl Shangkuan), in iconic, historic sites. Contact: Perform International, Email: info@performinternational.com - Website: www.perform-international.com

5th Per Musicam Ad Astra, International Copernicus Choir Festival and Competition, Toruń, Poland, 25-28 June 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 15 April 2017. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horvath e. K., Email: constanze@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

London International A Cappella Choir Competition, St John's Smith Square, London, United Kingdom, 25 June-1 July 2017. 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 Dec 15, 2016. Contact: Joanna Innes-Hopkins, Email: info@sjs.org.uk - Website: www.liacc.org.uk/

International Contest of Classical Music and Singing Música del Mar, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 25-28 June 2017. Competition performance in the stunning castle-fortress of the 12th century Villa Vella. For classical and jazz singers, academic and chamber choirs. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

Kennedy Center: Celebrate President JFK 100th, Washington DC, USA, 27 June-4 July 2017. In collaboration with the Kennedy Center, Classical Movements' s celebrating the centennial of President Kennedy's birth with a grand choral celebration of Kennedy's legacy by inviting choirs from countries that have benefited from the work of the Peace Corps, as well as select choirs from the U.S. and abroad. Classical Movements, as part of its Eric Daniel Helms New Music Program, will commission composers from these visiting choirs' countries to create new choral works in the spirit of President Kennedy's legacy promoting international peace and diplomacy. This celebration will be incorporated within the Serenade! Washington Choral Festival which is scheduled for June 27-July 4th (with daily performances at the Kennedy Center June 28-July 3). Contact: Yarina Conners, Classical Movements, Inc., Email: Yarina@classicalmovements.com - Website: <http://classicalmovements.org/rhap.htm>

Jubilate Mozart! Choral Festival, Salzburg, Austria, 28 June-2 July 2017. Join other mixed voice choirs from around the country to perform under Jo-Michael Scheibe and Professor János Czifra in the storybook city of Salzburg. Everywhere you turn in Salzburg is a reminder of Mozart's presence, from his birthplace and museum to the Mozartplatz and Mozart Monument. Join us as we celebrate the life and music of this timeless composer in the Jubilate Mozart Choral Festival. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@m MozartChoralFestival.org - Website: m MozartChoralFestival.org

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

Choralfest Melbourne 2017, Brisbane Grammar School, Queensland, Australia, 30 June-3 July 2017. For any type of choral ensemble performing at a high level in any style. In addition a program of Honour choirs for children and youth, chorister workshops and the opportunity to work with local composers is being planned. Apply before August 15, 2016. Contact: The Australian National Choral Association, Email: anca.choralfest@gmail.com - Website: <http://choralfest.org.au/>

Great Basilicas of Italy Festival Tour, Italy, 2-7 July 2017. Festival celebrating the artistic heritage of two of Italy's most important churches. Under the leadership of artistic director Dr. Cameron LaBarr, the mixed festival choir will perform repertoire that is significant to each of these wonderful concert spaces. Contact: Perform International, Email: info@performinternational.com - Website: www.perform-international.com

Musica Eterna Roma, Italy, 2-6 July 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Spirituals and Gospel Music 2017, London and Paris, United Kingdom and France, 3-11 July 2017. Individual and combined festival concerts with Rollo Dilworth. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

Italy 2017 Choir Festival with John Dickson, Rome & Tuscany, Italy, 3-11 June 2017. Festival staging Faure's Requiem. Individual concerts and combined festival concerts. Option to tour Florence and Venice. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival and Competition, Wernigerode, Germany, 5-9 July 2017. Competition for choirs and music ensembles from all over the world. This competition, named after Johannes Brahms, puts a musical focus on this German composer and the German romantics of the 19th century. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Dublin Choral Festival, Ireland, 5-9 July 2017. Lend your voices to sing in a combined mixed-voice choir in Ireland's Fair City. The festival chorus will perform thrilling choral literature under the direction of Artistic Director Dr. Stan Engebretson – Chorale Artistic Director for the National Philharmonic. We look forward to seeing you for this exciting festival on The Emerald Isle! Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@dublinchoralfestival.org - Website: <http://dublinchoralfestival.org/>

Cappadocia Music Festival, Ürgüp, Turkey, 5-9 July 2017. For choirs, orchestras and any kind of musical ensembles. Contact: BilgeSistem Bil. ve Yay. Hiz. Ltd. Sti., Email: info@musicfestinturkey.com - Website: www.musicfestinturkey.com

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>

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

Antica Pompeii, Italy, 6-8 July 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

35th International Choir Festival of Preveza, 23rd International Competition of Sacred Music, Preveza, Greece, 6-9 July 2017. For mixed, equal voices', children's, chamber vocal ensembles, mixed youth choirs & choirs of Byzantine chant. Repertory must include a compulsory piece, a piece composed before 1800, a piece composed during 1800 - 1950, a piece composed after 1950 & a folk song from the choir's country of origin. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: prevezachoralfestival@gmail.com or armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://prevezafest.blogspot.gr/>

11th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 7-12 July 2017. Cross-cultural and musical exchange event including workshops, lectures, seminars, concerts in and around Vienna, competition with an international and highly renowned jury. Contact: Summa Cum Laude Youth Music Festival, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

Passion of Italy with Heather J. Buchanan, Rome, Florence and Venice, Italy, 8-13 July 2017. Individual and combined festival concerts for all choirs and singers. Contact: KIconcerts, Email: info@KIconcerts.com - Website: www.KIconcerts.com

4th International Choir Festival Coralua, Trondheim, Norway, 8-14 July 2017. For children, middle school and adult choirs. Choral workshops with excellent international conductors. Singing Tour in Norway, discover the beautiful village of Røros. Concerts in the best venues of Trondheim and Røros. Contact: Coralua, Email: trondheim@coralua.com - Website: www.coralua.com

Golden Voices of Barcelona, Spain, 9-13 July 2017. For both professional and amateur choirs from all around the world. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestalonia.net - Website: www.fiestalonia.net

SINGMIT! Festival in Vienna, Austria, 13-15 July 2017. For choirs and singers from around the globe, rehearsals with artistic director Gerald Wirth, workshops and performance of Schubert's "Mass in E-Flat Major No. 6" celebrating Schubert's 220th birthday. Contact: Encore Performance Tours, Email: encoretours@acis.com - Website: www.encoretours.com/go/singmit.cfm

Claudio Monteverdi Choral Festival and Competition, Venice, Italy, 13-16 July 2017. 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

3rd European Choir Games, Riga, Latvia, 16-23 July 2017. 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: Fördereverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Paris Rhythms, France, 20-23 July 2017. 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

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 Barcelona. Also on <https://www.facebook.com/wscm11bcn/> and <https://twitter.com/simposibcn> Contact: International Federation for Choral Music, Email: office@ifcm.net - Website: <http://www.wscm11.cat/>

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

6th International Campus Music Festival, Stuttgart, Germany, 28-31 July 2017. For youth choirs from all around the world. Contact: Internationaler Volkskulturkreis e.V., Email: kripp@volkskulturkreis.de - Website: www.volkskultur-de.org

Africa Cantat, Kinshasa, DR Congo, 6-12 Aug 2017. Initiated by the African Confederation of Choral Music (ACCM) with the support of the Congolese Federation of Choral Music and the partnership of IFCM, A Coeur Joie International and Europa Cantat, the festival will be an ideal crossroad to discover and exchange around the rich authenticity of the African choral heritage. Choirs, choral conductors and lecturers from all around the world, Africa is eager to welcome in the heart of the continent, to share the warmth of its hospitality and its rhythms and colors. Contact: African Confederation for Choral Music, Email: audemunicator@gmail.com

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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Brussels, Belgium, 7-10 Sep 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Brussels your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

3rd International Festival of Sacred Music Francesco Bruni, Italy, Sep 2017. Festival with aim to renew the interest in the Sacred Music in Southern Italy. Contact: International Festival of Sacred Music Francesco Bruni, Email: direzione@festivalfrancescobruni.com - Website: www.festivalfrancescobruni.com

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Lisbon, Portugal, 14-17 Sep 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Lisbon your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Paris, France, 21-24 Sep 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Paris your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 21-24 Sep 2017. 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

The Voice of Wealth, Lloret de Mar, Spain, 22-27 Sep 2017. International choir festival and competition for all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Monolit Festivals, Email: info@monolitifestivals.com - Website: <http://monolitifestivals.com/>

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

International Choir Competition and Festival Kalamata 2017, Greece, 11-15 Oct 2017. Competition for all types of choirs in different categories of difficulty, line-ups and musical genres. Contact: Fördereverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2017, Spain, 16-22 Oct 2017. 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 2017 International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 25-29 Oct 2017. Competition for mixed, male, female, children's and youth choirs. No compulsory pieces required. Contact: Fördereverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

In Canto sul Garda International Choir Festival & Competition, Riva del Garda, Italy, 28 Oct-1 Nov 2017. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Apply before 30 Dec 2015. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Miami Voice 2017, Florida, USA, 1-5 Nov 2017. Conductors and singers have the possibility to attend workshops with Morten Lauridsen and other choral experts and to assimilate the beauty of Florida's coast: This stunning region represents a unique composition of land, sea and sky and is known as one of the best holiday destinations worldwide. Contact: Fördereverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: www.interkultur.com

Cantate Dresden, Germany, 2-5 Nov 2017. For all kind of choirs from all over the world. Contact: Music&Friends, Email: info@musicandfriends.org - Website: www.musicandfriends.com/html/cantate_dresden.html

International Budgetary Festival/Competition The Place of Holiday, Spain, 3-6 Nov 2017. 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

ON STAGE with Interkultur in Prague, Czech Republic, 9-12 Nov 2017. No competitions but a buzz of choral activities: Make Prague your stage during your choir tour. The schedule will include touristic activities (sight-seeing), short concerts in touristic places, a workshop with a local choir and a joint concert of all the participants. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <http://onstage.interkultur.com/>

Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 23-27 Nov, 30 Nov-4 Dec, 7-11, 14-18 Dec 2017. 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

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

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 3-6 Dec 2017. 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

International Festival/Competition Talents de Paris, France, 5-8 Dec 2017. 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

25th International Sacred, Advent & Christmas Music Festival and Choir Competition Cantate Domino Kaunas, Kaunas, Lithuania, 14-17 Dec 2017. Concerts in city halls, churches, choir competition in many categories, workshops. Contact: Kaunas club "Cantate Domino", Email: info@kaunascantat.lt - Website: www.kaunascantat.lt

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 7-10 Jan 2018. 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

15th Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del Garda, Italy, 25-29 Mar 2018. For all kinds of choirs from all around the world. Contact: Meeting Music Inh. Pirosk Horv th e. K., Email: deborah.bertoni@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

66th 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. 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

Sea Sun Festival & Competition, Costa Brava, Spain, 6-11 May, 17-22 June, 8-13 July, 23-28 Sep 2018. 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

International Contest Sun of Italy, Montecatini Terme, Toscana, Italy, 17-20 June, 8-11 July 2018. 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

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>

36th International Choir Festival of Preveza, 24th International Competition of Sacred Music, Preveza, Greece, 5-8 July 2018. For mixed, equal voices, children's, chamber vocal ensembles, mixed youth choirs & choirs of Byzantine chant. Repertory must include a compulsory piece, a piece composed before 1800, a piece composed during 1800 - 1950, a piece composed after 1950 & a folk song from the choir's country of origin. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://prevezafest.blogspot.gr/>

Golden Voices of Barcelona, Spain, 8-12 July 2018. For both professional and amateur choirs from all around the world. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

Paris Rhythms, France, 19-22 July 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

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

Europa Cantat Festival 2018, Tallinn, Estonia, 27 July-5 Aug 2018. 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

International Budgetary Festival/Competition The Place of Holiday, Spain, 2-5 Nov 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

International Festival/Contest Gran Fiesta, Spain, 2-5 Dec 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

International Festival/Competition Talents de Paris, France, 11-14 Dec 2018. Competition of various genres in choral and vocal singing, open to amateurs and professional teams of all ages. Contact: Fiestalonia Milenio, SLU, Email: nika@fiestaloniamilenio.net - Website: www.fiestaloniamilenio.net

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. 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, Marktberdorf, 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. 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

68th 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. 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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