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# INTERNATIONAL CHORAL MAGAZINE

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2024  
JANUARY 2024



**FOCUS  
REPERTOIRE: HISTORY AND  
INNOVATION**

**FIRST STEPS: BUILDING A  
CHOIR FROM ZERO**

**INTERVIEW WITH MASAOKI  
SUZUKI**

**AMERICA CANTAT 10**

**MOTETS FOR ST. CECILIA**

# INTERNATIONAL CHORAL MAGAZINE

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# EDITORIAL



## EMILY KUO VONG

*IFCM President*

This issue of the *International Choral Magazine* includes many outstanding articles to discuss the importance of choral repertoire. Throughout our practice, we learn that building a rich and diverse repertoire is one of the most essential aspects of musicians' training. In choral education and performance, repertoire encompasses the body of musical works that the choir learns and performs proficiently, influencing the choir's artistic growth and reflecting its musical accomplishments.

Firstly, repertoire helps conductors and singers to develop vital technical and interpretive skills. When they take on new pieces, they encounter different musical structures, techniques, and styles to gain a broader understanding of music and enhance their technical abilities. This continual exploration of repertoire is the key for the conductor to refine technique, musicality, and overall musicianship.

Moreover, repertoire provides choirs with a means to express their artistic individuality. Various songs act as a medium for composers to deliver their thoughts, emotions, and experiences, eventually becoming an extension of their identity. Every choir has a unique artistic voice. Through the selection of repertoire, conductors discover the sounds and themes that resonate with the choir and enable the choir to communicate their emotions and perspectives effectively.

Additionally, repertoire expands choirs' horizons and exposes them to a wide range of musical cultures. Through exploring musical works from various eras, different countries and regions, and multiple cultural backgrounds, singers can gain more musical knowledge and comprehension. As a result, it strengthens their ability to appreciate and respect diverse forms of cultural expression. Meanwhile, choirs can make a strong connection with audiences by embracing a rich repertoire, fostering a sense of inclusivity and unity across borders.

Therefore, repertoire plays a pivotal role in the development of choral performance and the growth of choirs. In this issue, we will read an interview with the world-class conductor Masaaki Suzuki. From it, we can see that the role of a choir conductor extends far beyond simply directing a group of singers. Conductors are music lovers, passionate educators, and influential leaders and they are able to choose good repertoire for the choir that can inspire and create great enjoyment for the singers. Compared to composers who are the first creators, conductors recreate composers' works, pouring their soul into different repertoires, offering the world a unique choir!

*Edited by Patricia Abbott, Canada*

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# REPERTOIRE: HISTORY AND INNOVATION



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# THE PATH TO THE LIGHT: FROM THE DISCOVERY OF A PIECE OF MUSIC TO THE CONCERT HALL

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## DR. UWE WOLF IN CONVERSATION

*Interview by Isabelle Métrope, International Choral Magazine Managing Editor*

IT'S WINTER, IT'S DARK AND COLD. DUSTY SHEET MUSIC IS FOUND IN THE WARDROBE OF AN OLD HOUSE. THE PIECE HAS BEEN HIDDEN FOR CENTURIES AND, IF IT HAS EVER BEEN PLAYED, IT WAS NEVER PUBLISHED. BUT NOW IT HAS BEEN DISCOVERED, AND... AND THEN? WHAT IS THE PROCESS BEFORE THE UNKNOWN WORK CAN BE PUBLISHED AND PERFORMED, I ASKED DR. UWE WOLF. HE IS CHIEF EDITOR AT CARUS-VERLAG STUTTGART.

### **Dear Dr. Wolf, how often do discoveries of this kind occur?**

There are countless unknown pieces of music by mostly unknown composers; certainly many, many more than there are known. What we 'know' about historical music, for example what is available in publishing catalogues or recordings, is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg. And there are a lot of people who search through this unknown repertoire and bring it to a listening audience in concerts or recordings. So to answer your question – it happens quite often!

### **As a conductor, where do you find these unknown works?**

It varies. You can find them in catalogues or databases or while browsing in a digital library. Or more traditionally: in a reading room, in the archives. There are so many ways to do research today. The most difficult – and crucial! – thing is to identify the right search term...

### **How is it decided who will publish it? And how does Carus-Verlag decide whether or not to publish it?**

If you discover a piece, perform it in a concert and realize that it is actually good music, it seems a natural progression to offer it to a publisher of your choice (some also send it to every publisher they can think of; the surest way to stop it from getting published!). You can also publish on online publication platforms, but things can get lost in such a large pool and also you have to deal everything on your own. This makes a publisher a more attractive choice. For the publisher, however, the unknown is always a problem: no-one is seeking it out – and how could they when it's unknown music! And making unknown music known is incredibly difficult for a publisher. Nevertheless, we are constantly

trying to do just that, but certain factors have to be right for it to succeed. An unknown work by a well-known composer is a good combination. Or the piece has to have some sort of connection with something better known: text, teacher of the composer, arrangement, need... This is a tricky situation where we always think that it might work, but you never know! Sometimes it actually does work. All in all, any unknown music that is given a chance only makes up a tiny fraction of the new releases. Because a publisher can only very rarely make money from them, and thus recoup the costs of research, production, marketing and all the rest.

### **What is the process for the sheet music edition?**

If we decide to take a chance on a piece, that's when the research begins. Are we sure there's no pre-existing edition or recording? Are there any legal issues? Is the information we have correct? Is it really by the



identified composer? People often say that the source for this is an autograph. Is this really the case? Is this really the only source? Did the person who offered it to us hand over everything correctly? Very often, the situation changes substantially during the period of research. Sometimes we end up turning the edition down (e.g. it turns out that the composer is someone different or their identity is doubtful to say the least). But it may also be that we continue, but now with three sources instead of one. Or everything is as we thought – that's good too!

Down the line, it doesn't matter whether the piece is known or unknown. A contract is made with the editor, checks are made of the musical text, and its associated critical commentary to make sure it contains all the essential (and not too many insignificant) things. Then the "manuscript" (in submissions these days this is usually a music notation file) is configured: notes are made to determine how it should look later on. Then it goes to the typesetters

who input it or edit the submitted music file so that it looks like a Carus publication. Then there are correction runs, if necessary, a piano score is commissioned and a continuo realization, the voice parts are created – and everything is corrected again and again. In the meantime the publisher writes a foreword, which in turn is checked, edited, translated, typeset... And marketing and sales are already thinking about where to place the new edition in the market. And finally, the edition leaves the printer, makes its way into the webshop, the newsletter and catalogues – if it is a decent-sized piece there might also be a workshop somewhere. And we all hope that our promotion around its release will succeed in persuading people to perform it, so that the piece has a chance to become known and does not sink back into the depths of the catalogue (there are also unknown treasures in the Carus catalogue that deserve to be performed, but – for whatever reason – have not come to anyone's notice).

**Have pieces landed on your desk in recent years that make you think they could be a true discovery with a strong unique selling point?**

Difficult question. I can't think of one big experience off the top of my head, but there have been many smaller ones. When I got the tip-off in the run-up to the Beethoven year that a contemporary of Beethoven had composed a Kyrie for choir and orchestra based on the first movement of the Moonlight Sonata, I thought it was either completely idiotic or had huge potential. I got the piece, it was well done, we issued it – and it was (and still is) performed up and down the country. But it's not a revelation, it's a cool idea, well done. That kind of thing happens a lot. I found the individuality of the mass by Felix Petyrek surprising and convincing (but it still flopped). I really like the children's choral cantatas by Daniel Stickan for their conviction and the high standard with which texts and music are compiled into something that children can perform, but also for the fact that there is something for the adult listeners to take away

with them over and above  
just watching the  
children  
make

figure humaine kammerchor © NB-fotografie





music. So there are a lot of things. But there are also any number of pieces that I really like and that we still don't publish – because we already know that almost no-one will perform them (for very different reasons). That hurts too. Other things are not really a discovery, but still so inaccessible that they are rarely done: Donizetti's Requiem is one such. A great piece with subtle, colourful instrumentation, done with a very fine brush. I hope that this will be a discovery for many – even if there was "sort of" already material!

**Which composer's work do you wish was still lying forgotten in an attic, waiting to come to light?**

Well, what else can I say other than that someone finally needs to find the St Mark's Passion by J. S. Bach please – and then come straight to

me! It can't be ruled out, but it's also not very likely (both parts). There are a few other pieces by other composers the existence of which we know of, but not where they are – for example the two masses by Jacques Offenbach. I have not yet completely given up hope. Is it good music? Who knows? I'd like to know.

*Edited by Lore Auerbach, Germany*



**Dr. UWE WOLF** studied musicology, history and auxiliary sciences of history in Tübingen and Göttingen. After his doctorate in 1991 he was a research assistant at the Johann Sebastian Bach Institute in Göttingen and played a major role in the completion of the New Bach Edition. In 2004 he moved to the Leipzig Bach Archive. He headed one of the two research departments there, and was responsible for the redesign of the Bach Museum as well as the development of the online project Bach Digital. He has been chief editor at Carus-Verlag since October 2011. He has taught at various universities and is a member of the editorial board for several complete editions. [uwolf@carus-verlag.com](mailto:uwolf@carus-verlag.com)

# REFLECTING ON THE JOURNEY OF EARLY MUSIC PERFORMANCE IN THE 500<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF LUTHERAN HYMNALS

## INTERVIEW WITH MASAOKI SUZUKI

by Saeko Hasegawa, President of Japan Choral Association and Conductor, Tokyo, Japan, & Tomoko Yokoyama, Member of Japan Choral Association's International Committee and of the International Choral Magazine Editorial Board, Nagano, Japan

**Mr. Suzuki, have your performance practices changed as you have performed works repeatedly over the years?**

The basic approach has not changed, but we have become more forgiving in a way. We used to work on articulation rather fanatically, but we don't do that anymore, because now we know how Bach's music should be performed.

It has been over 30 years since I founded the Bach Collegium Japan (BCJ) in 1990, and if you ask me what has changed since then, it is that we have become older! But we have been accepting young members into the ensemble to keep the group youthful. Most of the current singers have joined us in the past 10 to 15 years. They are very professional. They know Bach's music very well, so it has become much easier to conduct rehearsals.

**Has the environment for educating singers changed?**

Yes, very much so. When new singers join a group with many long-time members, the young ones learn quickly what the older people took many years to acquire. They learn so much faster. We used to say, "We need to pass our knowledge on to the next generation..." but now it is rather the old ones who need to put in more effort to catch up with the young people. You might worry that the younger members would be selfish in the way they perform, but they are not selfish at all. So we don't need to be so arrogant... Those who join us share our ideas. The music has been handed over very well.

**We used to hear that the main focus of vocal lessons was operatic performance and that singers didn't learn ensemble singing at university. Has the**

**educational environment become more aware of ensemble singing?**

Definitely. When the Early Music Department was set up at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music in 2000, people knew that Baroque vocal ensembles were important, but they still believed that opera singing mattered more. They didn't know how to teach early music at the beginning. But their awareness gradually changed as singers started learning early music and performing it in ensembles. By the time I left the university 13 years ago, ensemble lessons were taught to students of both vocal and instrumental music.

**Do you also see such a change in countries other than Japan?**

Yes. Europe and the USA changed much earlier than Japan did. Even some modern orchestras have a desire to perform Baroque music. The biggest issue for the finest orchestras is not technique but how to limit the number of members who will play a concert. Many orchestras have 16 or 14 violinists in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> violin sections, respectively. If you tell them, "I only need four in each," usually they cannot do that due to their regulations. But when I performed "Messiah" with the New York Philharmonic the other day, I asked for 6 each, and they could do that. Those who realize the need for flexibility in their social system can adjust quickly.

Choirs have the same problem. The primary difficulty is how to create a social environment for such concerts. With amateurs, you cannot have a fine ensemble if you are limited to 8 singers. Then you might say, "We need 80 singers." It is okay to sing *Messiah* with 80 singers, but then you can only perform music intended for 80 singers.

I don't usually work with amateur choirs, but there are some competent ones. You just need to decide what to do depending on the situation.

In this article I was asked to discuss performing 500-year-old works: the year 1524 – 500 years ago – is an extremely important year as it was when the Lutheran hymnal "*Erfurt Enchiridion*" and a collection of hymns edited by Johann Walter were published. In the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of its publication in 1724, Bach wrote 40 chorale cantatas. This year, 2024, is the year of chorale cantatas, and we (Bach Collegium Japan) are planning to perform these 40 works.

Although Bach wrote so many cantatas, many people are unaware of most of them, except perhaps for very famous ones such as N<sup>os</sup> 140 or 147. Bach often used chorales, or hymns, which are songs for the congregation, in his cantatas. His chorale cantatas were written in 1724, the second year Bach lived in Leipzig.

In cantatas, there is usually a choral piece at the beginning, followed by several recitatives and arias, and a chorale at the end. In chorale cantatas, on the other hand, chorales are used in every movement. In the opening chorus, a soprano may sing the melody of a chorale without variation; against this, the other vocal sections and instruments have totally independent lines of music. Instead of adding variation to the same

melody, something with a different value is added to create the opening chorus. Bach's achievement with these works was to generate unique musical values, independent of the hymn melodies.

For instance, the first verse of the hymn text is used for the 1<sup>st</sup> piece, and the last verse is used for the four-voice part in the end. Then, if there are 10 verses in between but only several Cantata movements, the meaning of the chorale is digested and applied to the recitatives and arias. So all the texts are covered, but in a different way than in the chorale itself. The melodies of the chorale sometimes appear in the middle of a recitativo or an aria, and you feel the spirit of the chorale throughout the entire cantata. These are very special cantatas.

Forty such works were written in the same year. Then Bach later replenished the missing works for some Sundays according to the Christian calendar. He spent the rest of his lifetime trying to complete the annual catalogue of chorale cantatas. Hymns were that important for him.

***Do you think the fact that Bach sang in a choir in his youth affected his writing?***

I am sure he was familiar with chorales from his childhood. In the era of Mozart and Haydn – apart from Mendelssohn, who was very conscious of hymns – no

Bach Collegium Japan © K. Miura



other composers used hymns at the core of their works. In the history of music, hymns played a significant role only until Bach's time, and not after that, unfortunately.

Bach's cantatas, especially these chorale cantatas, are truly enjoyable to perform. You find many things, such as how the shape of music is based on a certain text. There are many places like riddles.

Bach always composed works with a sense of perfection. This doesn't mean he tried to create massive pieces: Rather, he made sense in every note, and he never wrote anything carelessly. Partly because the structure was mostly counterpoint and not accompaniment, every note has a deep meaning. For instance, in the first 4 bars of chorus in the Mass in B minor, where the chorus sings, "Kyrie..." the inner voices move so intricately because they are making the form of a cross. Such symbolic meanings are constantly sought after, and he never gives up. That's an impressive energy.

Mozart and Beethoven also have power as such, but the uniqueness of Bach's music is such symbolism in sound shapes. I'm impressed by his tireless energy in carving every shape of music, even though others may dislike it.

#### **What works would you like to work on in the future?**

I want to keep following the tradition of religious music. Next year (2024), in addition to the *Chorale Cantatas*, we will also perform Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 2, *Lobgesang* and Brahms' *A German Requiem*. Mendelssohn is apparently connected with Bach, and Brahms studied

Bach's works extremely closely. Brahms' *German Requiem* also has something like a chorale melody. I would like to excel in performing music by following the thoughts of those composers. Playing on period instruments has a significant impact, especially with Mendelssohn. The sound will be totally different from that produced by modern instruments.

#### **What do you wish for your choral musicians and the music society?**

Music only exists when it is performed. Therefore, it is absolutely critical that live performances at concerts continue; that is the mission of performers. This is universal for both amateurs and professionals.

The effort to make performance better enables us to enjoy ourselves. The key is to work only on great music. Do not perform rubbish music. Your life is limited, and you will never be able to perform all the music that exists in the world. The first key is to choose only the better ones. The second key is to focus on how to perform it, for the sake of making the best music possible.

The level of the Japanese music society is very high, and the young musicians are especially splendid. But I think people are forgetting the importance of really enjoying music: they pay too much attention to competitions. Competitions are just a starting point. You must become mature after them and make better music. I always believe we should pay attention to the music, not the people.

*Translated from Japanese by Tomoko Yokoyama  
Edited by Anita Shaperd, USA*





Since founding Bach Collegium Japan in 1990, MASAAKI SUZUKI has established himself as a leading authority on the works of Bach. He remains JCJ's Music Director, taking it regularly to major venues and festivals in Europe and the USA, including Bachfest Leipzig and Lincoln Center and fostering an outstanding reputation for the expressive refinement and truth of his performances. In addition to working with renowned period ensembles, such as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Baroque, Suzuki is invited to conduct repertoire as diverse as Brahms, Britten, Fauré, Mahler, Mendelssohn and Stravinsky with orchestras such as the Bavarian Radio, Danish National Radio, Gothenburg Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the NHK and Boston Symphony Orchestras, and the San Francisco Symphony. Suzuki's impressive discography on the BIS label, featuring all Bach's major choral works and complete works for organ, has brought him many critical plaudits – the Times wrote: "It would take an iron bar not to be moved by his crispness, sobriety and spiritual vigour". 2018 marked the triumphant conclusion of Bach Collegium Japan's epic recording of the complete sacred and secular cantatas initiated in 1995 and comprising sixty-five volumes. In 2020, the ensemble won a Gramophone award in the choral category for their recording of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Suzuki combines his conducting career with work as an organist and harpsichordist. Founder and Professor Emeritus of the early music department at the Tokyo University of the Arts, he was on the choral conducting faculty at the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music from 2009 until 2013, where he remains affiliated as principal guest conductor of Yale Schola Cantorum. <https://bachcollegiumjapan.org/en/>

Masaaki Suzuki led a very well attended workshop on J.S. Bach motets at the WSCM in Kyoto, Japan, in 2005 © Dolf Rabus

# WHY WE NEED COMPOSITION COMPETITIONS – AND HOW TO MAKE THEM BETTER

**Dominick DiOrio**

*Conductor and composer, USA*

COMPOSITION COMPETITIONS ARE OFTEN MALIGNED. THEY ARE SOMETIMES CITED AS PROOF OF A CULTURE THAT DOES NOT PRIORITIZE GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT, ESPECIALLY BY INDIVIDUALS WHO ADVOCATE FOR A MORE HOLISTIC CREATIVE COMMUNITY.

Depending on how the competitions are structured, the applicants may be asked to pay a fee — often seen as predatory when used to seed the prize money — and then receive little or no communication after submission.

And there is no guarantee of success, so the energy expended applying and then receiving rejections can lead to burnout, fatigue, and an encroaching sense of failure for a committed and skilled composer.

These are all legitimate critiques.

And yet, composition competitions offer substantial benefits to those chosen as winners. Indeed, most composition competitions come with some combination of the following:

- Prize money for a pre-existing work, or occasionally a commission contract and commensurate commission fee to create a new work;
- A performance, often a world premiere or substantial professional premiere or second performance;
- An audio and/or video recording of the live performance, and occasionally even a recording session on the work for commercial or professional release;
- Travel funds to offset the cost for the composer to attend the performance;
- Enhanced renown and publicity by being named the winner, especially if the organization funding the competition has a broad reach of members and supporters;
- And occasionally, some competitions may also offer the possibility of publication/distribution of the finished score by a publisher or a distributor.

Beyond these tangible benefits, there is also the impossible-to-replicate experience of being in the room, hearing one's work performed by a living, breathing

ensemble of singers and players. In many ways, first performances of works function as laboratories or workshops for the eventual final score or finished piece. (It is exceedingly rare that the composer makes no changes to a manuscript after an ensemble's first reading.)

Most composers have the chance to attend a dress rehearsal prior to the performance, where they can hear the ensemble's best efforts to interpret their score. This is an invaluable learning experience, as they begin to understand how well they've communicated through notation:

- Has the ensemble clearly interpreted their intent, and are there ways they can make the notation clearer if not?
- Has the conductor found nuance in their interpretation that they didn't think possible?
- Are there times in the score where the ensemble and conductor made a different choice than notated (perhaps with regard to tempo, articulation, etc.) and why? Asking why they came to that choice can teach the composer more about the "instrument" for which they are writing.

And finally, the premiere performance also gives the composer the chance to gauge an audience's reaction to the work "in real time." How is the work paced? Does it effectively set and deliver the text — if a texted work — and is the meaning of the words clear to the listener who may not be able to read a program note? Does it move the listener?

These opportunities can also be afforded during any premiere of a new work, of course. Yet in the context of a competition, the composer is most often unknown to the players, singers, and conductor before the process, so it allows for an entirely new series of "inputs"

beyond the previous circles of connections the composer may have. New information, new people, new connections: all of this helps to refine the composer's ability and prowess.

Indeed, for those chosen as the winners, composition competitions can be a profoundly important part of their career development.

And for the profession, composition competitions help to identify new talent, works, and voices. There is always a need for music of our time, and competitions help to curate that vast trove of scores so we are aware of the very best new scores being written right now.

To return to the critiques from earlier in my note, we can do more to enhance the value of competitions for those who are *not* chosen as winners. A few simple changes — already implemented by some organizations — will go a long way to ensuring a positive place for the role of competitions in our profession:

- **Eliminate application fees.** There is no reason to charge a composer \$25, \$50, or more to apply for a contest. Find another source of funding that is not those seeking the prize.
- **Provide constant communication throughout the process to the applicants.** Confirm receipt of their application in writing. Communicate a clear timeline for decision-making. Give the composers the courtesy of a note of gratitude for applying, prior to announcing the winner(s).
- **Consider awarding honorable mentions.** They cost you nothing, and they give a burgeoning composer a line for their resume that may help them in their career.
- **Curate a jury that provides informative and helpful critique when adjudicating the scores and share some of that insight — as appropriate — with the applicants if they are not chosen as winners.** It may be helpful for a young composer to read comments like: "Not enough textural variety; everyone sings all of the time" or "The soprano

tessitura is too high for too long and would not result in a successful performance with our ensemble."

- **If the score is excellent, but there were limited prizes, tell them that too.** It may also be true that there is nothing wrong with the score at all. If a composer's score is acceptable, but there were too many applicants and only one or a few prizes, that is valuable for a composer to know — it amplifies their confidence and provides external affirmation and reassurance that they are doing good work.

With small changes like these, we can ensure that composition competitions remain vital tools for identifying and supporting talented new writers, for uplifting our ecosystem of creators who don't always win, and for advocating for the creation of new music everywhere.

*Edited by Caroline Maxwell, UK*



**Dominick DiOrio is a conductor and composer who has been recognized with The American Prizes in both Choral Composition and Choral Performance. He is Professor of Music at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he leads the select, new music chamber chorus NOTUS, an ensemble invited to perform at the IFCM's 12<sup>th</sup> World Symposium on Choral Music in Auckland, New Zealand, before it was cancelled due to the pandemic. As part of the honor of being invited, NOTUS was named an IFCM Ambassador in 2022. He is also the 14<sup>th</sup> Artistic Director & Conductor of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, now celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Learn more at: [dominickdiorio.com](http://dominickdiorio.com) [ddiorio@indiana.edu](mailto:ddiorio@indiana.edu)**

The Indiana University NOTUS Ensemble, with director Dominick DiOrio (center-top), is committed to the creation, performance, recording, and advocacy of new choral music. (Fall 2021) © Hallie Geyh / IU Jacobs School of Music

# TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES WITH CHORAL MUSIC

## Dr. Deanna Joseph and Özkan Manav on Premiering “I’m Listening to Istanbul” at WSCM 2023

**SINEM ERENTÜRK**

THE WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC (WSCM) 2023 HELD IN ISTANBUL, TÜRKIYE, WITNESSED A REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE THAT LEFT A LASTING IMPACT ON BOTH THE AUDIENCE AND THE ARTISTS THEMSELVES. THE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY SINGERS, LED BY THE TALENTED CONDUCTOR DR. DEANNA JOSEPH, HAD THE HONOUR OF PREMIERING ÖZKAN MANAV’S MESMERIZING COMPOSITION “I’M LISTENING TO ISTANBUL.” THIS PIECE BEAUTIFULLY WEAVED TOGETHER THE RICH TAPESTRY OF TURKISH CULTURE AND CONTEMPORARY CHORAL MUSIC.

We had an exclusive interview with Dr. Deanna Joseph and the composer, Mr. Özkan Manav, to gain insights into their unique perspectives on this unforgettable performance. We delved into their experiences, challenges faced during the preparation process, the significance of this contemporary choral composition, and the connection between the choir and Mr. Manav’s music.

Mr. Manav shared his inspiration behind choosing Orhan Veli’s iconic poem and the importance of infusing modern Turkish literature into choral music. Dr. Joseph discussed the choir’s journey in mastering this intricate piece, embracing the fusion of traditional and avant-garde elements, and their meaningful connection with Turkish culture.

Together, they shed light on the universal language of music and the profound impact it has in uniting people across the world.

**How did you experience this performance from your perspectives, as the conductor of the choir and the composer of this contemporary piece?**

**Joseph:** It was a tremendous honor to premiere Özkan Manav’s “I’m Listening to Istanbul” at the 2023 World Symposium on Choral Music. The experience was one that the singers and I will cherish for a lifetime... to premiere this stunning and innovative piece about Istanbul... in the city for which it was written, and for so many people from Türkiye made for a very deep and fulfilling performance experience. So many of the effects in the piece – the birdcalls, for example – really came to life to us once we landed in the city and started walking around – we could finally hear the sounds of the city for ourselves. Many of the singers commented instantly – “I hear the birds... they are right here!”

**Manav:** “I’m Listening to Istanbul” is a composition for an eight-part choir and two reciters. Deanna Joseph encouraged me, noting that the singers have experience with eight-part choral pieces. However, in this composition, there is also a counterpoint involving two reciters. The reciters, featuring a whispering female voice followed by a male voice in a normal tone, are reciting contemporary Turkish poet Orhan Veli’s renowned poem.

Georgia State University Singers offered a beautiful premiere of my piece in our newly-built Atatürk Cultural Centre’s Grand Hall. The hall was packed and the audience embraced us heartily.

Deanna Joseph and Özkan Manav



The ovation at the end of the performance was not just for my piece but for all of us, the talented singers, their fascinating conductor, their well-thought out, brilliantly prepared program, and my piece, all together. This is what I felt. Quite a lot of listeners congratulated me after the concert, many of whom I have never met before.

**What was the preparation process like for this piece? Were there any notable distinctions in preparing for it compared to a classical choral piece?**

**Joseph:** The piece challenged us in many ways – both the pitches and rhythms were challenging and the Turkish text was new to all of the students. We located a native speaker in Atlanta and invited her to make a recording of the text and we used this to practice proper pronunciation. Tempo was also a challenge, as the piece had to be performed to a recording of spoken text in Turkish which made specific timings important. Once pitches and rhythms were solidified, we practiced with the recording a lot to make sure the timing came out perfectly. The extended vocal techniques in the piece were an additional element ... The singers enjoyed learning how to execute them and fully bring the piece to life.

**Composing for choirs presents unique challenges and opportunities. What do you find to be the most significant aspects of writing compositions specifically for choirs?**

**Manav:** I remember a comment by a flautist in a documentary about contemporary flute performance. He stated that the flute, which directly reflects the breath of the performer, is the most unmediated, the most direct of musical instruments. Yet the human voice is even more direct. It reflects a

human being's breath in a most direct manner and offers his/her feelings in its clearest form.

The human voice is the direct extension of the human heart. In the 2023 meeting of the World Symposium on Choral Music, which was my first involvement in this massive organization, I was surprised to see how easily people get close to each other, becoming friends, mingling with each other. I shouldn't have been surprised because what brought them together was the human voice. When singing together, humans are becoming a single new being. This is the unique aspect of writing a composition for choir.

**How did the choir perceive Manav's music and connect with it, especially considering its contemporary and Turkish elements, and its being in the Turkish language?**

**Joseph:** The choir had not performed a piece like this before, and we all learned a great deal from the experience. Manav's music is highly specific – every detail is in place and there are clear instructions for how to execute every element. This piece was a blend of new and old, of traditional and avantgarde, of sentimental and stark. I loved the uniqueness of the compositional style.

We were able to listen to recordings of Turkish choirs sing the traditional tune that is woven through the piece which provided context and helped us a great deal with style and pronunciation. It was amazing to hear feedback after the performance from Turkish members of the audience who said "I heard the tune in there!" That really meant a lot to us and made the performance even more impactful.

**ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR DR. DEANNA JOSEPH & GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY SINGERS**

Dr. Deanna Joseph is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at the Georgia State University School of Music where she conducts the University Singers and leads the master's program in choral conducting. A recent review of her work states – "[t]he choir sings with great musicality, excellent intonation, clear diction, and a healthy and beautiful pallet of tone colors..." (The Choral Scholar).



*The international award-winning Georgia State University Singers (Atlanta, Georgia, USA) is the School of Music's premier vocal ensemble. Selected by competitive audition, the choir of forty-five singers represents the diverse population of Georgia State University. In April 2023, the choir was selected as one of ten ensembles from across the globe to perform at the WSCM in Istanbul, Türkiye. In May 2017, the University Singers won first place in the renowned Marktoberdorf International Chamber Choir Competition during a tour of Austria and Germany. In May 2013, the University Singers competed in the Florilège Vocal de Tours where they placed second overall in the mixed choir category. The choir's three professional recordings, Evening Hymn (2016), Heavenly Display (2019) and Requiem (2023) were released by Gothic Records are available on all streaming platforms including iTunes and Spotify.*

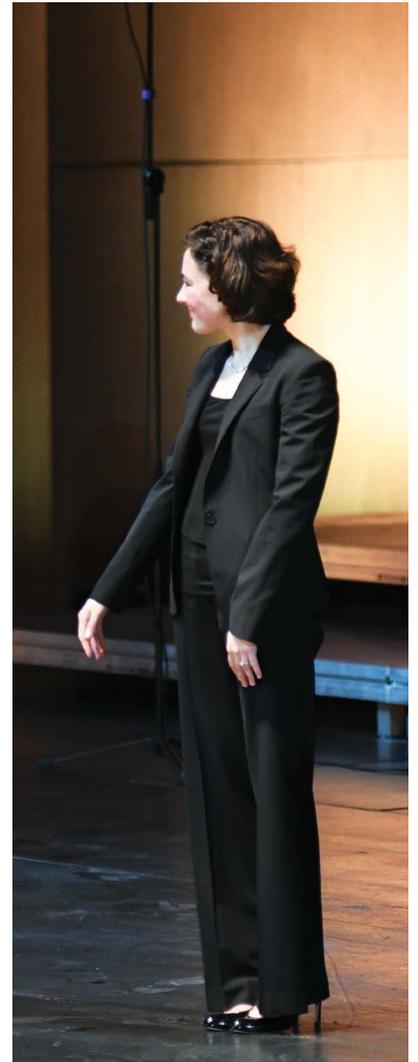
<https://music.gsu.edu/choir/>



**Mr. Manav, typically, your compositions incorporate elements from Turkish folk music or Turkish classical music. Could you explain the reason behind your decision to use a contemporary iconic poem from Turkish culture, like Orhan Veli's poem this time?**

**Additionally, could you share what this poem means to you and its central theme for those who may not be familiar with it?**

**Manav:** I decided to choose a poem from modern Turkish literature, which I know far better than any other literature. While wandering through Orhan Veli's poems, I thought that "I'm Listening to Istanbul" might have a special meaning for WSCM's Istanbul meeting. While Istanbul (audience) was listening to the voices of the world, choral music lovers from all over the world would listen to Istanbul through Orhan Veli's verses, encircled with my music. While working on the piece I kept thinking that the images in Orhan Veli's poem, written exactly 75 years ago, still



retain their freshness and vitality. These images were intertwined not only with visual scenery of the city and its people but also with its sounds. Orhan Veli's images in this poem were ready to be transferred into music. All I did was to surround them, embrace them with human voice through my ears.

**How does it contribute to the world of choral music on a broader scale and in terms of promoting contemporary compositions from different parts of the world?**

**Joseph:** Conducting a piece from Türkiye held a special significance for me. It was an honour and a joy to bring to life the premiere of a commissioned work in its country of origin. I am grateful to WSCM for bringing all of the commissioned works to fruition and supporting the creation and performance of new choral works from across the globe. This is part of what I see as the role of a conductor and of our professional organizations.

*Edited by Bethany Dent, UK*

## ABOUT THE COMPOSER ÖZKAN MANAV

Born on May 20, 1967 in Mersin, Ali Özkan Manav studied composition in Istanbul at the Mimar Sinan University State Conservatory with Ahmed Adnan Saygun and İlhan Usmanbaş. Upon receiving a full scholarship from the Higher Education Council in Ankara, he made his doctoral studies with Lukas Foss and Marjorie Merryman at Boston University (1996-99). He has been teaching at his alma mater, Istanbul State Conservatory of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University since 1991. <https://ozkanmanav.com>



*His orchestral work Sforzati has been premiered in Munich with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in musica viva concert series in 1999. Upon receiving the Deutsche Welle Composition Prize in 2002 another orchestral piece, Portamento Lento has been premiered in Beethovenfest in Bonn. His orchestral rendering of Ali Ekber Çiçek's Haydar Haydar has been premiered by the Turkish National Youth Philharmonic Orchestra in their 2017 European tour and performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the Presidential Symphony Orchestra's new concert hall in Ankara and in the opening concert of Istanbul's Atatürk Cultural Center in Fall 2021.*



**SINEM ERENTÜRK** began her career as a young journalist at Türkiye's only English-language newspaper at the time. She then moved to the pharmaceutical industry, where she worked for 15 years in various positions, primarily focusing on strategy and multi-channel marketing in the latter years. Her life changed dramatically when she became a mother to twin boys and relocated to London with her family six years ago where she is a member of a local writers' group in Richmond, London. Sinem has been singing since the age of eight in various choirs, ranging from children's, girls', youth choirs in her hometown of Ankara, to mixed choirs in Istanbul. Currently, she is part of a philharmonic choir in south-west London. Recently, Sinem assumed the role of Head of Communications for the successful launch of WSCMIstanbul2023. As a choral enthusiast and a member of the Editorial Board of the International Choral Magazine, she's excited to bring new perspectives to the promotion of choral music worldwide. She sees choral music, along with the collective arts, as a crucial catalyst for a genuinely connected world. [sinemerenturk@gmail.com](mailto:sinemerenturk@gmail.com)

*Edited by Bethany Dent, UK*



# THE MUSICA INTERNATIONAL PROJECT:

## The world's choral repertoire just a click away

A SERVICE TO THE WORLD CHORAL COMMUNITY, MUSICA INTERNATIONAL ([WWW.MUSICANET.ORG](http://WWW.MUSICANET.ORG)), CREATED IN 1982, IS A COLLABORATIVE MULTILINGUAL MULTIMEDIA DATABASE OF THE WORLD CHORAL REPERTOIRE. IT IS A RESEARCH AND TEACHING TOOL ON CHORAL MUSIC FOR CHORAL CONDUCTORS, MUSICOLOGISTS, CONSERVATORIES, CHORAL FEDERATIONS, MUSIC STORES... IT IS ALSO AIMED AT AMATEUR MUSICIANS WHO ARE EAGER TO DISCOVER AND APPRECIATE THE CHORAL REPERTOIRE.

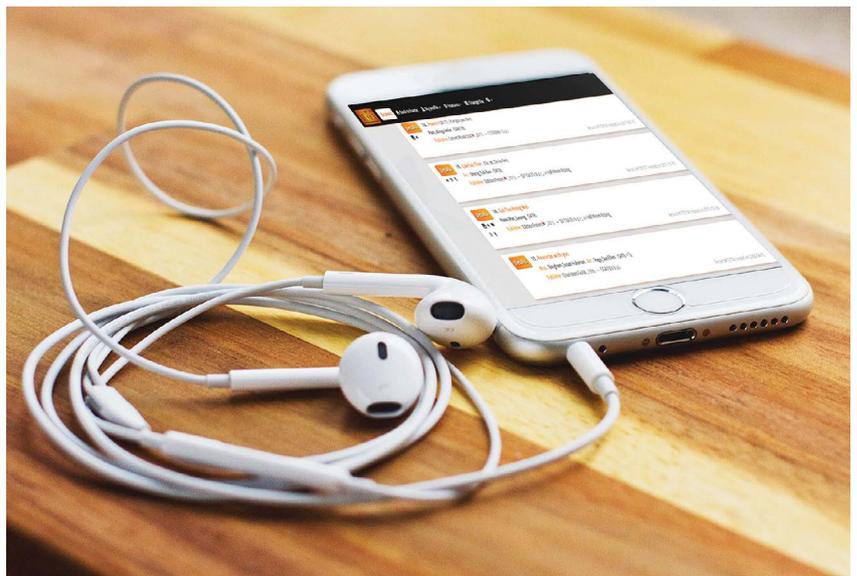
Available in French, English, German and Spanish, Musica currently covers 200,000 choral titles, contains biographies of 33,000 composers and lists over 2,000 choral music publishers. It is Musica's ambition is to be the leading virtual library of choral music, a resource containing all possible information about a score.

To be comprehensive, the project covers all levels:

- Score description: information is structured into over 100 different types of criteria (composer, harmonizer, title, genre, form, publisher, difficulty, choir type, language, instrumentation, keywords...) available in 4 languages (automatically translated). In addition, Musica contains over 300,000 multimedia links, to provide a fuller understanding of the chosen piece: image of one or more pages of the score, text, translation into several languages, a sound clip or video or both of a good interpretation if available, a sound file giving the pronunciation by a native speaker, midi file, external links (biographies, correlated sites).
- Coverage of the choral repertoire: pieces for children's, male, female or mixed-voice choirs, sacred or secular, from Gregorian chant to choral jazz,

popular songs, variety music, great classical works, opera choruses, accompanied or a cappella works, with or without soloists... there is something for everyone.

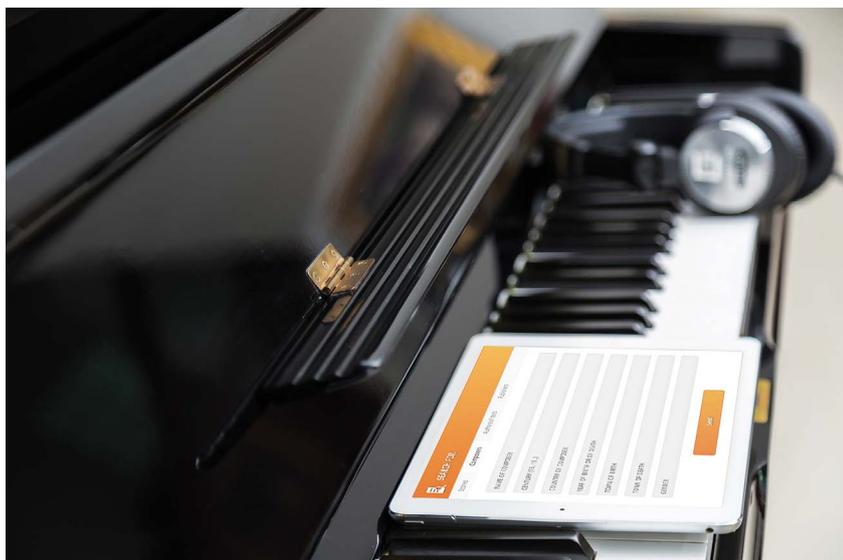
- Origins of the music: the spread of the project to all continents has made it multicultural, with equal importance given to all cultural heritages.



### THE [HTTPS://WWW.MUSICANET.ORG](https://www.musicanet.org) WEBSITE

The entire Musica website is available in four languages. Alongside the database with its numerous search options, there are four other features to note:

- the Favorite Piece of the Month: every month, Musica promotes "the" piece that any choir conductor would take to a desert island, if it were only possible to take one! In this way an anthology is being built up containing highlights of international interest which all conductors can harvest.
- the "Auditorium": an alphabetical list of thousands of sound clips and videos of choral pieces referenced in Musica.
- composers' jubilees: a list of composers with jubilees during the current year and the three following ones. Another mine of information for those planning ahead.
- manage your own score library inside Musica: no need to purchase



software or create a local database! Simply search Musica for the corresponding record containing detailed information, and add your personal data (e.g. location of the score) in a “private field”. If a piece is not yet referenced, it is possible to create a new record in the database helping to enrich the Musica database available worldwide. For further information, please contact [office@musicanet.org](mailto:office@musicanet.org).

### COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

Musica is a collaborative database that draws on the knowledge and experience of as many players in the choral world as possible: federations, composers, publishers, conductors, musicologists, universities and music libraries. We welcome contributions of all kinds:

- sending multimedia files: texts, translations, recordings of the pronunciation of texts by native speakers, audio or video recordings...
- entering new data and enriching existing ones directly online: composers can add their compositions, publishers their publications, choirmasters their favorite pieces, if not already described. All you need to do is contact the Musica team ([office@musicanet.org](mailto:office@musicanet.org)) to obtain the necessary rights to make

entries and corrections online, on the Musica website.

### MUSICA WORKSHOPS

Although online data entry is possible, Musica organizes “workshops” in which conductors, musicologists, publishers and music documentalists are invited to participate. These sessions are a privileged opportunity to share one’s particular knowledge of choral music, input one’s own compositions or publications, improve existing data, record pronunciations, all in a friendly and stimulating setting with other enthusiasts. The work does not exclude sightseeing or indulging in the local cuisine, on the contrary...

A list of upcoming workshops is available at <https://www.musicanet.org/en/musica/musica-workshop-2/>.

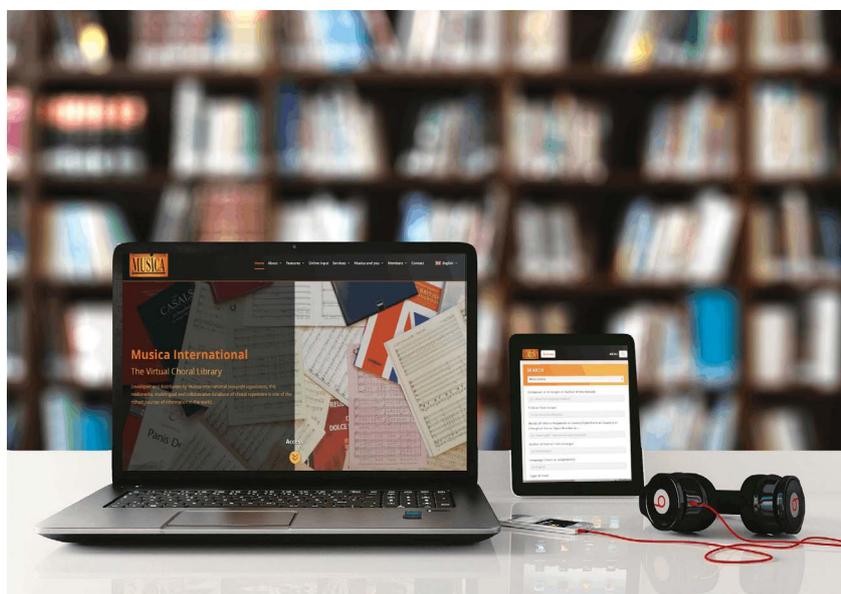
Musica is also looking for volunteers ready to organize workshops in order to promote the specific choral repertoire of a country or a region.

### FULL PRIVILEGED ACCESS

Professional users of [www.musicanet.org](http://www.musicanet.org) wish to get more information than is available through standard free access to the documentary information.

For this reason, Musica offers full privileged access, with no limitations:

- Like any non-profit organization, Musica International needs financial support, however small. Musica’s appreciation is shown by giving donors full privileged access.
- Choral federations and choral directors’ associations that are members of Musica can offer privileged **global** access to all their members via their website. Ask yours to contact Musica.
- The professional subscription is specially designed for music libraries. Moreover, Musica can open up privileged access to an entire institution, or even an entire university campus, by automatic recognition of all



its computers, with no need to log in. And there are additional advantages for libraries, including the possibility of locating their scores in the Musica database.

The road towards complete coverage of the global choral repertoire is still long. Take full advantage of what has already been achieved. And perhaps you would like to add your own brick to the edifice? The more of us share in the development of Musica, the more and the faster we will reap the rewards.

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Photos © Musica International

*Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, Italy/UK*



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# A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY AND CREATIVITY:

## The May Festival's 25 for 25 Commissioning Project

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### INTERVIEW BY BRETT SCOTT

*ICM Editorial Board member, USA*

ICM EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER BRETT SCOTT INTERVIEWED DR. MATTHEW SWANSON, ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR OF THE MAY FESTIVAL CHORUS, CINCINNATI, USA, ABOUT A UNIQUE COMMISSIONING PROJECT THE CHORUS UNDERTOOK AS PART OF ITS 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON IN 2023. THE MAY FESTIVAL IS BELIEVED TO BE THE LONGEST CONTINUOUSLY RUNNING CHORAL FESTIVAL IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE MUSICAL ORGANIZATION IN THE CITY OF CINCINNATI SINCE ITS INCEPTION.

**Brett Scott: Tell us a bit about the genesis of this unique commissioning project.**

**Dr. Matthew Swanson:** In the May Festival's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season, we sought to develop projects that would highlight the organization's legacy and demonstrate our commitment to the future of the choral art in Cincinnati, USA, and beyond. Additionally, we wanted to honor the communal element of the May Festival, which has been present from its very start in 1873. How could we celebrate our anniversary while simultaneously drawing attention to the vibrant choral life of our region? After some discussion, we settled on a commission project — but instead of commissioning works for the May Festival Choruses to sing, we would commission works for other organizations. Naturally, we wanted the works to be performed, so it made sense to organize a community showcase. We expected that not all ensembles would be available on the day of the showcase, so we also encouraged the ensembles to perform their commission at their "spring concert." This had the added bonus of bringing a bit of the May Festival to all corners of our city during the spring concert season.

**BS: So, once you settled on this initiative, what were the next steps? What form did the project take?**

**MS:** The Festival commissioned twenty-five new choral works and gave them away as "gifts" to local choral ensembles and organizations. The program was a partnership with the local ensembles and organizations, as well as the New York City-based Luna

Composition Lab, a composer mentorship program for young female, non-binary, and gender non-conforming composers. The May Festival offered this opportunity to ensembles in our city (Cincinnati, Ohio) and the tri-state region (southwest Ohio, southeast Indiana, and northern Kentucky) that were representative of the depth and breadth of the area's choral music scene. Luna Lab connected the May Festival with twenty-five of their affiliated composers, and the May Festival worked with Luna Lab to "match" composers and ensembles. Each commission was funded in its entirety by the May Festival, though the nature and content of each work were determined by the ensemble and the conductor. The May Festival also offered a stipend to each performing ensemble to support their participation. Each composer received a stipend for their composition and for travel to Cincinnati, as well as two composition lessons with established female, non-binary, and gender non-conforming composers. Many of the finished works were performed at a large community showcase on March 19, 2023, in Cincinnati, and the works were also performed throughout the community during the spring of 2023 as the ensembles and organizations presented their spring and end-of-season performances. Ensembles and composers were provided with recordings from the showcase. In addition, as part of the local classical music station (90.9 WGUC) broadcast of 2023 May Festival performances, a selection of the commissions were aired on the radio, accompanied by commentary describing each work.

**BS: How was the decision made to pair with the Luna Lab and how were the participating composers chosen? And what is the Luna Lab for those who do not know this organization?**

**MS:** Once we settled on the concept, we were in need of 25 composers! Our staff had heard of Luna Lab thanks to the sterling work of the founders, Missy Mazzoli and Ellen Reid.

Founded in 2016 by composers Missy Mazzoli and Ellen Reid, Luna Composition Lab provides mentorship, education, and resources for young female, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming composers ages 13-18. Luna Composition Lab is the only initiative of its kind in the United States. It has

achieved national recognition as a program that not only celebrates underrepresented voices but also shapes music's future by providing a support system for continued success. We at the May Festival approached Missy, Ellen, and Luna Lab's Executive Director Alyssa Kayser-Hirsh, and they were immediately enthusiastic — particularly about the opportunity for the composers to engage with choral ensembles and the choral art. The composers were all current or past fellows of Luna Lab, or participants in previous Luna Lab programs.



MUSE: Cincinnati Women's Choir and conductor Jillian Harrison-Jones perform Anya Lagman's "I Am Mother" at the May Festival's Community Choral Showcase on March 19, 2023, at Cincinnati's Christ Church Cathedral. Photo Credit: Julie Curry.

**BS: How were the participating choirs selected?**

**MS:** We could not hope to include every choir in Cincinnati — there are hundreds, if not more! So, we decided to include a cross-section of the choral community, with representatives from a variety of age groups, voicings, musical styles, organizational makeups, cultural traditions, missions and goals, and geographic regions. We wanted to continue deepening relationships with organizations that had collaborated in the past, and we wanted to use this project as an opportunity to build new relationships.



Some of the 25 for 25 composers and Luna Lab staff members pose for a picture at the May Festival's Community Choral Showcase on March 19, 2023 at Cincinnati's Christ Church Cathedral. Front (L to R): Azalea Twining, Olivia Bennett, Jack Gjaja, Yuri Lee, Chloe Elise Villamayor, Gabriella Cariddo, Maya Miro Johnson, Anya Lagman. Back (L to R): Cecelia Olszewski, Joanna McDonald, Luna Lab Executive Director Alyssa Kayser-Hirsh, Luna Lab co-founder and co-artistic director Missy Mazzoli, Sage Shurman. Photo Credit: Julie Curry.

**BS: What do you hope will be the long-term impact of this initiative?**

**MS:** We hope that there will be three impacts, both in the Cincinnati area and abroad. For the composers, we hope that this will be the beginning of a continued interest in writing for voices and choral ensembles, which is a different skill than writing for instruments. For the ensembles, especially those who do not normally sing new music, we hope that this will encourage them to continue to engage with, or even commission music by living composers. For our community and

<b>Composer</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Text Source</b>	<b>Ensemble</b>	<b>Forces</b>
Abby Harris	[for a door]	Harriet Beecher Stowe	School for Creative and Performing Arts Chorale	unaccompanied mixed ensemble
Alicia Erlandson	How To Float	Pamela Gast	Voices of Indiana	mixed ensemble, piano, flute, alto flute, clarinet
Anya Lagman	I Am Mother	text by the composer	MUSE: Cincinnati's Women's Choir	treble ensemble, piano
Azalea Twining	O Ecclesia	Hildegard von Bingen	Heri et Hodie	unaccompanied treble ensemble
Caleb Palka	The Space Between	e.e. cummings, amores (i)	Cincinnati Men's Chorus	tenor/bass ensemble, piano
Cecilia Olszewski	Aubade	Iman Pekdemir	No Promises	unaccompanied tenor/bass ensemble
Chloe Villamayor	Are	Found texts by the composer, and the Gospel of Luke	NKU Chamber Choir	unaccompanied mixed ensemble
Devon Lee	What I Know About Living	The Nutritionist, by Andrea Gibson	Thomas More University Women's Chorus	treble ensemble, piano
Elisa Johnson	La Promesa	The Bible, Galatians 3:26-39	Thomas More University Women's Chorus	Treble Choir, piano
Gabriella Carrido	Love Thee Better After Death	Elizabeth Barrett Browning	Cincinnati Boychoir	unaccompanied mixed ensemble
Jack Gjaja	Ah! Sun-Flower	William Blake	St. Ursula Academy Vocal Ensemble, SUAVE	unaccompanied treble ensemble
Joanna McDonald	Untamed	Vachel Lindsay, "The Broncho That Would Not Be Broken"	Young Professionals Choral Collective	mixed ensemble, piano, drums, American sign language interpreter & dancer
Madeline Cheng	Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds	Molly Bendall	Cincinnati Camerata	unaccompanied mixed ensemble
Maya Miro Johnson	Strange Father!	Edith Södergran, "At Nietzsche's Grave", from The September Lyre	Xavier University Choir	mixed ensemble, unaccompanied
Michelle David, with Tronee Threat	We Are Stronger	Tronee Threat	World House Choir	mixed ensemble, piano, spoken word artist, electronic backing track
Olivier Bennett	Ethereal Fields	Emily Dickinson, "We never know how high we are"	May Festival Youth Chorus	SAB, organ
Rachel Mugemancuro	a visitor, come from far away to witness an ending	textless	Hear Us, Hear Them	unaccompanied mixed ensemble, optional video projections
Sage Shurman	Spring Is My Complicity: Mother Earth's Remorse	text by the composer	Northern Kentucky Community Chorus	mixed ensemble, piano
Tiffany Cuaresma	Serenity	Gabriela Mistral (trans. by the composer)	World House Choir	unaccompanied mixed ensemble
Violet Barnum	Invisible Winds	Christina Rosetti/Violet Barnum	Cincinnati Choral Academy; Ursuline Academy A Cappella Ensemble	children's/treble ensemble, piano
Yuri Lee	The Tiger and the Dried Persimmon	text by the composer	CINKOA: Cincinnati Korean American Choir	unaccompanied mixed ensemble, body percussion
Zola Saadi-Klein	Defeat the Dragon	Rumi	CCM Chorale	mixed ensemble, unaccompanied

The May Festival acknowledges the following composers whose works may be pending or awaiting performance as of this writing: KiMani Bridges, Jordan Millar, Ebun Oguntola.

Additionally, the May Festival gratefully recognizes the Cincinnati Youth Choir, the Little Miami Chorale, and the Classical Roots Chorus for their participation in the 25 for 25 Project.



*No Promises* Vocal Band poses with Cecelia Olszewski following the premiere of Olszewski's "Aubade" at the May Festival Community Choral Showcase on March 19, 2023 in Cincinnati's Christ Church Cathedral. Photo Credit: Krista DeVaul.

**Dr. MATTHEW SWANSON** is Associate Director of Choruses and Director of Special Projects for the Cincinnati May Festival, a staple of Cincinnati's cultural life since its founding in 1873. He conducts the May Festival Youth Chorus and prepares choruses for performances at the May Festival and with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. <https://mayfestival.com/chorus/artistic-leadership/matthew-swanson>

region, our hope is that Cincinnati will be a city full of singing, of all different kinds of singing. We want to heighten awareness about choral singing in the region and to increase community participation in choral singing.

*Edited by Taylor Ffitch, USA*



Originally from Canada, **BRETT SCOTT** is Professor of Ensembles and Conducting at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. He has served as Associate Editor of *The Choral Scholar* and Chief Editor of *The Research Memorandum Series*. His authorized biography of composer, educator and soundscape activist R. Murray Schafer was published in 2019. [lbrettscott@gmail.com](mailto:lbrettscott@gmail.com)

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# EVENTS 2024

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c/o Haus der Kultur  
Weberstr. 59a, 53113 Bonn, Germany  
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## Calendar

### 2024

January	22-28/01/2024	Walter Strauss Choral Conducting Masterclass	Ankara (TR)
April	11-13/04/2024 17-20/04/2024	Festival di Primavera	Montecatini Terme (IT)
	2-7/07/2024	Study Tour to the 100th Anniversary of the Lithuanian Song Celebration	Vilnius (LT)
	4-17/07/2024	EuroChoir	Varna (BG)
	8-14/07/2024	International Choral Festival Barcelona	Barcelona (ES)
	14-21/07/2024	European Seminar for Composers	Aosta (IT)
	21-28/07/2024	Singing Bridges	Novi Sad (RS)
August	7-11/08/2024	Arctic Boys Choir Festival	Bodø (NO)
	18/08-8/09/2024	World Youth Choir summer session 2024 with the National Youth Orchestra of Germany	Germany and Italy
September	14-20/09/2024	Study Tour to Georgia and/or	Tbilisi (GE)
	20-26/09/2024	Study Tour to Armenia	Yerevan (AM)
October	18-20/10/2024	Fosco Corti International Competition for Choral Conductors	Turin (IT)
November	15-17/11/2024	Membership Weekend 2024	Flanders (BE)

Gefördert vom:







# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

## EMILY KUO VONG

*IFCM President*

Dear Friends,

It is amazing that we have already stepped into 2024, which is another new start full of hope and opportunities! Firstly, I would like to express my best wishes to everyone, wishing you a wonderful New Year filled with love, health, and happiness!

In the past year, we witnessed a thrilling recovery not only of the world economy and exchanges but also of global choral activities.

IFCM and its members organized many international choral events to resuscitate the influential power of choral music and can boast of many accomplishments. For example, IFCM successfully held the World Symposium on Choral Music (WSCM) in Türkiye to bring this flagship event of IFCM for the first time to the city that is a bright pearl on the border of Asia and Europe. Thousands of choral professionals and music lovers gathered together to discuss the development of this art form and to explore the future of choral education.

Also, in the fourth quarter of last year, one of IFCM's major partners — the China Chorus Association (CCA) — held its 9<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China, and elected the new board of the association. For this achievement, I sincerely congratulate the newly inaugurated President, Ms. Junying MA as well as other board members of CCA, and hope they further enhance the cooperation with IFCM to jointly increase the communication of choral music between China and the world!



Looking ahead for 2024, IFCM will participate once again in the organization of the 17<sup>th</sup> China International Chorus Festival (CICF) and the IFCM World Choral Education Conference in Beijing in mid-July. After that, the China Qiandongnan International Folk Song Choral Festival and IFCM Voices Conference will also be brought to people's attention again. Moreover, in the first week

of October, IFCM's high-profile event, the World Choral EXPO, already held in Portugal twice (in 2019 and 2022), will take place in this picturesque country once more. During these marvelous events, IFCM, as an advocate of choral music, will raise our collective voices for love, peace, and mutual understanding. I believe we can make a difference together through choral music to build a beautiful future where peace prevails, mankind resonates with nature, and harmonious melodies fly into people's hearts!

Thank you, dear friends! Your energy is a great support for IFCM's development! I hope we have a great 2024 together to write a new chapter in the world choral community!

Best wishes,

*Edited by Patricia Abbott, Canada*

# Choral Composition Competition: The Winners are...

In March 2023, IFCM launched its Sixth International Choral Composition Competition to promote new works in choral music and to encourage innovation in choral writing that fits the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century choir. The criteria emphasized compositions that combine originality, imagination, and creativity within the context of contemporary global themes. With great pleasure, the winners are:

- **Paolo Orlandi**, Italy, with *The Arrow and the Song* (Winner in the World Choral Day category). Photo © Cecilia Teresa



- **Marie Herrington**, USA, with *A Jellyfish* (Winner in the Mixed and/or Equal Voices category)



### Special recognitions:

- Peter Walters, UK, with *Light*
- Motshwane Pege, South Africa, with *And I Will Dwell with The Lord*

On behalf of IFCM and the jury members, we express our sincere congratulations to the winners and our deepest gratitude to all composers who submitted compositions.

## IFCM Online Cafes International and National

Following the enthusiastic response to the Online Cafes organized in the past few months, IFCM is announcing a series of Online Cafes in the upcoming months! International Cafes will be for IFCM members only while National Cafes will be open to everyone (members and non-members).

These sessions will be informative and enriched by your active participation. You will be able to learn about new repertoire for your choir, discover festivals/events/

seminars in 2024, and more. The Cafes will be led by well-known choral conductors, composers, and managers from around the world.

Are you interested in joining IFCM's International Cafes, but are not a member? Become a member today and you will immediately receive an invitation to the Cafes in your inbox! All online cafes are recorded and the videos available to IFCM members on [www.ifcm.net/service/access-to-ifcm-members-online-cafes-recordings](http://www.ifcm.net/service/access-to-ifcm-members-online-cafes-recordings)

### Schedule of the International Cafes:

- 28 January 2024: Plan a Choral Year... with IFCM (see
- March 2024: Conducting Techniques
- April 2024: IFCM on the Discovery of New Repertoire, Part 2
- June 2024: YOUNG





**IFCM MEMBERS' ONLINE CAFE SERIES**

# PLAN A CHORAL YEAR WITH IFCM

**28 JAN 2024** | 9 AM (CST) | 4 PM (CET) | 11 PM (UTC+8)  
SUNDAY ONLY VIA ZOOM

With Representatives from (as of 26 November 2023)

- American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)
- European Choral Association (ECA)
- Japan Choral Association (JCA)
- Confédération Africaine de Musique Chorale (CAMC)
- Voce in Tempore

Moderated by **PELIN KÜÇÜKERDOĞAN**  
Chairperson, YOUNG IFCM Youth Committee

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#IFCMconnects



## Exclusive Opportunity to Discover China and Sing in Beijing

Founded in 1992, the China International Chorus Festival (CICF) is one of the largest and most prestigious international chorus festival gathering in China and the Asia-Pacific region. Held every two years, the past 16 CICFs have been proved a great success with more than 120,000 participants over the past 30 years. The festival has reached an online audience of over one hundred million viewers, significantly reshaping the history of choral music in China.

The 17<sup>th</sup> CICF is scheduled to be held in Beijing 15-19 July 2024. It will feature a wide range of choral activities: opening and closing ceremonies, choral forums, choir evaluation, high-level concerts featuring both Chinese and international choirs, master classes (workshops), and public welfare activities.

IFCM is happy to collaborate with CICF 2024 and invites all choirs of any type, vocal ensembles, and vocal groups from around the world to join this amazing festival.

Participating choirs will receive the following with the registration fee of US\$500 per person:

- The possibility to participate in the international competition (12-minute program)
- 60-minute rehearsal
- 20-minute concert
- The possibility to sing one or two songs at special concerts
- All accommodation, meals, local transportation, and tickets for guided tourist excursions are provided by the organizers. International costs such as flight tickets, visas, and insurances are the responsibility of choir.

Please find a full description of program on <https://www.ifcm.net/cooperations/china-international-chorus-festival>.

If you are interested in registering your choir for CICF, please write directly to [office@ifcm.net](mailto:office@ifcm.net) or [secretarygeneral@ifcm.net](mailto:secretarygeneral@ifcm.net), and we will guide you through the next steps.

## New Country Groups for Membership Fees

The IFCM membership fees vary according to three country groups. These lists of countries were established with reference to each country's Gross Domestic Product and Gross National Income as measured by the United Nations.

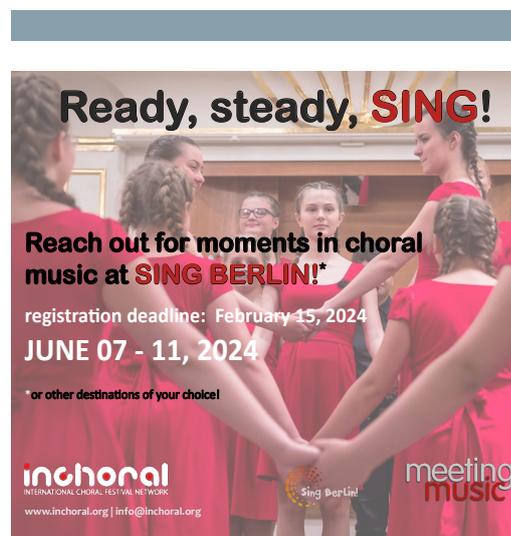
A non-monetary development indicator was also used to determine the country groupings.

The IFCM Board carefully reviewed these lists and a motion was passed to accept the three country groups, keenly aware that the past few years have been challenging for the choral world and its supporters.

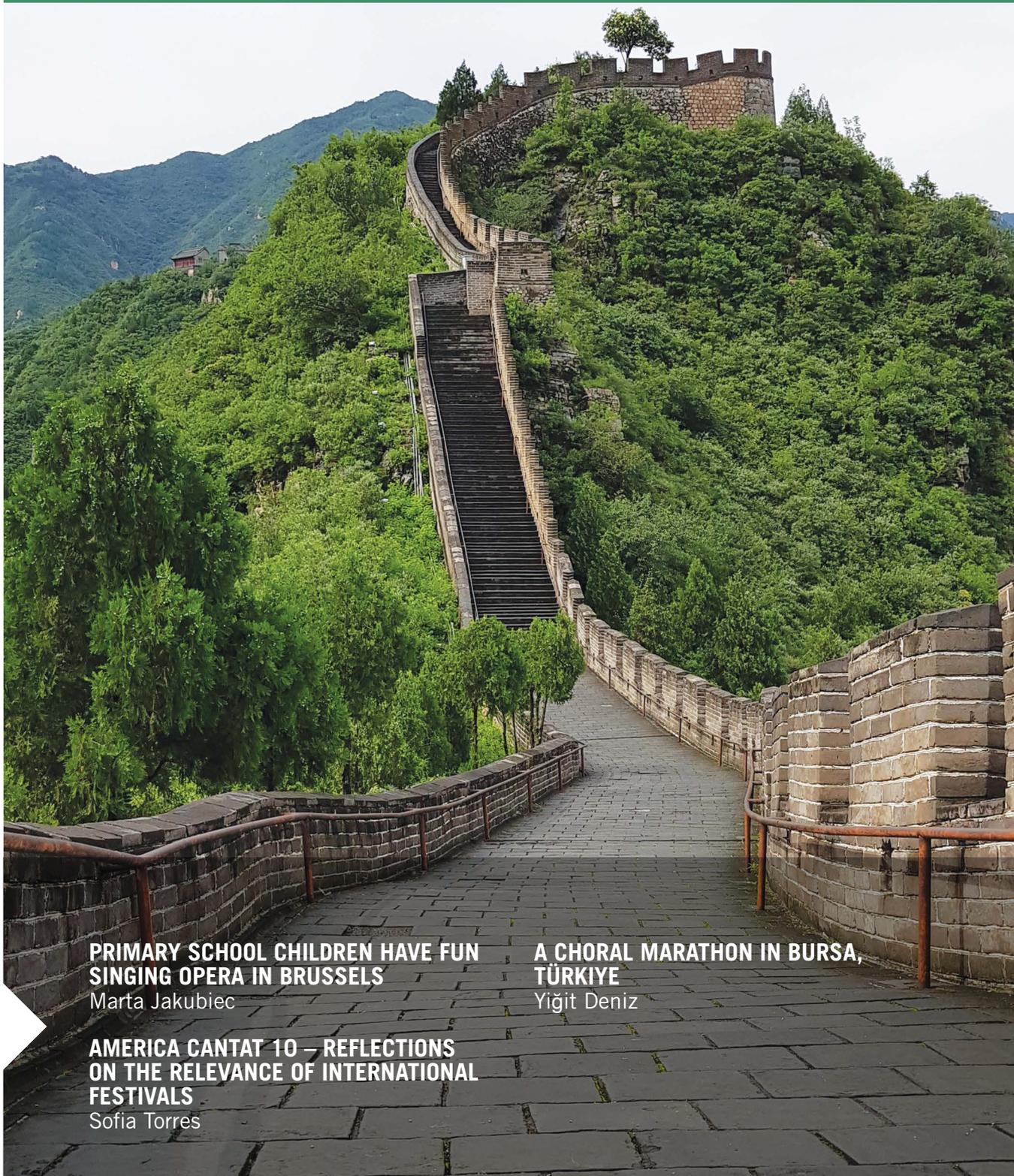
**Check your country's group** on <https://www.ifcm.net/membership/membership-fees>.



The Award Ceremony, on the first rows: Ensemble Vocal Sénior de la Salle (Canada) and Choir Knipas un Knauki (Latvia)



# CHORAL WORLD NEWS



**PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN HAVE FUN  
SINGING OPERA IN BRUSSELS**

Marta Jakubiec

**A CHORAL MARATHON IN BURSA,  
TÜRKIYE**

Yiğit Deniz

**AMERICA CANTAT 10 – REFLECTIONS  
ON THE RELEVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL  
FESTIVALS**

Sofia Torres

# PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN HAVE FUN SINGING OPERA IN BRUSSELS

**MARTA JAKUBIEC**

*Choir conductor and music teacher, Poland/Belgium*

IN 2019, I STARTED SUPPORTING A MUSIC PROJECT FOR CHILDREN ORGANISED BY OPERAMUS IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, AND EUROPA INCANTO IN ROME, ITALY, AS A VOCAL COACH. IN THIS PROJECT, CHILDREN OF MANY NATIONALITIES FROM PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BRUSSELS PREPARED CHORUSES FROM THE OPERA *TURANDOT* TO SING IN A LIVE THEATRE PERFORMANCE ALONGSIDE PROFESSIONAL SOLOISTS AND AN ORCHESTRA FROM ITALY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF GERMANO NERI.

The opera was a shortened version of the original, rewritten by Nunzia Nigro, the creator of the project. During the performance, the narrator would tell the story, while the soloists or the children's choir would sing the vocal parts.

I thought that this was a great project that would not only familiarise children with the opera but also provide them with an unforgettable artistic experience. However, I had wondered how children without any musical experience would manage to sing *Turandot* by Puccini, given that it was written in 1926 and has quite complicated fragments. An additional difficulty was that the children were expected to sing in Italian. My doubts soon disappeared. The children used an application where the songs were recorded and the text was displayed on screen. This turned out to be very easy to use, so the children were able to practise both in the classroom and at home. I ran vocal rehearsals with them every few weeks to improve their singing. The children then made their costumes and participated in a live opera performance in a theatre with scenery, an orchestra and soloists. More than 150 children sat in the front rows of seats during each performance. When a choral fragment appeared,

the conductor would turn around and direct the children. Every child also had the opportunity to sing from the stage, gradually coming on in groups.

We were lucky because the performance of *Turandot* took place in early February 2020, just before the outbreak of the pandemic. Although Covid stopped opera projects for a while, they resumed in 2021-2022 with Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, followed by Rossini's *Cinderella* in 2022-2023. Last academic year, 2,000 children representing 13 nationalities from 12 primary schools in Brussels (7 Belgian schools, both French- and Dutch-speaking; 1 international school and 4 European Schools) joined together thanks to music!



Rossini's *Cinderella* © Maël G. Lagadec 2023

For me, as a music teacher and choir conductor, this project has been a great way to introduce children to classical music. Though opera might appear to be a genre only for connoisseurs, it can be pleasantly performed by children who not only have their voices and ears trained for several months but who also gain practical knowledge of what it is to sing in a choir and what an opera performance looks like. Participation in this project has been an amazing artistic experience!



Rossini's *Cinderella* © Maël G. Lagadec 2023

**HERE ARE THE OPINIONS OF SOME OF THE OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED:**

**Lucia Scoca** – President of OperaMus:

“The Scuola InCanto project is already widespread in Italy and, when we first started in Brussels in 2019, the challenge was to bring it to an international environment where there were no Italian-speaking children. Four years later, I am proud to say that we did it! This was down to several factors, including the use of digital technologies to help children without any musical background to easily learn the melodies and text, as well as the systematic efforts of the class teachers and the passionate work of our vocal coaches. As a result, the children joyfully sing in a choir with their classmates and receive a wonderful introduction to the world of opera.”



Flashmob of many participants of the opera project in front of the European Parliament May 2022 © Antonella Casillo for Operamus

**Germano Neri** – Artistic director of Europa InCanto and conductor:

“The Scuola InCanto project is a teaching method designed and developed to make opera accessible to the younger generations, who will become aware and passionate audiences in the future. Moreover, the idea of performing an opera with an orchestra – the Europa InCanto Orchestra – and young professional singers makes the final performance even more inclusive and engaging.”

**Nunzia Nigro** – Project creator:

“After the performance in June 2023, we left Belgium with great joy and the impression that our idea to bring young people closer to the world of opera was becoming more concrete. We also enjoyed the fact that we were able to create a cultural, intergenerational connection between children, their parents and grandparents who, having practised opera together at home, rediscovered it as a timeless, multimedia and exciting form of entertainment.”

**Gracjana Woźniak** – Mother of a participating child in their 4<sup>th</sup> year of primary school:

“This is one of the best educational projects I have ever been involved with, because children learn in many ways. The project develops their musical skills and knowledge about opera, teaches perseverance and exercises their memory. Additionally, the ability to work creatively in a group is reinforced while sewing clothes with the teacher and parents. A professional opera performance at the end is a real celebration! Seeing your child on the opera stage, next to professional singers and an orchestra, is a moving and proud experience.”

**Ingrid Beňáčková** – European School teacher, Slovak section:

“My pupils in their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of primary school participated

in the opera project for the first time. During the school year, they practised regularly with me and our excellent vocal coach Marta. Although my pupils were a little worried about being on stage, the final result was remarkable! The children were full of enthusiasm singing classical music and felt they were doing something extraordinary. It was a beautiful experience and a memory that will last a lifetime. On behalf of the parents and myself, a big thank you to all the creators and artists!"

In 2023-24, we are working on the fifth edition of the project in Brussels with 2,400 participants. I hope that there are many more operas ahead of us. I am sure that, by taking part in this experience, children will be more open to classical music, especially opera.

*Edited by Kelly Harrison, USA*



Team work during the preparation of the costumes © Gracjana Woźniak for Operamus



Photographer Gracjana Woźniak and Ingrid Benackova for Operamus

**MARTA JAKUBIEC** is a Polish choir conductor and music teacher living in Belgium. As well as being a vocal coach for the opera project, Marta also runs 'Do-Re-Mi' for children and parents, following the world-renowned American programme MusicTogether® ([www.doremibelgium.com](http://www.doremibelgium.com)). She conducts concerts sung by adult choirs in Brussels, including Vocal Ease, the Estonian choir Beene and BachWerk. In these, she frequently combines amateur singers and professional instrumentalists, as in the 'Highlights of Bach' concert planned for March 2024, to be performed by the choir Vocal Ease with professional instrumentalists specialising in Baroque music ([www.vocaleasebru.com](http://www.vocaleasebru.com)). Marta's passion is introducing classical music to people who are not very familiar with it, and this is often the focus of her [YouTube channel](#). [jakubiecmarta2@gmail.com](mailto:jakubiecmarta2@gmail.com)





# AMERICA CANTAT 10

## Reflections on the relevance of international festivals

### SOFIA TORRES

*Choral director, singer and arranger, Chile*

**BETWEEN THE 11<sup>TH</sup> AND 15<sup>TH</sup> OF OCTOBER THIS YEAR, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHORAL EVENTS IN LATIN AMERICA TOOK PLACE IN LA PLATA, ARGENTINA: THE AMÉRICA CANTAT 10.**

Celebrated in the same country where it all began, an event of five beautiful days surrounding the subject of choral music played out across eight different workshops, including an open call to sing for everyone. Afternoons and evenings were also for concerts involving national and international groups along with conversations and a panel of presentations by various choral organizations, in which IFCM Board Member Niels Græsholm (Denmark) and myself presented the programs and work of the International Federation for Choral Music. The first AC was in 1992 in Puerto Madryn, Argentina, and it has subsequently been held in various Latin American countries over the years. This year, to commemorate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, America

Cantat once again took place in Argentina. But, what importance do these events have? Is there any relevance in this, in getting together to listen to concerts and sing with

people with whom we will never sing again?

I had the opportunity to participate in the Works Preparation Workshop for Brazilian and Uruguayan music led by Federico Trindade, a Uruguayan musician living in Brazil. Not only did we sing and learn new melodies and some phonetics, but we also used our bodies to move through space and to create body percussion. For the first time, I observed and experienced a methodology of choral improvisation that took us from laughter to tears. In five days, a group of complete strangers managed to cry together after singing. Such was the level of connection we reached through collective singing that we were no longer strangers but even much more than acquaintances.

In discussion with Federico, we commented on the importance of choral music in our lives. We both share a migrant's perspective, living life in a country other than the one in which we were born and finding aid in the way choral music



helped us establish ourselves in new places. „Choral music is my home,“ he told me at one point. Wherever we go, we carry this practice with us. Wherever we go, we can find a group and experience collective singing, since it has no borders and does not discriminate, and there will always be room for everyone to be a part of this beautiful collective activity. Participation in events like America Cantat 10 reminds us of the importance of coming together to share experiences, awareness, knowledge and the practices surrounding choral music. It keeps us in touch with how things are done in other latitudes. It allows us to hear new sounds. It allows us to meet other people who are passionate about a shared interest and to reunite once again with others where, if not for these encounters, this would be difficult to achieve.

Hence, the value of these events is undeniable, and although one would like everyone to participate, there are certain limitations that make large-scale attendance at international festivals difficult, which are the implied costs of participation. This is especially so in Latin America, where choral directors still fight for recognition as professionals producing valuable work. Also, in the vast majority of countries, where salaries for the general population are below living standards, the economic reality does not usually sustain financing of travel and participation in these events. As such, attendance by an individual participant or a director with a choir at international festivals is an effort that can take even a year or more of gathering funds and organizing the implications of such a trip, because moreover, the concept of the cultural manager here, and even more so that of the choral manager, is relatively new.

Those who participate, then – are they privileged? Are they people who have the financial resources to travel and forego a week’s salary? I would say no. What I observed at America Cantat was a diverse audience composed of music students, choir singers from various professions, young professionals from the area and even established directors, composers and performers, from within and without Argentina. But the incentive for these people to participate in these instances, regardless of the effort required, is that they value and recognize participation as an investment. Not only is it an activity of enjoyment in the moment of the festival but also the subjects learned and experienced in these events are experiences that last a lifetime, ranging from the music itself and the instructional and musical resources learned to the people and the social networks established between the various players in choral music. Participation as an investment in these festivals generates a circle that feeds back on itself, one that grows and spreads to the smaller circles from which each of the participants comes.

For now, it is the duty of those of us who take part in these events to pass along what we learned, invite others to participate in the events that follow and to also provide feedback to the organizations about the things that worked well and the things that didn’t so that the next time can be even better. For now, the invitation is to avoid regarding festival attendance as an expense but rather think of it as an investment, for us and for our entire musical circle. And for the future, the invitation is to participate, to organize, to be a part and to get involved in the creation of new and more events like these so that more people can be closer to choral music.

*Translated from Spanish by Joel Hageman, USA*



**SOFÍA TORRES VALENZUELA** is a choral director, singer and arranger. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Music Theory from the Universidad de Chile and is the Choral Director for the Universidad Nacional de las Artes, Argentina. As a director, she has attended numerous courses and workshops with both national and international teachers and has directed various choral, instrumental and orchestral ensembles in Chile, Argentina and Venezuela. As an arranger, she has written for different choral formats, with her music performed and recorded by various choirs. She is currently a professor at the Universidad de Chile, deputy director of the Virtual Women's Choir—a project created in the pandemic and active to this day—director and singer in the Ensamble Vocal Albores Australes and director of the Coro FaCiQyF, and she was recently chosen as a representative of Latin America and the Caribbean in the IFCM Youth Committee. <http://aamcant.com.ar/america-cantat-10/>

# A CHORAL MARATHON IN BURSA, TÜRKİYE

**YİĞİT DENİZ**

*Türkiye*

IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION SET OUT AT THE WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC ISTANBUL 2023 (WSCMISTANBUL2023) TO POSITION TÜRKİYE AS ONE OF THE PIVOTAL CHORAL HUBS IN THE WORLD, A RESPLENDENT CHORAL MARATHON WAS ORGANIZED BY THE CHORAL CULTURE ASSOCIATION AND HOSTED BY THE NILUFER MUNICIPALITY IN BURSA. THIS GRAND EVENT SAW THE PARTICIPATION OF OVER 30 CHOIRS AND AN ASSEMBLY OF NEARLY 1,000 CHORISTERS HAILING FROM VARIOUS CORNERS OF TÜRKİYE.

Over its 10 years, the Choral Marathon has steadily matured into a cherished tradition in Türkiye. However, the 2023 edition of this marathon stood as a testament to its ever-evolving splendour. Nearly 1000 choristers from 32 choirs in different cities in Türkiye gathered on 14 and 15 October 2023 for the event, which was marked by an excited and generous audience flocking to the Merinos Atatürk Congress and Culture Centre's concert halls and Nazim Hikmet Culture House. Concerts given by a series of different types of choir – from women's choirs, children's choirs to chamber choirs and vocal groups – have surely contributed enormously to the rising popularity of choral music in Türkiye. This follows on from this year's WSCM, organized by the International Federation for Choral Music in Istanbul which is regarded as a big milestone in the country's choral culture history.

"We witnessed a comparable enthusiasm and joy among attendees and the audience, akin to what was experienced during the WSCM Istanbul 2023 event," said Yiğit Deniz, conductor of Jazzberry Tunes choir, based in the Turkish capital Ankara.

This year's marathon held a distinct significance, intertwined with the joyful celebrations for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye. The opening evening witnessed an extraordinary performance by the State Polyphonic Choir and the Bursa Regional State Orchestra. They presented an ensemble of celebrated marches and anthems, beloved by the Turkish public, as well as new compositions dedicated to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Türkiye's foundation.



After the opening concert, there was a splendid gala event, featuring the Nilufer Polyphonic Choir and the Barbershop Istanbul vocal group performing together. Acapella Boğaziçi gave the closing concert with a diverse repertoire, predominantly inspired by Türkiye's indigenous music.

Beyond the extraordinary musical renditions, the Choral Marathon in Bursa aspired to offer a distinct perspective to its attendees. The two-day event hosted a series of presentations and workshops delivered by nationally and internationally renowned Turkish choral conductors, composers, and music education professionals including Suna Çevik, Hasan Uçarsu, Burak Onur Erdem, Pinar Çanakçı Çavdur, and Başak Doğan.

At the culmination of the marathon, the Vice-President of the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), Burak Onur Erdem, bestowed a two-year membership upon the marathon's organizing committee members as a token of appreciation. These sponsored memberships are part of the IFCM program "Creating Futures in Choral Music."

[korokulturu.org](http://korokulturu.org)  
info@korokulturu.org

*Edited by Laura Massey, UK*

"We witnessed a comparable enthusiasm and joy among attendees and the audience, akin to what was experienced during the WSCM Istanbul 2023 event"



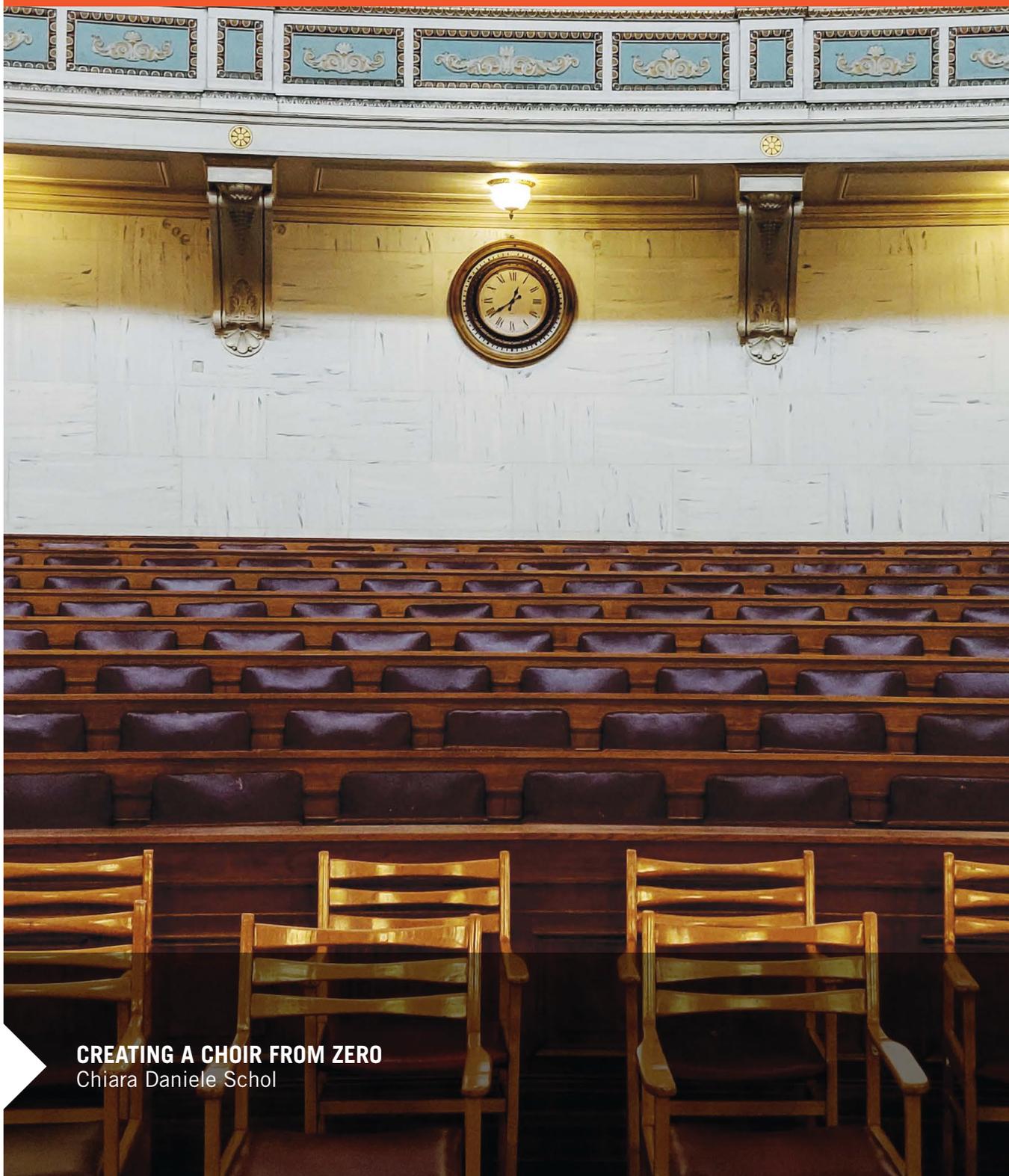
© Sina Kiriş

An Vokal © Sina Kiriş



FIRST STEPS...

# FIRST STEPS



**CREATING A CHOIR FROM ZERO**  
Chiara Daniele Schol

# CREATING A CHOIR FROM ZERO

**CHIARA DANIELE SCHOL**

*Montevideo, Uruguay*

**WHEN CREATING A CHOIR FROM THE GROUND UP, WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES SOME QUESTIONS BEFORE EMBARKING ON SUCH A TASK, SINCE IT WILL BE FROM THE ANSWERS OBTAINED THAT WE FIND THE BEST PATH TOWARD CONDUCTING IT IN A WAY THAT IS REWARDING AND ENRICHING FOR EVERYONE.**

Two initial and essential questions that will be of great help in outlining the choir's type and its foundational objectives might be: Is the choir I'm creating part of an institution or is it independent and managed autonomously? Am I able to select the voices or is it an open call to all who wish to join?

With the answers to these two questions, I immediately obtain two very different choir profiles and therefore diverse possibilities and characteristics. In the case of an independent choir, the essential decisions will be made by the director/manager while alternatively, many of the decisions in an institutional organization may be subject to certain a priori guidelines: choice of repertoire, open call for voices, compliance with certain calendars and institutional projects, institutional image, etc.

Let's focus on an independent choir where every decision depends solely and exclusively on me as the musical leader. What questions should I ask myself?

First of all, knowing what type of choir and sound I want to have: Do I want a sound of equal voices? Male? Female? Or do I want a mixed choir? Youth choir? Children? And so on. Then think about the planned musical objectives and in that vein, proceed to define the instrument with which I'll

work: What repertoire will I cover? What choral-vocal instrument does this repertoire require to get a satisfactory result? Can I sustain this sound with amateur voices with little choral-vocal experience, or do I need voices with previous experience?

The creation of a new choir can also occur depending on the instrument that takes form, since often the voice selection is limited and rehearsals infrequent, obliging us to adapt to the material that arises as a result. Here, we must be careful not to make the mistake of proposing a repertoire, which may have been the impetus for the choir's creation at first, only to find that the instrument that finally takes shape is unprepared to address it, surely presenting both the director and the singers with double the frustration in the future.

When creating a choir, it is important to know the weekly rehearsal schedule I will have and the attending workload in addition to having a suitable physical space in which to perform, namely: adequate acoustics for the rehearsal of choral music (neither too reverberant nor too dry), a spacious location that permits moving and working with the whole body, preferably a space that has a piano or keyboard, movable chairs, music stands for the director and choir members, etc.



An important driving force for operation and continuity will be clear long-term objectives and always setting short-term goals to maintain the interest of the group (concert dates, festivals, various group integration activities, etc.).

The choir is a living artistic organism where the musical aspect is as important as the human one. For this reason, it is vital during its formation not only to be attentive to the vocal-musical technical aspect but also to the potential we see in its future members: level of commitment, interest in working together, a proactive disposition toward the activity. In a first audition, it's very difficult to be able to detect these aspects effectively, even though the choir director, in the course of training, must develop intuition and constantly work to cultivate an aesthetic and ethical sensitivity. Therefore, it is advisable to make clear to the applicants from the start that a definitive incorporation into the choir will take place once a certain period of time has elapsed for assessment.

Along these lines, it is also necessary to elaborate from the beginning the functioning of the new group, promoting an internal organization for the choir, which will involve the voluntary creation of committees made up of the choir members themselves. These in turn work in continual coordination with the director, some of

these delegations possibly related to: finance, clothing, the outlining of projects and activities, communications and distribution, concert organization, etc.

As directors, we know we often fulfill several roles in addition to that of musical leader, performer, trainer, etc. When creating a choir from scratch, it is important to have a basic knowledge of project management. What does the project consist of? Why do I want to create this choir? What do I want to achieve? In how much time? What is the audience I imagine for my proposal? How can I expand it to reach new audiences? What name am I going to give it? What visual identity do I want it to have? In short, there are many questions that, as managers, we should also ask ourselves. Of course, having allies trained in these areas is most desirable but not always possible, which is why it's important to be attentive to these non-trivial aspects at the birth of a new choral project.



Lastly: I regard the creation of a choir today as a great act of courage and a wonderful challenge in the midst of a society that promotes and celebrates individuality, where collective and long-term projects fall into disuse, where the belonging of the "we" and the efforts that benefit the whole are devalued. Here's to many more choirs as spaces for meeting, working and cooperative construction!

*Translated from Spanish by Joel Hageman, USA*



**CHIARA DANIELE SCHOL** gained her degree in choral conducting at the **Universidad de la República Oriental del Uruguay**, complemented by her career in teacher training for music education. She has furthered her experience through scholarships to study in Bologna, Italy, and by participating in several courses, particularly those taught by: **J. Duijck, W. Pfaff, A. Rocha, J. Prats, Stanley De Rusha, Steen Lindholm, Martin Schmidt, Simon Carrington, María Guinand, A. Grau, J. J. Lemetrê, Ingrid Zur, Jorg Heyer and Violeta Hemsy**, among others. She has continuously directed various choral groups, foremost of among these the **University Children's and Youth Choir and the Drakkar Men's Choir**, having directed both since their founding in 2010. The latter group represents an intense effort, obtaining first prize in various international competitions. She is a frequent guest at different events as a director, a workshop instructor for directors and singers, a lecturer, a soprano soloist and an accordionist in the traditional realm. [chiaradanieleschol@gmail.com](mailto:chiaradanieleschol@gmail.com)



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# BOOK REVIEW



**MOTETS FOR ST. CECILIA 1540–1610**  
**JOHN A. RICE**  
Reviewed by Erik Peregrine

# MOTETS FOR ST. CECILIA 1540–1610

## JOHN A. RICE

REVIEWED BY ERIK PEREGRINE

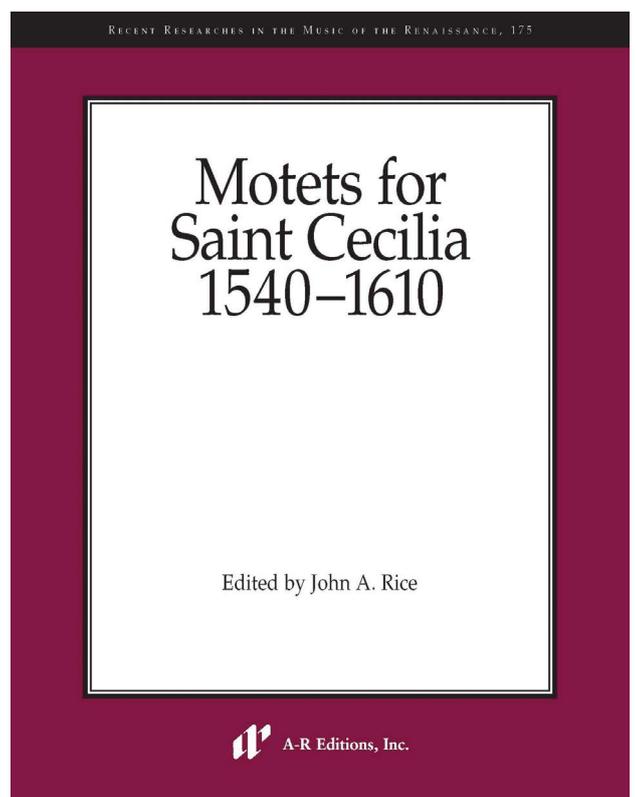
Musicologist and pedagogue, California, USA

JOHN A. RICE'S RECENT ANTHOLOGY, *MOTETS FOR ST. CECILIA 1540–1610* (A-R EDITIONS: *RECENT RESEARCHES IN THE MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE*, 175) IS A TREASURY OF LESSER-KNOWN CHORAL WORKS CELEBRATING THE PATRON SAINT OF MUSIC. WHILE AN OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN ITS OWN RIGHT, THIS COLLECTION IS MOST RICHLY UNDERSTOOD IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITS ACCOMPANYING BOOK, *ST. CECILIA IN THE RENAISSANCE: THE EMERGENCE OF A MUSICAL ICON* (UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 2022). FOR THOSE WITHOUT THE BOOK, RICE HAS INCLUDED AN ILLUMINATING YET MANAGEABLE WEALTH OF HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND ARTISTIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION WITHIN THE ANTHOLOGY TO CONTEXTUALIZE ITS TWENTY-FOUR MUSICAL OFFERINGS.

The introductory material summarizes the history of St. Cecilia's veneration (she was not always affiliated with musicians, as I had previously assumed), her evolution into the patron saint of music, a description of her feast day celebrations in sixteenth-century Siena, a case study of one commonly-set Cecilian text found within the anthology, brief commentaries on each of the twenty-four included motets, texts and translations, and relevant plates. The commentaries provide an impressive tapestry of background information despite their brevity, highlighting the most notable musical/contextual aspects of each motet after a biographical vignette of its composer. Rice's prose is deep yet readable throughout, and I especially enjoyed his inclusion of first-person commentary where relevant. This subtle reminder that the collection is the work of a fellow human being was quite welcome and appropriate in an anthology of music by and for musicians in praise of our patron saint.

The anthology itself consists of twenty-four "unfamiliar works by unfamiliar musicians" (pg. x) for forces ranging from four to sixteen voices in one to four choirs, arranged in roughly chronological order. Rice has done an exemplary job of selecting works that are both obscure and beautifully crafted; as a result, it was difficult to choose just a few motets to call attention to in this review. The two short "picture motets" preserved in engravings (Daniel Raymundi's "*Fiat cor meum*" and Cornelis Schuyt's "*Domine fiant anima mea*") are particularly intriguing from an interdisciplinary perspective and would be welcome additions to any program exploring the intersections of music, art, and/or material culture. Other highlights of the collection include Pierre Certon's "*Cecilia virgo gloriosa*", featuring a striking dramatization of St. Cecilia's own words, Rinaldo del Mel's "*Cantantibus organis*" with its delightful madrigalisms, Jan van Turnhout's "*O virgo generosa*", which Rice has set to facilitate the sort of double choir performance that Turnhout may have intended, and Gasparo Villani's lush polychoral "*Cantantibus organis*". While the last of these might be more at home in a Baroque anthology (it was originally published with a *basso seguente* part, included in this edition as *basso continuo*), I am grateful for its inclusion here. It is a fittingly opulent and celebratory work to close the collection.

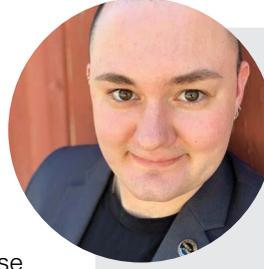
These motets will certainly appeal to conductors, singers, and listeners alike, though the anthology format (and the price and bulk associated with it) is unwieldy for ensemble performance. I hope to see standalone performance editions drawn from this collection made available in the near future. Rice's fine editorial work will transfer naturally from the library to the



rehearsal room. The majority of included motets would be appropriate for contemporary mixed-voice ensembles with a few slight alterations: for example, tasteful transposition to better suit SATB-type voicings (where relevant) and setting altus/contratenor parts in non-transposing treble clefs for ease of reading by modern altos. Until these motets are published individually, however, interested conductors must seek out other editions (where they exist).

*Motets for Saint Cecilia 1540–1610* will be of great interest to musicologists, historians, and anyone curious about Cecilian musical traditions through the end of the Renaissance. Choral conductors, too, will treasure it as a sourcebook of lesser-known gems, but will undoubtedly find themselves tempted to make illegal photocopies of these outstanding scores. I thoroughly enjoyed Rice's presentation of this collection and I look forward to programming these splendid editions if – *when!* – they become available in more accessible formats.

*Edited by Karen Bradberry, Australia*



**Dr. ERIK PEREGRINE (they/ them/theirs)** is a visionary conductor, musicologist, and pedagogue whose work centers relationship as the fundamental basis for music-making. Peregrine currently serves as the artistic director of Ensemble Companio, an award-winning Northeastern regional chamber choir, and the founding director of LIFT!, an independent conducting studio. During their recent tenure as Director of Choirs at the University of California–Davis, Peregrine was awarded both the 2023 UC Davis University Honors Program Faculty Mentorship Award and the 2023 ASUCD Excellence in Education Award for their outstanding commitment to undergraduate education. Peregrine holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting and historical musicology from the University of Arizona, an MM in choral conducting from the University of British Columbia, and a BA in Music from Lewis & Clark College.  
[artisticdirector@ensemblecompanio.org](mailto:artisticdirector@ensemblecompanio.org)

 The advertisement features a background image of a large, light blue, ornate building with a porch, situated on a waterfront. The sky is a soft sunset or sunrise. In the top right corner, there is a logo for the Estonian Choral Association, consisting of a stylized 'E' and 'A' intertwined. Below the logo, the text reads 'ESTONIAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION'. The main text is in a bold, dark blue font. A decorative wavy line separates the top image from the text. At the bottom, there is a white lace-like pattern.
 

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### Corearte Tenerife

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# CHORAL CALENDAR



**FESTIVALS, COMPETITIONS, CONFERENCES,  
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Compiled by Nadine Robin

# CHORAL CALENDAR

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**Fingal International Festival of Voices, Ireland, 7-11 Mar 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [ireland@music-contact.com](mailto:ireland@music-contact.com) - Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**ON STAGE in Israel, Israel, 12-17 Mar 2024.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**International Choir Festival Corearte All'Italiana, Italy, 14-23 Mar 2024.** Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [info@corearte.es](mailto:info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com.es/en/tour/italy/>

**Paris International Choir Festival, France, 14-18 Mar 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [info@musiccontact.com](mailto:info@musiccontact.com) - Website: [www.musiccontact.com](http://www.musiccontact.com)

**Cherry Blossom Washington D.C. International Choral Festival, USA, 14-17 Mar, 21-24 Mar, 28-31 Mar, 4-7 Apr 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**12th International Gdansk Choir Festival, Poland, 15-17 Mar 2024.** Apply before November 15, 2023. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: [mail@gdanskfestival.pl](mailto:mail@gdanskfestival.pl) - Website: [www.gdanskfestival.pl](http://www.gdanskfestival.pl)

**Discover Puerto Rico and its Choral Music, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 15-18 Mar 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic, 20-24 Mar 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**17th Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition, Fukushima, Japan, 21-24 Mar 2024.** Apply before October 31, 2023. Contact: Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition, Email: [v-ensemble@pref.fukushima.lg.jp](mailto:v-ensemble@pref.fukushima.lg.jp) - Website: <http://www.vocalensemble.fukushima.jp/en/>

**Vox Lucensis, Lucca, Italy, 22-27 Mar 2024. Apply before September 4, 2023.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**17th Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del Garda, Italy, 24-28 Mar 2024.** Apply before 10 December 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**International Children's & Youth Chorus Festival 'StimmenKlangRaum', Weimar, Germany, 3-7 Apr 2024.** Apply before 31 December 2023. Contact: Schola Cantorum Weimar, Email: [festival@schola-cantorum-weimar.de](mailto:festival@schola-cantorum-weimar.de) - Website: <https://schola-cantorum-weimar.de>

**Verona International Choral Competition, Verona, Italy, 3-7 Apr 2024.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: <http://www.music-contact.com/>

**Misatango Choir Festival, Berlin, Germany, 4-7 Apr 2024.** Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA/COLUMBUS Reisen GmbH & Co KG, Email: [info@misatango.com](mailto:info@misatango.com) - Website: <https://www.misatango.com/festivals/festival-berlin-2024>

**Festival di Primavera (Spring Festival), Montecatini Terme, Tuscany, Italy, 11-13 Apr (aged 6-13), 17-20 Apr 2023 (aged 16-28).** Apply before May 31, 2023. Contact: FENIARCO (Italian Federation of Regional Choir Associations), Email: [festivaldiprimavera@feniarco.it](mailto:festivaldiprimavera@feniarco.it) - Website: [www.feniarco.it](http://www.feniarco.it)

**29th Torrevieja Habaneras Contest for Children's and Youth Choirs, Torrevieja (Alicante), Spain, 20 Apr 2024.** Apply before 20 December 2023. Contact: Manuel Martinez, Email: [habaneras@habaneras.org](mailto:habaneras@habaneras.org) - Website: <https://habaneras.org>

**Slovakia Cantat, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 25-28 Apr 2024.** Apply before December 15, 2023. Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: <https://www.choral-music.sk/en/Festivaly/>

**72nd European Music Festival for Young People, Neerpelt, Belgium, 26-29 Apr 2024.** Apply before October 30, 2023. Contact: Europees Muziekfestival voor de Jeugd, Email: [info@emj.be](mailto:info@emj.be) - Website: <https://www.emj.be/>

**16th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 26 Apr-1 May 2024.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**21st Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 27 Apr-1 May 2024.** Apply before 10 January 2024. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Cork International Choral, Ireland, 1-5 May 2024.** Fleischmann International Trophy Competition (closing date: 31 October 2023) or the Non-Competitive International strand (closing date: 30 November 2023). Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: [info@corkchoral.ie](mailto:info@corkchoral.ie) - Website: [www.corkchoral.ie](http://www.corkchoral.ie)

**Corearte Iberia Spring Musical Tour, Madrid, Avila, Merida, Santiago de Compostela, Lisbon, Oporto, Spain & Portugal, 6-15 May 2024.** Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [info@corearte.es](mailto:info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com.es/en/tour/spain-portugal/>

**International Festival of Choral Singing Nancy Voix du Monde, Nancy, France, 8-12 May 2024.** Apply before February 1, 2024. Contact: Festival International de Chant Choral de Nancy, Email: [festival-choral@orange.fr](mailto:festival-choral@orange.fr) - Website: [www.chantchoral.org](http://www.chantchoral.org)

**2nd European Festival JVM (Jeunes Voix Mêlées), Thuir, France, 8-12 May 2024. Apply before September 30, 2023.** Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: [alix.bourrat@orange.fr](mailto:alix.bourrat@orange.fr) - Website: <https://choraethuir.wixsite.com/chanterie-cantilene/copie-de-festival-jvm-2024>

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

**International Choral Competition Ave Verum 2021, Baden, Austria, 9-12 May 2024.** Contact: Wolfgang Ziegler, chairman, Email: [aveverum.baden@gmail.com](mailto:aveverum.baden@gmail.com) - Website: [www.aveverum.at](http://www.aveverum.at)

**International Choral Competition Ave Verum 2021, Germany, 9-12 May 2024.** Apply before October 31, 2023. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Harmonie Festival 2024, Limburg-Lindenholzhausen, Germany, 9-12 May 2024.** Apply before November 30, 2023. Contact: Harmonie Lindenholzhausen, Email: [information@harmonie-festival.de](mailto:information@harmonie-festival.de) - Website: [www.harmonie-festival.de](http://www.harmonie-festival.de)

**13th World Choir Festival on Musical & Competition, Thessaloniki, Greece, 10-12 May 2024.** Apply before March 20, 2024. Contact: Choir Korais, Email: [choirkorais94@gmail.com](mailto:choirkorais94@gmail.com) - Website: [www.xorodiakorais.com](http://www.xorodiakorais.com)

**International Festival of University Choirs UNIVERSITAS CANTAT 2024, Poznań, Poland, 15-18 May 2024.** Apply before December 15, 2023. Contact: International Festival of University Choirs, Email: [festival@amu.edu.pl](mailto:festival@amu.edu.pl) - Website: <http://cantat.amu.edu.pl/pl/>

**PODIUM 2024, Montréal, Québec, Canada, 16-19 May 2024.** Contact: Choral Canada, Email: [podium@choralcanada.org](mailto:podium@choralcanada.org) - Website: <https://www.podium2024.ca>

**Choral Workshops with Mozart's Coronation Mass, Wrocław, Poland, 16-19 May 2024.** Apply before December 31, 2023. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [info@mrf-musicfestivals.com](mailto:info@mrf-musicfestivals.com) - Website: <http://choral-workshops.com>

**42nd International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Greece, 16-26 May 2024.** Apply before January 31, 2024. Contact: International Choral Festival of Karditsa, Email: [nke@otenet.gr](mailto:nke@otenet.gr) - Website: <http://festivalofkarditsa.blogspot.gr/>

**23th Statys Simkus Choir Competition, Klaipeda, Lithuania, 16-19 May 2024.** Apply before January 15, 2024. Contact: Klaipeda Choir Association „AUKURAS“, Email: [aukurasku.lt](mailto:aukurasku.lt) or [simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com](mailto:simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com) - Website: <https://www.aukurasku.lt/simkus>

**Festival de la Voix, Châteauroux, France, 17-19 Mai 2024. Apply before 15 octobre 2023.** Contact: CEPRAVOI, Email: [contact@cepravoi.fr](mailto:contact@cepravoi.fr) - Website: [www.festivaldelavoix-chateauroux.fr](http://www.festivaldelavoix-chateauroux.fr)

**Musica Sacra International Festival, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 17-21 May 2024.**

Apply before 28 Feb 2024. Contact: MODfestivals e.V., Email: [office@modfestivals.org](mailto:office@modfestivals.org) - Website: <https://www.musica-sacra-international.org/>

**Chorus America Conference 2024, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, 6-8 June 2024.**

Contact: Chorus America, Email: [service@chorusamerica.org](mailto:service@chorusamerica.org) - Website: <https://chorusamerica.org>

**3rd Sing Berlin! International Choir Festival & Competition, Germany, 7-11 June 2024.**

Early birds apply before 15 December 2023. Others apply before 15 February 2024. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Limerick Sings International Choral Festival, Limerick, Ireland, 7-9 June 2024.**

Apply before October 31, 2023. Contact: Limerick Sings, Email: [information@limericksings.com](mailto:information@limericksings.com) - Website: <https://www.limericksings.com>

**12th Kaunas Cantat, Kaunas, Lithuania, 7-9 June 2024.**

Apply before March 1st, 2024. Contact: Lituania Cantat, Email: [info@lchs.lt](mailto:info@lchs.lt) - Website: <http://www.lituaniacantat.lt/>

**Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy/Austria, 12-16 June 2024.**

Apply before February 15, 2024. Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival Office, Email: [info@festivalpusteria.org](mailto:info@festivalpusteria.org) - Website: [www.festivalpusteria.org](http://www.festivalpusteria.org)

**International Krakow Choir Festival Cracovia**

**Cantans, Poland, 13-16 June 2024.** Apply before 20 December 2023. Contact: MELODY & Polonia Cantat, Email: [mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl](mailto:mail@krakowchoirfestival.pl) - Website: <http://www.krakowchoirfestival.pl>

**International Choral Festival Costa Rica for Peace, San Jose, Costa Rica, 19-22 June 2024.**

Apply before February 28, 2024. Contact: Costa Rica International Choral Festival, Email: [info@choralfestcostarica.org](mailto:info@choralfestcostarica.org) - Website: [www.choralfestcostarica.org/](http://www.choralfestcostarica.org/)

**33rd International Franz Schubert Choir Competition & Festival, Vienna, Austria, 21-25 June 2024.**

Early birds apply before 15 January 2024. Others apply before 15 February 2024. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Corearte Choral Summer Camp, Puerto de la Cruz Tenerife, Spain, 25-30 June 2024.**

Apply before 15 February 2024. Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [Info@corearte.es](mailto:Info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com.es/en/choir-festival/tenerife/>

**Musica Orbis Prague Festival, Czech Republic, 27 June-1 July 2024. Apply before April 30, 2024.**

Contact: Musica Orbis Prague Festival, Email: [info@musicaorbis.com](mailto:info@musicaorbis.com) - Website: <https://www.musicaorbis.com/>

**International Festival Verona Garda Estate, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, Vicenza, Italy, 27 June-15 July 2024 (3 sessions).**

For all choirs of all types. Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email: [info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu](mailto:info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu) - Website: [www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu](http://www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu)

**Festival of Voices, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 28 June-7 July 2024.**

Contact: Festival of Voices Tasmania, Email: [info@festivalofvoices.com](mailto:info@festivalofvoices.com) - Website: <https://festivalofvoices.com/>

**HarbourVOICES International Festival, St. John's Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada, 29 June-4 July 2024.**

Apply before September 15, 2023. Contact: HarbourVOICES International Festival, Email: [info@harbourvoices.ca](mailto:info@harbourvoices.ca) - Website: <http://harbourvoices.ca>

**EuroChoir 2024, Varna, Bulgaria, July 2024.**

Contact: Bulgarian Choirs' Union - Website: <https://europeanchoralassociation.org/activities/eurochoir/>

**42nd International Choir Festival of Preveza, 28th International Choir Competition, Preveza, Greece, 1-7 July 2024.**

Apply before May 1st, 2024. Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: [armonia4@otenet.gr](mailto:armonia4@otenet.gr) - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

**2nd Choral Composition Competition of Preveza, Preveza, Greece, 1-2 July 2024.**

Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: [armonia4@otenet.gr](mailto:armonia4@otenet.gr) - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

**7th Choral Conducting Seminar and Masterclass, Preveza, Greece, 1-3 July 2024.**

Contact: Choral Society "Armonia" of Preveza, Email: [armonia4@otenet.gr](mailto:armonia4@otenet.gr) - Website: <http://www.armoniachoir.gr/festival/index.php>

**Florence FUN and Music Festival, Florence, Italy, 2-4 July 2024.** Contact: FICF - Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Email: [info@florencechoirfestival.com](mailto:info@florencechoirfestival.com) - Website: <http://www.florencechoirfestival.com/>

**Study Tour to the 100th Anniversary of the Lithuanian Song Celebration, Vilnius, Lithuania, 2-7 July 2024. Discounted fee for IFCM members.** Apply before March 1st, 2024. Contact: Lithuanian National Culture Centre, Email: [s.prockyte@gmail.com](mailto:s.prockyte@gmail.com) - Website: <http://www.dainusvente.lt/>

**58th International Choral Competition, Spittal an der Drau, Austria, 4-7 July 2024.** Apply before January 31, 2024. Contact: Kulturamt der Stadt Spittal an der Drau, Email: [info@chorbewerb-spittal.at](mailto:info@chorbewerb-spittal.at) - Website: <http://www.chorbewerb-spittal.at>

**International Choral Festival "Choral Festivities — Sparkling Voices", Ni, Serbia, 4-7 July 2024.** Apply before May 29, 2024. Contact: Ustanova Ni ki kulturni centar, Email: [injac.milena@gmail.com](mailto:injac.milena@gmail.com) - Website: <https://www.nkc.rs/>

**16th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 5-10 July 2024.** Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: [office@scfestival.org](mailto:office@scfestival.org) - Website: [www.scfestival.org](http://www.scfestival.org)

**59th Barcelona International Choir Festival, Spain, 8-14 July 2024. Choirs apply before November 30, 2023.** Individuals apply before March 30, 2024. Contact: Federació Catalana d'Entitats Corales, Email: [fcec@fcec.cat](mailto:fcec@fcec.cat) - Website: [www.fcec.cat](http://www.fcec.cat)

**Chanakkale International Choir Festival and Competition, Canakkale, Türkiye, 9-14 July 2024.** Apply before 17 February 2024. Contact: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Email: [info@canakkalekorofestivali.com](mailto:info@canakkalekorofestivali.com) - Website: <http://www.canakkalekorofestivali.com/>

**14th International Youth Chamber Choir Meeting, Usedom Island (Baltic Sea), Germany, 12-21 Jul 2024.** Apply before December 15, 2023. Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: [info@amj-musik.de](mailto:info@amj-musik.de) - Website: <https://www.usedom.amj-musik.de/en/>

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**European Seminar for Young Choral Composers, Aosta, Italy, 14-21 July 2024.** Apply before March 30, 2024. Contact: FENIARCO (Italian Federation of Regional Choir Associations), Email: [info@feniarco.it](mailto:info@feniarco.it) - Website: [www.feniarco.it](http://www.feniarco.it)

**17th China International Chorus Festival, Beijing, China, 15-19 July 2024.** Contact: China International Chorus Festival or IFCM, Email [office@ifcm.net](mailto:office@ifcm.net) or [secretarygeneral@ifcm.net](mailto:secretarygeneral@ifcm.net) - Website: <https://www.ifcm.net/cooperations/china-international-chorus-festival>

**13th Musica Eterna Roma International Choir Festival and Competition, Italy, 17-21 July 2024.** Early birds apply before 15 December 2023. Others apply before 15 February 2024. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**International Choir Competition, Miltenberg, Bavaria, Germany, 16-21 July 2024.** Apply before December 1, 2023. Contact: Kulturreferat des Landratsamtes Miltenberg, Gaby Schmidt, Email: [kultur@LRA-MIL.de](mailto:kultur@LRA-MIL.de) - Website: [www.chorwettbewerb-miltenberg.de](http://www.chorwettbewerb-miltenberg.de)

**39th Takarazuka International Chamber Chorus Contest, Takarazuka City, Hyogo, Japan, 20-21 July 2024.** Apply before Jan 31, 2024. Contact: Takarazuka Vega-Hall, Email: [ticc@takarazuka-c.jp](mailto:ticc@takarazuka-c.jp) - Website: [https://takarazuka-c.jp/ticc\\_en/](https://takarazuka-c.jp/ticc_en/)

**Singing Bridges, Novi Sad, Serbia, 21-28 July 2024.** Apply before April 9, 2024. Contact: Serbian Choral Association, Email: [info@cx.rs](mailto:info@cx.rs) - Website: <https://cx.rs/>

**70th International Choral Contest of Habaneras and Polyphony, Torrevieja (Alicante), Spain, 21-27 July 2024.** Apply before 31 December 2023. Contact: Certamen Int'l de Habaneras de Torrevieja, Email: [habaneras@habaneras.org](mailto:habaneras@habaneras.org) - Website: [www.habaneras.org](http://www.habaneras.org)

**8th Krikor Chetinyan Choral Conducting Masterclass, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 22-28 July 2024.** Apply before July 1, 2024. Contact: Plovdiv National School of Music and Dance "Dobrin Petkov", Email: [horovalab@gmail.com](mailto:horovalab@gmail.com)

**13th Bali International Choir Festival 2024, Kuta, Bali, Indonesia, 23-27 July 2024.** Last registration closes on 13 March 2024. Contact: Bandung Choral Society, Tommyanto Kandisaputra, Email: [mailbcsevents@gmail.com](mailto:mailbcsevents@gmail.com) - Website: <https://www.bandungchoral.com/>

**Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Florence, Italy, 23-26 July 2024.** Contact: FICF - Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Email: [info@florencechoirfestival.com](mailto:info@florencechoirfestival.com) - Website: <http://www.florencechoirfestival.com/>

**Tokyo International Choir Competition, Japan, 26-28 July 2024.** Apply before 28 February 2024. Contact: International Choral Organization of Tokyo, Email: [ticc@icot.or.jp](mailto:ticc@icot.or.jp) - Website: <https://www.ticctokyo.icot.or.jp/>

**Arctic Boys Choir Festival, Bodø, Norway, 7-11 Aug 2024.** Apply before February 1, 2024. Contact: Ung kirkesang (Young choristers), Email: [arcticboys@sang.no](mailto:arcticboys@sang.no) - Website: [www.sang.no/](http://www.sang.no/)

**Summer Course for Choral Conductors, Haapsalu, Estonia, 12-16 August 2024.** Apply before 30 April 2024. Contact: Estonian Choral Association, Email: [kooriyhing@kooriyhing.ee](mailto:kooriyhing@kooriyhing.ee) - Website: [www.kooriyhing.ee](http://www.kooriyhing.ee)

**3rd International Choral Festival of Natal, Natal, Brazil, 16-18 Aug 2024.** Contact: Maestria Produção Cultural, Email: [maestriaproducao@yahoo.com](mailto:maestriaproducao@yahoo.com) - Website: <https://www.maestriaproducaoocultural.com/ficnatal2024>

**World Youth Choir Session 2024 with National Youth Orchestra of Germany, Germany & Italy, 18 Aug-8 Sep 2024.** Contact: World Youth Choir Foundation, Email: [manager@worldyouthchoir.org](mailto:manager@worldyouthchoir.org) - Website: [www.worldyouthchoir.org](http://www.worldyouthchoir.org)

**Borneo International Choral Festival 2024, Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia, 26-30 August 2024.** Apply before 31 May 2024. Contact: Borneo International Choral Festival 2024 - Website: <http://www.malaysianvoicescollective.com/borneoicf>

**58th Days of Mokranjac, Negotin, Serbia, Sept 2024.** Apply before May 31, 2024. Contact: Festival "The days of Mokranjac", Email: [dkmokranjac1@gmail.com](mailto:dkmokranjac1@gmail.com) - Website: <http://www.mokranjcevi-dani.com/eng/>

**Thailand International Choral Festival, Bangkok, Malaysia, 3-6 Sept 2024.** Apply before 25 May 2024. Contact: Thailand Choral Association, Email: [thaichoral@gmail.com](mailto:thaichoral@gmail.com) - Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/thaiicf/home>

**Internationales Chorfest, Magdeburg, Germany, 10-15 Sept 2024.** Apply before April 29, 2024. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**International Choir Festival Corearte, Manizales, Colombia, 10-15 Sep 2024.** Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [info@corearte.es](mailto:info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com.es/en/choir-festival/colombia-2024/>

**(Inter)national Congress for Choral Conductors, Puteaux, France, 13-15 Sep 2024.** Contact: A Coeur Joie France, Email: [communication@choralies.org](mailto:communication@choralies.org) - Website: <https://www.congreschefsdechoeur.com/>

**Study Tour to Tbilisi, Georgia, 14-20 Sep 2024 and/or to Yerevan, Armenia, 20-26 Sep 2024. Discounted fee for IFCM members.**

Contact: European Choral Association, Email: [Jozi.Vovk@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org](mailto:Jozi.Vovk@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org) - Website: <https://europeanchoralassociation.org>

**12th International Choral Festival Music&Sea, Paralia, Greece, 17-22 Sep 2024.** Apply before 30 July 2024. Contact: MAG Culture and Experience, Email: [mag.culture@gmail.com](mailto:mag.culture@gmail.com) - Website: <https://magculture.mk>

**Study Tour to Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia, 20-26 Sep 2024.** Contact: European Choral Association, Email: [Jozi.Vovk@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org](mailto:Jozi.Vovk@EuropeanChoralAssociation.org) - Website: <https://europeanchoralassociation.org>

**chor.com Convention for Choral Music, Hannover, Germany, 26-29 Sep 2024.**

Contact: Deutscher Chorverband e.V., Email: [info@deutscher-chorverband.de](mailto:info@deutscher-chorverband.de) - Website: <https://www.chor.com/english/>

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**Grieg International Choir Festival and NINA Solo Competition for Young Singers, Bergen, Norway, 26-29 Sep 2024.** Apply before May 10, 2024. Contact: Annlaug Hus, Email: [post@griegfestival.no](mailto:post@griegfestival.no) - Website: <https://griegfestival.no>

**International Choral Singing Conference Choralia magna 2024, Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, Oct 2024.** Contact: NIPOS Artama, Email: [nipos@nipos-mk.cz](mailto:nipos@nipos-mk.cz) - Website: <https://www.nipos.cz/choralia-magna-2024/>

**Sing'n'Joy Bohol, Tagbilaran City, Bohol, Philippines, 1-6 Oct 2024. Apply before May 13, 2024.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**5th Beira Interior International Choir Festival and Competition, Fundão, Portugal, 2-6 Oct 2024.** Early birds apply before 29 February 2024. Others apply before 30 April 2024. Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**17th International Choir Contest Flanders, Genk, Belgium, 4-6 Oct 2024.** Apply before March 15, 2024. Contact: International Choir Contest Flanders, Email: [ikv.vlaanderen@gmail.com](mailto:ikv.vlaanderen@gmail.com) - Website: <https://www.ikv-genk.be>

**5th Kalamata International Choir Competition and Festival, Greece, 9-14 Oct 2024.** Apply before May 13, 2024. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 17-21 Oct 2024. Apply before July 31, 2024.** Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [info@mrf-musicfestivals.com](mailto:info@mrf-musicfestivals.com) - Website: [www.mrf-musicfestivals.com](http://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com)

**International Choir Festival Corearte Barcelona 2024, Spain, 21-27 Oct 2024.** Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [info@corearte.es](mailto:info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com/es/en/choir-festival/barcelona-2024/>

**SING FOR GOLD, Calella/Barcelona, Spain, 23-28 Oct 2024.** Apply before May 27, 2024. Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Eric Ericson Award 2024, Uppsala and Stockholm, Sweden, 23-26 Oct 2024.** Apply before 1 March 2024. Contact: Sveriges Radio AB, Email: [ericericsonaward@sverigesradio.se](mailto:ericericsonaward@sverigesradio.se) - Website: [www.ericericsonaward.se](http://www.ericericsonaward.se)

**Fosco Corti International Competition for conductors 2024, Turin, Italy, 25-27 Oct 2024.** Contact: FENIARCO (Italian Federation of Regional Choir Associations), Email: [info@feniarco.it](mailto:info@feniarco.it) - Website: [www.feniarco.it](http://www.feniarco.it)

**International Choir Festival Corearte México 2024, Mexico, 2-8 Dec 2024.** Contact: Festival Internacional de Coros Corearte Barcelona, Email: [info@corearte.es](mailto:info@corearte.es) - Website: <https://www.corearte.com/es/en/choir-festival/mexico/>

**18th International Choir Festival Tallinn 2025, Tallinn, Estonia, 10-13 Apr 2025.** Apply before November 15, 2024. Contact: Estonian Choral Association, Email: [kooriyhing@kooriyhing.ee](mailto:kooriyhing@kooriyhing.ee) - Website: [www.kooriyhing.ee](http://www.kooriyhing.ee)

**18th International Choral Competition Gallus – Maribor 2025, Slovenia, 11-13 Apr 2025.** Apply before September 23, 2024. Contact: Javni sklad RS za kulturne dejavnosti, Email: [info.maribor@jskd.si](mailto:info.maribor@jskd.si) - Website: <https://www.gallusmaribor.si/en/>

**Cork International Choral, Ireland, 30 Apr-4 May 2025.** Fleischmann International Trophy Competition (closing date: 31 October 2024) or the Non-Competitive International strand (closing date: 30 November 2024). Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: [info@corkchoral.ie](mailto:info@corkchoral.ie) - Website: [www.corkchoral.ie](http://www.corkchoral.ie)

**14th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 28 May-1 June 2025.** Apply before Jan 31, 2024. Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: [info@ejcf.ch](mailto:info@ejcf.ch) - Website: [www.ejcf.ch](http://www.ejcf.ch)

**CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 29 May-1 June 2025.** Apply before December 15, 2024. Contact: CantaRode, Email: [info@cantarode.nl](mailto:info@cantarode.nl) - Website: <https://www.cantarode.nl/en/>

**19th International Chamber Choir Competition, Marktoberdorf, Germany, 6-10 June 2025.** Apply before December 31, 2024. Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: [office@modfestivals.org](mailto:office@modfestivals.org) - Website: [www.modfestivals.org](http://www.modfestivals.org)

**Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy/Austria, 11-15 June 2025.** Apply before February 15, 2025. Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival Office, Email: [info@festivalpusteria.org](mailto:info@festivalpusteria.org) - Website: [www.festivalpusteria.org](http://www.festivalpusteria.org)

**6th European Choir Games & Grand Prix of Nations 2025, Aarhus, Denmark, 27 June-6 July 2025.** Apply before December 4, 2024. Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Florence FUN and Music Festival, Florence, Italy, 1-3 July 2025.** Contact: FICF - Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Email: [info@florencechoirfestival.com](mailto:info@florencechoirfestival.com) - Website: <http://www.florencechoirfestival.com/>

**Musica Orbis Gloria, Prague, Czech Republic, 3-7 July 2025.** Apply before 30 April 2025. Contact: Musica Orbis, Email: [info@musicaorbis.com](mailto:info@musicaorbis.com) - Website: <https://www.musicaorbis.com>

**17th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 4-9 July 2025.** Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: [office@sclfestival.org](mailto:office@sclfestival.org) - Website: [www.sclfestival.org](http://www.sclfestival.org)

**International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 17-20 July 2025.** Contact: International Choral Festival of Missoula, Email: [info@choralfestival.org](mailto:info@choralfestival.org) - Website: [www.choralfestival.org](http://www.choralfestival.org)

**Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Florence, Italy, 22-25 July 2025.** Open to choirs, orchestras & bands. Contact: FICF -

Florence International Choir & Orchestra Festival, Email: [info@florencechoirfestival.com](mailto:info@florencechoirfestival.com) - Website: <http://www.florencechoirfestival.com/>

**African Asia Pacific World Choir Games, Port Louis, Mauritius, 26 Sep-5 Oct 2025.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/events/>

**Relaxsing Costa Barcelona, Santa Susanna, Spain, 22-27 Oct 2025.** Contact: European Choral Association – Europa Cantat - Website: [info@relaxsing.org](mailto:info@relaxsing.org)

**55th International Choir Competition of Tolosa, Spain, 30 Oct-2 Nov 2025.** Apply before May 15, 2025. Contact: Centro de Iniciativas de Tolosa, Email: [cit@cittolosa.com](mailto:cit@cittolosa.com) - Website: [www.cittolosa.com](http://www.cittolosa.com)




  
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