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FOCUS **MUSIC AND LANGUAGE(S)**

THOUGHTS ON SILENCE IN MUSIC

BIRD LANGUAGE IN CHORAL MUSIC

*EL ÚLTIMO HILO: THE FABRIC OF
LANGUAGE IN MUSIC*

LISTENING WITH THE EYES
SING&SIGN

INTERNATIONAL CHORAL MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL



EMILY KUO VONG

IFCM President

In traditional theories, speech functions were thought to be localized in the left hemisphere of the brain and music functions in the right. Because of these specific lateralizations, music and language have been treated as different psychological faculties. For example, Bever and Chiarello published a landmark paper in 1974 reflecting this duality of roles that the two hemispheres play in processing music and language information. In their research, the left hemisphere was better at propositional, analytic, and serial processing and the right was more specialized for appositional, holistic, and synthetic relationships.

However, this view has been challenged in recent years with the emergence of modern brain imaging techniques and improvement in neurophysiological measures to investigate brain

functions. Applying these cutting-edge approaches, a totally new viewpoint of music and language has formed based on neural and psychological underpinnings. The findings of this latest research indicate that music and language functions have many aspects in common because several neural modules are simultaneously involved in speech and music. There is also emerging evidence that humans' language functions can benefit from music functions and vice versa. For instance, Dege and colleagues demonstrated in their papers that phonological awareness of language, which is pivotal for reading and writing skills, is closely related to pitch awareness and musical expertise. As a result, pre-schoolers can benefit from a program of musical training to increase their phonological awareness.

Music and language are universal human capacities with many commonalities, especially with respect to their acoustics and structure, social interaction, social evolution, and functional origins. Therefore, both music and speech play important roles in the context of social bonding. This issue of the International Choral Magazine contains a number of professional articles discussing the relationship between music and language.

I believe this will bring you a fresh and original insight into this subject.

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THOUGHTS ON SILENCE IN MUSIC

BURAK ONUR ERDEM

IFCM Board Member, Türkiye

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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SHORTENED VERSION TAKEN FROM THE ORIGINAL PAPER "THE NOTION OF SILENCE IN MUSIC: A CHORAL CONDUCTING PERSPECTIVE" BY BURAK ONUR ERDEM, WRITTEN IN 2012.

Silence is a musical phenomenon. Musical silence has its specific characteristics, effects and meaning. For all musicians, it is crucial, because the musical motion begins, continues and ends with silence itself. Silence is an integral part of conducting and conducting in itself is a silent act of music making.

I have written this paper presenting a study of various forms of silence, whether notated or not, that are utilized in music, concentrating on choral performance and conducting. Here, I would like to share a glimpse of the content and if you are interested, you can read the complete edition in the following link (<https://www.scribd.com/document/495934334/The-Notion-of-Silence-in-Music>).

Silence in music can be an extremely effective way of expression. It can have different characteristics. Silence may hold tension or may symbolize resolution. Sometimes it implies a hidden crescendo, other times it refreshes the memory of the listener for the beginning of a new section. Although silence is mostly engaged with expectation, it can also mean closure for a phrase or simply contribute to a melodic structure. No need to mention that silence before and after the music is as important as the sound itself. Performers use silence in various ways. Considering how performers

experience the silent moments in music, one may come up with common features of musical performances with regard to those moments. An example could be the tension in the hands of a conductor, when the piece finishes. Another could be the sway in the body of a pianist during a long rest in a sonata. Thus, silence can also take many physical forms in the body of the performer, which is quite interesting from a conductor's point of view, since conducting implies the realization of the music with non-verbal gestures of the body.

The Oxford English Dictionary, among others, defines silence as the complete absence of sound. It is rather interesting for a concept to be defined by the absence of anything. That would mean silence is approached from the perspective of sound or, expressed more technically, it is the negation of sound. The same is also valid vice versa. Just as silence can only be defined with regard to sound, sound can also occur merely over a silent basis. Thus, sound and silence are by definition bound together, like day and night.

Nevertheless, we should not forget that these concepts are always relative to each other. The late sunset can be perceived darker than the day, but it is actually brighter than midnight. The same

The Oxford English Dictionary, among others, defines silence as the complete absence of sound. It is rather interesting for a concept to be defined by the absence of anything.

idea applies to sound and silence. A quiet whispering in the concert hall may be considered silent in comparison to the sounds of the city, but it may be disturbing in a classical concert hall setting. However, more than that, the interesting part about this analogy is that both include elements of its counterpart. The day is never fully bright. There are shadows, maybe clouds, or different colors. Similarly, the night also involves light in itself. One may perceive a space to be completely dark in the night, whereas it may turn out that there are many things to see when the eyes are used to the darkness. Turning back to sound and silence, the crucial point we want to make is that silence contains sound in it, and vice versa. As in the example of John Cage's *4'33"*, the piece about silence is eventually not silent at all, considering all the different noises and sounds in the environment.

Correspondingly, there are also elements and tastes of silence in the sound. They are inseparable from this point of view.

That leads us to the idea that silence is not an absolute concept, but a relative one, which contains different levels and layers. As Zofia Lissa argues, there is never absolute silence, even in nature (1964: 445). Furthermore, silence also has a lot to do with human perception. Elisabeth Hellmuth Margulis puts forward the concept of perceived silence, which does not necessarily require acoustical silence (2007: 247). The threefold relationship between perceived, acoustical and notated silence will be examined under the next section on musical silence, but it is important to note that the perception of silence can vary according to the surrounding events of the environment we are in.

Silence is meaningful. This is expressed exactly the same way by William J. Samarin, as he continues saying that silence is an absence with a function, like the zero in mathematics. (1965: 115) Silence has particularly crucial meanings in some cultures. That is to be seen by Ron Scollon's statement about how a silent moment may indicate failure in speech within an American context, (1985: 26) whereas Senko K. Maynard mentions that Japanese culture is skewed toward silence (1997: 153). Indeed, silence is an important part of Eastern cultures, especially within religious rituals. Explaining the Tibetan Buddhist meditation *mahamudra*, Brown and Thurman write that cutting off the spoken word and recitation, namely silence, makes one intensely aware of mental chatter. (2006: 172) This idea of the ability of silence to make the mind more aware shows



that it has a direct relationship with human perception. This sensitivity in perception can be true for both physical sounds and mental activity. Thus, it would not be wrong to conclude that silence brings about a more careful way of listening. Listening to both quiet and loud sounds has to do with silence (Voegelin 2010: 100). If silence is strongly related to the act of listening, then it is not a surprise that it is used for generating a more intensive concentration in both speech and music.

Overall, considering silence is not the absence of sounds and it is rather a state of perception, we end up with the idea that its definition should be refined carefully. In my attempt to study closely what silence may mean in music, I have come up with a draft categorisation of functions of silence, which may be summarized as following: There is silence before the music and after the music, both are usually not notated but they have specific functions with regard to the sound content.

There is also silence within the music, which is open to much closer examination. Here, it is important to return to Margulis' concepts of acoustical, perceived and notated silence. Not all the silent moments within the duration of the music can be notated. Notated silence is normally expressed by rests. However many other occasions in music result in silence. For example, the end of a fermata or a transition to another section creates silent spots in the music. Similarly, a voiceless consonant can lead to a sharp move to silence. Whether notated or not, silence is an integral part of the duration of the actual music. My attempt to derive some categories out of this resulted in the following: Transitional or closural silence, breathing silence, relieving or tense silence, textual

silence and localized silent spots. If you are interested in reading more about this, you are more than welcome to check out the original paper here: <https://www.scribd.com/document/495934334/The-Notion-of-Silence-in-Music>

Whatever the model of categorization is, it is clear that different characteristics of silence demand different ways of performance. A transitional silence cannot be conducted as a closural one. Similarly, a breathing silence should not be more interrupting than a tense silence. To conclude, it would not be wrong to claim that concentrating on silence could provide a much more comprehensive musical experience and must be elaborated carefully in musical analysis and performance.



Dr. BURAK ONUR ERDEM is the principal conductor of the Turkish State Choir. Erdem graduated from Boğaziçi University Political Science & International Relations department with the Rector's Prize. He has a master's degree in music theory and a PhD in conducting from ITU Centre for Advanced Studies in Music. Thereafter, he finished his postgraduate degree with Prof. Johannes Prinz on choral conducting at Kunstuniversität Graz. Erdem started the Boğaziçi University Choral Festival (KoroFest) in 2009, founded the Choral Culture Association in 2012, has been elected to the board of the European Choral Association in 2015 and has been appointed to the board of the International Federation of Choral Music in 2018. He served as a music commission member in the Europa Cantat Tallinn and Ljubljana Festivals and acted as chair of the music commission in Leading Voices Utrecht Festival. Erdem continues to serve as Vice-President of the European Choral Association and leads the organisation of World Symposium on Choral Music 2023 Istanbul.
<http://www.burakonurerdem.com/about.html>

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BIRD LANGUAGE IN CHORAL MUSIC

The example of *The Nightingale*

by Latvian composer Uģis Prauliņš (*1957)

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

Mr Prauliņš, you compose for instrumental ensembles as well as for choirs, and nature is always on your mind. To what extent does nature inspire your work?

Always, permanently. For years, I have always had impressions and visions from nature in my mind while creating. There are even sections of my work which conjure up, in my mind, certain places, a tree, a certain environment: there is always that image in my head. I started to feel strongly about nature early in my childhood in the countryside: the sunlight through the canopies of the trees, the paths under the trees, the rainy days and the dew in the lush grass and the fallen leaves in gold and various colours. Later in my childhood I learned about the sea, the winds, the sand, the unusual vegetation, piercy pine needles, heat ... singing birds and fresh streams of air in the morning when opening doors.

These childhood memories are really essential for me, they are like a foundation to my life. In later years, I saw the parks in Riga, the graveyards, especially the old abandoned cemetery: it sounded to me like *Black Sabbath I* (the very first album of this metal group), the forests sounded like *Jethro Tull* and a bit like *Gentle Giant* (both British rock bands). Pink Floyd is associated, for me, with the sunrise in the dewy countryside. Arvo Pärt, in later years, is for me linked to the grey (misty) and (placid) sandy coasts of the Baltic Sea.

In 2012, you composed "The Nightingale" for recorder, mixed choir and speaker. The recording with Stephen Layton and the Danish National Vocal Ensemble was nominated for two Grammy awards ("Best Choral Performance" and "Best Contemporary Composition"). What is the story of this piece?

As early as in the early 1990s, when gigging in Denmark, I heard a recording of the young recorder virtuoso Michala Petri – which was breathtaking ... I had the dream of composing for her (but, of course, that's one of those dreams you will never reach and fulfil). At that time I also encountered the sound, the symphony of sounds and contemplative (and windy!) moods from Denmark.

Fifteen years later, while representing the Latvian Composers' Union in MIDEM, Cannes, I met lute player, guitarist and music producer Lars Hannibal (OUR Recordings), who – after we kept meeting each year at MIDEM – eventually suggested I create a large piece for wonderful genius Michala Petri. My first thought was for recorder and chamber orchestra, however (and wisely) the choice as to accompaniment fell to the choir. It would be a unique line-up. At that time, Maestro Stephen Layton, who visited me in Riga, was also the conductor of the Danish Radio Choir/Danish National Vocal Ensemble. We all agreed on such a concept. At that time, we already knew what the subject was going to be. Lars Hannibal had already



Latvian composer Uģis Prauliņš

suggested Hans Christian Andersen, whose 200th anniversary was being celebrated, and the fairy-tale about the Nightingale – and Michala Petri is definitely the nightingale from Denmark in the wide world! Thus, after presentations to Danish radio, the radio company commissioned the piece and set the date for the premiere(s) in Århus and in the Danish Radio Hall in Copenhagen.

The recording took place in the famous Christianskirken, Copenhagen 8-12 August, 2011.

How is the language of birds connected to ours? What are its specific qualities?

Birds have their sentences, repetitions, intervals, emotional calls, also danger warnings and sounds used when in close competition. The songs are sometimes very loud, some people cannot sleep in the morning! Overall, bird song is lively, fresh, brisk, vivid; but it may also be trance-like, or workaday, or casual. Some are just chirping, quietly. And their timbre can vary from a short tweet to the long howling sound of owls. I see and hear hundreds of cranes every year in the field nearby, with their distinctive calls, starting with one (solo) who then passes it on to other voices, gradually building a massive and loud choir (tutti) full of agitation, sadness and premonition about the impending journey to the south. It is different when they are coming back in spring – they occupy the same slope, a brow in the hillock, but exhausted and not noisy.

Clément Janequin, back in the 16th century, used onomatopoeia to make voices reproduce the language of birds in his “Chant des Oyseaux.” Which tool did you use to include this language in “The Nightingale”?

Michala's recorder parts and also some choral passages contain quite a lot very close transcriptions of the real nightingale's songs (I recorded them in my garden), also the piece has been written (inevitably) in both our place in the border area of Latvia and in the green oasis of our house in Riga (yes, we sometimes had to close the windows to allow us to sleep one more hour!).

Mostly the trills and glissandi are used for the recorder part. The choir sometimes represents the wind in the forest canopies of the trees, occasionally humming and with whistling glissandi. Mostly the choir 'covers' the human beings and their emotions – the courtiers, the Emperor, etc. There are also occasional responses and imitations of the nightingale's song, also lots of melisma (which one can freely interpret *ad libitum*). In the 4th movement, 'In the Quest', the choir is having fun with some animal sounds, the first soprano leading in a 'bird's manner' to the nightingale's melody. In the 6th movement, "At the Palace", all the choir follows the semiquavers of the recorder's trilling. The singers are also gurgling: singing the chords with water in their mouth. In the 7th movement, "The Artificial Bird", the choir is pretending, together with the recorder, to be just that – an artificial

bird (reminding me of a music sequencer or drum machines). There are also very high notes (D6) for the sopranos which is of course a reference to birds. How we see and hear the birds' songs depends only on our imagination (however some people can imitate their songs, and then they respond!).

How did you put the language of the bird in dialogue with the voices? Did you use a special notation for the singers or are they singing from the usual music system?

I used simple imitations, mostly it's the recorder interacting with the upper voice(s). Usually, the music is noted in the usual 5-line simple melodic notation; glissandi and melisma are *ad libitum*.

Which aspect of the language of the birds should we particularly pay attention to, when we next go for a walk in the forest?

... a silence, a reverence to what's happening. Just stand still and listen. And try to find (locate with ears only) the quietest sound.

Thank you, Mr Prauliņš!

Some more nature inspired compositions by Uģis Prauliņš:

- „Līvu sasaukšanās” (The Call of Livonians) [2018]
- Choral miniatures „Japan Impressions” (song cycle) [2017], esp: 'Asakaze ya' (rising skylarks), [„Yuku mizu ni” (dragonfly)], 'Hototogisu' (nightingale).



EL ÚLTIMO HILO

THE FABRIC OF LANGUAGE IN MUSIC

JAKE RUNESTAD

Composer, USA

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

CREATING MUSIC INFORMED AND INSPIRED BY WRITERS OUTSIDE OF MY OWN CULTURE IS LIKE WEAVING AN ORNATE GARMENT WITH MULTICOLORED THREADS — EACH STRAND CONTAINS A COMPLEX HISTORY OF ITS OWN, AND THESE THREADS MUST BE THOUGHTFULLY AND CAREFULLY UNITED INTO A SINGLE TAPESTRY. THIS WEAVING OF TEXT AND MUSIC TEACHES ME ABOUT NEW PEOPLE AND PLACES, IT CHALLENGES ME TO CONSIDER ALTERNATE PERSPECTIVES AND IT FOSTERS GREATER COMPASSION FOR OTHERS.

Several years ago, I received a commission from *Kantorei*, a fantastic choir based in Denver, USA. *Kantorei* has a beautiful friendship with the Guatemalan choir *Vocalis*, and they wished to commission a new piece of music to unite the two choirs and cultures: music from the USA and poetry from Guatemala.

for SATB choir, string quartet, and marimba (the national instrument of Guatemala), sets Ak'abal's poems in both K'iche' (a Mayan dialect) and Spanish. But before I began composing (and because I am not a native speaker of these languages), I had some work to do. I was born and raised in the USA as a native English speaker and was fortunate to learn Spanish as

a second language in my schooling. I have spent significant time in Spanish-speaking countries (Peru, Colombia, Argentina, Costa Rica, Spain, and Guatemala) and while I consider myself fluent in Spanish, it does not feel *native* in myself. Speaking another language natively requires engaging in the *persona* of that language, complete

a clear idea of the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* of the text, they are more prepared to illuminate the words with **intention and authenticity**. Setting poetry that is not in the composer's native language introduces another layer of challenges. My approach to this process includes four steps:

1. RESEARCH

When preparing to set a text to music, the composer must study the historical context behind the author and their words. Some questions I ask myself include: When and where did the author live? What was going on in the world/their community at that time? How did that time and place impact the author's work? How and why did the author write the words (scratched on the wall of a death camp in WWII Germany, penned in a personal journal, a love letter, etc.)? What cultural nuances and metaphors are embedded in the text? For example: the *quetzal* is the national bird of Guatemala, but it is also the monetary unit. If I assumed the author was talking about the bird, I would be in trouble if the poem was actually talking about money! This is where consulting with a native speaker is crucial in uncovering as much meaning as possible.



Composer Jake Runestad at the grave of Humberto Ak'abal in Momostenango, Guatemala, July 2021

After much research, we chose the Mayan poet Humberto Ak'abal (1952-2019) as the poetic voice from Guatemala. Ak'abal's powerful poems speak of the terror of genocide against the indigenous population, the beauty and importance of the earth, and the role of art in the face of difficulty. *El Último Hilo* ("The Last Thread"), the resulting musical work scored

with cultural nuances, dialects, slang, and years of immersion. Composing vocal works with English texts feels very natural to me, but other languages require a different approach.

When creating a piece of music with words, composers must be fully informed about the author and text *before* writing a single note. When the composer has



Jake Runestad walking with Esteban, the mother of Humberto Ak'abal, as she led him to Humberto's grave, July 2021

2. IMMERSE & ABSORB

To have a clearer understanding of the author's life and language, I immerse myself in a wide breadth of their creative output, in music from their culture, in works of other artists from their culture, and in the place they live(d) (whether physically or through forms of visual media). When I am setting a language other than English, I seek out recordings of native speakers and singers and listen for hours to become familiar with the language's sounds and rhythms. The more I can ingest of the author's sonic and visual world, the more clearly my music will communicate the nuance of the author's intent.

3. EMBODY

No matter the language of the text, I must be comfortable speaking and singing it in an idiomatic manner. If the language is not my native tongue, I work with a native speaker so I can learn the correct pronunciations, prosody/rhythms, and nuances of phrase shape. It is my job to internalize these words and to be able to express them correctly.

4. CREATE

Once I feel comfortable with the previous steps, I am prepared to begin creating music. This process involves improvising and singing the words within their cultural and emotional context to uncover the innate musical lines in each phrase (this authentic singing/physicalization is crucial). The instrumentation, musical material, form, and all aspects of the work are informed by the prior three steps.

For *El Último Hilo*, I learned as much as I could about Guatemala and its history, I spoke with Guatemalans to gain their perspective, I listened to hours of diverse genres of music sung in Spanish, and I worked with native speakers of both K'iche' and Spanish. A friend of

Humberto's recorded the K'iche' for me and I practiced diligently until I could mimic every sound, rhythm, and phrase. I worked with professional singers (and language gurus) to create IPA notation for the K'iche' and included this in the score. I also had the honor of visiting Humberto's home and writing studio, communing with his mother, sister, and widow, and

visiting his grave (the power of this visit is worthy of its own article). Creating this work was a transformational experience for me and all of those involved. *El Último Hilo* has beauty, power, and depth because of Humberto's words, and also because of the great care we took in engaging with the context surrounding his poems and history. Weaving together text,

music, culture, and story in an informed and intentional manner deepens our musical experiences and enriches the communicative power of our art form, resulting in a beautiful tapestry of community and empathy.

Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy/UK



Rehearsing *El Último Hilo* with Kantorei and Vocalis in Antigua, Guatemala, June 2022



Considered “one of the best of the younger American composers” (ChicagoTribune), EMMY®-winning and GRAMMY®-nominated composer and conductor JAKE RUNESTAD has received commissions and performances from leading ensembles and organizations such as Voces8, Washington National Opera, the Philippine Madrigal Singers, the Netherlands Radio Choir, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony Chorus & Orchestra, the Pacific Chorale & Symphony, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, and a GRAMMY®-nominated all-Runestad album from Conspirare called “The Hope of Loving.” In 2019, Jake became one of the youngest composers ever awarded the prestigious Raymond C. Brock commission by the American Choral Directors Association. Dubbed a “choral rockstar” by American Public Media, Jake is one of the most frequently performed composers in the world and has traveled to conduct and clinic ensembles on all but one continent. 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. More at: JakeRunestad.com

PIECES FOR SOLO VOICE AND PIANO ARRANGED FOR CHOIR AND PIANO: HOMAGE OR BETRAYAL?

DENIS ROUGER

Choral conductor, teacher and composer, Germany

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AT A REHEARSAL BACK IN THE 2000S, THE PARIS-SORBONNE UNIVERSITY CHOIR AND I WERE WORKING ON A PIECE OF FRENCH MUSIC WITH A STYLE AND FEEL THAT CALLED TO MIND THE FAMOUS MÉLODIE BY DUPARC, *L'INVITATION AU VOYAGE*, A SETTING OF A BAUDELAIRE POEM. I ASKED THE CHOIR MEMBERS WHICH OF THEM KNEW IT. JUST 2 PEOPLE OUT OF 90 TIMIDLY RAISED THEIR HAND. WITH A SUDDEN SENSE OF URGENCY, I DECIDED THAT, RATHER THAN HAVE THEM LISTEN TO DUPARC'S MASTERPIECE, I WOULD GET THEM TO SING IT IN AN ARRANGEMENT FOR CHOIR, AND SO DISCOVER IT "FROM THE INSIDE".

Seeing how much the young musicians got out of this discovery, I decided to carry on adapting suitable *mélodies* (the total currently stands at more than 50), rejecting any that I felt might be distorted by the massed voices of the choir (*mélodies* requiring a great deal of transparency, such as Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis*, or certain *Lieder* too profoundly personal to be suitable for a choir).

Taking a great composer's *mélodie* or *Lied* for solo voice and piano and arranging it for a choir singing in three, four, or five parts with piano accompaniment inevitably raises some questions:

1. Do we have the right to modify masterpieces?
2. Why should we do this? To what end?
3. Is it possible to adapt a masterpiece in such a way as to keep any changes to the absolute minimum?
4. What happens to the text, given that the language is an important part of a composition?

The answer to the first question might initially seem to be: no. But depending on how we answer the second question, we may be able to

get around this outright ban in certain cases. As I see it, there are two simple reasons why we might want to arrange an original work for different forces:

- To introduce the piece to an audience who would not generally have access to it.
- To bring out the richness of a masterpiece by throwing a different light on it, i.e. showing off another side of the piece by expanding its soundworld. We would not be improving the piece, of course (!), but simply presenting it from a different perspective, just as a statue might be lit in very different ways or placed on different pedestals.

This kind of arrangement would require unwavering respect for the original score and its meaning. In order to answer "yes" to the third question, we would need to separate content and form, trying to preserve the work's meaning despite changing its form. Finally, to answer the fourth question, the poem's text and language are evidently key elements that, when considered alongside the several other factors at play, determine how faithful an arrangement is to the original work.

To help us understand the challenges of this kind of arrangement, and the difference that language makes, let's compare a *mélodie* in French (e.g. Fauré's *Les Berceaux*, a setting of a text by Sully-Prudhomme¹) and a German *Lied* (e.g. Hugo Wolf's *Verborgenheit*, a setting of a magnificent text by Mörike²), both arranged for a choir singing in five parts. These two pieces are very different as far as form and inspiration are concerned, but many of the same factors come into play when we arrange them, although our approach to these factors might be different:

PROSODY

- Respecting the text: sticking close to the prosody the author used for the original melody (no onomatopoeic "la la la", "bam bam bam", etc.).
- Respecting the meaning of the poem in each voice part: certain words might be deleted or repeated, but each phrase should still have its full

1 Carus Verlag 9.243

2 Carus Verlag 9.245

meaning, so that the performers can always “say” their text.

PIANO

Using the original part in full with no changes.

HARMONY

This is a very tricky point. Absolute respect for the composer’s harmony is vital, but this harmony might be slightly extended for melodic reasons or because the polyphony “suggests” it. This would require as profound a knowledge of the composer’s musical language as possible in order to write as the composer themselves might have written (creating a sound that matches the “general impression” and that is strictly in the composer’s style).

Sometimes, when voice parts hold notes that the piano only briefly touches upon in arpeggios, dissonances are intensified and the existing harmony is nuanced, lending these moments a particular emotional colouring: in Fauré’s *Les Berceaux*, for instance, the altos’ D held over the sopranos’ E flat makes bar 31 all the more dramatic.

“ORCHESTRATION”

- Varying use of the vocal possibilities afforded by between one and five voice parts depending on the context.
- Choosing a dense or airy polyphony depending on the sonorities of the harmony and the meaning of the text.

In Wolf’s *Verborgenheit*, the first phrase is *tutti*: the plea “Lass, o Welt!” (“Leave me, o world!”) is intensified when sung by multiple voices. The second, more intimate phrase, which evokes an almost imperceptible sadness and nostalgia, seems better suited to women’s voices alone, while the low chord in bar 20 and the dramatic crescendo that follows it are more powerful when sung polyphonically.

After this great *forte*, the return of the first theme, now sung by the sopranos alone, seems more tender, more fragile and touching. The tenors’ fading B flat in bar 31 allows the *tutti* entrance to be gentle, evoking the universality of human longing.

Wolf/Rouger: *Verborgenheit*, Carus 9.245, partial reproduction by friendly permission for this article only.

The first phrase of *Les Berceaux* is given to the upper voices alone: in Sully-Prudhomme’s poem, it is the women who stay on land with their young children, while the men go to sea, never knowing whether they will return. The grief that this phrase expresses is the women’s grief, and their unison voices convey not only their sadness, but also their solidarity.

Fauré/Rouger: *Les Berceaux*, op. 23 no. 1

The first sentence of the melody “Les Berceaux” is for women only. Carus 9.243, partial reproduction by friendly permission for this article only.

DYNAMICS

Using different voice parts to contribute to dynamic effects (e.g. *piano* sung by two voice parts, *forte* by five). In bars 20 to 26 of Wolf's *Lied*, as in bars 12 to 19 of *Les berceaux*, a long *crescendo* is intensified by capitalising on the dynamic possibilities of *tutti* compared to a single voice, lending the phrase a heightened sense of drama.

SONORITIES

Using different voice parts to convey meaning (e.g. five parts singing *pianissimo* to evoke warmth and comfort, five parts singing in unison to emphasise the drama of a passage, two upper voice parts to convey transparency or lightness, or, as we have seen, to embody the words...).

*The idea is not to "over-articulate" the words,
but rather to let the original text blossom
by bringing out its implicit content.*

CHOICE OF MELODIC LINES AND TESSITURAS

Depending on the atmosphere of the poem and how it is set, always departing as little as possible from the composer's musical language. There is naturally a link between the tessitura of each voice part and the tessitura of the original melody, but this melody can always be given to an internal voice, which would then be accompanied by a higher voice (this is not the case in our two examples).

Having the voice parts double the piano lines is practical, certainly, but the main reason to use this technique is to highlight certain words: in bars 7 and 8 of *Verborgenheit*, the alto part doubles the piano's quavers only for the words "Herz" (heart) and "haben" (to have), discreetly emphasising them. In bars 15, 16, and 17, the alto part is syncopated, which heightens the drama of the moment by evoking tears or sighs.

The image displays a musical score for the song 'Verborgenheit' by Franz Schubert, arranged by Wolf/Rouger. The score is for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins at measure 16. The vocal parts have lyrics in German: 'Trä - nen se - he ich der Son - ne lie - bes Licht.' The piano part features a dense, arpeggiated texture in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) is present in the piano part. The score is a partial reproduction for the article.

Wolf/Rouger: *Verborgenheit*, Carus 9.245, partial reproduction by friendly permission for this article only.

In my opinion, these details work in the background to conjure up the atmosphere of the poem, but should remain discreet, almost invisible (or rather inaudible): the idea is not to "over-articulate" the words, but rather to let the original text blossom by bringing out its implicit content. These



are subjective choices, of course, and a different arrangement could do something quite different with these factors. The main thing, in my opinion, is to use these elements not for their own sake (because a *crescendo* always makes an impact, for example), but to convey feelings that it may be impossible to convey through words alone. Taken together, the words of a poem make an impression on us that is far more than the sum of each word's individual meaning—that's the magic of language!

Giving due consideration to all these factors establishes a relatively strict framework, but one that leaves room for a creativity that is as exciting as it is surprising. This creativity encourages us to find our way to an act of writing that is close to composition, a free, personal, subjective act that is similar to performance in being based on absolute respect for the composer's musical inspiration.

Translated by Katie Sykes, UK

© Arne Morgner



DENIS ROUGER is renowned for his rich choral sound and sensitive interpretations.

He gained his first musical experiences as the son of a Parisian family of musicians and studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. He has been a lecturer and choral director at the University of Paris-Sorbonne for 20 years. For 10 years he has conducted the choir at Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral and has been the Honorary Chapel Master of the Madeleine Church. As director of numerous ensembles he frequently travels to Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Canada, the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland (Lucerne Festival). He teaches masterclasses in Sweden, Bulgaria, France, Germany and Switzerland. Since 2011 he has been Professor of Choral Conducting at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik Stuttgart. The chamber choir he founded won first prize at the International Choir Competition in Mosbach in 2014. In 2016 he founded the *figure humaine kammerchor*, with whom he regularly gives concerts at well-known festivals and records CDs. In addition to his work as a choral director, he also composes and reworks French and German songs for choir. Email: Denis.rouger@figurehumaine.de





figure humaine kammerchor © NB-Fotografie

LISTENING WITH THE EYE

SING&SIGN

SUSANNE HAUPT

Singer, Germany

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

SING&SIGN DESCRIBED IN ONE SENTENCE

The non-profit Leipzig-based association SING&SIGN and its inclusive ensemble, consisting of professional and semi-professional musicians, both hearing as well as hearing-impaired and multiply disabled, make vocal works particularly by J.S. Bach accessible to the sign language community by making music using sign language.

INTENTION

Bach's music, an essential part of German culture, is almost inaccessible to hearing-impaired performers or concertgoers. The idea of participation is often still lacking, especially in the field of classical music. Johann Sebastian Bach said: "All music should glorify God and delight people." To do justice to this statement, to delight all people and exclude no one, one of the intentions of this project is to combine classical sacred music culture with sign language culture, which are usually found side-by-side rather than together.

ENSEMBLE

The ensemble was founded in 2017 by the soprano Susanne Haupt and is under the patronage of the retired Thomaskantor Prof. Gotthold Schwarz, the director of the Leipzig Bach Festival Prof. Dr. Michael Maul and the director of the CI (Cochlear Implant) Centre, University Hospital Leipzig Prof. Dr. Michael Fuchs.

It now consists of about 50 hearing-impaired, multiply disabled and hearing participants, predominantly young adults, and brings together several groups:

- The professional musicians of the ensemble are renowned freelance vocal soloists and instrumentalists who form a baroque ensemble.
- The signing choir consists of semi-professional vocalists and people with various disabilities such as a hearing impairment, visual impairment, Tourette syndrome, APD (auditory processing disorder) or learning disability, autism, physical disability.



REGIONAL AND NATIONAL

The city of Leipzig is famous for music and Bach. In addition to weekly Bach cantatas by the Thomaner Choir, around 30 Bach Christmas oratorios and Passions are prepared and performed there each year. By hearing people for hearing people and therefore not accessible to those with disabilities. In order to offer the largely ignored hearing-impaired audience regular participation in this tradition, the ensemble offers an audio-visual, sometimes interactive and staged, accessible performance of these works during the liturgical year: cantatas of the Christmas Oratorio in the Advent season and St. John Passion in the Passion season, with selected cantatas or motets inbetween and a hands-on children's concert. The St. John Passion had its premiere in April of this year. From December 2023 onwards, there is a plan to perform an accessible-to-all cantata from the Christmas Oratorio every year in cooperation with the Tabor community until all six cantatas have been completed. The aim is for these concerts to have a permanent place in the concert calendars in and around Leipzig. The sign language community is supported with part of the concert revenue. This makes Leipzig the first city in Germany to regularly perform accessible Bach works with this pilot project. Having said that, this innovative, hitherto unique project will be introduced in other cities to reach the hearing-impaired in other places. This will happen partly in collaboration with other ensembles and institutions in order to reach out to as many people as possible with the theme of inclusion and to drive this idea forwards.

INCLUSION NEEDS CULTURE – CULTURE NEEDS INCLUSION

Hearing people learning German Sign Language (DGS) and the involvement of the hearing-impaired in musical performance is a step towards a smaller but special cultural community. Mainstream society should not expect, just because it is greater in numbers, other linguistic and cultural communities to understand their language and fully adapt to it.

The usual practice for interpreters or hearing-impaired individuals to sign next to and not with the musicians is, for example, an image of separation and not of unity for the ensemble. This is because the hearing and hearing-impaired mostly communicate only among themselves. It is for this reason that the hearing singers of the ensemble communicate directly with the deaf community in the area of music with the help of signs, out of respect for this culture, even if they are sign language beginners. The music becomes visible and tangible and thus gives something back to those from whom they are learning the language. The hearing-impaired also sign the music together with the hearing and thereby gain insights into the world of music. This allows an exchange to flow between the cultures, from which both sides benefit.

In addition to the texts of the musical works, the hearing participants learn the basics of sign language so that they can exchange ideas with the hearing-impaired and form a community.





INSIGHT INTO THE PROCESS

First, the biblical texts are translated and written into DGS in collaboration with hearing-impaired individuals, theologians and sign-language interpreters. They are then visualised via video as a learning aid for the singers. Since sign language differs from the grammar of the spoken language in terms of sentence structure and placement, there are two translations. One in DGS for the hearing-impaired and one in near-DGS for the hearing singers. In weekly ensemble rehearsals, all the



singers learn signs and music by heart: the hearing sing the vocal music and sign near-DGS under direction, the hearing-impaired sign in DGS in the metre of music, alongside the hearing, also under direction. This means that there is a musical director, a signing director for the hearing and another one for the hearing-impaired. Accompanied by an interpreter. Since no one has tried this before, a concept has been devised and is being continuously developed. As some of the hearing-impaired participants may also have other disabilities, intensive methodological-didactic and socio-educational work is also required. This also is also necessary for the staging of the performance, the rehearsals for which follow the musical signing rehearsals and where the soloists and the orchestra are also involved. The singers also visualise instrumental motifs with signs to represent a large part of the whole piece. All



organisation such as administration, direction, event staging, rehearsals, public relations work, acquisition, financing, concepts, association work, programming... is so far exclusively done by the inclusive ensemble and offers all development opportunities.

AIMS

Cultural traditions and values are lived out through the collective nurturing of sacred vocal music, especially Bach's legacy, by and for the hearing-impaired and the hearing. In addition to Bach, the concert series "Listening with the Eyes", also features other composers. Through this, barriers and fear of contact between the hearing and the hearing-impaired are broken down. The inclusion of disabled people in recreational music and education, as well as social and cultural participation, is the main purpose of the project and contributes to the support and public perception of this minority. The focus is on

the joint action and joint experience of the hearing-impaired and the hearing. From project development to organisation to implementation.

TARGET AUDIENCE

In the same way as it is for the ensemble, a concert should be beneficial to both hearing and hearing-impaired audiences. Hearing-impaired people, regardless of whether they have been deaf from birth, have an auditory processing and perception disorder, become hearing-impaired or deaf only over time, cannot perceive music or can only perceive it to a limited extent, partly via vibrations in the room, hearing aids, hearing implants or their remaining hearing capacity. They are supported in classifying perceived sounds such as the distinction between high and low tones or the assignment of instruments and voice groups. The visualisation, using signs, supports the hearing to differentiate the individual voices by ear. The signs make the polyphony visible and thus give the music an additional experiential dimension and emotional depth.

ACHIEVEMENTS

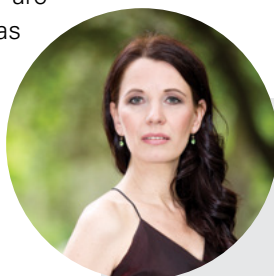
In 2022 the ensemble performed at the Bach Festival and the German Choral Festival in Leipzig as well as at the Thuringian Bach Weeks in Erfurt. It made guest appearances at the Heinrich-Schütz Music Festival in Dresden, Gera and Weißenfels, and at the Choral Festival in Magdeburg with the concert programme "Schütz-mit den Augen hören" [Schütz-listening with the eyes].

They also performed Bach's Art of the Fugue at the Iserlohn Theatre together with the Delian Quartet and were invited to various workshops at conferences, for example the symposium of the German Deaf Association in Berlin. Through these emotionally moving activities, which are unique in the classical music sector, the ensemble has come to the notice of the German Deaf Association and the New York Times, among others.

The ensemble took one of the winning places in the competition "Free Broadcast Time for Free Artists" organised by the broadcaster Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR). Likewise, with "Beethoven- mit den Augen hören" [Beethoven-listening with the eyes], it won a place in the video competition "Beethoven... anders" [Beethoven...differently] organised by the Bundesmusikverband Chor und Orchester [Federal Choir and Orchestra Association].

Translated by Laura Massey, UK

All photos © Joerg Singer Photography



Soprano SUSANNE HAUPT, who grew up in Cairo, Berlin and Dresden, studied classical singing at the Leipzig Musikhochschule. She has made guest appearances in various productions of the Leipzig Opera and Musikalische Komödie. At the centre of her artistic work is the singing of early music. She gives concerts with various solo programmes in different chamber music formations. As a concert soloist, she is mainly engaged in oratorio singing, working with renowned conductors and ensembles. The singer's greatest passion are the works of Johann Sebastian Bach. In order to enable hearing-impaired people to also participate in his music, the soprano founded the inclusive ensemble "SING&SIGN" with which she puts on accessible performances of many of his sacred vocal works with sign language within the concert series she conceived called "BACH-mit den Augen hören" [BACH-listening with the eyes]. As a singing teacher, she also passes on her knowledge as a voice coach. She worked as a children's voice trainer at the Leipzig Opera and is currently working on the project "Sing yourself in" at the "Johann Sebastian Bach" music school in Leipzig. Email: singandsign@web.de





INTERVIEW WITH NILO ALCALA AND MARK ANTHONY CARPIO

ONOMATOPOEIA IN VOCAL MUSIC

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)



M. Alcala, you have written several vocal music pieces using onomatopoeia. What was the reason you chose not to use a pre-existing text – or to write one? What role does onomatopoeia play in most of your works?

Nilo Alcala (NA): As a Philippine-born composer I have made it my mission to promote Philippine music and culture. A large number of my choral works are based on or inspired by chants from various regions of the Philippines. The main use of onomatopoeia in my choral works is to imitate the instrumental soundscape of the region where a specific chant is from. So for me, onomatopoeia does NOT replace an actual language but works side-by-side a specific dialect.

For chants from the southern Philippines, I use onomatopoeic phrases such as “tm taka taka tm tm” or “di-gi-ding ding di-gi ding” or “dang taka dang tang” to imitate either metallic or wooden percussion instruments from the region, as well as actual rhythms from their percussion-based music. (Listen to Kaisa-isa Niyan: <https://shorturl.gg/Z5FH3tE>)

I also use onomatopoeia as a word-painting tool. For example, made-up words like “zzssh” or “trrrr” may elicit images of chaos or disruption, as opposed to humming, which is inherently peaceful.

What challenges are introduced by the use of this particular language when composing vocal music?

NA: One common challenge is the pronunciation of these onomatopoeic words — but only if no pronunciation guide is available. For Filipinos, we would automatically read the onomatopoeic syllable-words “dum dum” or “tum tum” as “doom doom” or “toom toom” (and without aspirating the consonants). However, I’ve noticed that without a pronunciation guide, Western choirs will read the letter “u” as a schwa, and automatically aspirate the consonants. But this is easily corrected with a pronunciation guide or by using the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet).

Mr Carpio, you recently recorded a CD called “Onomatopoeia” with the Philippine Madrigal Singers. What inspired you to record this programme?

Mark Anthony Carpio (MAC): Since the beginnings of the Philippine Madrigal Singers, our founder always made it a point to share and promote Philippine choral compositions in all our concerts. Since I became choirmaster in 2001, I have resolved to continue this mission. Moreover, I have committed myself to the preservation of these works through recordings, starting with composers who come from the ranks of the singers. “Onomatopoeia,” a collection

of works by Nilo Alcala II, is one of the first albums we have come up with. Nilo, who sang with me from 2003 to 2006, contributed significantly to our repertoire with his original compositions. Many of his works require the voice to imitate the sound of Philippine native instruments, thus presenting an aural representation of what the text or story is all about. Things came to a head when I decided he had contributed enough works to put together an album.

What were the challenges you faced in using a language not made up of usual words?

MAC: First of all, Nilo’s works are based on existing languages. What he did was employ syllables that approximate the sounds of native instruments as an accompaniment to the melodies. Sometimes he would also make use of individual syllables from the words themselves. Even though these languages are spoken in our country, it doesn’t necessarily mean we understand them, nor do we know exactly how to pronounce the words. Many of these languages require different ways of shaping the mouth and coloring the voice. We would always ask for guidance, either from a native speaker, or from someone who has done some research about the language such as Nilo himself.

Which pronunciation rules did you apply to the onomatopoeia – those of the Philippine language or another one?

NA: I use Philippine pronunciation ‘rules’ for vowels, much like Italian vowels.

PHILIPPINE DICTION

Vowels are similar to Italian ones:

Vowel	IPA	Diphthong	IPA
/a/	A	/ay/	aɪ
/e/	ε	/oy/	ɔɪ
/i/	ɪ	/uy/	ʊi
/o/	O	/iw/	iʊ
/u/	U	/aw/	aʊ
		/ey/	ɛɪ

Consonants are always hard and non-aspirated. The letter “R” is always rolled.

What opportunities does the use of onomatopoeia – not a real language, not used in daily life – offer for vocal music?

NA: Onomatopoeia comes up once in a while in everyday conversation, when one is describing certain situations that involve sound. In my music, it is usually to imitate the musical instruments of a certain region where I got a specific chant from.

MAC: Composers of vocal/choral music spend much time choosing the text and words for their compositions. Sometimes, they are interested in the deep meaning of the words. At other times, they are interested in how

colorful or attractive to the ear the words are. In the Philippines, we have quite a lot of children's rhymes which do not make sense but are nevertheless still pleasurable to listen to. It is natural for us to invent words that are onomatopoeic in nature. It should not be surprising for these words to find their way into our songs.

Thank you!

Edited by Anita Shaperd, USA



Trailblazing composer NILO ALCALA is carving out a legacy for Philippine Arts internationally. He is the first Philippine-born composer to receive the Copland House Residency Award, and to be commissioned by the Grammy-winner LA Master Chorale.

He is also the first Filipino-American artist to be featured as Musical America Worldwide's Artist of the Month, and winner of the Professional Division of The American Prize. He was a member and resident composer of the Philippine Madrigal Singers and has received two Anin ng Dangal awards from two Philippine Presidents. His works have been performed in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas and his commissions include the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra, C4, The Esoterics, Asia-Europe Foundation, Andrea O. Veneracion International Choral Festival; Korean Ministry of Culture; NAMCYA, Manila Symphony Orchestra, among others. Notable performances include World Youth Choir, Asia Pacific Youth Choir, C3LA, San Francisco Girls Chorus, and the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. Asian Cultural Council grantee, Alcala was a Billy Joel Fellow at Syracuse University where he received the Irene L. Crooker Music Award.

<https://www.niloalcala.com>



MARK ANTHONY CARPIO is the choirmaster of the Philippine Madrigal Singers. He also heads the Andrea O. Veneracion Sing Philippines Foundation and spearheads several choral music development initiatives in the country. Mark earned his master's degree in Choral Conducting and a bachelor's degree in Piano from the University of the Philippines.

HELPING TOOLS

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

THE WORLD WIDE WEB IS AN ALMOST INFINITE SOURCE OF HELPING TOOLS FOR SINGERS AND CONDUCTORS. HERE ARE SOME TO SUPPORT YOUR CHOIR TO SING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE – KNOWING WHAT THEY ARE SINGING ABOUT, AND HELPING THEM TO GET THE RIGHT PRONUNCIATIONS!

Ipipapa generates phonetic transcriptions in IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) in all languages for singers. The advantage is obvious: with IPA you can map every sound that exists in any world language. In order to facilitate easy use, Ipipapa also offers some audio recordings, translations, and introductory texts about IPA. The site is available in English and German.

<https://www.ipipapa.com>



proforá offers downloadable pronunciation recordings of songs, arias, folk songs, and choral works recorded by singers in their mother tongue. 300 works in 12 languages are already available, and further requests can be submitted. Prices start at EUR 0.99 for short pieces, and season prices are available for choirs. No subscription is necessary. The site is available in English, German, and French. Proforá is a business member of IFCM.

<https://www.profora.net/en>



proforá :

lieder-net

Online since 1995, LiederNet Archive is the world's largest public database of vocal texts and translations. The Archive holds information on over 186,000 classical vocal works, several thousand of these being choral, along with more than 39,000 translations (contributed mostly by volunteers) that span over a hundred languages.

<https://www.lieder.net>

Musica International

In the Musica International database (with about 200,000 choral scores), conductors and singers will not only find detailed bibliographic information but will also have access to a video of an interpretation of the piece, find a translation of the text in several languages, listen to the pronunciation by a native speaker and much more. All IFCM members have full unrestricted access to the Musica International Database.

<http://www.musicanet.org>



Translated by Clayton Parr, USA

RELATION BETWEEN TEXT AND MELODY IN THE HUNGARIAN, KHANTY, AND SÁMI FOLK SINGING TRADITIONS

ILDIKÓ TAMÁS

Linguist, folklorist, ethnologist, Budapest, Hungary

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

SEVERAL PEOPLE HAVE DEALT WITH THE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TEXT AND MELODY IN HUNGARIAN FOLK SONG, FROM ZOLTÁN KODÁLY TO THE ETHNOMUSICOLOGIST LAJOS VARGYAS AND THE LINGUIST-PHILOLOGIST LÁSZLÓ DEZSŐ. NEVERTHELESS, THE TOPIC HARDLY APPEARS IN THE 21ST-CENTURY'S RESEARCH TOPICS IN HUNGARY.

First I will summarize the research results of Hungarian prosody for the sake of comparison in my article. Then I will describe the similarities and differences in the use of possibilities inherent in prosody in the case of different cultures, using the example of nearly and distantly related people. Languages that belong to the same linguistic family have similar prosody features. This influence appears in the singing tradition, so alongside Hungarian, Khanty¹, and Sámi², we could also add Finnish, Estonian, Mordvin, and other examples with similar features (for example: Sebeok 1952, Hajdú 1982). Of course, specific examples only allow for a relative comparison because – in contrast to strophic folk songs with a fixed structure, mostly sung with a constant number of syllables – the basis of Sámi

musical thinking, for example, is the melody with a more flexible, motivic structure. A slightly closer analogy to the Hungarian phenomenon is the prosodic toolkit of Khanty individual songs that we know about from the studies of W. Steinitz, R. Austerlitz, É. Schmidt, and M. Csepregi. In Uralic linguistics, there is a well-known tradition of research on verse syntax that can serve as a lesson in musical studies (for example, Steinitz 1934, Austerlitz 1958, Lotz 1960). In addition to the musical

approach, I also use the linguistic interpretation of prosody in my article. In languages, as well as in text, suprasegmental tools (tone, pitch, stress, pause, etc.) are involved in shaping what is said; the latter can occasionally modify the meaning conveyed by the words. This aspect plays a particularly important role in melodies with an informal structure close to speech.

It is a general characteristic of Hungarian singing that in genres close to speech both the accentuation conditions as well as the intonation of sentences reflect natural speech. For example, the melody line of the lamenter can be matched to the



1 Khanty people are the indigenous people of North-Western Siberia (Russia), around the Ob, Irtysh and Ishim rivers with their tributaries. Estimated total population: 28-30 thousand people.

2 Sami people are the indigenous population of Northern Scandinavia. Most of them live in Norway, Finland, and Sweden. Some thousands live in Russia. Estimated total population: 100-150 thousand people.

line of the lamenting speech melody, i.e. it describes a descending line (Szomjas-Schiffert 1996: 36–43). The upward melodic closure creates a feeling of incompleteness in Hungarian. Reciting melodies that rhythmically depict speech is close to informal singing. The instinctive musical use of suprasegmental tools is also well exemplified by our work rhymes, in which it is unthinkable that the emphasis of speech and melody are not in harmony. According to Antal Békefi, the rhythm increases the pace of the work, and the upward pitch jump represents the peak of the effort. Furthermore, the use of greater force is achieved by thickening the rhythm (Békefi 2005: 44–45).

Hungarian children's rhymes and playing songs are quite different from this phenomenon. The rhythm takes precedence in their structure of pairs of beats or motifs. Therefore, the emphasis and segments of the text are often shifted which can also make it difficult to understand the content.

In strophic folk songs, despite the solid rhythmic structure, one can observe the effort to harmonize small details of melody and text. The adaptive scoring indicates this in the Hungarian singer's performance. In this regard, János Bereczky puts it as follows:

"The Hungarian people [...] also sing eighths with a certain internal flexibility, one might say with small punctuation, clearly and exclusively depending on the shortness and length of text syllables. It was created by the same unified sense of language [...]" (Bereczky 2003: 448).

In addition, as Lajos Vargyas points out:

"the rubato, i.e. free, changing rhythm, is in principle adapted to the text. However, this is not always the case: precisely because the rhythm is free, because it does not confine the language to strictly measured time limits, it does not even have to follow the length relationships and accents of the language."

That is why musical requirements prevail. Variety, highlighting, and lengthening certain places, climaxes, or stops of the melody line; where rich ornamentation surrounds the melody, the individual melisma groups do not always extend the notes according to the syllable length with dividing a phrase according to its musical needs. It (rarely) happens that they suppress requirements of the language for the sake of a rhythmic turn, [...] for the sake of some musical effect" (Vargyas).

Even in the Ob-Ugric singing tradition, there are strict rules for the correct coordination of fine details of text and melody. Katalin Lázár noticed that the division of musical units often does not match that of textual units (Lázár 1987; Lázár – Sipos 2008). However, half-line shifts of the text in Khanty songs cannot completely overturn the accentuation conditions. Éva Schmidt invested a lot of time and energy in mapping out the prosody of Khanty songs. She found that "a very complicated toolkit – mainly the filler syllables – ensures that the accents belonging to the musical, linguistic, and metrical levels are coordinated. The location of filler syllables is far from accidental or imaginative" (cited by: Lázár – Sipos 2008: 13). Her opinion is consistent with the results of previous similar research (see Steinitz 1934; Austerlitz 1958; Lotz 1960). Of course, we could list similar examples at length, the comparison

of which provides many parallels with the Hungarian material. Prosodic features are among the most durable phenomena of languages. It demonstrates the well-known fact that all Uralic languages have fixed (first syllable) stress, even if their other features have developed over the millennia. This fixed emphasis prevails in the singing folklore of peoples belonging to the Uralic language family, as documented by the best-examined Hungarian and Khanty material.

A prosodic phenomenon different from the ones presented so far is found among the Finno-Ugric-





Nunnanen, Finland © IldikóTamás

speaking peoples in the Sámi singing tradition. The special feature of their folk songs, the yoiks, is that they hardly contain any meaningful text: mainly nonsense words of one or two syllables sung to the melody. According to the Sámi writer and poet Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, not only the independent semantic value of the words but also the prosodic construction itself is involved in the transmission of the message in yoik texts. The grammatically and semantically uninterpretable elements that make up the majority of the text blocks – e.g. valla-valla, vaja haja, lai le, loilo, loilá, lolai, loo, lolloloo, lul-luu, reiun loilo, na, nuu-nuu nunnu, njollo... – are probably intended to promote the continuity of the music. These syllables form the pure basis of musical structure (Valkeapää 1984). Valkeapää's explanation of the use of text blocks also

includes, albeit tangentially, statements related to prosody, although he only talks about the continuity of music and not about correct rhythmicity in this context. The Sámi yoik often disregards the emphasis requirements of the language, since the musically and rhythmically stressed sounds do not fit the stressed places of natural speech while at the same time a syllable that is otherwise unstressed in natural speech comes out for a longer sustained or emphatic vocal sound (Tamás 2001: 302–303). With the frequent use of filler elements – if we start from the singing practice of other Finno-Ugric peoples – it would be possible to adjust the meaningful text passages in the song to the right place in terms of emphasis. The Khanty singers do not operate with rhythm either – although correct prosody is important to them. Instead, they shape (add or shorten) the text to achieve good stress distribution. This is not what happens in yoik singing, on the contrary: nonsense words supplementing a meaningful text rarely serve the metrical balance or the coordination of accents. This phenomenon can be considered an important characteristic of the Sámi performance style, in which perhaps the intentional weakening of text, maintaining the audience's attention, playfulness, and the performer's prowess may also play a role. The function of prosodic shifts of yoiks can be similar to the shift of line structure found in Khanty's performance. According to Katalin Lázár, the different, intersecting structure of text and melody creates tension and is a means of "ending" the song, which "requires a concentration that lifts both the performer and the listener out of everyday reality" (Lázár 1987: 217). In the case of Khanty "the purpose of this editing method is not only to make the sometimes hundreds of lines of songs enjoyable and varied but also to create and maintain the emotional state necessary for both the performance and reception" (Lázár 1987: 217). Similar motivations can be at work in the case of Sámi yoik singers.

Therefore in the dialectic of the interaction of text and melody similar and contradictory tendencies can be observed, even among speakers of related languages. I have illustrated this, in a nutshell, using the example of Hungarian, Ob-Ugric, and Sámi singing traditions.

Edited by Rebeka Angstmann, UK

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ILDIKÓ TAMÁS PhD, linguist, folklorist, ethnologist. She works as a senior research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology (Research Centre for the Humanities, Eötvös Loránd Research Network, Budapest). Her research fields are Sámi languages and folklore, interdisciplinary study of Sámi yoiks, „nonsense” texts in folklore, prosodic and etymological studies, children's folklore, and online folklore. Her selected works in English linking to the present paper are: The Voice of the Devil (?) The Sami Song in the “Cross”-fire of Various Discourses, In Bea, Vidacs; Éva, Pócs (eds.) Faith, Knowledge, and Doubt in Religious Thinking, Balassi Kiadó (2020); Tamás Ildikó: Field, data, access. Fieldwork among the Sámi from the perspective of assimilation and ethnic revitalization processes, Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 63, 2018; Tamás Ildikó: The Colours of the Polar Lights: Symbols in the Construction of Sami Identity, In Szilárd, Tibor; Tóth, Roza; Kirillova, Jüva Sullöv (eds.) Vabahuso moistoq Hummogu-Euruupa kirändüisin. Vabaduse Konsept Ida-Euroopa kirjandustes. The concept of freedom in the literatures of Eastern Europe, Voro Instituudi Toimondusoq (2017); Tamás Ildikó: “Few words are sung in it” Questions of Methodology in Studying Sami Yoik Texts, In Kajsa, Andersson (ed.) L'Image du Sápmi III., Humanistic Studies at Örebro University (2013). Email: tamas.ildiko11@gmail.com



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
Emily Kuo Vong

**ISTANBUL WELCOMES WSCM 2023
IN SPRING**
Nevin Şahin

**VÍCTOR DANIEL LOZADA, WINNER OF THE
IFCM COMPOSITION COMPETITION 2021**
Interview by María Guinand



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



EMILY KUO VONG

IFCM President

Dear all,

Now we have stepped into the new year 2023. First, I would like to express my warmest greetings and sincerest wishes to all the friends of the IFCM!

As the whole world recovered from the pandemic, the entire choral community also arose with new hope and prosperity in 2022. The IFCM and its members organized many choral events in different countries in which we happily gathered with our friends again after a long separation.

2022 was the 40th anniversary of the IFCM. We celebrated it during the 3rd IFCM World Choral EXPO in September in Portugal. It was a marvelous occasion to review the development of the IFCM over the past four decades, with more than 600 IFCM members, singers, conductors, choral educators, and volunteers coming to this beautiful country to join the landmark celebration. They participated in a series of gala concerts, workshops, and master classes to seek innovative discussion on choral music. Meanwhile, by holding the World Choral EXPO, the centuries-old elegance of Portugal was brought to the international artistic stage.

At the last gala concert during the 3rd IFCM World Choral EXPO, we announced that the next World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM) would be in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2023. Then, with the

great help of our main partners of WSCM 2023 – the Turkish Choral Association and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey – the IFCM organized its Board meetings in November in Istanbul. These Board meetings were fruitful and productive, discussing and deciding many matters on the development of the IFCM in the future, especially implementing a number of details for the next WSCM. I believe WSCM will shine in this historic city and illuminate the global choral world.

Besides this flagship event, IFCM will continue to serve our members in 2023. We will make continuous efforts to bring benefits to our members, enhance the operation between the choral and the non-choral areas, and help various countries to develop choral education. At the same time, we will work on a new strategy for IFCM membership recruitment – the project of Creating Futures. We hope more people will have opportunities to access high-level choral activities in the IFCM.

And finally, my dear friends, 2023 is new and hopeful, another entirely thrilling starting point for us to devote ourselves to choral music. The world is full of conflict and opposition, however, we could make a difference through choral music, diverse cultures, and mutual understanding!

TO ALL VOLUNTEERS CONNECTING OUR CHORAL WORLD

Happy Holidays!
WISHING EVERYONE JOY, PEACE, AND PROSPERITY!



ISTANBUL WELCOMES WSCM 2023 IN SPRING

NEVIN ŞAHİN

Choral Culture Association volunteer, Türkiye

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

LOCATED IN THE FORTUNATE GEOGRAPHICAL ZONE WHERE ALL FOUR SEASONS ARE EXPERIENCED, ISTANBUL ENJOYS ONE OF THE MOST COLORFUL SPRINGS IN THE WORLD. ALTHOUGH SOME HEAVY AFTERNOON SHOWERS CAN TURN THE CITY GREY, THEY ARE ALMOST ALWAYS FOLLOWED BY RAINBOWS, STRETCHING HIGH UP ABOVE THE BOSPHORUS STRAIT, BUILDING A COLORFUL BRIDGE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. WHEN THE RAINBOWS FADE AWAY, THE SUN HEADS BELOW THE HORIZON, PAINTING THE SKIES WITH BEAUTIFUL PINK AND PURPLE HUES.

Having celebrated the equinox in March, the Istanbulite skyline witnesses longer days in April, hence more time to get immersed in the exquisite colors of sunset. With the waxing crescent in the night sky, the lights of the stars meet the city lights, spreading a shimmery blanket of reflections over The Sea of Marmara.

These are not the only things above the horizon which offer Istanbul one of the most colorful springs ever to be found in the world. The

city is famous for its Judas-trees which blossom during the spring. Similar to the Japanese Sakura blooms appreciated by millions if not billions every other spring, the Judas-trees stretch an imperial purple stripe across the Bosphorus in April. A color so significant, the trees were even claimed to be the inspiration behind the royal Byzantine clothing. After the Byzantine Empire faded from the historic scene, the Ottoman Empire became associated with another gorgeous flower, the tulip.

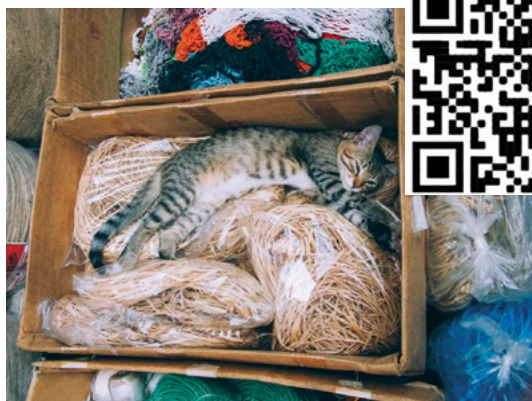
Claimed to have spread to Western Europe through Istanbul back in the 16th century, the tulips still rejoice in festive springs all around the city's parks with all possible colors of the palette, from the whitest to jet black. The efflorescing trees and pullulating flowers influenced the blossoming of poetry and music as well, an idyllic example being the song in the Makam Nihâvend mode by 20th century composer Arif Sami Toker on the Tulip Era poet Nedîm's "Erişti nev-bahar eyyâmı, açıldı gül-i gülşen" (So arrived the spring days, blossomed the roses in roseries).

It is impossible to imagine a colorful Istanbul covered with spring flowers without fluffy cats purring and snuggling around the flowers. The symbol of hospitality and love for animals and the icon of contemporary urban culture in Istanbul, cats of every color and size can appear everywhere in the city, even having glorious stage appearances in important international meetings and stellar concerts of world renown ensembles. The feline experience in the city makes it easier to understand how those soft paws



Judas trees blossoming before Maiden's Tower © Kız Kulesi

kept inspiring composers from Scarlatti to Stravinsky, and how challenging it is to be performing on the stage in black clothes which easily get colorfully covered in cat fur. They might well be one reason behind choirs shifting gradually from all black dress code to a more vivid, polychromatic staging.



Fluffy cats of Istanbul napping, eating and napping again © Ki Adams

The kaleidoscopic views of Istanbul in spring make it perfect timing for WSCM2023. The mission of inclusion refers to all the different colors of musical traditions around the globe, and Istanbul is excited about hosting choirs of many different traditions and choral leaders from various backgrounds during this colorful time of the year. Being the cultural hub of many different states and empires throughout history, Istanbul has always witnessed the coexistence of different musical cultures. Mosques being next to Orthodox churches mingled different religious musicalities into each other. Monophonic and microtonal singing of traditional music shared the same stage with Western polyphony, composers inspired by the Eastern Mediterranean microtones and Western European tonality brought to life unforgettable musical phrases, city dwellers took pride in the woodwind festival



Galip Dede Caddesi leads from the end of İstiklal Caddesi down to the Karaköy area of old Istanbul. Along the steep, cobbled-stone street are music shops featuring traditional Turkish instruments © Ki Adams



People flowing like a river through İstiklal street Taksim (close to the WSCM venue)
© Serhat Erdoğan

dedicated to clarinet only a few years apart from the kanun festival celebrating the Middle Eastern musical heritage. Last but not the least, the city became a center for appreciation of choral music, where choirs of different musical styles and backgrounds perform in harmony, ranging from Turkish folk music to Armenian sharagans, jazz to early music, from all-male Byzantine choirs to women's choirs, with all levels of professionalism and all age groups, the choral music scene of Istanbul is as colorful as its springs.

With the WSCM ideal of integration and inclusion, Istanbul offers the best setting for conversation, cultural appreciation, and collaboration, where choirs and choral music enthusiasts from all around the world can come together and not only enjoy the music scene but also broaden their horizons by sharing their own colors with one another. Now the time for acknowledging the beauty of choral singing is approaching, right on time with the fanfare of Istanbulite spring colors.

<https://wscmistanbul2023.com>

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The walls along Galip Dede Caddesi are covered with colourful street art, a perfect backdrop for street musicians. Cangöz Müzik is one of the officially approved musical instrument suppliers of the Republic of Turkey. © Ki Adams



NEVIN ŞAHİN is a performer, composer, and award-winning researcher of makam music, currently an assistant professor of music theories at Hacettepe University Ankara State Conservatory. Beside her academic work, Nevin is active in the Turkish choral music scene as a singer in both monophonic art music choirs and polyphonic choirs.



Maiden's Tower in sunset
© İbrahim Uzun



Top left: fresh fruit juice stands are found throughout Istanbul for a refreshing pick-me-up: pomegranate, orange, lemon, grapefruit, and more.
 Middle left: Spice shop in the harbourside Eminönü area, within the Fatih district, nearby the Grand Bazaar.
 Top right: Sculpture in Taksim Square, placed appropriately in the front of Atatürk Cultural Center (Atatürk Kültür Merkezi) by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi).
 Photos © Ki Adams



Aerial night view of Istanbulite mosques © Aydın Kiraz

VÍCTOR DANIEL LOZADA, WINNER OF THE IFCM COMPOSITION COMPETITION 2021

Interview by María Guinand, IFCM Vice President for Latin America

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

When and where were you born?

I was born in Valencia, Carabobo province, Venezuela, on June 4, 1979.

Tell us a bit about your musical training in general.

I started at the Sebastián Echeverría Lozano School of Music, and graduated from the recorder school in Valencia. In choral conducting I studied with Maestro César Alejandro Carrillo at the Conservatorio Simón Bolívar and in the choral leadership program with Maestra Lourdes Sánchez. I have done many courses, workshops, and masterclasses with conductors such as William Alvarado and Josep Vila, among others.

Who were your favorite composition teachers that inspired you?

I have had three mentors in composition: Franklin Garcés, César Alejandro Carrillo, and Dante Andreo. Throughout my career as a lover of music, composers of various genres have influenced me, among them Anton Bruckner, Francis Poulenc, my mentor Carrillo, Astor Piazzolla, Hans Zimmer, Henry Martínez, and Juan Luis Guerra.

How would you define your compositional style?

I have not been inclined to label my music. Those who have heard my compositions have said that they are characterized by a lyrical and subtle style, like in the soundtracks

of romantic films. In that sense I base my music on jazz sonorities, while seeking out the directness of choral writing.

What has your experience been as a choral singer or vocalist?

I've been connected to choral music from an early age. As a youngster I was a member of my municipal choir. During my college years, I sang in the Orfeón de La Universidad de Carabobo, and was leader of strings for four years. I had the opportunity to study voice with Maestro William Alvarado for five years, while at the same time singing with the Coro Sinfónico Regional Carabobo.

I have led choirs of various types. During 12 years of work in "El Sistema" I founded "núcleos" (arts learning centers) directing children and youth choirs with national and international profiles. Currently, I sing as a tenor in various choral groups in Madrid, Spain, and I direct Coral Génesis, also in Madrid.

What poets inspire you?

There are so many poets that I couldn't possibly mention them all. I can start with Arthur Rimbaud, John Donne, Pablo Neruda, and Eugenio Montejó. There are others, not poets exactly, whose writing is exquisite such as Gabriel García Márquez and Julio Cortázar.



What themes do you like to explore in your choral works?

Recently, my compositions have been based more on sacred themes and texts that allude to love or nature. I am very interested in creating works which deal with vulnerable or forgotten populations such as the elderly, so the rest of the world can reflect on them.

What are your next composition projects?

I am highly motivated by composition competitions with specific criteria. The next one will be run by "Orfeo Catalá" in the coming year. I have a personal goal of creating a song cycle for children's choir that includes objects and body percussion. The craft of making choral arrangements is always central to my work, and often the occasion arises for me to create something for my choir, or for any colleagues who ask.

<https://victordaniellozada.com>

Translated from Spanish by Joshua Habermann, USA

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CHORAL WORLD NEWS



**30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LITTLE
SINGERS OF ARMENIA**
Marine Margaryan

**THE INTERNATIONAL CHORAL
ENSEMBLES OF HOLLYWOOD FILM
MUSIC**
Micah Bland

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LITTLE SINGERS OF ARMENIA

MARINE MARGARYAN

Pianist and pedagogue, Armenia

© Vahan Stepanyan

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

"These children sing so flawlessly that they infuriate even God."
Cosmos Galilaes, Artistic Director and Conductor, Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra, 1996

"What Tigran Hekekyan presents here on the stage is impossible to achieve on earth, such a performance is only possible in the Heavens."
Gido Kokars, Professor at the Latvian Academy of Music, Founder and Conductor of the Ave Sol Choir, Latvia, 2016



For over thirty years the Little Singers of Armenia, founded by Maestro Tigran Hekekyan, has been an internationally acclaimed chorus that has captured hearts across the world. Today we celebrate alongside them as we revisit a long list of their accomplishments and a heartwarming story of dedication and love through unparalleled challenges.

Barely three years after the ensemble's inception, in 1995 during the post-Soviet era, while conditions were unraveling in Armenia, the choir embarked on an important and demanding fifty-day concert tour. During the tour, it performed in Poland, Belgium, Germany, France, Switzerland, the European Festival of Youth Choirs in Basel, and in 20 states across the USA. It was invited to perform for UNESCO's 50th anniversary and the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Charter. Before reaching its third year the Little Singers of Armenia had already won two gold and one silver medal, as well as the Grand Prix during the Golden Gate International Children's Choral Festival in San Francisco.

"There is no chorus in Israel with such quality. Perhaps nowhere in the world. Such professionalism, love towards art and music that is conveyed from the performer to the audience. You are world-class musicians and it is a great honor for us to have the opportunity to listen to you. We are grateful."

Rita Vinokur, Head Rehovot Conservatory of Music Chair, Cultural Department, Rehovot, 2017

"It was fantastic. I have attended many concerts, but I have never listened to such flawless music, perfect execution, and illuminating voices... let me say that in Heaven it can't be better."

Rev. Thomas Roedder, Saint Moritz, Switzerland, 2016

"All the choir conductors who were present at your concerts conveyed to us that they have never heard a choir with such quality and perhaps never will in the future. This was like a miracle which took place in their life."

Ieva Krivickaitė, Director, Ugnele Children's Choir, 2019

"I always say to my singers that we should always strive for excellence but not perfection, because perfection does not exist. But today, having listened to the Little Singers of Armenia I realized that perfection sometimes exists"

André Ducret, Founder and Conductor of the Saint Michel Choir, Fribourg, Switzerland, 2016

"Amazing choir. I hardly ever come across such choirs. You are not only singers but also high-quality artists. It is no wonder now that you are called the ambassadors of Armenian music."

Soulyus Lausa, Conductor, Director, National Cultural Center of Lithuania, 2019



From the start, Little Singers of Armenia was received with resounding praise and admiration. This reputation, the heart of its legacy, would be upheld throughout its decades of performing and on renowned stages across the world, such as the Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, the Victoria Hall in Geneva, the Konserthuset in Stockholm, and the Berliner Philharmoniker Concert Hall, Opéra Garnier in Paris, etc.

In 2001, the choir would be recognized as an important ambassador by the European Federation of Choirs of the Union which granted the choir the honorary title of "The Cultural Ambassadors of Europe." But perhaps the greatest achievement for Maestro Tigran Hekekyan might have come in 2002 when the International Federation for Choral Music invited the Little Singers of Armenia to participate in the Sixth World Symposium in Minneapolis. It was one of only twenty best choirs from around the world invited to perform.

The Little Singers of Armenia became widely recognized for its colorful repertoire from ancient music, 5th century Armenian spiritual chants and hymns to complicated 21st century works, medieval works, Western classical music, popular songs from around the world, and jazz. In a short time, the children's choir had reached a remarkably high level of artistry and professionalism

– easily keeping pace with well-established professional choruses.

As a result, the choir became a highly sought-after ensemble for many contemporary composers. This led to many new pieces which would forever alter the musical landscape for choral music. These newly written works would stretch boundaries for choruses and generate new possibilities for composers – often raising the bar too high for the other choruses around the world. Even in these extreme musical settings, Little Singers of Armenia would perform these demanding pieces with ease and clarity. With emotion that was uniquely its own, genuinely manifested by every member on stage, creating a unified and sublime sound.

"The choir sings very soulfully and emotionally. The pronunciation is very beautiful, the sound is wonderful. While singing, everyone's eyes tell a little story."

Gunter Berger, Director, Dresden Philharmonic Choir, 2019

"This choir is one of the greatest choirs in the world. The Little Singers of Armenia stands out for the love, warmth, enthusiasm, and joy towards each other. This is why they are so exceptional. The conductor is wonderful. He is capable of creating a musical dialogue between the audience and the singers. He is one of the five best conductors I know."

Bo Johansson, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Adolf Fredrik Girls Choir, Stockholm, Sweden, 2012

"I am aware of the high quality of this choir. But I cannot imagine how they manage to constantly strive for even higher quality. This choir, simply, is just perfect."

Michel Hostettler, Composer, Conductor, Vevey, Switzerland, 2016

"This choir is a congenial world, woven by the multicolor threads of aspirations and dreams, very different from gloomy reality."

Sveta Barsegyan, 15 years old, II soprano, Little Singers of Armenia



Today, the choir is one of the best in the world due to its special leadership under Maestro Hekekyan. As a result, he has become a sought-after pedagogue whose methods for engaging youth and leading choruses have been spreading rapidly across the international musical community. His leadership, through constant cultural changes and varying interests of support for classical music, demonstrates what is possible when one's work is fortified with love and also a relentless amount of commitment.

While Tigran is often credited for his professional approach, his work with the choir is multi-dimensional and holistic. He describes it as:

The Little Singers of Armenia is first and foremost a state of mind, a collective unity, an assembly of people of the same worldview. A family, in the real and traditional sense of the word, where there are clear demarcated human and moral standards. Here, every member of the family works together. The older tries to help and mentor the younger, the younger taking example from the older. It is like a microcosmic world, where there is hierarchy, discipline, law, and order, all delineated by the members of the choir. However, in contrast to the world, where things are resolved by force, where connections and channels of influence provide underserving leverages, and where competition blurs standards and morals, the choir works honestly and harmoniously. Here, choices are made only after skills have been evaluated. When children join, their only true responsibility is to grow into educated and valued citizens in our community and world. They learn to stand shoulder-to-shoulder, not only during performances but in all life situations. In the Little Singers of Armenia, the children learn about love, living fully, appreciating nature, and the history of their homeland.

My most cherished moments are during concerts, seeing the children's sparkling eyes radiant under the sounds of Bach, Fauré, and Komitas. I watch every one of their movements as they stand together on the stage. It is important to me because I see their love. Their love for each other and their love for the planet. I feel their veneration and love for their homeland, Armenia, that shows that they will continue to honor our age-old musical heritage which has lasted since the third millennium BCE.

If you long to visit your childhood, connect to your most sincere aspirations, or want to rediscover lost emotions or deeply seated memories, you will find it with Little Singers of Armenia. You will experience a deep amount of love flowing through it and around it. You will be mystified by the children and the music. You will be absorbed and it will mean everything to you and it does me.

Today, after thirty years, the choir thrives due to its devoted conductor and founder Maestro Tigran Hekekyan. We celebrate with him wholeheartedly. What once started as a dream has now transformed generations of children and inspired listeners across the world. The boundless love within this choir, and around it, encircles everything with goodwill for all people for all time's sake. It is a solid stepping stone for the advent of new and numerous musical ambassadors and a powerful model for peace around the globe.

Congratulations on your 30 years, Little Singers of Armenia!

Original article translated by Ara Ghazarian

"The choir is a plant where the most precious and warm memories of my childhood are ingrained. The choir is a school of life where I was taught to love and appreciate, to struggle and never despair, be fair and just like music itself."

Lilit Ginosyan, Former member of Little Singers of Armenia

"... You have an enormous power to change reality. It is a lesson for me personally and for all the people who heard you tonight, for people who need what you do, in order to change reality."

George-Emmanuel Lazaridis, renowned Pianist & Composer, Artistic Director, Thessaloniki Concert Hall Organization, 2015



MARINE MARGARYAN is a pianist, pedagogue, accompanist, winner of many international competitions, and author of many articles and publications. She has performed all around Armenia and abroad, participated in a number of prestigious international events and festivals in Greece, Lebanon, Egypt, Iran, France, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, the USA, Italy, Latvia etc. Marine Margaryan has performed as a pianist with different musicians, ensembles, and choirs. Marine Margaryan is a lecturer in piano and professor at the Komitas State Conservatory, as well as teaching at the Sayat-Nova and P. Tchaikovsky Schools of Music. Marine Margaryan's students win high awards in various international competitions and are included in the various foundations and targeted programs. Marine Margaryan lives an active daily life, creates in various fields, is busy with the upbringing of her four children, two of whom are trying to find their path in music as a cellist and oboist.
<https://www.als.am/en>

THE INTERNATIONAL CHORAL ENSEMBLES OF HOLLYWOOD FILM MUSIC

MICAH BLAND

Choral Director and Professor, Toledo, Ohio, USA

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF FILM PRODUCTION, MUSIC HAS PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE OVERALL AESTHETIC OF A FILM. CHORAL SINGING HAS REGULARLY BEEN INCORPORATED AS AN ELEMENT OF FILM MUSIC, APPEARING IN APPROXIMATELY 61% OF HOLLYWOOD FILM SCORES.¹ INITIALLY, THE CHORAL MUSIC FOR HOLLYWOOD FILMS WAS PRODUCED IN LOS ANGELES UTILIZING LOCAL ENSEMBLES AND CONTRACTED STUDIO SINGERS. AS THE INDUSTRY PROGRESSED, LONDON EMERGED AS A POPULAR ALTERNATIVE FOR CHORAL FILM MUSIC PRODUCTION THROUGH THE EXTENSIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BOTH THE METRO VOICES AND LONDON VOICES.

While Los Angeles and London account for much of Hollywood's choral music production, there are also several international ensembles deserving of recognition. The following identifies a selection of choral ensembles from each continent and their contributions to film music.

EUROPEAN ENSEMBLES

In addition to ensembles from Los Angeles and London, choral ensembles based in Europe are among the most frequently utilized by film composers. The popularity of these ensembles is due, in part, to the many European-born composers that have worked in Hollywood. One such composer is

Ennio Morricone (1928–2020). As a composer, Morricone had a great affinity with the voice and regularly contracted the Italian ensemble I Cantori Moderni di Alessandroni for his films.² First heard in the score for *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), I Cantori Moderni di Alessandroni went on to perform in thirty-seven films between 1964 and 1973, eighteen of which were with Morricone.

In 2013 the Disney film *Frozen* and its sequel *Frozen 2* (2019) created a worldwide sensation.³ In both productions, the opening credits featured the vocal sonorities of the Norwegian choral ensemble, Cantus, performing the song

¹ Micah Bland, "Choral Music in Film" (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2021).



African Children's Choir

² Charles Leinberger, Ennio Morricone's *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press) 2004.

³ Maria Konnikova, "How 'Frozen' Took Over the World," *The New Yorker*, June 25, 2014, <https://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/how-frozen-took-over-the-world>.

"Vuelie."⁴ While Cantus has only appeared in two films thus far, based on the success of the *Frozen* franchise it is likely that the ensemble will be utilized in future film projects.

Other European ensembles with appearances in film include the Malle Babbe Women's Choir (*Paradise Road*, 1997), Rundfunkchor Berlin (*Valkyrie*, 2008), Children's Choir of the Staatsoper Unter Linden Berlin (*The Book Thief*, 2013), and Sofia Session Choir (*Solo: A Star Wars Story*, 2018).

AFRICAN ENSEMBLES

Internationally recognized South African vocal ensemble Ladysmith Black Mambazo is easily the most notable African choral ensemble to be featured in a Hollywood film score. Interestingly, the ensemble's inclusion in film has been exclusively through licensed music.⁵ Licensed recordings by Ladysmith Black Mambazo can be heard in seven Hollywood films, the most notable being *Coming to America* (1988).

Since its release, "Circle of Life" from *The Lion King* (1994) has been recognized as one of the most popular choral film works. Originally performed in the film by Lebohang "Lebo" Morake and Carmen Twillie, the film's opening song, "Nants' Ingonyama/Circle of Life" is immediately recognizable to film music enthusiasts. A native of South Africa, Morake was hired by composer Hans Zimmer to arrange the choral music for both *The Lion King* and *The Power of One* (1992) to provide these films with a more authentic African soundscape.⁶ The ensemble for *The Lion King* was unfortunately never identified. However, references in literature describe the ensemble as a South African choir.⁷

Other African ensembles with appearances in film include the African Children's Choir (*Blood Diamond*, 2006) and Mshengu White Mambazo (*Blended*, 2014).

EURASIAN ENSEMBLES

From the central Asian region, the most frequently utilized ensemble in Hollywood has been the Alexandrov Ensemble (Red Army Choir). Since the Cold War, Russia has often been portrayed as the antagonist in Hollywood films. As an ensemble comprised of Russian military personnel, the Red Army Choir not only musically depicts Russian culture, but also personifies the militaristic activities taking place on-screen. Similar to Ladysmith Black Mambazo, the ensemble's incorporation in film has been exclusively through licensed recordings and can be heard in fifteen Hollywood film scores.

Apart from the Red Army Choir, no other choral ensembles from central or east Asia are known to have performed in Hollywood film scores. Historically, Asian cultures have been significantly underrepresented in Hollywood, an issue that has recently received increased awareness from the industry.

4 Josh Weiss, "'Frozen II': How Christophe Beck Carved a More Mature Score Out of the Ice for Disney's Sequel," *Forbes*, December 2, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshweiss/2019/12/02/frozen-ii-how-christophe-beck-carved-a-more-mature-score-out-of-the-ice-for-disneys-sequel/#21bb9b4771ad>.

5 Licensed music is the use of previously recorded copyrighted material.

6 Bland, *Ibid*.

7 Atemnkeng, Nkiacha, "The Sound of the Lion King," *Porter House Review*, November 16, 2020, <https://www.porterhousereview.org/articles/the-sound-of-the-lion-king/>.

OCEANIA ENSEMBLES

At the turn of the millennium, choral ensembles from Oceania were the recipients of new interest from Hollywood. This sudden interest was partially due to the success of the *Lord of the Rings* (2001–03) film trilogy which were primarily filmed in New Zealand.⁸

For *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), director Peter Jackson and composer Howard Shore wanted a Pacific-island sound for the mines of Moria scene. Supplementing the film's primary ensemble, London Voices, Shore hired Igelese Ete to gather a 60-voice tenor-bass ensemble of regional singers.⁹ Over a decade later, Ete was once again approached by Hollywood for the film *Moana* (2016). As the head of the university's performing arts school in Fiji, Ete utilized his university ensemble, Pasifika Voices, for the project.¹⁰

In Australia, the Sydney Children's Choir and Sydney Philharmonia Choir were both contracted for the films *Happy Feet* (2006) and *Australia* (2008). Interestingly, for

8 Carol Pinchefskey, "The Impact (Economic and Otherwise) of Lord of the Rings/The Hobbit on New Zealand," *Forbes*, December 14, 2012, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolpinchefskey/2012/12/14/the-impact-economic-and-otherwise-of-lord-of-the-ringsthe-hobbit-on-new-zealand/?sh=6ff2685031b6>.

9 Jennifer Dann, "Twelve Questions with Moana choral composer and Lord of the Rings choir conductor Igelese Ete," *NZ Herald*, May 15, 2017, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/twelve-questions-with-moana-choral-composer-and-lord-of-the-rings-choir-conductor-igelese-ete/VUS26R772LQRRX23HYYZGY427U/>.

10 *Ibid*.



Cantus, Norway © PK foto: Mats Kalland and Camilla Pile Pedersen

the film *Happy Feet*, composer John Powell utilized an unprecedentedly large ensemble of 600 voices.¹¹

SOUTH AMERICAN ENSEMBLES

Choral ensembles from South America are by far the most underrepresented ensembles in Hollywood. Following an extensive search, the only choral ensemble from South America known to have performed in a Hollywood film is the Niños Cantores de Morelia Choral Group (*The Bravados*, 1958). The reason why South American ensembles continue to be underrepresented in Hollywood is unknown. However, it may in part be due to the large number of Latin American immigrants in the United States available to work as contracted studio singers, negating the need for South American choral ensembles.

CONCLUSIONS

As an expression of a country's cultural identity, international choral ensembles have had a vital role in authentically portraying their native cultures in Hollywood films. Unfortunately, however, throughout

the history of film production in Hollywood, international ensembles have been significantly marginalized. Hollywood's lack of diversity has been scrutinized by industry leaders throughout the past decade. As a result, many American film companies have recently placed a priority on producing diverse films. Through this increased awareness of diversity, the international choral community may, and hopefully will, observe increased interest from Hollywood in the near future.

Edited by Laura Massey, UK



Dr. MICAH BLAND is Director of Choral Activities and Visiting Assistant Professor at The University of Toledo where he directs the Chamber Singers and University Chorus and teaches courses in choral music education, conducting, and voice. He is the founder and host of the ChoralEd video podcast which is also a monthly blog feature on ACDA's ChoralNet. Email: mbland1613@gmail.com

¹¹ Tim Walker, "John Powell interview: 'I sold myself to the Devil, just a bit,'" *Independent*, May 31, 2014, <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/news/john-powell-interview-i-sold-myself-to-the-devil-just-a-bit-9466955.html>.




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CD REVIEWS



**CHORALIS CONSTANTINUS 1508 –
HEINRICH ISAAC IN KONSTANZ**
Reviewed by Tobin Sparfeld

**FRANK LA ROCCA - MASS OF THE
AMERICAS**
Reviewed by Tobin Sparfeld

CHORALIS CONSTANTINUS 1508

HEINRICH ISAAC IN KONSTANZ

REVIEWED BY TOBIN SPARFELD

Conductor, USA

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

ONE MIGHT EXPECT THAT A CLASSICAL ALBUM FEATURING NUMEROUS WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS WOULD ONLY CONTAIN MUSIC WRITTEN RECENTLY. THIS RECORDING OF MOTETS FROM HEINRICH ISAAC'S CHORALIS CONSTANTINUS, HOWEVER, PREMIERES WORKS PUBLISHED OVER 500 YEARS AGO.

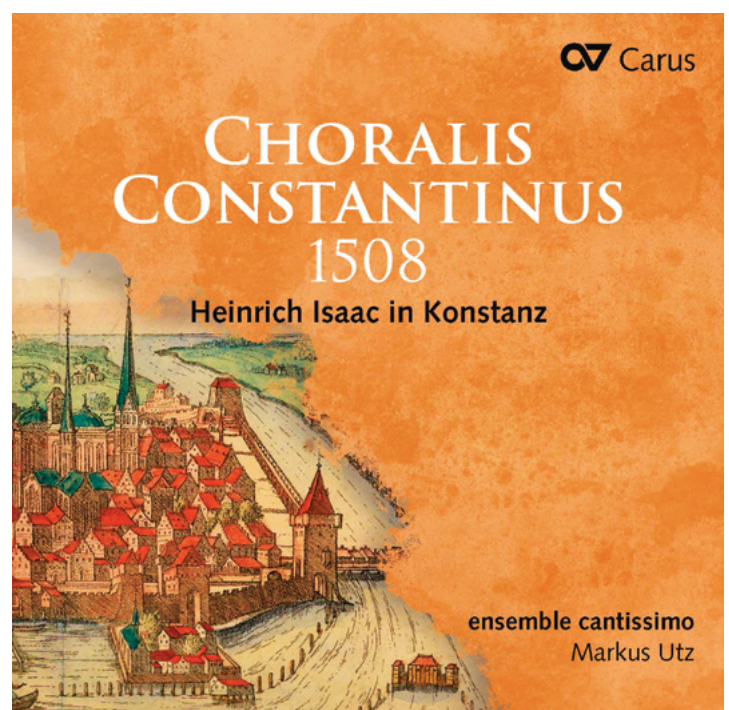
Franco-Flemish composer Heinrich Isaac (1450–1517) was one of the most prolific composers of the Renaissance, producing a range of diverse music, including: instrumental music, masses, motets, and part songs in Italian, German, and French. His best known work may be the song "Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen."

Though little biographical information remains of Isaac, his reputation amongst his contemporaries must have been substantial since Lorenzo de Medici invited him from Innsbruck to Florence in 1484, joining other Florentine artistic figures such as da Vinci, Botticelli, and Michelangelo. During this time he became a Florentine citizen, married a Florentine, and settled in Italy.

In 1496 Isaac moved to Vienna and was commissioned by Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, in whose employment he would remain until his death. During this time he composed and collected over 375 Gregorian-chant based polyphonic motets which were delivered to Constance Cathedral in late 1508 and early 1509. Though not published until 1550-1555 after his death, the motets remain some of the finest examples of chant-based Renaissance polyphony in existence. This posthumous publication, however, meant that the works only came to light during the Catholic Reformation, spearheaded by the Council of Trent. As such, some of the more interesting works were deemed unsuitable for liturgical use. The ranges of the motets, which are more like works for STTB voices than SATB, may also explain why they have received relatively little attention.

This recording is a collection of eighteen motets from Volume II of the Choralis Constantinus, and includes the motets commissioned specifically for Constance Cathedral in 1508. Of the eighteen selections, thirteen are world premiere recordings.

Founded in 1994, *ensemble cantissimo* features elite singers from Switzerland and Germany and specializes in previously unheard choral repertoire. The ensemble was founded by conductor Markus Utz who is also an organist and pedagogue. He has served as Professor of Choral Conducting at Zurich University of the Arts since 2007 and has led the twelve-voice ensemble in this recording, which took place in July 2021. Fittingly, the recording site was on the island of Reichenau in the middle of Lake Constance. The motets on the recording are organized by liturgical calendar: Christmas, devotional texts to Mary, Easter, Pentecost, and the Feast of St. Conrad. Typically in this volume, the motets for a particular feast day were grouped into Introit, Alleluia, Sequence, and Communion. The sequences



are usually the longest and feature the most complicated imitation of the chant melody.

Highlights of the recording include: the opening *Puer natus*, which features a brilliant four-part imitation of the chant melody in sections; the biting dissonances at the end of the *Haec dies*; the novel meter change in the middle of *Dominus in sina*; and the exciting imitated melody introduced by the soprano voice in the *Spiritus Domini*. Some of the motets are a cappella, while others are doubled by sackbuts and cornetts. While intonation and the vocal quality of the singers is strong, diction is harder to hear in the instrumental movements, and the voices retreat slightly into the reverberation of the church sanctuary.

As many of these selections are within reach for many choral ensembles, this recording is recommended for anyone seeking accessible Renaissance literature in addition to connoisseurs of exquisite Renaissance music. Since the works are of a consistent nature, the album transports the listener through Isaac's motets of careful consonance and sublime imitation. Conductor Markus Utz and his *ensemble cantissimo* deserve congratulations for bringing these yet unheard recordings to our ears.

Edited by Sam Hemsworth, USA

FRANK LA ROCCA MASS OF THE AMERICAS

REVIEWED BY TOBIN SPARFELD

Conductor, USA

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

THE BENEDICT SIXTEEN CHOIR HAS RECENTLY RELEASED A RECORDING FEATURING THE WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING OF FRANK LA ROCCA'S MASS OF THE AMERICAS. RECORDED IN JANUARY 2022, THE WORK WAS COMMISSIONED IN 2018 BY THE BENEDICT XVI INSTITUTE FOR SACRED MUSIC AND DIVINE WORSHIP TO BE A MASS INCORPORATING TRADITIONAL MEXICAN MELODIES, IN THE MANNER OF RENAISSANCE PARAPHRASE MASSES, ESPECIALLY THE MEXICAN FOLK SONG LA GUADALUPANA. THIS SOLEMN MASS IS AN INTERESTING PIECE BOTH AS A LITURGICAL WORK AS WELL AS IN SECULAR PERFORMANCE SETTINGS.

American composer Frank La Rocca (b. 1951) set the Mass for choir, organ, percussion, guitar, and string ensemble. While most of the settings are in Latin, there are also portions in Spanish as well as Nahuatl, a native language of central Mexico.

The Benedict Sixteen Choir is a sixteen-voice SATB ensemble in the greater San Francisco Bay area and was founded in recent years by conductor Richard Sparks. Sparks has an impressive career in both professional and academic worlds. He founded Seattle Pro Musica in 1973 and has guest conducted numerous professional ensembles, including the Swedish Radio Choir, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati. His doctoral dissertation won ACDA's Julius Herford Award, and he served as Director of Choral Activities at Pacific Lutheran University and is Professor Emeritus at the University of North Texas.

The Mass for the Americas brings together popular Hispanic carols and pious songs with high classical musical styles. Preceding the Mass ordinary is *El Cantico del Alba*, a traditional Mexican folk melody simply arranged by La Rocca in the style of a processional. Accompanied first by a single-tone chime, the unison melody branches out into two parts sung by soprano and alto voices. Tenor and bass voices enter in two parts and are accompanied by strings and organ.

La Rocca's composition largely relies on a traditional harmonic language. While there are passages that contain more modern dissonances, they never intrude upon the underlying consonant foundation. The instrumental texture is led by organ and strings, with percussion instruments providing timbral color as opposed to metric reinforcement.

One of the most notable movements of the Mass is the offertory *Ave Maria*. La Rocca sets the text at two different points in the Mass, one in Latin and the

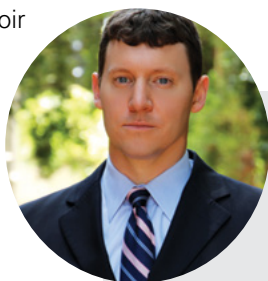
other in Nahuatl. The first Latin setting begins gently, but more expressive dissonances build as the text reaches “fructus ventris tui” and later “Jesus.” The end features a captivatingly elegant solo by soprano Estelí Gomez.

During the Benedictus, one can hear another Mexican folk melody, *La Guadaluana*, sung over repeated string triplets and a soft marimba tremolo. Snippets of this melody can also be heard in portions of the *Gloria* and *Salve regina*. The *Ave verum corpus* is reminiscent of many other famous choral settings of that text, including William Byrd’s famous setting.

At the end of this Mass, there are four Marian antiphons, each belonging to a season of the year. In the *Salve regina*, the chant melody is sung sometimes in unison, sometimes imitated with instrumental accompaniment. At the end, the *La Guadaluana* melody can be found interweaved with the vocal chant texture.

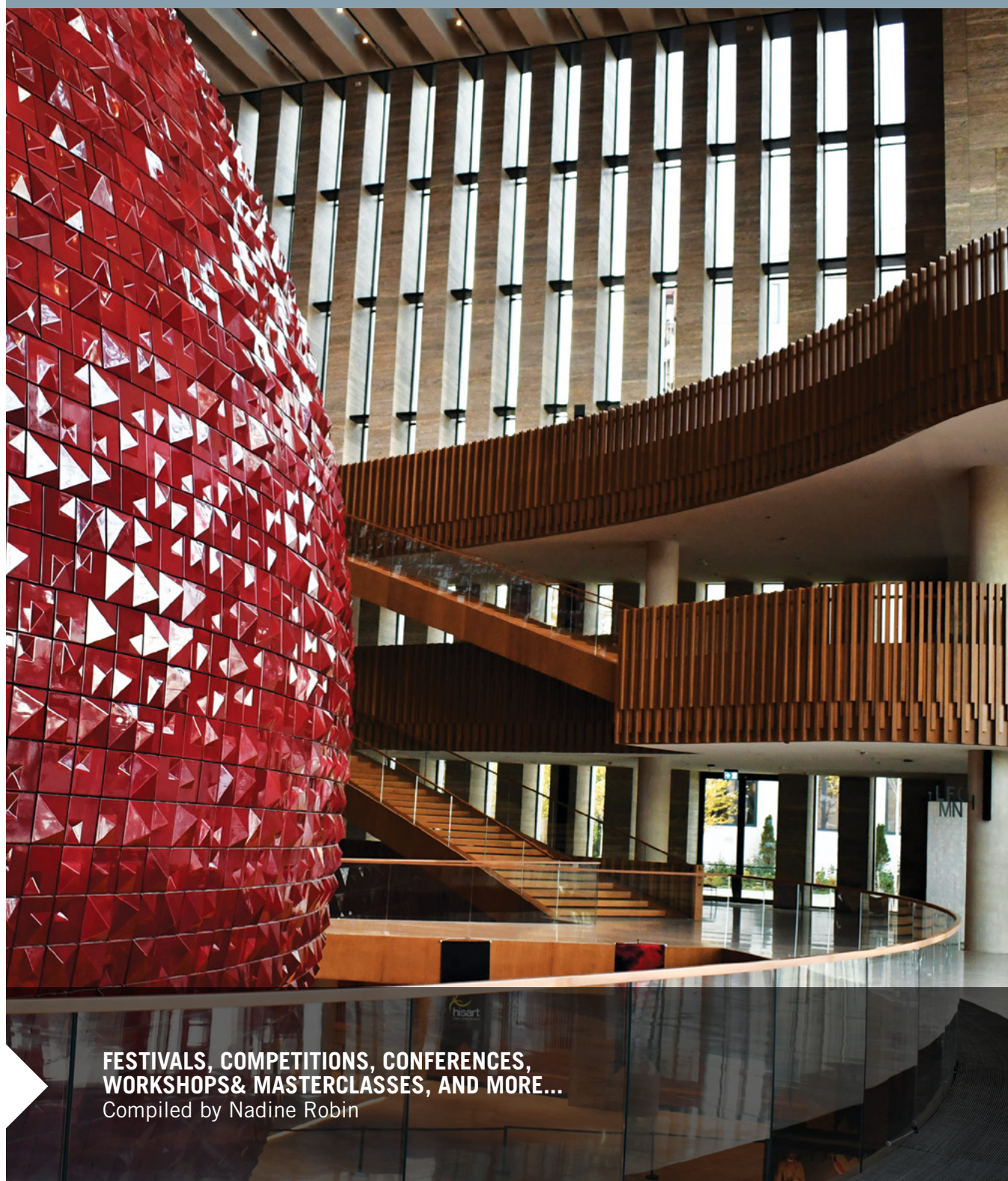
The Benedict Sixteen Choir should be commended for a strong world premiere recording of an important choral work. The artistry of the professional singers is omnipresent, and the recording allows the choir’s diction and melodic phrasing to be clearly heard over the organ, string, and percussion instruments. The exceptionally detailed album notes by William P. Mahrt should also be mentioned. The Benedict XVI Institute’s stated mission is to “open the door of Beauty to God;” this recording represents the fruit of their labor.

Edited by Karin Rockstad, USA



TOBIN SPARFELD is the director of choirs and vocal activities at Glendale Community College in Glendale, California. He received his DMA in Conducting from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, studying with Jo-Michael Scheibe and Joshua Habermann. He also received an Artist Teacher Diploma from the CME Institute led by Doreen Rao. Tobin has also taught at Principia College and was the Director of Choral Activities at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. He is a former member of the St. Louis Children’s Choirs, has sung with Seraphic Fire and currently sings with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. Email: tobin.sparfeld@gmail.com

CHORAL CALENDAR



**FESTIVALS, COMPETITIONS, CONFERENCES,
WORKSHOPS & MASTERCLASSES, AND MORE...**
Compiled by Nadine Robin

CHORAL CALENDAR

Singing in Cádiz, Spain, 5-10 Mar 2023. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Roma Music Festival 2023, Italy, 8-12 Mar 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Dublin International Choral Festival, Ireland, 9-13 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: ireland@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Fingal International Festival of Voices, Ireland, 9-13 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: ireland@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Paris International Choir Festival, France, 16-20 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: info@musiccontact.com - Website: www.musiccontact.com

Festival of Peace and Brotherhood, Rome, Italy, 16-20 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <https://home.music-contact.com/>

32nd International Franz Schubert Choir Competition, Vienna, Austria, 16-20 Mar 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

11th International Gdansk Choir Festival, Poland, 17-19 Mar 2023. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@gdanskfestival.pl - Website: www.gdanskfestival.pl

Discover Puerto Rico and its Choral Music, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 17-20 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 22-26 Mar 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Cherry Blossom Washington D.C. International Choral Festival, USA, 23-26 Mar, 30 Mar-2 Apr, 6-9 Apr, 13-16 Apr 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

15th International Festival of School Orchestras and Choirs, Karditsa, Greece, 30 Mar-9 Apr 2023. Contact: International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Email: nke@otenet.gr - Website: <http://festivalofkarditsa.blogspot.gr/>

18th Budapest International Choir Festival & Competition, Hungary, 2-6 Apr 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

7th Vietnam International Choir Festival & Competition, Hôi An, Vietnam, 2-6 Apr 2023. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Festival di Primavera (Spring Festival), Montecatini Terme, Tuscany, Italy, 13-15 Apr (aged 6-13), 19-22 Apr 2023 (aged 16-28). Contact: FENIARCO (Italian Federation of Regional Choir Associations), Email: festivaldiprimavera@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

17th International Choir Festival Tallinn 2023, Tallinn, Estonia, 13-16 Apr 2023. Contact: Estonian Choral Association, Email: kooriyhing@kooriyhing.ee - Website: www.kooriyhing.ee

Tenby Music Party, United Kingdom, 16-21 Apr 2023. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

11th Istra Music Festival 2023, Poreč, Croatia, 19-23 Apr 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <https://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/>

Verona International Choral Competition, Verona, Italy, 19-22 Apr 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://www.music-contact.com/>

Sing Along Concert Milan, Italy, 20-23 Apr 2023.

Contact: Interkultur e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com -
Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

World Symposium on Choral Music 2023, Istanbul, Türkiye, 25-30 Apr 2023.

Contact: International Federation for Choral Music - Website: <https://www.wscmistanbul2023.com>

68th Cork International Choral, Ireland, 26-30 Apr 2023.

Contact: Cork International Choral Festival,
Email: info@corkchoral.ie - Website: www.corkchoral.ie

Hull International Choir Competition, United Kingdom, 27 Apr-1 May 2023.

Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Slovakia Cantat, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 27-30 Apr 2023.

Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: info@choral-music.sk - Website: <https://www.choral-music.sk/en/Festival/>

20th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 27 Apr-1 May 2023.

Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Costa Barcelona Music Festival, Calella, Spain, 3-5 May 2023.

Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

51st International Competition Florilège Vocal de Tours, France, 5-7 May 2023.

Contact: Florilège Vocal de Tours, Email: contact@florilegevocal.com - Website: www.florilegevocal.com

12th World Choir Festival on Musical & Competition, Thessaloniki, Greece, 5-7 May 2023.

Contact: Choir Korais, Email: choirkorais94@gmail.com - Website: www.xorodiakorais.com

Venezia Music Festival 2023, Italy, 10-14 May 2023.

Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

3rd Music Schools Festival Crossroads of Civilizations, Rhodes, Greece, 10-14 May 2023.

Contact: Diavlos Culture Groups & Festivals, Email: diavlosc@yahoo.gr - Website: www.diavloslink.gr

International festival of choirs and orchestras, Venice, Jesolo, Italy, 10-14 May 2023.

Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: post@musikreisenfaszination.de - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

13th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 16-21 May 2023.

Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: info@ejcf.ch - Website: www.ejcf.ch

Vox Lucensis, Lucca, Italy, 17-21 May 2023.

Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 18-21 May 2023.

Contact: CantaRode, Email: info@cantarode.nl - Website: www.cantarode.nl

Singing in Skipton, United Kingdom, 21-26 May 2023.

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

International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia Cantans, Poland, 1-4 June 2023.

Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl - Website: www.krakowchoirfestival.pl

Rimini International Choral Competition, Rimini, Italy, 1-4 June 2023.

Contact: Rimini International Choral Competition, Email: info@riminichoral.it - Website: www.riminichoral.it

Sound Waves Linz International Choir Competition & Festival, Austria, 7-11 June 2023.

Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, 9-11 June 2023.

Contact: Limerick Sings, Email: information@limericksings.com - Website: www.limericksings.com

Music at Monteconero, Montenegro, 11-17 June 2023.

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

Northern Choir Conducting Competition 2023, Svendborg, Denmark, 12-14 June 2023.

Contact: SyngSydfyn Festival, Email: pc@balslev.org - Website: <https://www.syngsydfyn.dk>

Dublin Choral Festival, Ireland, 14-18 June 2023.

Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC,
Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <http://dublinchoralfestival.org/>

Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy/Austria, 14-18 June 2023.

Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival Office, Email: info@festivalpusteria.org - Website: www.festivalpusteria.org

Roma In Canto International Festival of Sacred Music, Rome, Italy, 14-18 June 2023.

Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 15-19 June 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

Monteconero Music Party, Montenegro, 18-24 June 2023. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: avdb@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

Rome Choral Festival, Rome, Italy, 22-26 June 2023. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <http://romechoralfestival.org/>

Salzburg Choral Festival Jubilate Mozart!, Austria, 28 June-2 July 2023. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <https://salzburgchoralfestival.org/>

Musica Orbis Prague Festival Online, Czech Republic, 29 June-3 July 2023. Contact: Musica Orbis, Email: info@musicaorbis.com - Website: <https://www.musicaorbis.com/>

International Festival Verona Garda Estate, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, Vicenza, Italy, 29 June-17 July 2023. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu - Website: www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu

15th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 30 June-5 July 2023. Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: office@scfestival.org - Website: www.scfestival.org

Great Britain Choral Festival, Ely, United Kingdom, 1-5 July 2023. Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: info@musiccelebrations.com - Website: <https://britainchoralfestival.org>

Barcelona Choral Music Festival, Spain, 3-9 July 2023. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: fcec@fcec.cat - Website: www.fcec.cat

58th Barcelona International Choir Festival, Spain, 3-9 July 2023. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: fcec@fcec.cat - Website: www.fcec.cat

12th World Choir Games, Gangneung, Gangwon, Korea (Democratic People's Rep. of), 3-13 July 2023. Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Chanakkale International Choir Festival and Competition, Canakkale, Türkiye, 4-9 July 2023. Contact: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Email: info@canakkalekorofestivali.com - Website: <http://www.canakkalekorofestivali.com/>

International Choral Kathaumixw, Powell River, Canada, 4-8 July 2023. Contact: Powell River Academy of Music, Email: info@kathaumixw.org - Website: www.kathaumixw.org

Budapest Music Festival 2023, Hungary, 5-9 July 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Europa Cantat Junior Festival, Ghent, Belgium, 5-13 July 2023. Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecj2023.be - Website: <http://www.ecj2023.be>

Study Tours at Europa Cantat Junior Festival 2023, Ghent, Belgium, 5-13 July 2023. Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, Email: info@ecj2023.be - Website: <https://www.koorenstem.be/nl/europa-cantat-junior-2023>

12th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival and Competition, Wernigerode, Germany, 5-9 July 2023. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Istanbul International Chorus Festival and Competition, Istanbul, Turkey, 6-10 July 2023. Contact: Istanbul Harman Folklor, Email: istanbul@istanbulchorus.com - Website: <http://www.harmanfolk.com/avrasya.htm>

41st International Choir Festival of Preveza, 27th International Choir Competition, Preveza, Greece, 6-9 July 2023. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: armonia4@otenet.gr - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

International Cantus Music & Culture Festival – Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria, 6-9 July 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choir Festival, Oakland, California, USA, 9-15 July 2023. Contact: Piedmont Choirs, Email: info@goldengatefestival.org - Website: <https://www.piedmontchoirs.org/golden-gate-festival>

13th International Choir Competition, Miltenberg, Bavaria, Germany, July 2023. Contact: Kulturreferat des Landratsamtes Miltenberg, Gaby Schmidt, Email: kultur@LRA-MIL.de - Website: www.chorwettbewerb-miltenberg.de

Edinburgh Early Music Summer School, United Kingdom, 16-21 July 2023. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: lucy@lacock.org - Website: www.lacock.org

International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 19-22 July 2023. Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: info@choralfestival.org - Website: www.choralfestival.org

Toscana Music Festival 2023, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 19-23 July 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Africa Cantat, Yaounde, Cameroon, 1-6 Aug 2023. Email: info@africacantat.org - Website: <https://www.africacantat.org/>

San Juan Canta International Festival, Argentina, 11-15 Aug 2023. Contact: María Elina Mayorga, Email: sanjuancoral@gmail.com - Website: <http://sanjuancanta.com.ar>

European Academy for Choral Conductors, Fano, Italy, 27 Aug-3 Sep 2023. Contact: FENIARCO, Email: info@feniarco.it - Website: www.feniarco.it

Paris Music Festival 2023, France, 23-27 Aug 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Al Sole della Sardegna International Choral Festival, Sant'Antioco, Italy, 28 Aug-6 Sep 2023. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: info@festivalalsoleellasardegna.eu - Website: www.festivalalsoleellasardegna.eu

13th Praha Music Festival 2023, Prague, Czech Republic, 30 Aug-3 Sep 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

20th EUROTREFF, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 6-10 Sep 2023. Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: info@amj-musik.de - Website: <http://www.eurotreff.amj-musik.de>

(Inter)national Congress for Choral Conductors, Puteaux, France, 8-10 Sep 2023. Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: secretariat@choralies.org - Website: <https://www.congreschefsdechoeur.com/>

14th Cracovia Music Festival 2023, Cracow, Poland, 27 Sep-1 Oct 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

4th Voices for Peace 2023, Perugia, Assisi, Italy, 27 Sep-1 Oct 2023. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

America Cantat 10, La Plata, Argentina, 11-15 Oct 2023. Contact: America Cantat, Email: wecretaria@aamcant.org.ar - Website: <https://www.aamcant.org.ar/aamcant2/america-cantat-10/>

Claudio Monteverdi Choral Festival and Competition, Venice, Italy, 12-15 Oct 2023. Contact: Claudio Monteverdi Choral Competition, Email: office@venicechoralcompetition.it - Website: www.venicechoralcompetition.it

In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda & Arco, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 19-23 Oct 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: www.mrf-musicfestivals.com

Choral Workshops with Mozart's Coronation Mass, Riva del Garda, Italy, 19-22 Oct 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <http://choral-workshops.com>

Misatango Choir Festival, Vienna, Austria, 24-28 Oct 2023. Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA/COLUMBUS Reisen GmbH & Co KG, Email: info@misatango.com - Website: www.misatango.com

Relaxsing Costa Barcelona, Santa Susanna, Spain, 26-30 Oct 2023. Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat - Website: info@relaxsing.org

Adriatic Pearl International Choir Festival & Competition, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 27-31 Oct 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: info@meeting-music.com - Website: www.meeting-music.com

Wien Music Festival 2023, Austria, 2-6 Nov 2023. 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>

16th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia Cantat, Poland, 17-19 Nov 2023. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody. Email: info@varsoviacantat.pl - Website: www.varsoviacantat.pl

Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 23-27 Nov, 30 Nov-4 Dec, 7-11 Dec, 14-18 Dec, 21-25 2023. Contact: Music Contact International, Email: travel@music-contact.com - Website: www.music-contact.com

Romano Gandolfi International Competition for Choral Conductors, Parma, Italy, 23-26 Nov 2023. Contact: Claudio Monteverdi Choral Competition, Email: aercobologna@gmail.com - Website: www.choralconductorcompetition.eu

12th Krakow Advent and Christmas Choir Festival, Poland, 1-3 Dec 2023. Contact: Polonia Cantat & Melody. Email: Krakow@christmasfestival.pl - Website: <http://krakowchristmasfestival.pl>

Badenia Advent Music Festival 2023, Austria, 7-10 Dec 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: info@mrf-musicfestivals.com - Website: <https://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com/Choir-Orchestra-Festival-In-Baden-Germany/>

16th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 27 Apr-1 May 2024. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: mail@interkultur.com - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

International Children's and Youth Choir Festival, Hannover, Germany, 8-12 May 2024. Contact: Internationales Kinder- und Jugendchorzentrum, Email: info@internationales-chorzentrum.de - Website: <https://www.internationales-chorzentrum.de/home-en.html>

16th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 5-10 July 2024. Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: office@sclfestival.org - Website: www.sclfestival.org

We are pleased to provide this list of international festivals, competitions, conferences, workshops and masterclasses to our readers. 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.

Please submit event information for publication to Nadine Robin
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