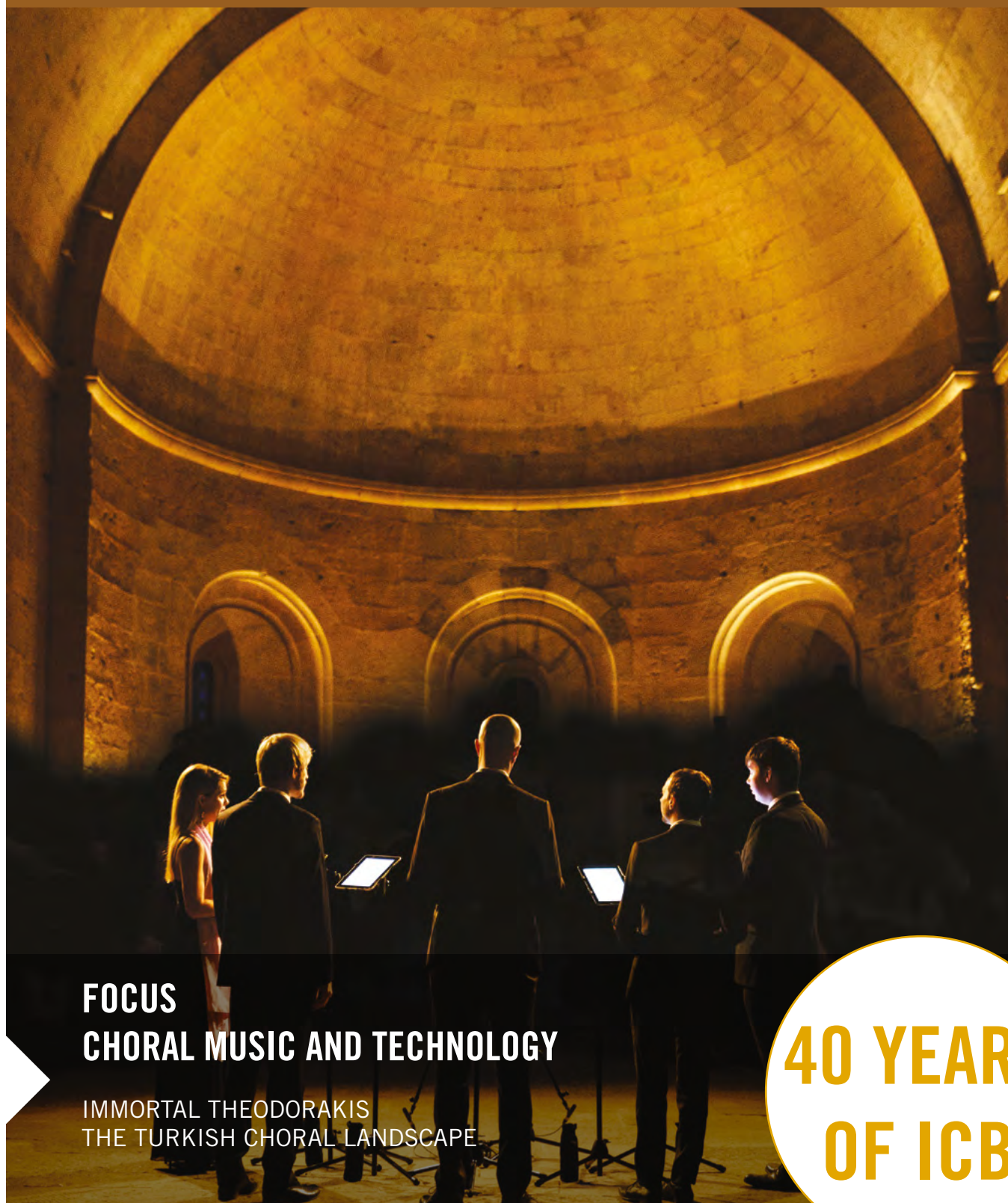




# ICB

INTERNATIONAL  
CHORAL  
BULLETIN

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Volume XL, Number 4  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 2021



## FOCUS CHORAL MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

IMMORTAL THEODORAKIS  
THE TURKISH CHORAL LANDSCAPE

40 YEARS  
OF ICB

# INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN

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# EDITORIAL



## EMILY KUO VONG

*President*

Over the past two years, while the whole music community has been affected by the Covid-19, choral music has been facing the toughest challenge of all. The majority of people are not confident that choirs can rehearse and perform safely unless widespread testing and vaccinations are undertaken, which could potentially take an entire year or more.

In this situation, the choral music sector is using technology to seek innovations in distanced choral singing. Just like when Steven Jobs said that if technology got married to liberal arts and the humanities, it would yield results that would make our hearts sing.

I believe that technology and new media are playing a significant role in keeping every singer singing together in the choral music family. With the technique of asynchronous recording, building a

virtual choir became astonishingly widespread last year. Fortunately, there are many resources for those people who are interested in getting involved in virtual choirs.

For virtual choirs, the musical output can become high quality thanks to cutting-edge engraving technology that can make MIDI guides and click tracks readily available. Therefore, this medium works particularly well for bringing newly composed choral music to the public. On the other hand, audiences appreciate the work of virtual choirs as they allow you to feel close to watching a live performance.

The year 2022 brings with it the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IFCM and ICB has grown alongside this federation from the beginning. As a window into IFCM for the world, ICB has been working to connect the entire choral community and multiple cultures with professional choral

music knowledge and technology. Today, the magazine is not only available in print but also online.

Moreover, we have a fabulous Editorial Board and a wonderful translation team, the members of which are volunteers. With their professional work and selfless spirit, ICB is translated into many languages making it invaluable for many choral populations. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them and congratulate them on their amazing outcomes. I believe, in the future, ICB will be even more colorful, covering many more topics and introducing us to many more special choirs, composers, and conductors.

*Edited by Mirella Biagi, UK/Italy*

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IFCM ICB, PO Box 42318, Austin TX 78704, USA

Fax: +1-512-551 0105

Email: [office@ifcm.net](mailto:office@ifcm.net)

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# FOCUS

## CHORAL MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

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# CHORAL SINGING AND TECHNOLOGY:

## How has Covid-19 changed the way choirs make music?

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**DARIUS LIM**

*Conductor, Singapore*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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SINCE THE ONSET OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TWO YEARS AGO, WE HAVE FOUND OURSELVES MOVING DEEPER INTO THE REALM OF DIGITAL MUSIC-MAKING. THE PANDEMIC HAS DEPRIVED US OF THE ABILITY TO EXPERIENCE LIVE CHORAL MUSIC-MAKING – A DEFINING MEDIUM OF THE CHORAL IDIOM – IN MANY WAYS.

The online rehearsal experience has transitioned to a process that many would deem colder, ineffective, and a one-way experience at odds with the definition of the choral art. Many of us (including myself) look back and remember the times when we could sing together in large groups. We now appreciate much more the ability to experience the sounds of the collective human voice – a spontaneous artistic endeavour that is made even more special with the knowledge that the music made is specific to that moment in time.

Even now, many still debate the efficacy and purpose of virtual choirs. Despite all the challenges, if we really look deeply into the changes in our choral music-making, we realise that the virtual platform has given us a chance to strip apart the different aspects of the choral art: we are able to separate and delve into the technical, social and artistic aspects of the artform more effectively.

We may have experienced some fatigue with virtual concerts of late, probably because of the many similar virtual choirs that have come through the screen, all produced in the same 'window frames' format. It is interesting to note that choirs are now starting to put greater focus on advocacy and story-telling through acting and speaking

in music videos. This has helped provide a greater visual impact for their viewers. In short, what choirs previously spent so little time focusing on must now assume greater importance on virtual platforms.

Our causes for music-making have also changed drastically. Singing to bond, unite, heal and change has now taken centre stage. In some ways, the pandemic has refreshed and reminded us of its advocative purpose: being the world's most accessible artform, uniting the human race through the unity of voices, the sharing of stories, and providing hope of a brighter future. The competitiveness of choral festivals and competitions has somewhat taken a back seat for the time being, as many festivals pivot to host digital programmes that engage choirs and conductors, and continue to provide a platform for professional artistic development and global awareness of music-making amidst this chaos.



Darius Lim

## WHAT IS THE PLACE OF TECHNOLOGY TODAY AND WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE IN THE YEARS TO COME?

In many ways, Covid-19 has forced an entire generation of musicians, artists and singers to pivot and transition to a new digital platform. It has made us think out of the box and take a new look at the choral idiom: We cannot sing together now, but what would it take for us to do so? For the time being, we look to technology and all its advances to remake the choral experience – rehearsing on Zoom and organising virtual concerts. But... is it really “for the time being”? A great debate is still on-going.

The virtual platform has created whole new markets and media to connect the world together. Virtual rehearsals and concerts that seemed impossible just two years ago are now possible with the click of a mouse. Our need for this platform has also created a new market for software designers, sound engineers, music producers and media companies.

Rehearsals on Zoom have to be conducted with singers unable to hear each other because of the application’s limitations. However, the different elements of a choral rehearsal (vocal technique, musicianship skills, social interaction and learning of songs) would be more successful and efficacious for singers if the elements were conducted online separately and not all at once. You cannot respond to someone next to you, listen to the conductor, harmonise and look at your score simultaneously while in an online rehearsal. Until recently, spontaneous two-way communication was deemed to be virtually impossible, but the launch and discovery of Jamulus and JackTrip has made virtual music-making much closer to live experience, allowing singers and musicians to hear each other and react to a conductor’s gestures in real time. This, in my opinion, is one of the greatest improvements to the virtual choral experience.

I don’t think anything can replace the experience of live choral singing. The choral experience is most profound when we are physically present: Human interactions and the sounds of the human voice create an unexplainable connection and motivate us to build a choral sound together.

However, looking into the near future, the lines of virtual and physical spaces will continue to blur with improvements in technology. Synchronous choral rehearsals and concerts will see improvements in latency, transmission and sound quality. I foresee a new breed of hybrid concerts in the next few years, where musicians and singers will be able to collaborate virtually in one physical space, but perform from the comfort of their homes. In the slightly more distant future – the next few decades – we will probably see breakthroughs

**For the time being, we look to technology and all its advances to remake the choral experience - rehearsing on Zoom and organising virtual concerts. But... is it really “for the time being”?**





and technological advances in 3D holograms. When successful, we will be able to sing side by side with the next person being thousands of miles away. That would certainly be a sight to behold!

### WHAT THREATS DO THESE DEVELOPMENTS POSE FOR THE CHOIR WORLD?

Whatever the developments in technology, I hope we will not lose that spark for live choral singing and choral excellence. It is through the live singing choral idiom that we are able to experience the true soul of choral music-making. The resonance of the human voice, the spontaneity of a conductor's gestures and the imperfections of unplanned moments in a live performance are but some of the elements of choral singing that simply cannot be replicated on the digital platform. They are what makes these moments magical and memorable.

Another danger probably lies in the ability to create an artificially perfect sound world. The digital realm does sometimes give the illusion of perfection, which may develop into complacency or fracture our ability to give great live concerts of equal calibre. Some have claimed that virtual choirs have saved the choral world from total obliteration during the height of the pandemic. Others

are of the opinion that virtual choirs should not be categorised under 'choir' singing and deem it artificial. Perhaps if we could take a different attitude towards this platform and view it through the lens of ensemble-building via the different elements of the choral art, it would help us see the bigger picture: Virtual choirs are, in fact, a form of choral advocacy - just as a retail shop with a physical space can also continue selling its merchandise on a digital platform.

The choral world will take a few more years to heal from the after-effects of the pandemic. During this time, we should not forget that digital platforms, though effective, should not be a long-term replacement for live choral singing. We also should not lose our aim for artistic excellence – to constantly challenge ourselves musically to be the best version of ourselves. It is through this endeavour that we find ourselves and build the necessary skillsets of discipline, drive, and self-motivation.

Having said that, virtual choirs have given hope to the choral world at a time when we needed it most. I believe even post-pandemic, it will continue to serve as a platform for advocacy and cause, and remind us all of the importance of coming together to sing for a common purpose, wherever we are in the world.

*Edited by Anita Shaperd, USA*



**Singaporean Composer and Conductor DARIUS LIM is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Voices of Singapore (VOS). He is published by Edition Peters, Walton Music, and Cypress Music. He is currently Council Member of the Asia Pacific Choral Council, Board Chairman of the World Alliance of Children's Choirs, and Deputy General-Secretary of the National Instructors & Coaches Association. He has also served on various other international music adjudication panels and boards. With the vision of building a Singing Singapore, the VOS Choral Society is one of the country's leading choral societies, with 20 choral singing groups and over 600 singers. Among their numerous recognitions is their 900-strong virtual choir performing "Home" during the pandemic. The work has been displayed at the Singapore National Museum, reflecting the resilience of a nation. Virtual choir recordings by VOS have collectively garnered over 1.5 million views on virtual platforms and have since become a benchmark for virtual music making in the country. Email: [darius@voicesofsingapore.com](mailto:darius@voicesofsingapore.com) — [www.voicesofsingapore.com](http://www.voicesofsingapore.com) — [www.dariuslim.com](http://www.dariuslim.com)**





# VIRTUAL SURREALITY: NOT YOUR TYPICAL VIRTUAL CHOIR

Machine Learning and Computer Graphics meet Polyphonic Choral Music in *Home Comfort Advisor* by Eliot Britton and the Amadeus Choir

**KATHLEEN ALLAN**

*Artistic Director and Conductor, Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto, Canada*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

## A NEW CHALLENGE

In the spring of 2020, choirs were presented with the biggest challenge in the history of our practice: how do we make choral music without being in the same room?

In response to this challenge, myriad innovations came flooding into the digital choral space. From grids of floating faces to live-streamed, socially-distanced concerts, choirs were proving what most of us already suspected: that nothing, not even a global pandemic, could keep us from making music together.

The Amadeus Choir is a semi-professional choir of approximately 70 voices that regularly commissions and performs new

work, especially by Canadian composers. However, aside from its artistic endeavours, the choir is also a tightly-knit community established over its 47 years of history. Keeping the choir connected socially and maintaining the joy of singing were vital during this period of isolation, as was upholding our mandate of presenting new work.

## A NEW FORMAT

When I approached composer/media-artist Eliot Britton about creating a piece for the Amadeus Choir to perform remotely, we discussed wanting to break the mold that had quickly become the dominant “virtual choir” format. He suggested that his artist collective, Quigital, take on the project. Consisting of a composer, a lyricist, a graphic designer, and a software engineer, all with connections to choral music, the team was perfectly equipped to create a work of digital choral art for the pandemic age.

Quigital is a group of artists that explores the absurdity of corporate aesthetics and culture through interactive art. “It is largely about exploring the creepy side of machine learning and data collecting, and then showing how affably it’s presented to the public,” says Eliot Britton. With slick, corporate visuals, innovative



technological approaches, and engaging interactive components, Quigital highlights and critiques the relationship between corporations and their consumers. "There's something that's very comforting and familiar about the corporate branding aesthetic, but then under the surface, it's actually quite disturbing and ominous. The project is actually a subversive critique of capitalism and big data."

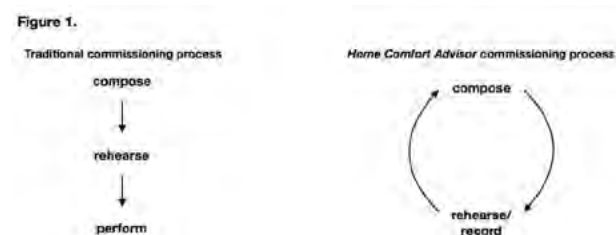
As the pandemic raged on and the digital takeover of the domestic sphere accelerated more, the Quigital concept seemed to be the perfect vehicle to keep our singers connected and create a meaningful artistic project with a light-hearted approach. So, the team began the months-long creation of a satirical, interactive, musical web experience called "Home Comfort Advisor: Your new, choral smart home."

### A NEW PROCESS

Since early in the pandemic, we, like so many choirs, had experienced the frustration that came with trying to simulate group singing over the Internet. Whether by attempting to rehearse over Zoom, or by editing dozens of video and audio files together, it was impossible to achieve the musical magic so easily achieved with a single breath drawn together in the same room. "I want to do something that moves in a different direction and really embraces what a choir can be on the Internet in the 21st century," says composer Eliot Britton. "How can we make this interactive for the audience?"

The chorister experience was also at the forefront of the project's design. "I was thinking of all the excited, community-driven choir people who were in their own individual homes," says Britton. "And I thought, how can this be interesting for each person? So, baked into the whole process of this work was the assumption that every single person is going to be recording in an unknown room with an unknown microphone with an unknown level of audio quality."

Rather than the traditional commissioning process of compose → rehearse → perform, the relationship between choir and composer was to be more reciprocal (See Figure 1). In a collaboration that spanned the entire season, Britton would provide small fragments to the choir, sometimes attending a rehearsal to describe his ideas and coach the recording process. Then, singers would upload their recordings for Britton and his team to manipulate and assemble into the final electronic compositions and interactive online content.



For the elements that were to be musically synchronized, even the guide tracks used for recording were in keeping with the Quigital aesthetic. Highly produced and using a corporate-sounding voiceover, the choir would be led through the track ("Now it's time for my favourite: Rehearsal 'C'!"), given their pitch, and even complimented on their take: "Wow - That was incredible!"

Hear an example guide track here: <http://bit.ly/quigitalclick1>.

### THE NEW CREATION

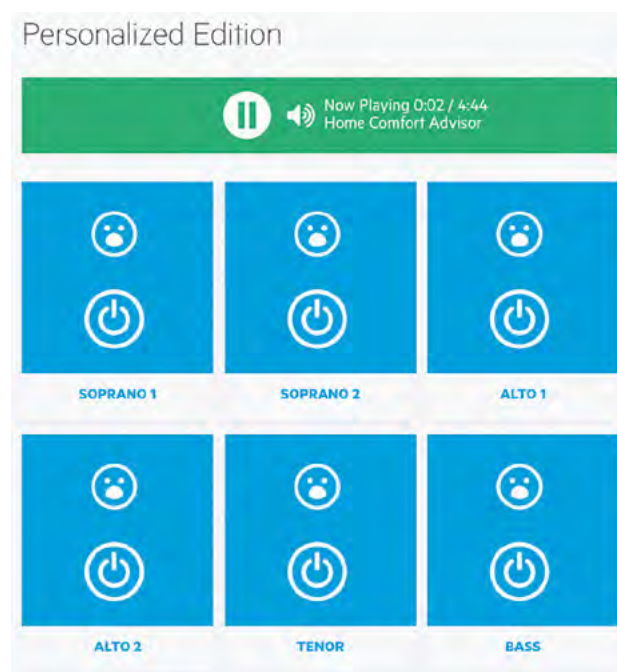
The final work consists of four movements (five if you count the "Help" section), all of which are housed on the custom website [quigital.com/smarthome](http://quigital.com/smarthome). Three promotional trailers for the project (that look like advertisements for the fake Quigital smart home products) are considered "Movement zero" and can be viewed on the Amadeus Choir's YouTube channel.

### I. Arm! Alarm! Restore!

Movement I uses text generated by "Quigital\_AI," the machine learning system programmed to spit out quasi-intelligible (and rhyming) text fragments based on 10,000 pages of smart home manuals.

The music was inspired by a French Renaissance chanson, "Belle qui tiens ma vie" by Jehan Tabourot. Because of the experimental nature of the project, Britton wanted to start out with a musical aesthetic that was very accessible. "Having something familiar that is underneath something extremely strange makes it more digestible. It allows the audience who's interacting with it to see more patterns."

Random combinations of Amadeus voices are presented by pressing the button, "See next models," to create a seemingly infinite number of ways to enjoy this quirky start to the piece.



## II. Home Comfort Advisor

Quigital\_AI's smart home text is set in an original six-voice motet by Eliot Britton in this movement which uses the three-note Quigital corporate theme as the musical seed for a nearly five-minute work. The "relaxing imitative polyphonic style" is customizable according to the listener's preferred voicing. Listeners can turn each of the six voice parts (SSAATB) off and on as the piece plays. Again, a familiar musical aesthetic is used to deliver an absurd faux-corporate message, though now with original music. "I went all out with every shred of Renaissance polyphonic compositional power that I could muster. That brings us to the idea of skirting authenticity. If it wasn't beautiful, then it wouldn't work."

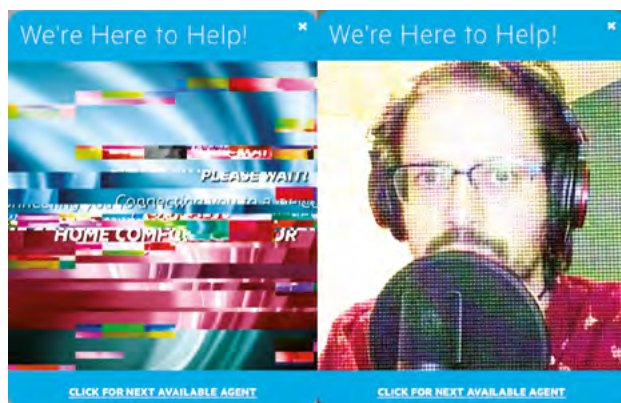
## III. Exit Time Into Schedule

A purely audio experience, this movement takes a complete turn into techno-choral melancholy. "Feeling disconnected? Is digital stress causing you to check the status of the status of your smart plug?," the website asks. Three soloists take on the roles of "Melancholy Robot Voice", "Ominous Voice of the Future", and "Corporate Neutral" to deliver this 2.5-minute robo-chorus.

"What I realized through this project is that we had to commit and go way beyond something that was 'advisable' and 'normal' to create something that was truly interesting," says Britton. "In the end, it had to be fully committed to this idea of a corporate aesthetic choir piece on the Internet."

## V. Get Help (yes, number V comes first!)

At any point during a visit to the website, audience members can press "Get Help" and enjoy the



tongue-in-cheek help videos by members of the Amadeus Choir, processed for extra effect by the Quigital Team. The glitchy suggestions of "you're muted" and "I can see you but ... but ... but I can't hear you" offer unlimited comic relief.

## IV. Your Smart Home

When I saw the fourth movement, essentially a CGI music video, I was in awe of what Britton and his team had created. It somehow summed up

all of the emotions our choir had felt over the course of a full year in lockdown. Seeing the video graphics weave through a sea of synchronized music playback devices, a brief respite in nature with the presence of the bizarre fake Quigital camera product, and finally, the singers' faces reflected in the computer graphic sky, was overwhelming, and I couldn't quite place why. I think it was the way it depicted the simultaneous digital disconnect, techno overload, and yet connectedness we were all feeling. It takes the concept of "surreal" — the word I personally felt best embodies the entire pandemic experience — to the extreme, blurring the lines between digital renderings of reality and reality itself; corporate emotional manipulation and authentic emotional expression.

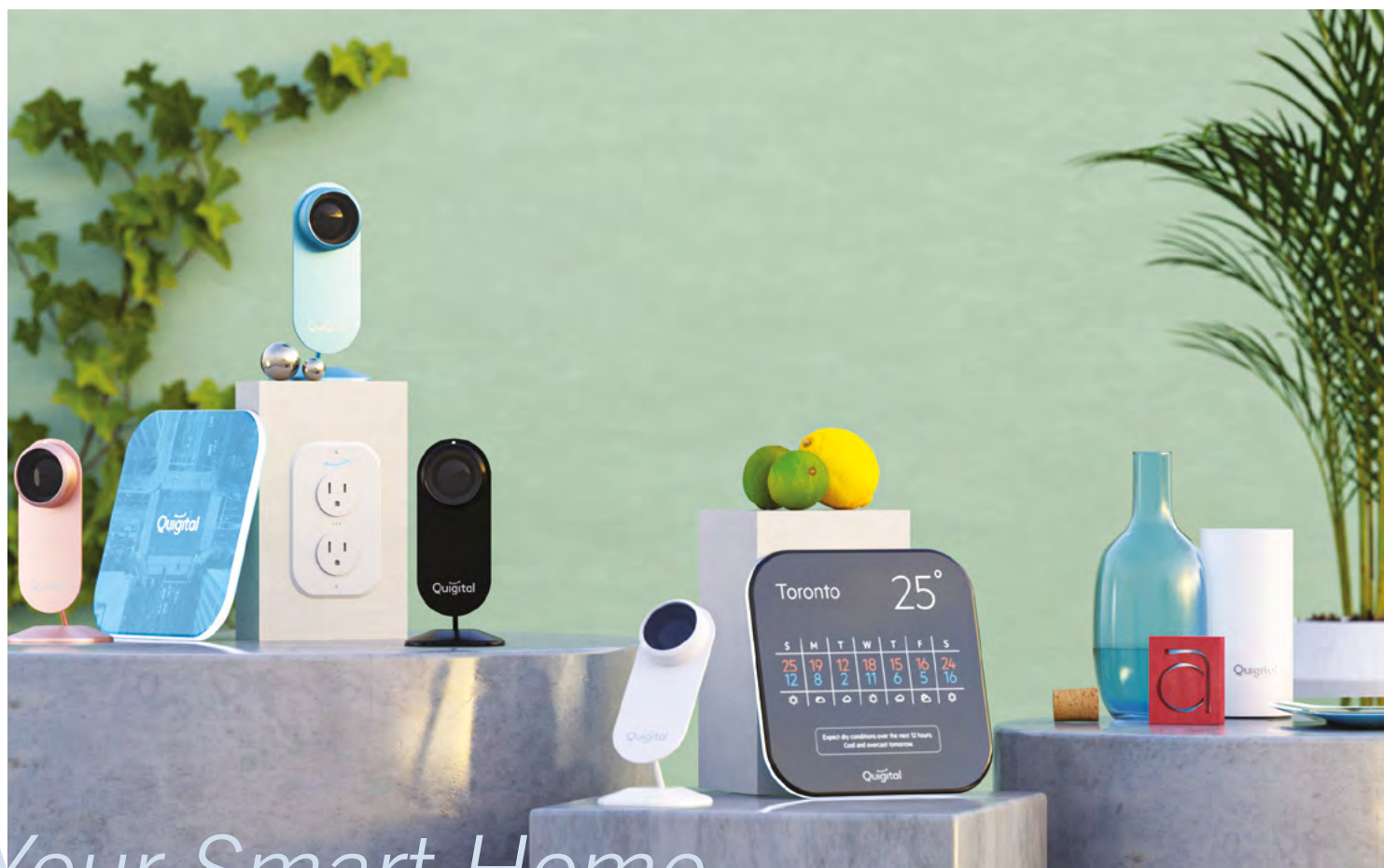
We have not met in person as a choir since March of 2020, but our membership and audience engagement is as strong as ever. It has been projects like this that have enabled us to make art while staying apart. And while we cannot wait to experience the magic of that group breath — that upbeat that holds so much musical potential in it — together again, we are grateful for the wild and wonderful opportunity to work with Britton and his colleagues.

You can experience *Home Comfort Advisor* at [www.quigital.com/smarthome](http://www.quigital.com/smarthome).

**Quigital** is Dave Arbez, Eliot Britton, Patrick Hart, and Kevin McPhillips.

*Edited by Ellen Murname, UK*





## Your Smart Home

**KATHLEEN ALLAN** is the Artistic Director of the Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto and Artistic Director of Canzona, Winnipeg's professional Baroque choir. Ms. Allan is in high demand as a conductor and composer and is equally comfortable working in early, contemporary, and symphonic repertoire. Originally from St. John's, NL, she has conducted orchestras and choirs across Canada, the US, and Japan, and recently made her conducting debut with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (2019) and Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra (2020). She was the 2016 recipient of the Sir Ernest MacMillan Prize. She is the Co-Artistic Director of Arkora, an ensemble that blurs the lines between the music of our time and masterworks from the ancient repertoire. Her compositions have been commissioned, performed and recorded by ensembles throughout the Americas and Europe. She holds a composition degree from UBC and a master's degree in conducting from Yale University.



About the **AMADEUS CHOIR OF GREATER TORONTO**: Enlivening Toronto's arts community for 48 years, the award-winning Amadeus Choir is a semi-professional choir of auditioned voices from Toronto and the surrounding areas. The Choir champions the best of choral music and premieres works of Canadian and international composers through a self-produced Toronto concert series, guest performances, and special events. Known well beyond Toronto through tours, festivals, recordings, and national and international radio broadcasts, the Choir collaborates with many professional performing arts organizations in the GTA. The Amadeus Choir is proud to take a leading role in educating the next generation of choral musicians by providing workshops for conductors, composers, singers, and students. The Choir is known for its strong support of Canadian music, and regularly commissions work from established and emerging Canadian composers. In 2019, after celebrating the 35-year leadership of Lydia Adams, the Choir welcomed Kathleen Allan as Artistic Director and Conductor. <https://www.amadeuschoir.com>

# ONE CLICK IS (NOT) ENOUGH

## Publishing in the Digital Age

**GIOVANNI CESTINO**

*Musicologist, Italy*

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AS WITH MOST OF OUR DAILY ACTIVITIES, NOT EVEN THE ACT OF MAKING MUSIC (IN THIS CASE, CHORAL) CAN AVOID THE CONSTANT INTERACTION WITH TECHNOLOGY AND WHICH, IN MANY CASES, MAY EVEN SURRENDER TO THE RESOURCES OFFERED BY THE INTERNET.

Think back to your last concert for a moment (please forgive the author for reminding you of this, given the current situation): how much of your sheet music came from the Internet, rather than from a library? How often have you listened to a performance somewhere online and how often have you practised exclusively on the piano or in a choir instead? How often have you bought a copy by ordering it from the comfort of your desk, rather than in person at your trusted music store? You will get hardly any answers that do not include at least some type and level of technological intervention, and there is nothing wrong with that. However, observing everything go digital in our choral experience can inspire us to proceed with greater awareness in the future, particularly during this time of overexposure to the virtual world in which we are all living.

The same is said in all languages: the Internet is an *encyclopaedia* (to use a term dear to the author and philosopher Umberto Eco) which is not always reliable since it is the result of an unstoppable plethora of operations – independent or collaborative, but not always verified – and, all things considered, accessible to us easily and in great quantity. From this point of view, choral music certainly enjoys a privileged place if we consider that, among the virtual archives of musical texts – the most famous of which being the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP) – the world of choral music is the only one to benefit from a site entirely dedicated to its own repertoire, namely the Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL).

As for the entries on Wikipedia, the quality of its nearly 35,000 pieces of sheet music, provided by users from all over the world, varies greatly in terms of reliability and accuracy: they range from a kind of *do-it-yourself* philology – that is, put together using sources readily available to the editor, and usually with poor methodological rigour – to a sort of illogical transcription of mensural notation with a few too many flats in the key... This same variation in quality can also be found in the information that accompanies the works (for those who want a taste

of this, I refer you to the page “Matona, mia cara” by Orlando di Lasso).

However, community-driven projects (i.e., those which allow all users to contribute freely) should not be stigmatised as such, especially when there appear to be some lucky exceptions: I am thinking, for example, of GregoBase, a database of Gregorian scores; created on an entirely voluntary basis, but which stands out for its richness, precision and – most importantly – for how verifiable the information on the site is.

It is a different matter, however, for the commendable activity of releasing scientific publications online. Alongside some more traditional ones such as the well-known *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* (NMA) or *The New Guillaume Du Fay Opera Omnia* – sadly left unfinished by the late Alejandro Enrique Planchart – there are other more innovative ones, such as the *Marenzio Online Digital Edition* (MODE) or the *Gaffurius Codices Online* (GCO), which harness the full potential of digital hypertext to become remarkably versatile tools for study and research.

We are therefore unable to ignore the huge benefits of the Internet for ‘exploration’ in our day-to-day relationship with written music, which are just as valid for any digital archive as they are for the many bibliographic tools at our disposal. In fact, nowadays any search for a musical text should, without exception, pass either via online public access catalogues – for example, OPACs of individual libraries, national OPACs or META-OPACs such as WorldCat – or via inventories, such as the RISM (International Inventory of Musical Sources). In all cases, only one commandment applies: never stop after just one click. Investigate further, be curious, and above all, question what you find. Place the same value on selecting which edition to base your performance on as you would when making any other interpretative decision.

In the transition from text to performance – or rather, in the continued relationship between these two pillars of

making music – the potential for digital technologies is becoming more and more significant, again both in open forms and for proprietary products. Alongside platforms such as Choralia with its wide selection of MIDI files for studying music, you can also find publishing initiatives, such as those by Carus-Verlag whose app lets you study the different scores in their catalogue on your mobile device. You can highlight your part in a professional recording (and then sing over it), reduce the speed to practise more complex passages, or easily jump from one point to another in the score with a single tap on the screen. Apps such as this are significantly reshaping how technology contributes to learning music and are even changing the mission of music publishers: they no longer simply print pages of music, but instead want to offer innovative tools for studying them too.

From sheet music to performance, digital technologies have gradually found their place *in* performing too. Though the glow from Yuja Wang's iPad is no longer making headlines, it is no less true that more and more publishers are succumbing to the lure of digital distribution, to the extent that alongside app or e-book stores, there are now also sheet music stores (if you have never heard of them, try typing "nkoda" into your search engine). Here too, transitioning from paper to screen is always done in the name of 'gaining experience': what was previously done in analogue form must also be possible digitally. It is for this reason that all apps (from Bärenreiter's or Henle's, to free ones like *Piascore*) allow you to add annotations, change the page layout, and so on.

In comparison with other musical contexts, however, the choral world still seems attached to traditional dynamics: paper continues to be the undisputed master of the stage, perhaps on account of the healthy nature of equality that making music in a choir should inspire. Can thirty people all be expected to own a good tablet (let alone a dazzling e-ink tablet such as the PadMu), even if this would solve problems of lighting, individuals leafing through their parts in the middle of a concert, or losing copies and not being able to recover them from somewhere on the cloud?

The digital world and making music, therefore, seem to be conducting a long and elegant dance of seduction, but most importantly one that is not afraid to move at its own pace. There does not appear to be any revolution in motion or even in sight, nor do we need to worry about remaining prisoners to our old analogue routines while the rest of the world slowly... goes digital. Technological lock-in (i.e., having to settle for technological conditions which are not necessarily the best but the most popular) should not be a fear, and certainly not an impediment. After all, haven't we been satisfied for centuries – despite excellent results – with a form of collaborative technology such as our written musical compositions, even though this technique may be simplistic and imprecise?

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<https://www.feniarco.it/it/editoria/choraliter>

*Translated from Italian by Luke Martin, UK*



**GIOVANNI CESTINO** (1992) holds a degree in Classical Guitar from the Conservatory of Alessandria, a MA in Musicology from University of Pavia, and a PhD in Musicology from University of Milan.

He also took courses in Composition, Conducting, and Renaissance Lute. He collaborates with LEAV – Ethnomusicology and Visual Anthropology Lab (University of Milan), and with Centro Studi Luciano Berio (Florence). He is a faculty member at Milan Choral Academy, and has been a visiting fellow at the Harvard University Department of Music. Since 2014 he conducts the Coro Facoltà di Musicologia (Cremona). He is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Milan.



Luleå University of Technology School of Music in Piteå, Sweden © Dolf Rabus





# A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CHOIR RECORDING TECHNIQUES

**PAUL MCGLASHAN**

*Sound Engineer, New Zealand*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

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THE LAST 100 YEARS HAVE SEEN HUGE CHANGES IN SOUND RECORDING TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY WITH DISTINCT ERAS RESPONSIBLE FOR INNOVATION AT ALL ASPECTS AND STAGES OF MUSIC PRODUCTION – FROM RECORDING, ENGINEERING, AND POST-PRODUCTION THROUGH TO MUSIC DISTRIBUTION, CONSUMER CHANNELS AND TECHNOLOGY. RECORDING OF ACOUSTIC ENSEMBLES SUCH AS CHOIRS AND ORCHESTRAS SITS WITHIN THIS LANDSCAPE AND WHILST TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO RECORDING ARE STILL PREVALENT TODAY, THE STAGE IS SET FOR A NEW ERA BASED ON IMMERSIVE RECORDING AND PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES THAT ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY MAINSTREAM FOR VIDEO, MUSIC AND GAMING INDUSTRIES.

The traditional approach to capturing a choral or orchestral performance typically relies on the acoustic qualities of the venue to obtain a balanced sound and a sense of realism. Ideally a venue is chosen to match the style of music and size of the ensemble. The recording engineer will choose an appropriate microphone configuration and positioning that captures an overall balance of the ensemble and a satisfying ratio of direct to reverberant sound. Choice of microphone (e.g. omni-directional vs. directional) and positioning also depends on factors such as the ambient noise level in the venue (air-conditioning, traffic, birds, weather), the degree and consistency of the choral ensemble, and the use of soloists and accompanying instruments.

Whilst there are a wide variety of microphone configurations, a typical setup for an acapella choir is usually based on a matched stereo pair of microphones for capturing the overall sound stage, optionally supported by spot microphones for choir sections and soloists (depending on the venue acoustics and the quality of the solo singers). The stereo microphone technique used is typically a spaced or near-coincident pair (e.g., omni-directional mics in Small AB, or directional mics in ORTF or NOS) perhaps supported by outrigger omni-directional or wide-cardioid microphones for large choirs. These choices usually result in the best sense of envelopment and spaciousness. The spot mics are tastefully blended to ensure that the overall balance and positioning of the soloists within the sound stage is as authentic as possible. The microphones are fed to an audio recorder ideally via a high quality, minimalist recording chain and the recording subsequently post-produced (edited, mixed, mastered). Outside

of editing and mixing, manipulation of the recorded sound (e.g., equalisation, compression) is usually kept to a minimum or not used at all. However additional reverberation may be added during post-production to glue the performance together and improve the sense of envelopment (a feeling of being surrounded by sound).

Today stereo recordings are still the predominant means of capturing choral performances. The microphone techniques and considerations used for choir or orchestra recordings haven't changed fundamentally since the early days of stereo recording back in the mid-1950s, when the introduction of magnetic tape drove much innovation in stereo recording.



Figure 1 - Surround microphone configuration based on Decca Tree

The move from tape to digital in the 1970s led to further improvements in audio quality and innovation in the recording and playback of multi-channel sound. New surround microphone techniques captured sound from the front but also from the sides and rear in an

effort to capture a 360-degree perspective. These recording techniques were coupled with playback formats such as Quadrophonic in the 1970's and Dolby 5.1 and DTS in the 1980s and 1990s. The aim of surround was to produce a more convincing sense of envelopment than you could get with stereo. However, like stereo where the sound stage is perceived to be in front of the listener, surround was only partially successful at producing a 360-degree experience since the impression was still of a largely 2-dimensional or horizontal sound stage.



Figure 2 - Neumann KU-100 Dummy Head

Binaural techniques progressed further during the 1970s with the use of a dummy human head with microphones located in the ears to simulate the way in which human beings perceive sound. Our ability to localise sound comes from sound arriving at our ears at slightly different times and levels. These inter-aural differences are largely governed by the shape of our heads, the distance between the ears, and their size and shape. The result is an accurate 3-dimensional sound stage with the listener in the centre and the sound appearing not just from left and right (as with traditional stereo) but also from below, above and behind. Binaural

recordings are best played back on headphones and depending on the where the dummy head is positioned can give an uncanny feeling of "being there" in the room with the performers. To date binaural has been a niche in the music recording scene and whilst it has been used to good effect by some contemporary artists, it hasn't been that popular for choral and orchestral recordings. (see CD Review in ICB 2021-3)

However, this is changing as headphones increasingly become the primary way of listening to music, with the growing trends in spatial recordings and as low-cost binaural head technology becomes available.



Figure 3 - SoundField Ambisonic Microphone

Ambisonics, a technique developed in the 1970s, captures a 3-dimensional impression using a tetrahedral arrangement of four microphones located at a single point in space and has been a popular approach to surround recording for both music and film. An interesting property of this technique is that the recordings can be manipulated in post-production. Various microphone patterns can be emulated by decoding the signals from the four

microphones in different ways. This is great for reproducing the soundscape of a crowd or a city, although to experience this fully on speakers you must be seated in the "sweet spot." When rendered to binaural format for headphone playback, Ambisonics provides very convincing immersive experiences. Ambisonics too has been a niche player in the world of acoustic ensemble recording – a key reason being that whilst it can provide a realistic soundstage the lack of low-frequency response from the directional microphones used means the sense of envelopment is not as convincing as stereo and surround techniques that use omni-directional microphones.

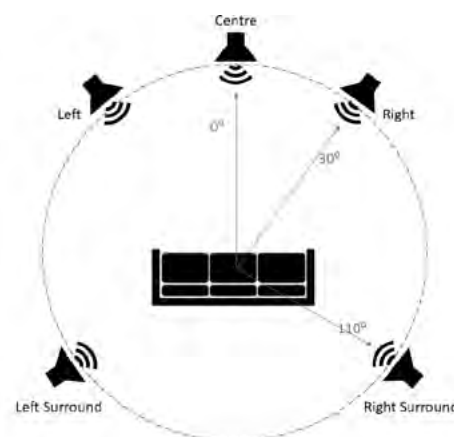


Figure 4 - Conventional 5.1 surround speaker setup (without LFE)

As with stereo, recording and mixing a choir for surround typically involves panning the left and right main microphones to the left and right speakers to provide the foundation of the front sound stage. A centre main microphone (if used) is panned to the centre speaker and the left and right rear facing microphones panned to the left and right surrounds respectively. Mixing levels are then adjusted to achieve the appropriate left-to-right and front-to-back balance. The left and right surrounds

provide a diffuse reverberant sound and assist with the sense of envelopment by emulating the venue reflections coming from behind the listener. Spot mics are panned as appropriate typically within the left to right front-facing sound stage – but could be panned to the sides or surrounds for interesting effects e.g., soloists in the gallery, the sides of the venue. Artificial reverberation may be required to meld soloists into the soundstage and a surround reverb may be added as overall glue and to enhance the sense of spaciousness. There is no doubt that surround can provide a step up from stereo in terms of realism and sense of envelopment. However, due to surround's reliance on fairly costly multi-channel speaker-based systems, its popularity has been limited and the additional production costs not easily justified.

Today the goal of envelopment has progressed beyond the original ambitions of surround sound and has led to a new era of immersive 3-dimensional audio. Whereas surround formats create a sound stage that surrounds the listener, the sound still arrives at the ears in the horizontal plane with speakers positioned in front, beside and behind the listening position. These surround formats ignore the fact that in a real performance much of the sound also comes at you from above, e.g., ceiling and balcony reflections. It is this additional height dimension that is the secret sauce for contemporary immersive sound formats such as Dolby Atmos, DTS:X and Auro-3D which add additional speakers located above the listener to provide the height information. Binaural too has become more mainstream with the increasing popularity of headphones and the ability of the immersive sound formats to fold-down a multi-channel recording to a binaural

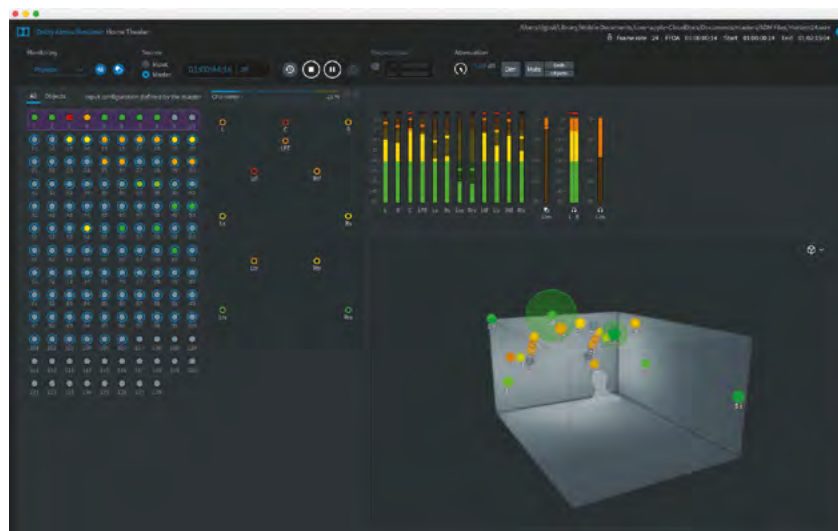


Figure 5 - Dolby Atmos Production Suite

version for immersive headphone listening. This has allowed immersive formats (Dolby Atmos in particular) to move beyond the speaker-based constraints of the cinema and living room to personal playback devices with access to streaming platforms such as Apple Music, Amazon Music and Tidal which are increasingly offering immersive content.

Recent advances in immersive formats have opened a new world of music production possibilities and the creation of experiences based on virtual acoustics. Not only is it possible to pan microphones in the traditional way in two dimensions but with the additional height speakers the sound mixer has a 3-dimensional space to play with allowing for mixes with a much more open and less cluttered feel. It is now possible to go beyond channel-based panning techniques by using "objects". Object-based approaches allow you to assign your microphones (and other sound sources) to an object and to position (pan) it anywhere within a 360-degree virtual space around the listener. Panning automation allows these objects to be moved independently within the sound

stage and a path defined for steering an object around the listener – great for movie sound effects (planes flying overhead or arrows whizzing past your ears).

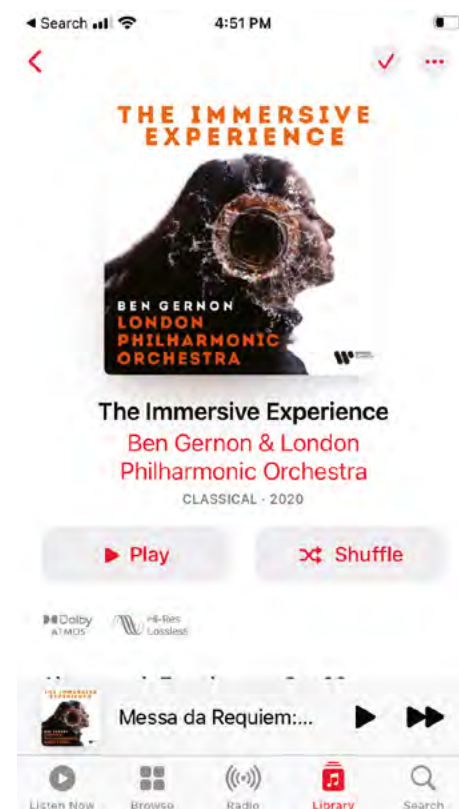


Figure 6 - Apple Music App with Dolby Atmos



Immersive, object-based formats open up new opportunities for choir recordings. Imagine each choir member having their own microphone and in post-production being able to manipulate each singer as an independent object – locating them at different positions around the listener. It would be possible to create completely different listening experiences and musical effects. An opportunity perhaps for innovative treatment of choral works like Eric Whitacre's "Leonardo Dreams of his Flying Machine".

It is still early days for immersive music and whilst there is a growing amount of immersive content much of this is remixes of stereo recordings. As a result, there are few examples of choral or orchestral performances that have been specifically recorded

with an immersive format in mind. That said one great example is available on Apple Music in Decca's Immersive Experience which includes a magnificent rendition of the introduction to the Dies Irae from Verdi's Requiem. Performed by the London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra the sense of "being there" in the midst of the orchestra and choir is pretty compelling – resulting in a much more intimate engagement with the performance than you would get from a typical stereo version. To listen to this of course you need to play it back through a device capable of rendering Dolby Atmos – easily done with headphones on an Apple iPhone and ensuring the Music app's "Dolby Atmos" setting is set to "Always On".

Whilst stereo recording and playback will continue to be the mainstay of acoustic recording for the foreseeable future, a new

era of innovation with immersive sound has begun. Object-based immersive formats such as Dolby Atmos will enable innovative sound design and new perspectives for the music listener - able to experience a performance, say, from the perspective of a choir member or section, the conductor or an audience member. The possibilities are endless! At the end of the day however, the immersive audio is still just a simulation of reality, and in my book whilst this listening experience has its place there is still nothing like physically being part of a real performance – as a choir singer or an audience member. I still vividly remember being in the tenor section of the Verdi Requiem about 20 years ago, standing behind and not far from the orchestra percussion section and being overwhelmed by the visceral punch to my chest from the shockwave of the two bass drums as they whacked those massive hits in the intro. Now that was really "being there!"

*Edited by Taylor Ffitch, USA*



**PAUL MCGLASHAN** is the owner and recording engineer for Classic Sound, a boutique recording company based on Great Barrier Island, Auckland, New Zealand that specialises in the recording and post-production of classical and acoustic music. Over the last 20 years Paul has engineered orchestral, ensemble and choral recordings for most of the major orchestras, chamber ensembles and choirs in New Zealand, often in collaboration with Atoll records. Early in his career Paul gained experience with a range of local and overseas classical performances during a three-year part-time internship at Radio New Zealand Concert. Paul was also responsible for recording and mixing the music for the opening ceremony of the 2011 Rugby World Cup which was broadcast to a world-wide TV audience. Paul has 1<sup>st</sup> class honours masters degrees in Computer Science and Creative and Performing Arts from Auckland University. He is a classically trained musician (voice) and was a member of the widely acclaimed Viva Voce chamber choir for 20 years before leaving to live on Great Barrier in 2016.



# WHO CAN SAIL WITHOUT WIND?

## The Challenge of the EUROPA CANTAT Festival Television

**IMPRESSIONS GATHERED BY ROSSANA PALIAGA**

*Journalist and musicologist, Italy*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

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"WHO CAN SAIL WITHOUT WIND?" ASKS A VERY WELL KNOWN SWEDISH FOLK SONG. SIMILARLY WE COULD HARDLY IMAGINE A EUROPA CANTAT FESTIVAL WITHOUT PARTICIPANTS. THIS YEAR, WE LEARNED THAT WE COULD JOIN THE EVENTS IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY. THE HOST OF THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF THE FESTIVAL IN LJUBLJANA (17-22 JULY 2021), THE JAVNI SKLAD RS ZA KULTURNE DEJAVNOSTI, WORKED VERY HARD TOGETHER WITH THE EUROPEAN CHORAL ASSOCIATION TO CHANGE AND ADAPT THE EDUCATIONAL AND CONCERT PLAN MANY TIMES IN ORDER TO RESPECT THE RESTRICTIONS DUE TO COVID. GATHERINGS, TRAVEL AND OPEN SINGING, WHICH ARE IRREPLACEABLE ELEMENTS OF THIS EVENT, BECAME IMPOSSIBLE OR TOO DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES NEED EXCEPTIONAL SOLUTIONS AND SO A HUGE PART OF THE PROGRAMME REACHED THE AUDIENCE THROUGH THE FIRST EVER EC TELEVISION PROJECT. THIS IS THE STORY OF THIS CHALLENGE, TOLD BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE CHORAL TV CREW.

### JEAN CLAUDE WILKENS – THE IDEA

When it became clear that workshops had to be cancelled because of the pandemic and that the wish to keep the festival alive was unanimous, the ECA music commission and the team started to look at what could be "kept" in Ljubljana or transferred to an online format, in order to connect with as many people as possible in keeping with the international flavour of the festival.

There was a generous list of concerts by guest groups and Slovenian choirs but also Zoom sessions with two-thirds of the PULSE programme as well as open singing and discovery workshops. My proposal to create the ECTV was an obvious one: we needed to put everything into a readable matrix, with the creation of a daily ritual. In addition, this TV grid could include all types of additions from Ljubljana such as reporting and interviews, somewhat giving the viewer a sense of belonging and being there.

The partnership with the school for radio and TV was the starting point of the real story. The result exceeded all expectations.



From left to right: Burak Onur Erdem, Jean-Claude Wilkens and Jan Schumacher

### ALJAŽ BASTIČ – LIVE FROM THE STUDIO

A festival televised online needs careful planning and involves many people, much equipment and great coordination. It is quite similar to an ordinary television broadcast – you need precise timing, check all the recordings technically and find a good team who will be able to work for longer periods of time. Of course, there can be a mix – you could do a semi-professional live-stream of an event (four professional cameras, live mixing, good sound, light ...), which still involves a lot of planning (and money), but that still wouldn't be a broadcast. With ECTV, we combined the two – nine hours of daily (mostly live) programming with technically challenging live webcasts.

There is a lot of background knowledge you need to be able to run a televised festival. You also need a lot of technical support – facilities as well as equipment. There were many, many challenges in creating a festival TV. Mixing live shows and online lectures was just one of them.



Aljaž Bastič

### ALFRED JÜRGENS – THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The reading sessions and PULSE lectures were planned long before the festival by the festival music commission. I imagine this was a big job. For the six reading sessions, where music publishers showcase

some of their music on offer, you obviously need to present a broad variety. I think this worked out pretty well; we had interesting presentations from Catalonia, Lebanon and the Levant region, from Italy, Canada, Germany and Slovenia.

For the PULSE lectures, the task was even more challenging: three lectures a day adding up to 18 lectures throughout the whole festival. We wanted to present a variety of topics (from Slovenian folk music to barbershop, neuroscience and online tools for remote music-making) and to give a stage to presenters from different countries, with a balanced representation of gender and age, and to highlight the “hot topics” of today's choral scene. Then we had to come up with a schedule that made sense. Huge credit is due to the festival music commission and to Joži Vovk as the head of ECTV who all did a fabulous job in organizing all of this in advance. Our job, in comparison, was quite small.

The most challenging thing for us was that there was no flexibility in terms of timing, because in a continuous TV broadcast there is no room for change: if your slot is 57'45 minutes long it needs to go on for 57'45 minutes. This was especially tricky with interactive sessions, where we had room for the audience to get involved and ask questions. We had to learn to be flexible, and to maintain good communication with the presenters and the production team, which is much larger than in a “traditional” webinar. It was not an easy task, given no one of us had ever done this before, but it was a really exciting one and great fun as well! I hope I'll get a call to be part of the next EUROPA CANTAT TV!



Alfred Jürgens

### ALBERTO PALACIN FERNANDEZ – PRELIMINARY & DAILY WORK

I got involved in the TV team in June, when I attended some of the very first meetings of the project, together with the core team. Due to my lack of time during the weeks prior to the festival, ECA-EC Project Manager & colleague Alfred Jürgens started collaborating with the EC Music Office for some preparation work.

At my arrival in Ljubljana, Alfred and I started working on the implementation of the reading and PULSE sessions; later on our office grew to four members, with the support of YEMP (Young Event Management



Programme) participants during the festival week. As a member of ECA-EC Youth Committee, I was also glad to see all my colleagues contributing to EC TV in many different ways!

In comparison to previous festivals, this time everything



Alberto Palacin Fernandez

was more complex technically. In a regular “offline” festival, we would be dealing with issues like attendees and spaces management, as well as presenters’ requirements; most of this work didn’t completely disappear, but was transformed. Additionally, we had to deal with many new issues: communicating effectively with the presenters and Music Commission members in a context of very different formats for the sessions (Zoom webinars on live TV, webinars live from the TV Studio in Ljubljana, hybrid sessions), scheduling rehearsals and offering tech help, preparing and receiving presentation materials... But overall, the most important thing was to build an efficient and reliable communication bridge between the musicians/artists/ guests, and the TV technical team, led by Aljaž. As none of us had experience in TV production before, this of course implied a huge learning experience for our team. After the very first day of the festival, activities like presenting and hosting a live TV show, writing technical scripts, or communicating with a professional TV crew became our daily routine.

### JOŽI VOVK – INSIDE JSKD

After it became clear that we would have to give up almost 3,000 participants, and with them many excellent conductors, musicians and lecturers, we looked for ways to bring at least part of the rich content and the festival spirit to their homes. So we developed the idea of an interesting, dynamic and attention-grabbing TV programme. The night before the first broadcast, all I wanted and prayed for was to see the picture and hear the sound from our ECTV studio on screens at 8:45 in the morning. It was a great feeling, just like on the last TV broadcast!

I really liked the fact that people from different countries started working



Studio EC TV © Tatjana Wrumnig

together immediately and we created an environment where we all knew our tasks and we all had the same goal. The days were very intense, the time pressure of minutes and seconds dictated by TV production needs often wore us down and yet we started the mornings with renewed energy. We were all television “apprentices,” more or less unexperienced, and I think we all came out of this adventure richer for the new knowledge, great experience, many friendships and unforgettable memories. The word I feel when I think about this amazing time and team is just... gratitude. I am grateful to each and every ECTV team member and to all the great lecturers and conductors for being part of this great choir story and grateful for the opportunity to be part of it myself.

#### **HENRIKE SCHAUERTE – THE SPIRIT OF THE FESTIVAL**

The spirit of the Europa Cantat Festival means that singers, conductors, and choral friends from all over Europe and the world come together to exchange, enjoy, and perform choral music. People meet on the streets; they sing together and enjoy a lot of coincidental encounters through singing and



Henrike Schauerte

## *Nine hours of daily (mostly live) programming with technically challenging live webcasts*



Studio ECTV © Tamara Domjanic

choral music. This year’s Europa Cantat TV definitely could not recreate those very special moments physically, but through the Europa Cantat TV edition and live events in Ljubljana, we were able to build bridges for choral music, singers, and conductors to reconnect to all the beautiful memories that they had gained in former editions of the festival. As part of the team working in Ljubljana, I felt the spirit of the Europa Cantat Festival clearly and I believe that we were able to transfer this feeling through a very varied and engaging programme to our audience, making it interactive and fun to participate from the comfort of one’s home.



Studio ECTV © Tamara Domjanic



## SONJA GREINER – THE FEEDBACK

In Ljubljana's Cankarjev Dom Cultural Centre we had the festival "VIP lounge". At first, we had planned this to be, as usual, the welcoming and meeting point for our guests. Then we realized that the members of the Festival Music Commission and the Board of the European Choral Association had to watch the ECTV programme – they each signed up to evaluate some of the sessions – and some of our guests would also want to do this. Watching together in the Lounge would be more fun than alone in the hotel. A group of people usually gathered there and I sometimes joined them with my laptop to work from there and partly follow our TV programme. Soon they all brought their songbooks and joined Open Singing as a group – also a nicer experience than joining alone in front of the computer!

Watching the PULSE sessions and the TV breaks together was also great. You could immediately exchange your impressions, sometimes laugh together and get interesting background information. ECTV was born out of the wish to have something to offer to all those who could not come to Ljubljana in person. The ability to make the wish come true with quality came about with tremendous luck as we ended up having a professional studio and a professional crew, and ECTV became the main focus of the event.

Will we repeat this? Many people have asked this. The answer is: probably not exactly the same way with 70 hours of live TV with such a professional setup and 40 people working exclusively for it. Will this experiment have a legacy? Certainly! Maybe in a smaller dimension and with a reduced programme. Hopefully we would not need it for the same reason and the main target group will be different. It will not be for registered participants who could not come in the end, but for people who could not register to begin with. We can reach out with such a programme to new target groups, such as people who cannot afford to travel or who don't want to fly, or for those who don't know Europa Cantat yet and are curious. It will not be the central activity of our event which will hopefully once

again gather people together physically in one place, but it may become one facet of offering a rich and diverse programme.

*Edited by Patricia Abbott, Canada*



Sonja Greiner © Chris Marchal (EMC)



Studio ECTV © Tamara Domjanic



**ROSSANA PALIAGA is a journalist and musicologist. She studied Literature and Performing Arts at the University of Trieste (Italy), piano, opera singing and archival studies. She has been singing in choirs since childhood and she works in different fields for the promotion of choral culture. She is the press office manager of the Slovenian Repertory Theater (SSG) and regularly writes articles about classical music for local, regional and national newspapers, periodicals, radios and televisions in Italy and Slovenia. She is the chief editor of the national magazine about choral music Choraliter published by Feniarco (Italian national federation of choral associations)**  
<https://www.feniarco.it/it/editoria/choraliter>







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# BEST PRACTICES: CHORAL MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

## When a Pandemic Catalyzes Technical Innovations

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

### INITIUM

'initium ; auditorium' is a concert streaming service available on the Web and through a smartphone app. This service is designed to support artists who have not had opportunities to perform due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the concept of 'Discover unknown, from here', we aim to create a place where you performers and audiences can have a new intellectual experience. If an auditor would like to watch a concert, he/she has to buy a ticket. It's also possible to buy a 'passport' to enjoy every concert for a certain amount of time.

*Project leader Kaito Kikuchi, Japan*

**initium ; auditorium**

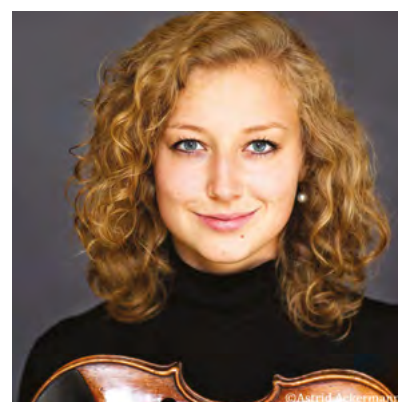


### COUPONCONCERTS

CouponConcerts is a nice initiative that brings music back to people and offers musicians the opportunity to cover their running costs even in pandemic times. On the platform, anyone can book a musician or an ensemble for a concert, which, depending on the pandemic, can take place in the short or long term. The model works very well in larger cities, but there is also interest in smaller towns. According to the principle of "pay now, listen later", the musicians receive the fee directly and then set an appointment with the organizers. Many musicians were quickly helped in a "concert-free"

time in this way. But it's not just good for the musicians! The online platform offers a wide audience the opportunity to bring their favorite music live into their own four walls. Be it for a house concert, a birthday, or even lessons, everyone will find what they are looking for here.

*Julia Ungureanu, violinist, Germany*





## JAMULUS

Jamulus is the software solution that gave hope to the choral world that was stopped in the midst of the pandemic. And indeed - once you had overcome small technical hurdles, you could finally experience a “choir feeling” again. With a stable, wired Internet connection, very low delays can be achieved, which make it possible to sing almost simultaneously. All you have to do is adjust the volume of the individual singers using the integrated digital mixer until a balanced choir sound is created. Rehearsal work, which in most video conference systems only works in one direction, is now again significantly more effective, more constructive and even allows agogic music-making with Jamulus. For ensembles whose singers have to travel from different regions, this type of rehearsal can be a sensible alternative even after the pandemic.

*Tristan Meister, conductor, Germany*



Tristan Meister © Minna Kettunen

*Couponconcerts and Jamulus texts translated by  
Clayton Parr, USA*

## TECHNOLOGY AND ORCHESTRAS IN THE PANDEMIC WORLD

For the Medellín Philharmonic Orchestra (Colombia), the pandemic was an opportunity to connect with new audiences in different ways. We consciously decided to change not only the concert transmission (from a live concert to the exact same concert transmitted through a virtual platform) but also to use products designed for the digital world in order to reach new audience segments. One of the interesting adaptations we made was to use chamber music (the only ensemble allowed by public health regulations) to raise awareness for the conservation of tangible and intangible heritage, becoming allies with an architect who did the reconstruction and digital modelling of theatres that disappeared in the city at the beginning of the 20th century and where shows such as the New York Philharmonic and the American Ballet, among others, were held. This is how we were able to “transport ourselves to the past” and perform concerts in places that none of our musicians were able to visit because they were demolished in 1940. The result was a series of concerts with different repertoires that generated conversations about all the places that were lost to industrialisation in the city and that we long for today. It was a mix of heritage, conservation, music and technology for reconstruction and 3D modelling that allowed us to continue working, expand our audience and be innovative in a sector that had been doing the same thing for 200 years. You can see some of these concerts [here](#).

*María Catalina Prieto, Executive Director, Colombia*



María Catalina Prieto

*Translated by Rebeka Angstmann, UK*



## ONLINE TEACHING

Online teaching seemed to be a strange format at first. However, with perseverance, we were able to move ahead. A microphone, a keyboard, a computer and headphones were the minimum requirements, and Zoom was the platform adopted. The students from the Hochschule für Musik Trossingen (Germany) had the benefit of fully equipped technology rooms provided by the school. Most of my private students had access to equipment and a sound knowledge of technology. The fundamental barrier here was the delay, which disrupted the togetherness of the lesson — accompanying or singing together was impossible, so the students had to be very well prepared beforehand. Experienced students



had a clear advantage, while less independent students easily lost motivation.

Creativity, flexibility, recordings, and accompaniments were essential, but the format of vocal improvisation proved to be a successful adaptation to the realities of online instruction — we looked for Internet-related inspiration, and even delay stimulated our creativity.

Online lessons connected a world in need of connection while shedding light on the evident social and economic gaps between people. Less fortunate students were at a clear disadvantage. My hope is for a future in which governments can provide the materials to allow every student to learn equitably, both in school and at home.

*Andrea Conangla, Portugal,  
Vocal improvisation lecturer at  
Hochschule für Musik Trossingen  
(Germany)*

*Edited by Richard Kutner, USA*

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# A SINGING CONTINENT

## Voices from Latin America

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**ANA PATRICIA CARBAJAL CÓRDOVA**

*Choral Director and Cultural Promoter, Mexico*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

In April 2020, we began this marvellous journey that we undertook in response to the looming adversities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. What began as a network of support and conversation between colleagues and friends, turned into a creative space which allowed us to create this beautiful project called “Canción con Todos” (“Sing Together”). This united more than 200 choirs and 800 voices singing a Latin American hymn composed by Armando Tejada Gómez and César Isella, with representations of each of the countries of Latin America. The composer César Isella (who passed away in January 2021) greeted all the participants. We organised a collection per country to pay the audio and video editors, the musical arrangement by Behomar Rojas was a free collaboration, so between all of us, we were able to work with our networks to make this dream come true. We are proud of this collaborative achievement, a sample of how teamwork makes the dream work, all for the sheer love of choral singing and what it means in our lives.



<https://bit.ly/vocesdel>  
<https://voceintempore.net>

*Translated by Rebeka Angstmann, UK*



# E POI LE PAROLE: TECHNOLOGY

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

Technology must be our servant and not our master. The more technology we invite into our lives the harder this is to remember.

*Griselda Sherlaw-Johnson, Choral Promotion and Business Development Manager at Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK*

Technology has brought about a golden age of music: opening wide the doors to repertoire discovery, performance dissemination, and compositional innovation. It has connected us all so quickly and efficiently that we must be mindful of its overuse.

*Ted Brimeyer, conductor, Urbandale, IA, USA*

When I hear the word "technology", my mind first says "this is not my thing". But liking words I go to the greek original word; τέχνη, tékhnē, meaning art, and -λογία logía, meaning study. The study of art! And then I get it – the connection between technology and the skill of choir training. One can evolve the other.

*Alexander Einarsson, choir conductor, Malmö, Sweden*

Technology: the machinery or processes that allow one to accomplish a goal. Technology enhances human skill to allow success. Success can be accomplished at a higher or lower level depending on how appropriate the technology might be (keep in mind that the best technology tends to be the latest one, but in some cases, old technology might prove to be more appropriate).

*Cristian Grases, conductor and former IFCM Board Member, Venezuela/ USA*

For me, "technology" is associated with such a meaning as imperfection, which is having a dream, ambition, many practices, studies, obviously failures, desperation, but strong dedication and, finally, success. Technology is a part of human experience.

*Alexander Humala, Artistic Director of the Krakow Philharmonic, Poland*

*Edited by Charlotte Sullivan, UK*

Livres d'Heures © Eve Lomé





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# FOURTY YEARS OF ICB



## ORIGINS, RECOLLECTIONS

An Interview with Jutta Tagger

## RECOLLECTIONS FROM FORMER TEAM MEMBERS

## THE CREATION OF AN ICB...

## MEET THE LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

## MEET SOME OF THE TRANSLATORS

## RESULTS OF THE ICB SURVEY



# ORIGINS, RECOLLECTIONS

## An Interview with Jutta Tagger

**BY ISABELLE MÉTROPE**

*ICB Managing Editor*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

**Isabelle Métrope:** Dear Jutta, the ICB was created in 1981. Where did it originate from and what were its objectives?

**Jutta Tagger:** The decision to create the ICB was taken by a group of choral personalities from a dozen countries during a meeting held on March 8/9, 1981 in New Orleans following an ACDA National Convention. This meeting was decisive for the creation of the IFCM.

Its objective was to create an inexpensive newsletter to be called INTERNATIONAL CHORAL BULLETIN. (NB: One must bear in mind that, at that time, Internet, e-mail, fax etc. did not exist, and telephone calls were expensive. People did not travel widely. The ICB got its first e-mail address in July 1994, but not many people had one at that time).

**IM:** What shape did the ICB have at its creation?

**JT:** The first issue, published in July 1981, had 4 pages and contained the summary of the above meeting, the list of participants, and an appeal to all for notices about festivals, seminars, workshops, information about choral publications, newsletters, possibilities of international exchange, names and addresses of organizations and persons who might be interested in the future organization etc.

**IM:** What were the contents and who were the authors?

**JT:** Originally, it was a newsletter

designed to simply inform; articles were not signed. Everything was written in English. Only the draft statutes were published in the four languages of the future federation (ICB n° 4, 1982).

The first few issues had Walter S. Collins (College of Music, Université du Colorado, Boulder, USA) as Editor in Chief and James R. Bjorge, New York, as Co-Editor. The publisher was ACDA.

The first signed article was the first President's Message ("Mundus Cantat") by Paul Wehrle, who was elected following the official creation of the IFCM (ICB dated October 1982). That issue contained the minutes of the constitutive assembly, the list of representatives of the Founding Members (only international organizations), the Board, persons in charge, etc. As of that date, the ICB was published regularly four times a year. It was also the last issue sent to non-members.

**IM:** In the 1990s, the ICB changed appearance, and in the 2000s, it became a color magazine and has remained so. What were the important milestones?

**JT:** Indeed. The April 1991 issue was the first in the shape of a magazine and had a colored and illustrated cover page (the paper of which though was the same as the rest of the ICB), and it was published in four languages. Its basic structure (Dossier, Repertoire, IFCM News...) has remained more or less the same since, with only minor adjustments over the time.

The articles were published in one of the four official languages, and the translations were in the middle of the magazines, printed in smaller characters and on non-white paper, often in the same color as the cover, but in pastel. The first issue printed in four colors was the one dated January 2004.

**IM:** Which people you met thanks to the ICB do you recall in particular?

**JT:** Maybe my first meeting with Royce Saltzman, ACDA President, during the New Orleans meeting, and Walter Collins whose idea it was to create the ICB, two exceptional persons who have had great influence on me and with whom (and their wives) lasting friendships developed.

I have met so many amazing people from the whole world during my life with ICB, in direct connection to my work with the Bulletin or not, that to list them all would exceed the framework of this interview. I was introduced to the choral world by my husband Claude Tagger, without whom my adventure with the ICB would never have taken place. My commitment to the ICB has opened new horizons for me, broadened my knowledge, and deepened my understanding of the world.

**IM:** Is there one issue that you remember particularly?

**JT:** No, I don't really. Each one had its specificities, as to content, aspect, or authors, and we always tried to make every single one "special", "interesting", and to improve our work little by little. The ICB has always



been the result of teamwork, with many people involved, for its production, contents and search of authors. And almost all of it as volunteer work.

**IM:** Since April 1991, the ICB has become a magazine with a cover. What was your favorite one?

**JT:** Well, in a sense, maybe the first one with a cover: it was in four languages, and because it was an important step forward. (Unfortunately, that cover contained a typo: It said: "In four languages" instead of "languages").

When the ICB became a publication

printed in four colors, the cover showed beautiful snapshots selected from the photos available. There was never a special cover "designer".

**IM:** What are your wishes for the future of the ICB?

**JT:** I wish long life to the magazine, in a spirit of openness and curiosity for the world as seen through the prism of choral art. May it be an interesting journal and involve more and more people in the world.

The ICB has evolved continuously throughout its existence and I hope this will continue to be the case. The successive changes in

its leadership (after me, Andrea Angelini, and now you, Isabelle) have brought each time fresh ideas, and innovative, positive vibes.

From the very beginning, I have always been involved, at all levels imaginable, be it to clear a package of ICBs from customs that arrived in Europe at our place and send on the individual copies to the members, or as a translator, later as a member of an editorial team, and then Editor; now rather (a tiny, tiny bit only) in the background.

It was and is a passionate affair. May this passion and, with it, the success of the ICB continue to grow in the world.



**JUTTA TAGGER (\*1939 in Weimar, Germany), studied English and French at the University of Heidelberg and obtained a diploma in translation in 1964. She moved to Paris, France in 1966. In 1969 she married Frenchman Claude Tagger, one of the co-founders and, later, President of IFCM (†1998), through whom she became involved in choral music, locally, nationally and internationally (A Cœur Joie, Europa Cantat, IFCM).**

**She has three children and six grandchildren. She participated in all IFCM World Choral**

**Symposia and in many other festivals and World Youth Choir sessions all over the world, mostly helping with translations and interpretation. From 1994-2009 she was a Co-Editor and later the Managing Editor of the International Choral Bulletin, ICB. Email: [jutta.tagger@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jutta.tagger@wanadoo.fr)**



*I wish long life to the magazine, in a spirit of openness and curiosity for the world as seen through the prism of choral art. May it be an interesting journal and involve more and more people in the world.*

**Thank you Jutta!**

# RECOLLECTIONS FROM FORMER TEAM MEMBERS

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Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

## ANDREA ANGELINI, RIMINI, ITALY

*ICB Managing editor from July 2009 to October 2020*

My first meeting with Jutta Tagger, the former editorial director of ICB is beautiful memory that I cherish. I had experience of running a national journal of choral music, but having to deal with musicians and topics from all over the world in four languages scared me not a little. I remember that Jutta, always patient, did everything to put me at ease and give me the necessary help, and I will always thank her for that. For my part, I approached the job with great humility because I think that when you are new to any position, the best thing is to have respect for those who came before you and for their work.

Another memory I keep in mind was the 'ideological battle' between the supporters of the printed paper and the digital edition of ICB. In the end, the idea of continuing with a hybrid version prevailed, which I believe is still a winner today.



## PATRICIA ABBOTT, MONTRÉAL, QC, CANADA

*Volunteer translator (French to English) and copy editor*

I first started translating and writing for ICB back in 1988-89 (so says my CV) and contributed regularly, especially in the 90s. With an increasingly heavy workload teaching, conducting and serving as Executive Director of what is now called Choral Canada and then as Artistic Director of the CAMMAC Music Centre, I had to step back for a few years, but I am back on board now that my workload has diminished somewhat. It is a great pleasure to participate in the global choral scene in this modest way and to put my journalism and translation training and experience to work for the art form about which I am so passionate. Congratulations to ICB and IFCM on this milestone anniversary and for keeping conductors around the world informed and connected.



© Eric Lavoie

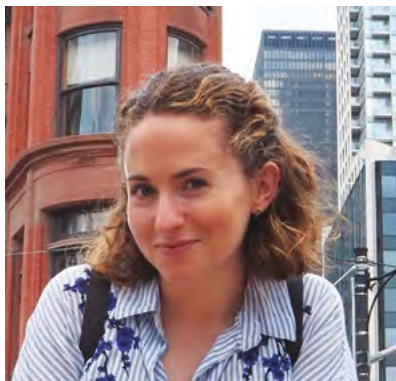
## GILLIAN FORLIVESI HEYWOOD, RIMINI, ITALY

*ICB collaborator since 2010; English coordinator 2010-2015*

I have many good memories from my years as an ICB Coordinator. I especially enjoyed the connection with so many people in so many different countries. I always enjoy exchanging news with other people, so when I contacted any of my team I would also add a few lines of personal news, and they always reciprocated. It was like having pen friends all over the world. I am still in contact with some of the women I corresponded with in the U.S., England, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

With regards to other interests, I am a Board Member and former Vice President of my local University of the Third Age; I do a lot of voluntary work for them. And I have twin grandchildren, aged five, to keep me busy, and a very companionable cat.



**MARÍA ZUGAZABEITIA, LUANCO, SPAIN***Translator since 2012, Spanish coordinator 2012-2021*

I started collaborating as a volunteer back in 2012 and I soon became the coordinator for Spanish language. This year I was replaced by talented Vania Romero and I continue to collaborate as a translator when she asks me to.

One of my favorite memories is when I met former ICB editor Andrea Angelini when participating in the festival he organizes in Rimini with my beloved choir Aurum (Luanco). I also loved meeting Vania Romero (actual Spanish coordinator) face-to-face when she toured in Europe with her Venezuelan choir.

**MARIA BARTHA, EVIAN, FRANCE***Translator and French coordinator 2010-2017*

I worked for ICB for some years as French Language Coordinator. I started in 2010, I remember doing the proofreading on the commuter train in the morning on my way

to work. I stopped in May 2017. In fact, my grandson was born in 2015 and I looked after him while his mother was at work. Although this was a great pleasure, I must say that I have missed this brainstorming, this permanent intellectual challenge, producing large quantities of adrenalin, ever since.

There is no better person than Barbara Pissane – with her personal and professional qualities – to continue this demanding work. Andrea managed the issues, and we did the details. A great team, which changed sometimes with the departure or arrival of new translators. We were all volunteers, so there was no lack of enthusiasm and fun. The atmosphere was friendly. Some of us went on to create or join translation agencies after this enriching experience.

Fortunately, I had a safety net in the form of the people who did the proofreading. I had a friendly relationship with Florence Recoursé even though we only knew each other virtually. Then Jean Payon took over. We could count on him without fail. If I received a translation late, at midnight, on the day of the last deadline, all I had to do was transfer it, and the proofreading arrived in my inbox at 2 a.m.

If ever in doubt or in need of advice, Jutta was always there to lend a hand, and give clarifications and explanations with her perfect knowledge of all the ICB editions. I regret a little that I was not able to take more advantage of all these exceptional events organised by the IFCM. There was so much to see. I got to experience them somewhat through the articles. It is too late now.

I would like to express my thanks to the current team, who left me on the mailing list and I still receive news from the choral world, bringing back so many memories.

**FLORENCE MARTHELY RECURSÉ, TOURS, FRANCE***French translator and proof-reader 2009-2017*

I was a translator and proofreader of French texts for about 5 years in the 2010s.

My fondest memory is the incredible kindness and goodwill of my ICB contact, Maria Bartha, coordinator of the French texts from 2010 to 2017, who used to send me texts. And the endless, communicative energy of my friend Isabelle! Congratulations to all the teams, past and future!

*Translated by Olivia Scullion, UK*

**Thank you!**  
**Merci!**  
**Danke!**  
**Gracias!**



# THE CREATION OF AN ICB...

Have you ever wondered how an ICB is conceived?

The FOCUS is decided upon by an International Editorial Board (see list on page 3).

Article proposals by readers, the Editorial Board, IFCM Board or IFCM team members are selected and put into a logical editorial plan by the Managing editor.

Specific additional articles are requested by the Managing editor to different authors.

Completed articles are sent to the (volunteer) language coordinators. They distribute them to their teams (who are also volunteers), so that all the articles are translated into English, German, Spanish and French.

At the same time, abstracts of some articles, if available, are sent to our Russian translator. The illustrations are being checked – or searched for – by the Managing Editor.

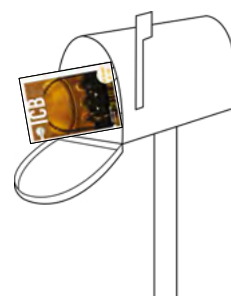
The articles are back – in 4 languages! IFCM Office Manager Nadine Robin can start designing the new issue.

The version to be printed is proof-read at least 6 times in total by Managing Editor Isabelle Métrope, Editor Emerita Jutta Tagger and Office Manager Nadine Robin.

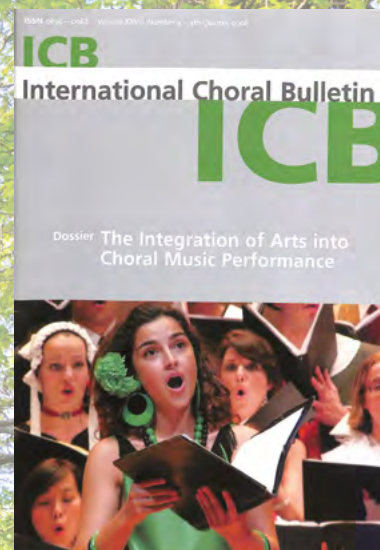
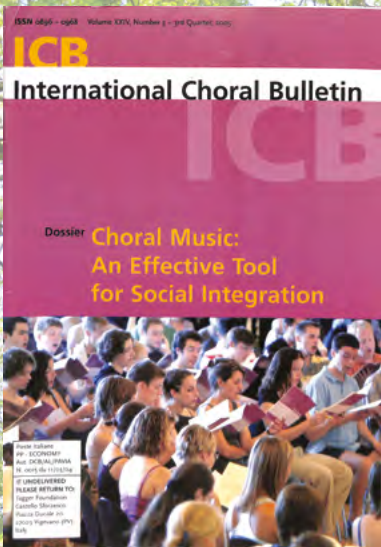
Yippie, the new ICB can go to the printer!

Nadine uploads all the articles onto **[icb.ifcm.net](http://icb.ifcm.net)**.

The new ICB is being shipped to you!









# MEANWHILE...

## At the IFCM office

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

My first layout for the ICB dates from 2002. Jean-Claude Wilkens, IFCM Secretary-General at the time, gave me some basic software lessons, and that was the start of a great passion. Ever since, I have looked forward to logging onto our online accounts to see the material that will make up our next ICB: texts, scores, authors' biographies and photos from around the world. Everything is there! The layout can begin!

At the same time, I track reservations for advertising space, and place the graphics. By the way, don't delay in [reserving your spot!](#)

Finally, after careful review by the Managing Editor and our marvelous Editor Emerita Jutta Tagger, a PDF document is sent to the printer for the paper version, and an electronic version, which includes extra pages dedicated to a choral calendar, is posted to the [IFCM website](#) and to the electronic publishing platform [ISSUU](#).

The paper version is sent to members who have opted to receive a hard copy. It is also sent to the translators who helped providing the texts in four languages, and to the contributing authors for the issue. In the meantime, the translated texts are uploaded individually to the ICB website, and the links sent to readers in more than 80 countries.

*Nadine Robin, IFCM Office Manager*

*Translated from the French by Joshua Habermann, USA*



Nadine and one of her supurrvisers



Page 34, from top to bottom, left to right: ICB Volume I, Number 1, July 1981 — Volume X, Number 3, April 1991 — Volume XXIII, Number 2, April 2004 — Volume XXIV, Number 3, July 2005 — Volume XXVII, Number 4, October 2008 — Volume XXXI, Number 3, July 2012 — Volume XXXVI, Number 1, January 2017 — Volume XXXVIII, Number 4, October 2019 — Volume XL, Number 2, April 2021



# 40 YEARS OF ICB

## Meet the Language Coordinators

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

### LORE AUERBACH

#### GERMAN-SPEAKING TEAM

Really, I've been an interpreter since birth. I was born in Amsterdam, a child of German parents who fled the Nazis. Later, we moved to England, so my early and school-age years were spent in two language worlds: German at home, and Dutch or English elsewhere.

Later in Germany I was able to use my language capabilities often. In choir I was given the name "Interlore" because I translated for our tours to England, and organized the return visits of our English counterparts. I helped finance my second music degree by working as a simultaneous interpreter at conferences.

During my working life I translated occasionally for the Europa Cantat Magazine of the ECA-EC, and also for the ICB. Later, I did the editing for all German translations for the ICB, and 12 years ago I took on the coordination of the German edition. It is an interesting task that has



© Volker Hanuschke

led to many contacts and email friendships with members of the translation team.

### BARBARA PISSANE

#### FRENCH-SPEAKING TEAM



I am French with Italian roots, I was born and live in Lyon, France's third largest city. I love early music, boat races, and dark chocolate. I used to sing in two choirs (early music and gospel) as a soprano. I have been collaborating with the IFCM since 2014, first as an English to French and Italian to French translator, and then since 2017 as the coordinator of the French team.

I am always excited to see the content of the ICB with so many topics and artists. I am grateful to the translators of my team for their deep commitment in getting texts done on time. Before COVID we were already working remotely on several continents, so we have managed the recent period with relative ease. I also volunteer as a translator and proofreader for Translators without Borders.

### VANIA ROMERO

#### SPANISH-SPEAKING TEAM



My name is Vania Romero, I'm Venezuelan but for the last four years I've been living in Buenos Aires. I got my bachelor's degree in modern languages and a master's degree in linguistics at the University of the Andes in Mérida. Following in my parents' footsteps, since the age of 15 I've been part of several choirs, and studied singing at UNEARTE before leaving my country. Nearly two years ago, I made a change in the course of my professional career, and now work as a software developer. Since 2017 I've been Leo Garrido's conducting assistant, and together we founded *Ensamble Coral Zaperoco*, a choir of Venezuelan immigrants living in Argentina. For almost ten years I've collaborated as a volunteer translator for IFCM, and since February 2021 I've been working as the Spanish Team Coordinator. Besides languages and music, my passions include memes and crochet.

**LAURA MASSEY**  
**ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEAM**



My name is Laura Massey and I am translator and proofreader living and working in Dorset in the south of England. I am a co-ordinator for the ICB for the English-language contributions, ensuring that they are translated and edited by a team of freelancers.

My involvement with music goes back a long way. I started playing the violin aged 7 and also dabbled with the piano and the saxophone. As a teenager, I played the violin in the Suffolk Youth Orchestra and this opened up travel to me as the orchestra went on tour around Europe every year. At university in Oxford, I then started singing in choral ensembles which involved more European touring. It was important to my husband and me to pass on our love for music to our children. My four children took up

the baton as all of them now play one instrument or another.

**MIRELLA BIAGI**  
**ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEAM**

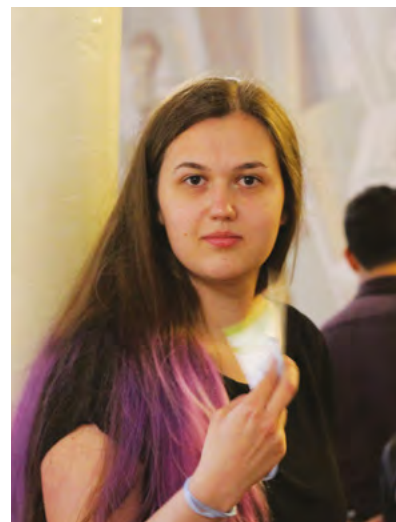


Born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland, I moved to Italy after graduating from the University of Edinburgh in French and Italian. I now live in the Tuscan mountains in what has been labelled “The Most Scottish Town in Italy” with my two cats (Rosemary and Nepitella), partner and newborn baby boy. Professionally I work from my *terrazza* as a freelance translator, although I dedicate most of my time to running the local scout groups as District Commissioner and representing the Italian Scout Federation at international level. I also enjoy singing in the local choir, playing the clarinet in several amateur bands, gardening and pilates. I have been an ICB

volunteer since 2013 and took over as English Language Coordinator in 2015.

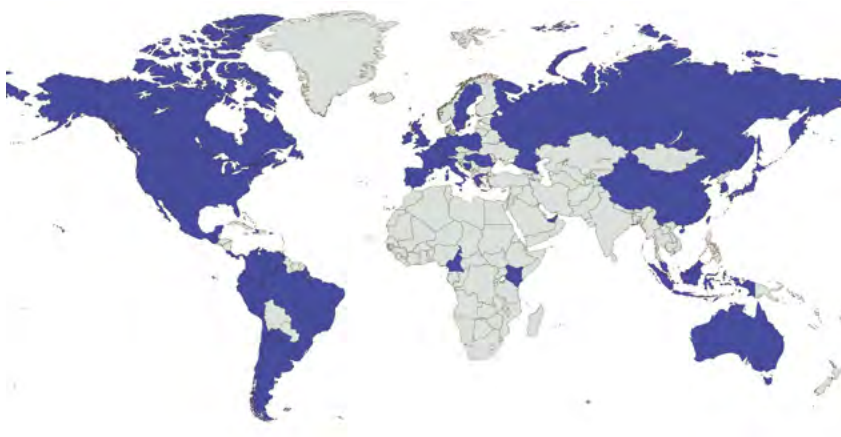
*Translated and edited by Joshua Habermann, USA*

**ANNA BOBRIKOVA**  
**RUSSIAN-SPEAKING TEAM**



Hi, I’m Anna, originally from St Petersburg, currently living in Turku, Finland. I’m an amateur choir singer and choral manager, a member of the Youth Committee of the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat, and, of course, a coordinator of the Russian translating team for the International Federation for Choral Music. Together with 5 other volunteers, I translate abstracts of International Choral Bulletin articles, newsletters of the IFCM, and other choral news from all over the world. We do our best to spread the word of international choral cooperation within the Russian-speaking choral community.

*Edited by Richard Kutner, USA*



In blue, part of the world where the ICB has a team member (translators, coordinators, reviewers)



ISABELLE MÉTROPE –  
MANAGING EDITOR



Born in France, raised between Brittany and Provence, I have been living in Germany for almost 15 years, though I feel more at home in the Mediterranean area. I am a musician first and foremost, as well as an inveterate language freak. I got to know the ICB through the first “IFCM Forum Youth, Voice and Arts Management” back in 2008 – a historical event if ever there was one. Shortly thereafter, I joined the French translating team. I took over the French-speaking coordination around the same time, and kept it until my conducting studies took over my daily life. Last year, when I saw the vacancy for managing editor, I of course applied. Since then, I have been the happiest editor in the world, surrounded with an amazing team which you now know as well.

*Translated and edited by Joshua Habermann, USA*

# FORTY YEARS OF ICB

## Meet some of the translators



Barbara Angli, Catalonia



Ariel Vertzman, Argentina, *"Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the most seasoned of them all?"*



Irene Auerbach and Elgar, UK



Jean Payon, Belgium



Juan Casasbellas, Argentina



Silke Klemm, Belgium





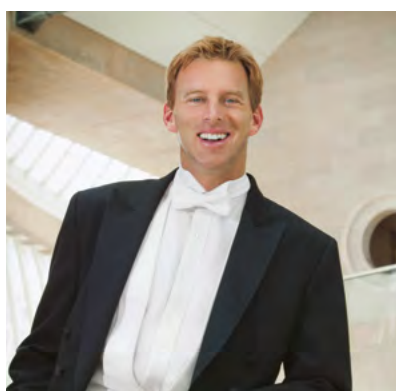
Débora Ester Baigorri, Argentina



Wolfgang Saus, Germany  
© Luna Buerger



Shekela Wanyama, USA



Joshua Habermann, USA



Karin Rockstad, USA



Gabriel Beauvallet-Bauchet, France

Thank you!



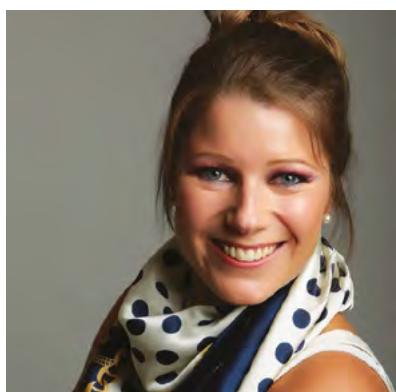
Véronique Bour, Belgium



Anita Shaperd, USA



Former English Coordinator Gillian  
Forlivesi Heywood with Kitty, Italy



Magdalena Lippingwell, UK



Caroline Clark-Maxwell, UK



Javier Perotti, Mendoza, Argentina

# RESULTS OF THE ICB SURVEY

## A big thank you to all who participated!

### Artikel auf Deutsch

### Artículo en español

### Article en français

92 participants from 30 countries answered the ICB survey. Half of them have been reading ICB for more than 15 years!

Regarding the format, a third of the participant read it only online, a third only printed, a third uses both possibilities. This kind of results are very helpful as they help us to make decisions: in this case, keeping only the e-version (which is not an option for now) might lead to a loss of 30% of our readers.

The Choral World News and the Focus (formerly Dossier) are the most read section (30% each), while 20% of our readers did not specify but read every section with a similar interest. 78% of the survey participants are satisfied with the length of the article, while the other 21% find them too long. (We thought this proportion would be higher, so the Editorial Board already decided in Spring 2021 to limit the length of articles to 1000-1200 words).

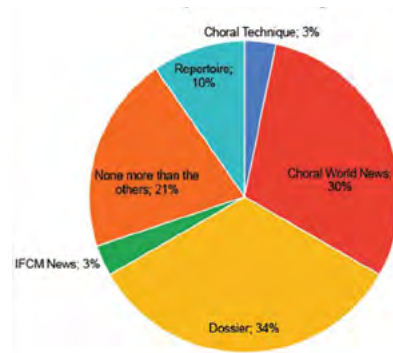
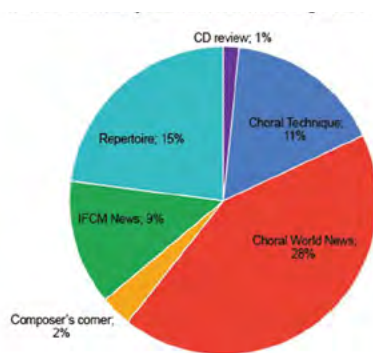
Without surprise, the English version is being read the most (the fact the printed version is only in English might also play a role in this data point); therefore, eliminating the translations might lead to a loss of 35% of our readers. Particularly interesting were the topics the participants missed. Scientific musicology articles as well as composition analyses were often mentioned, followed by exciting responses like "human stories," "choir management," "resources for very young singers," "diversity and inclusion".

Be assured that we will include your valuable input into our next editorial decisions!

Read the full results here.



Topics the ICB readers miss



Sections that the ICB readers find the most interesting



The seminar is addressed to composers and choir conductors with experience in writing and composition. The week will consist in individual and group lessons. For the entire duration of the seminar, the active participants will have at their disposal a laboratory choir to perform the compositions in progress.

# europa seminar for choral composers



## Workshops

Workshop on original composition for choirs

lecturer **Ēriks Ešenvalds** (Latvia)

Workshop on arranging pop for choirs

lecturer **Alessandro Cadario** (Italy)

Workshop on composing for children, youth and female choirs

lecturer **Ivo Antognini** (Switzerland)

Applications deadline

**31 March 2022**

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# INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CHORAL MUSIC



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Emily Kuo Vong

## REGIONAL ADVISORS LEND THEIR EXPERTISE TO THE WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC (WSCM 2023-24)

WSCM 2023-24 Team



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**EMILY KUO VONG**

*President*

**Artikel auf Deutsch**

**Artículo en español**

**Article en français**

Dear friends,

In the summer of 2019, the IFCM and the International Culture Centre in Monte Real (Lisbon) collaborated to bring the World Choral Expo to Portugal for the first time since it was established in 2015. The theme of "Voices Meeting for a Better World," together with the 2019 IFCM World Choral Expo, inspired global friendships and world peace. Through their common love for choral music, more than 600 outstanding choral singers and conductors representing over 50 countries came to Portugal to participate in this magnificent event.

During the 2019 IFCM World Choral Expo, a great number of spectacular concerts were organised at the best venues in the capital, Lisbon, and the picturesque city of Cascais. In addition to these concerts, various projects such as the Singing Network, Colourful Voices and a choral exhibition were also held. Another exciting memory from the 2019 IFCM World Choral Expo is that we celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Youth Choir at the IFCM's main offices.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both our organisation of and participation in choral events and activities have been limited. I am sure that all our friends who love choral music are, like me, missing the experience of singing together, as well as the wonderful atmosphere of choral events. However, I am thrilled to announce today that the World Choral Expo will return to Portugal in 2022, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of September.

Currently, preparations for the 2022 IFCM World Choral Expo are being implemented in two forms – first, the IFCM WCE 2022 committee has planned an exciting international programme with ensembles from five continents, and second, a regional committee has been created to focus on the local community. We plan to invite 12 choirs and vocal ensembles, together with two professional ensembles. So far, eight of them have confirmed that they will take part in this marvellous event.

At the 2022 IFCM World Choral Expo, people will attend high-level performances, the Colourful Voices programme, the EXchange! programmes, workshops and seminars, conducting masterclasses and gala concerts. The annual IFCM General Assembly is also scheduled to take place during this time.

As 2022 is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IFCM, we are also planning a sublime celebration, which includes a special exhibition dedicated to the IFCM in the *Palacete dos Condes de Monte Real* palace and the launch of a 40<sup>th</sup>-anniversary publication. I believe that, through the 2022 IFCM World Choral Expo, everybody all over the world will come together seamlessly to enjoy choral music and make lifelong friendships in Portugal.

Best wishes,

*Edited by Luke Martin, UK*

# REGIONAL ADVISORS LEND THEIR EXPERTISE TO THE WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON CHORAL MUSIC (WSCM) 2023-24

## WSCM 2023-24 TEAM

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)
[Artículo en español](#)
[Article en français](#)

THE MUSICAL TRADITIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONSTITUTE UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY FOR MOST OF THE WORLD'S CHORAL EXPERTS AND ENTHUSIASTS. IN PREPARATION FOR THE WSCM 2023-24 IN QATAR, THE ORGANISERS HAVE TAKEN THE UNPRECEDENTED STEP OF CREATING AN EIGHT-MEMBER TEAM OF REGIONAL ADVISORS THAT DRAWS TOGETHER SOME OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CHORAL LEADERS WITHIN THE ARAB MUSICAL WORLD. THIS EXCEPTIONAL GROUP WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE ARTISTIC COMMITTEE AND WILL PROVIDE INPUT AND GUIDANCE ON THE PARTS OF THE EVENT THAT INCLUDE MUSICAL CONTENT FROM THE HOST REGION.

The map of the Middle East in its current form is a very recent construction. Qatar, for instance, only gained its independence from Britain in 1971, and its current borders were only established in 2001. Today's nations and identities have been formed not only by these modern political boundaries, but also by historical boundaries and the complex networks created by religion, language, trade, kinship, pilgrimage, and migration that bind this diverse region together. These networks were historically, and continue to be, natural conduits for cultural transmission. While distinctive localised musical traditions flourish throughout the region, there are indisputably musical systems and stylistic traits that are found from Morocco to Xinjiang, and from Turkey to Yemen.

Drawing on the richness of the Arab musical world, rather than just that of individual Arab countries allows for a more open conceptualisation of this genre. It takes into account diasporic communities (both contemporary and historic) where Arab musical practices have engaged the periphery and evolved into new musical traditions. Whether it is modern day Lebanese communities in Montreal, Canada, or Arab communities in far-flung corners of the Ottoman and Persian Empires, the concept of "spheres of influence" opens up the regional advisory team to include Turkish and Iranian members, as well as Arabs living far from their geographic heartland.

Including these Regional Advisors in the work of the Artistic Committee means that the WSCM 2023-24 programme will not only bring together the top talent

of the choral world, but will also be able to identify and include representations of the very best talent this region has to offer. This group of regional choral experts is well-positioned to provide the necessary expertise, covering the geographic and stylistic range of choral practices and traditions from the Arab world, Middle East, and diaspora. Each member of the Regional Advisory Team brings their own unique set of knowledge, experience, skill and talent to the planning of the 2023/24 WSCM, and it is an honour to introduce them here.

### BARKEV TASLAKIAN (LEBANON)



Barkev Taslakian found his way to music at a very early age, learning to play several instruments, before discovering choral music and conducting. From 1992-1998 he studied conducting under Harutyun Topikyan and Yervant Yerkanian at the Parsegh Kanatchian Music Academy in Beirut.

Barkev is the founder and conductor of all three branches of the Fayha Choir in Tripoli, Beirut and



Cairo. Under Taslakian's direction the Fayha Choir has performed concerts in Lebanon, Armenia, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Qatar, Cyprus, Nagorni Karabakh, Poland, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, France, Canada, China, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Greece. In addition to performances abroad, the Fayha Choir has become widely celebrated in the Middle Eastern musical world, winning competitions and performing at prestigious events in Lebanon and around the region.

Barkev is the Director of several musical groups for children and young refugees in Lebanon, working in co-operation with local and international organisations that support the social, educational and psychological lives of child refugees and immigrants.



#### **SHIREEN ABU-KHADER (JORDAN/CANADA)**

Dr. Shireen Abu-Khader is a Palestinian-Jordanian Composer and Educator with degrees in Music Education and Choral Conducting from the University of Toronto, the University of Southern California, and Oberlin Conservatory. After working with

the National Conservatory of Music in Palestine from 1998 to 2000, Shireen returned to Jordan and in 2002 founded *Dozan wa Awtar Music Establishment*, which has been an important venture in her personal development as well as for the evolution of choral music in Jordan. Her album, "Introducing Dozan", was released in 2008.

Shireen has arranged numerous traditional Arabic songs for multiple voices, as well as composing new Arabic works for choirs. She is active in a range of choral and musical activities in Jordan, the West Bank, the United States and Canada. She maintains a busy conducting schedule, and has served as a guest speaker in regional and international conferences.

Currently based in Toronto, Shireen composes and collaborates with performers to disseminate music from her native region. She has recently evolved her company into *Dozan World* which aims to spread the music of the Arab world to the international community through sheet music publishing.

#### **BURAK ONUR ERDEM (TURKEY)**

Dr. Burak Onur Erdem has been a member of the IFCM Board since 2018. He studied music theory and conducting at Istanbul Technical University Center for Advanced Studies in Music, and went on to receive

a PhD. His postgraduate studies were with Prof. Johannes Prinz in Kunstuniversität Graz, Austria.



Burak founded the Choral Culture Association in Istanbul as a platform for Turkish choral music to innovate and develop. He was elected to the Board and the Music Commission of European Choral Association - Europa Cantat (ECA-EC) in 2015. He was awarded 'The Best Young Conductor's Prize' in the 38<sup>th</sup> International Varna Choral Competition and he was a judge in the 66<sup>th</sup> International Arezzo Choral Competition.

Currently he is the chair of the Music Commission of Leading Voices 2022 - European Days for Vocal and Choral Leaders - in Utrecht. He is Founder and Conductor of Rezonans, and has received many international awards with the choir. He conducted Istanbul European Choir from 2013 to 2016. He has been working with the Turkish State Choir since 2013 and was appointed its principal conductor in 2017.

#### **MISSAK BAGHBODARIAN (SYRIA)**

Born in Damascus, Missak Baghboudarian has been Conductor of the Syrian National Symphony Orchestra (SNSO) since 2003. He made his debut with the SNSO in 1994.

After building up his conducting experience in Syria, Missak studied conducting in Italy from 1997 to 2002 under Julius Kalmar. In addition to his studies, he has



taken part in masterclasses with the likes of H. Handt, D. Pascu, M. Beck, Carl St. Clair, Jorma Panula, and Riccardo Muti. Missak has considerable experience conducting international orchestras, as well as choirs, both in Syria and abroad.

Missak has been Conductor of the Chamber Choir of the High Institute of Music of Damascus since 2014. Over the course of his career he has had the honour of conducting a number of world premieres by contemporary composers. In 2010 he received the award of Commander of the *Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana* (Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity) from the President of Italy for his efforts and achievements in increasing musical cooperation between Syria and Italy.

#### **EDWARD TORIKIAN (LEBANON)**



Dr. Edward Torikian, a Lebanese citizen of Armenian origin, is the Head of Higher and Specialised Music Education Programmes in the Faculty of Arts & Sciences at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK), a position he has held since 1990.

Edward has many years' experience in choral directing and arranging, and teaching composition. His understanding of both Western and Middle Eastern music traditions has allowed him to produce polyphonic choral arrangements of more than one hundred and fifteen Arabic songs, while simultaneously preserving the Arabic scales and micro tones that are so fundamental to the genre. In addition, he has arranged many Western, Armenian and Syriac songs. Many of his Arabic arrangements were first performed by the Fayha Choir, then by many choirs in the Arab world and the USA where *Earthsongs* Editing House printed two of his arrangements. He is regularly invited to lecture about his works and arranging techniques in Europe, USA, Egypt, and, of course, in Lebanon.

#### **NAHLA MATTAR (EGYPT)**



Dr. Nahla Mattar is an Egyptian composer and Professor at Helwan University, Cairo. She is the former Director of Umm Kulthum Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Culture. She was a member of the Egyptian Music Committee, has held a seat on the Supreme Council of Culture, and has presented and published her research internationally.

Nahla received her Doctorate of Musical Arts in Composition from Arizona State University. Among her academic projects was the compilation and editing of the First Contemporary Music Biennale,

Alexandrina Bibliotheca. She was also the co-ordinator of the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Music Education in Egypt.

Nahla won second prize in the International Women Composers Competition, Unna Library, Germany, for her piece *Three*. Xenia Contemporary Ensemble commissioned her to compose *A River Inside Us Running*, premiered in the Egyptian Museum, Turin. In 2021 her orchestral piece *Al Ain* was performed by the Norwegian Radio Orchestra with Miguel Harth Bedoya and was published by Naxos. Nahla recently enjoyed the world premiere of her *Song Cycle of Egyptian Arabic Poems* in the Royal Opera House in London, as part of Engender Festival, with Camille Maalawy.

For musical settings of Arabic text, be it classical or colloquial, Nahla uses pronunciation and multiple meanings of words to inspire a rich and layered musical experience.

#### **MILAD OMРАНLOO (IRAN)**

Milad Omranloo is an Iranian choral and orchestral conductor, composer, and percussionist. He received his Bachelor's from Sooreh University, Tehran, and his Masters of Arts degree in Composition from the Art University of Tehran. During his early music career, he was a Timpanist and Head of Percussion for the Tehran Symphony Orchestra. However, his interests shifted to include conducting. After studying under the likes of Ali Rahbari, Loris Tjeknavorian, Iraj Sahbai and Erol Erdinc, he successfully transitioned his career to the podium. He has also participated in choral conducting masterclasses in several countries such as the Netherlands, Norway and the United States with instructors Andre de Quadros, Thomas Caplin, Jos Van Veldhofen and Michael Glasner.



In addition to conducting, Milad has received international recognition for his compositions, with his works being performed in Iran and abroad. His collaborations with international musicians, composers and conductors have allowed him to extend the reach of his own work and to introduce new influences into Iranian musical practices.

Milad is the founder and conductor of the Tehran Vocal Ensemble. Founded in 2006, the Tehran Vocal Ensemble has been a trailblazer, performing widely in Iran, as well as at international festivals in South Korea, Spain, Italy, China, Latvia, Russia and the United Arab Emirates. Milad went on to establish Tonal Choir in 2015, which has also won various titles in international festivals in Sri Lanka and Italy.

#### **HANIA SOUDAH (PALESTINE)**



Mrs. Hania Soudah-Sabbara is the Director of the Rosary Music School in Beit Hanina, Jerusalem. After earning her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education, she undertook a career as a Music Educator, networking with a number of local and international academies of music to create integrated and enriched music programmes for students.


Hania is one of the pioneers in establishing and conducting choirs in her community. She has accompanied and mentored a number of students who went on to earn higher degrees and pursue careers in music performance and in education, and in doing so has produced a vibrant legacy of music and culture

in the Palestinian community. She has served on a number of committees that work on creating a music curriculum for schools and academies, with a focus on inclusivity. She believes in the necessity to make music accessible to all as an integral part of each student's personal development and as a critical component in preserving the diverse cultural heritage of humanity.

With thanks to the outstanding Regional Advisory Team presented here, working together with the Qatari hosts and Artistic Committee, the WSCM 2023-24 promises a beautifully curated presentation of the very best choral music and speakers to be found in the Arab musical world today. The WSCM organisers welcome this team to the project and are excited to incorporate their contributions into the WSCM 2023-24. Whether historic or contemporary, choral music's horizons are ever shifting and ever evolving. This opportunity to share and expand the horizons for all of us is extremely exciting.

*Edited by Bethany Farr, UK*

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# CHORAL WORLD NEWS



**OBITUARY: MAYA SHAVIT (ISRAEL), IFCM BOARD MEMBER 2005-2011**



# OBITUARY: MAYA SHAVIT (ISRAEL), IFCM BOARD MEMBER 2005-2011

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Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

## OUR CHORAL COMMUNITY MOURNS ONE OF ITS MOST EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS: MAYA SHAVIT, FROM ISRAEL, WHO HAS PASSED AWAY AT THE AGE OF 85

Maya Shavit founded the Efroni Girls Choir in 1981, a choir of girls (ages 9-18) from all areas of Emek Hefer and representing a wide cross-section of the Israeli population. She remained its music director until 2013. Under her leadership, the choir achieved international acclaim through concert tours in Europe, Scandinavia, Canada, the USA and Japan.

Maya was one of the most active members of the Israeli choral scene. For decades, she focused on children's choirs throughout the country and abroad, giving young people the experience of musical collaboration and true acceptance. Maya initiated Jewish-Arab choral activities that were pro-tolerance community-building and educational, with the aim of building bridges between the cultures. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ministry of Education of Israel.

Between 2005 and 2011 Maya was an IFCM Board member, where she made a huge and positive

contribution to our choral community. In 2005 a World Youth Choir session was organised by Zimriya, the World Assembly of Choirs in Israel; Hallel, the Israeli Choral Organization; and Jeunesses Musicales Israel. Maya was involved in planning IFCM's third Multicultural and Ethnic Conference, focusing on Jerusalem as a centre for three of the great Abrahamic religions, traditions and cultures: Christianity, Islam and Judaism. This was due to take place in 2006, but was cancelled due to the political situation at the time. Maya would later write in a report: "...The variety of choral voices coming from the many Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions was an unbelievable mosaic, and the cooperation I received from the different people involved was touching and promising. It was to be what the whole idea of 'Voices of...' was meant to be..."

In 2008 Maya organised a meeting of the IFCM Executive Committee in Jerusalem and arranged for its



Maya conducting the Little Singers of Armenia in 2015 © Hakob Berberyan





Maya at the IFCM General Assembly in Kyoto in 2015 (top), and in Copenhagen in 2018 (right)

members to meet several cultural institutions, including Zimriya, Hallel and Mila.

In 2012 Maya was one of the experts at the IFCM World Choral Summit in Beijing, China, and presented 'Building Bridges' together with André de Quadros and Thierry Thiébaud.

Maya will remain a model of inspiration, courage, strength and humanism for many years to come, and she will be a dear friend forever. Nadine Robin, IFCM Office Manager

*Edited by Christopher Lutton, UK*

Maya Shavit was like no other. She lived and breathed choral music. And she was also a dreamer. Earlier this year, barely weeks before she passed away, she told me of yet another project that she wanted to start. Her mind never stopped imagining and dreaming. She didn't sleep much, and it was commonplace for her to receive and make phone calls at 1 o'clock in the morning. I knew Maya for decades and we collaborated so much on so many different initiatives. When she set her mind to something, she moved mountains to make it happen. She was deeply committed to music as a means of building communities across the Israeli-Palestinian divide. Motivated by what she saw as injustice towards Palestinians, she used her choral art and pedagogy to make the world a better place. Maya was a role model for the best kind of musician and person – kind, passionate, generous, idealistic, visionary, and unshakably committed to building a compassionate world centred on justice. Like hundreds of others, I carry her in the deepest recesses of my heart.

Professor André de Quadros

*Edited by Christopher Lutton, UK*



# Welcome to Iceland 2022!

**20th Nordic  
Choral  
Directors  
Conference**

**18th Nordklang  
Choral Festival**



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# REPERTOIRE



**SINGING WITH STYLE: THE TURKISH CHORAL LANDSCAPE**  
Burak Onur Erdem

# SINGING WITH STYLE: THE TURKISH CHORAL LANDSCAPE

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**BURAK ONUR ERDEM**

*Conductor*

[Artikel auf Deutsch](#)

[Artículo en español](#)

[Article en français](#)

TURKEY IS A COUNTRY WHERE A UNIQUE CHORAL STYLE HAS BEEN BLOSSOMING SINCE THE EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY. THE HERITAGE OF THE ANATOLIAN SOIL EMBRACED A VARIETY OF MUSICAL BACKGROUNDS WATERED BY THE EAST AND THE WEST, AND SO IT ALSO SHAPED THE COLLECTIVE SINGING CULTURE OF THE COUNTRY. THROUGHOUT THE CENTURY, AS CHOIRS AND CHORAL SOCIETIES BEGAN TO FLOURISH, A PARTICULAR COMPOSITIONAL OUTPUT ALSO FOLLOWED THIS TREND. AS WE LOOK TO THE PAST FROM THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY, IT IS APPARENT THAT THE UNITING OF THE WESTERN POLYPHONY AND THE EASTERN MICROTONAL CULTURE IS COMING TRUE IN THIS LAND OF CULTURAL BRIDGES.

The choral tradition of Turkey dates back to the first years of the Republic. Despite there being some individual choral initiatives in the late Ottoman Empire period, which were mainly founded by minorities, the first organised choral activities actually started around the 1920s. The School for Music Teachers, founded in 1924, constitutes a milestone in the new Republic's music politics. Various choral societies began to blossom in the early 1930s in big cities such as İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir. In the later decades, conservatories and music schools were an important hub for choral music to be produced and performed. The Turkish choral life was not only limited to school music; symphonic and a capella choral output has also been present since the beginning of the Republic. The late 70s and 80s coincide with the founding of the first professional a capella and symphonic choirs with public support, and the 90s and 2000s can be characterised by the blooming of the amateur choirs organised around Turkey's different key cities. Since 2010, Turkey has been blessed with numerous choral festivals, various choral organisations, internationally renowned choirs and a sharp rise in educational activities in choral conducting.

Before delving into the choral world of Turkey, one must get to grips with the terminology that the country uses to distinguish polyphonic choral music from so-called monophonic choral music. The choir scene in Turkey contains a number of choirs whose names include "polyphonic"; and there is a large number that define themselves as polyphonic, touching on the Western musical heritage. In contrast, folk music or classical Turkish music choirs are described as monophonic, where the singers sing one microtonal line with traditional ornamentation. The author however does not believe in purely technical distinctions of the choral society, since the very fact of collective singing is the main common denominator of each choir that takes part in this musical journey. The function of the choral societies, the quality of the compositional technique and performance, and the expression of musical content through common practice are much more interesting ways to approach a choral landscape of a country.

Choral composition in Turkey started with material from folk music. Mainly written in the 1930s and 1940s, the first compositional school of Turkish classical music was "The Turkish Five"; Ahmed Adnan Saygun, Ulvi Cemal Erkin, Cemal Reşit Rey, Hasan Ferid Alnar and Necil Kazım Akses, who were all born in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were the fundamentals of the new Republic's musical output. Though the material was mostly folk tunes, the very first Turkish oratorio was composed by Saygun in 1943. "Yunus Emre Oratorio" tells the story of the 13<sup>th</sup> century mystic Yunus Emre, written in the form of a classical oratorio and embellished with a taste of Turkish religious music. The second generation of composers includes names like Muammer Sun, Cenan Akin, Nevit Kodalli, Yalçın Tura and others. The main influence of the composers who were born in the 20s and 30s were themes of national epics and folk material. Avant-garde composers with choral output of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century also include İlhan Usmanbaş and Ertuğrul Oğuz Fırat.





Rezonans Chamber Choir, conducted by Burak Onur Erdem, performing a special concert titled *Vox Luminis* on December 8, 2019, at Şerefiye Cistern, one of the extraordinary historic venues of Istanbul, also known as Theodosius Cistern, which was built around 1600 years ago to store water for the use of the Byzantine Capital

Composers born in the 50s and 60s have a considerable amount of output in choral music: Turgay Erdener, Kamran İnce, Hasan Uçarsu, Özkan Manav and Mehmet Nemutlu. Uçarsu is most probably not only the composer with the largest number of capella works composed for choir, but he also represents a stylistic maturity of choral writing. His works accommodate a very fine fuse of Turkish classical music, folk music and original polyphonic material. It is not surprising that Uçarsu is one of the most popular composers among choirs in the country.

Fazıl Say, an internationally renowned Turkish pianist, has made a notable contribution to the choral repertoire with the *Nazım Oratorio*, which contains substantial storytelling on the 20<sup>th</sup> century Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet. Then comes the new generation, born in the late 70s and 80s. These contemporaries include names like



Mesruh Savaş, Volkan Akkoç and Recep Gül. The young composers of the country are especially strong in blending the new timbres of 21<sup>st</sup> century choral music into the rare recipe of Turkish choral writing that has existed for almost one century now.

It would be accurate to suggest that Turkish choral writing has a few trademark qualities exclusive to the country. One common feature is the irregular rhythmical structure where meters like 5/8, 7/8 or 9/8 are considered as usual time signatures. This can also be observed in the choral output of South-eastern Europe and the Balkans. Another quality that is significant to Anatolia is the microtonal background in the melodic structure. The *makam*, which corresponds to the scale structure of classical Turkish music, is one of the main influences on the contemporary composers. Furthermore, the influence of *makam* music also has its own harmonic implications where a major second or a minor second

interval has a totally different connotation in Turkish choral music than in the traditional European music. On top of that, the modal structure of the folk music brings about a harmonical approach based on the fourth as a unit, rather than the third. This allows a suspended fourth chord to function as a resolution rather than a suspension as in western harmony.

More characteristics of this specific compositional style can be explained in detail in a separate article in the future. Nevertheless, the reader can get a general idea of the Turkish choral landscape through this article, which by no means is intended to be a comprehensive guide to the choral composition scene in Turkey. More information on each composer and more established composers can be found online through the performances of Turkish choirs and the publications of music schools and conservatories.

*Edited by Charlotte Sullivan, UK*



**DR. BURAK ONUR ERDEM (\*1986)** studied music theory & conducting in Istanbul and a political science & international relations degree.

He has refined his choral conducting skills in masterclasses with Johannes Prinz, Maria Guinand, Volker Hempfling, Anders Eby, Denes Szabo and Michael Gohl.

He finished his postgraduate studies on choral conducting with Prof. Johannes Prinz in Kunstuniversität Graz, Austria. Erdem is a board member of the European Choral Association and International Federation of Choral Music. He is currently the chair of the Music Commission of Leading Voices 2022. He has been awarded 'The Best Young Conductor's Prize' in the 38th International Varna Choral Competition and he has served as a jury member in the 66th International Arezzo Choral Competition. Erdem is the principal conductor of the Turkish State Choir and the Istanbul-based Rezonans chamber choir. Email: [boerdem@ifcm.net](mailto:boerdem@ifcm.net)





# COMPOSER'S CORNER



## IMMORTAL THEODORAKIS

Stephanie Merakos, Isabelle Métrope, Thierry Thiébaud, Georges Van Gucht

# IMMORTAL THEODORAKIS

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**STEPHANIE MERAKOS, ISABELLE MÉTROPE,  
THIERRY THIÉBAUT, GEORGES VAN GUCHT**

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THE GREEKS CONSIDERED HIM AN IMMORTAL, GIVEN HOW NARROWLY HE SURVIVED IMPRISONMENTS AND ILL-TREATMENTS AND HOW ACTIVE HE WAS IN THE ARTISTIC AND POLITICAL LIFE OF HIS COUNTRY.

Mikis Theodorakis walked alongside his homeland for nearly a century: as part of resistance during the Nazi occupation (1941-44); imprisoned during the Greek civil war (1946-49); part of the opposition during the colonels' dictatorship (1967-74); then imprisoned again before going into exile in France until 1974. For the former pupil of Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatory, several decades of participation in Greek public life followed: as deputy and even minister (in the government of Konstantinos Mitsotakis, father of the current prime minister) he was an ardent defender of culture and bringing peoples together (Greeks and Turks, among others). For a few years he was the conductor of the choirs and orchestras of the ERT, the Hellenic National Radio and Television.

In 2018, at almost 93 years old and in a wheelchair, he forcefully demanded a referendum on the Macedonian question, speaking to the hundreds of thousands of Athenians gathered in front of Parliament. But the choral world knew Mikis Theodorakis above all thanks to his music: from the masterful work of *Canto General*, in which he sets the words of Pablo Neruda to music, to his many melodies, based mainly on the texts of Greek or Spanish-speaking authors, through to unforgettable film scores (yes, *Zorba the Greek*, but also many others!). And operas. And symphony music. And chamber music... Theodorakis often raised his voice. However, on September 2 he fell silent and his soul flew into the Athenian sky to find his friends Melina Mercouri, Pablo Neruda and many other of the main players of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dear readers, I will tell you a secret: I absolutely wanted to interview Mikis Theodorakis for the ICB. Unfortunately, it is not to be, so let's give the floor to some of those who worked with him...

*Isabelle Métrope, ICB Managing Editor*

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## PARISIAN CREATION, FEBRUARY 1981

With my choir "La Brénadienne", we presented the *Canto General* in 1981. I met him in Paris at his home, on Rue Notre Dame des Champs, where he lived after being imprisoned at the end of the 1960s by the

colonels' regime. I had called him to ask for advice on the interpretation of his *Canto General* that I was preparing with my 180 choristers! "Come visit me," he replied. So, I went. I did not have any bouzoukis to perform his *Canto* and wanted to know if I could replace them with flutes. We chatted about his music for two hours. A passionate (and fascinating!) man who interluded our discussions with extracts from his compositions by playing them on the piano... On this occasion he showed me a manuscript he had just finished sitting on his desk: *Neruda Requiem Aeternam* for double choir, keyboards and percussions, a short work of about 15 minutes that he was going to add to the *Canto General*. I was seized with incredible emotion while listening to the harmonic continuation... Tears flowed... He closed the copy of his manuscript and gave it to me saying, "You will create it with your choir." We performed this Requiem in February 1981 in the church of Saint Marcel (13<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris) in a concert during which we also performed the *Petit Messe Solennelle* by Rossini.

*Thierry Thiébaud, France, A Cœur Joie International President, IFCM Board Member, choir conductor and teacher*

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**WITH HIS MUSIC AND HIS SONGS, MIKIS  
THEODORAKIS WILL CARRY ON UNITING OUR  
HEARTS, OPENING NEW WORLDS FOR US, AS DOES  
EVERY GREAT ART WHICH CONVERSES WITH ITS  
TIME AND ITS HISTORY.**

*Maria Farantouri, Greek singer and long time musical partner of Mikis Theodorakis*

---

## CANTO GENERAL, AUGUST 1975 IN ATHENS, KARAISKAKIS AND PANATHINAIKOS STADIUMS

Mikis approached us in 1974, with ardour. He wanted a world-renowned ensemble by his side, he knew us very well and admired the rich sound of our instruments. He wanted the Percussions de Strasbourg to be with him





Chios Island, where Theodorakis was born

for his musical return to Greece.

We started rehearsals and a preview took place in the presence of François Mitterrand at the Salle de la Mutualité in Paris.

In Greece, the rehearsals took place in a friendly and pleasant atmosphere. Mikis had a great sense of humour and so did we... The arrival at the stadium is a moment that we will never forget: we were worried about performing on the pitch and it dulling the sound and the performance. Our doubts were quickly dispelled thanks to the outstanding technicians and highly talented sound engineers. Triumph is a poor word; we were transported by Mikis. His strength, his sensitivity transpires in his strong, dancing, singing conducting. He had an invisible bond with his singers and musicians, nourished by suffering, resentment, courage, and immense joy.

We were overwhelmed by the packed stadium, more than 60,000 people, cheering this symbol of freedom and struggle. The audience was elated by songs of victory. We

lived, breathed, and played with soul and conviction, carried by the songs. At the end of the concert there was an unbelievable standing ovation, a frantic pitch invasion towards Mikis.

The Percussions de Strasbourg experienced an unforgettable tour: starting at the Karaiskakis stadium in Piraeus on 13 August, the Patras Stadium on 16 August, back to Athens on 18 August where the double 33 rpm live album was recorded. The last concert was held on 18 August in Thessaloniki. The stadiums were always filled with a huge crowd.

Mikis, the icon. Mikis, the revolutionary. Mikis, the symbol.

*Georges Van Gucht, France, Knight of the Order of Arts and Literature, Founder of the Percussions de Strasbourg, Honourary Professor of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Lyon*

*Translated by Mirella Biagi, UK/Italy*

## MIKIS THEODORAKIS: A GREEK AND UNIVERSAL

I do not know of any Greek that has not sung Theodorakis' songs in times of love, peace, relaxation, unrest or demonstration. He always provided the right music to move our souls. A bigger-than-life figure, a musical genius and a genuine symbol for strength, unity, dignity, dedication, and patriotism, Theodorakis led a life passionately devoted to music, Greece, freedom, social justice and world peace. As a musician, activist and intellectual, he has been a unique, internationally recognizable and exuberant persona for almost a century as he indelibly marked, not only music and culture but also history, as an advocate of democracy and peace.

*"I had to live this life in order to write these songs,"* he said and indeed, his music, that brought high poetry to everybody's lips, that filled concert halls, stadiums, avenues, and movie theaters, was his means of expressing his state of mind. He created music when he was in love, or in despair, or tried to pull together and guide the people through good and bad times. His purpose was always to unify and calm down political passions. His music is a blessing and an answer to violence. It is a breeze of moving melodies where each note reminds us of his brilliance, his courage, his love for his country and his offering to humanity.

With great emotion and gratitude we say goodbye to "Mikis" of Greece and of the world. His music and spirit accompanied us, inspired us, delighted us and made us better!

*Stephanie Merakos, Head of the Music Library of Greece "Lilian Voudouri" of The Friends of Music Society (Athens)*



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# REVIEWS



**BRITAIN MEETS FINLAND  
JAAKKO MÄNTYJÄRVI – COMPOSITIONS  
FOR CHORUS**

Reviewed by Reijo Kekkonen

**NOSTRA CULPA  
VOCAL MUSIC BY EUGENE BIRMAN**

Reviewed by Reijo Kekkonen

# JAAKKO MÄNTYJÄRVI COMPOSITIONS FOR CHORUS

## REVIEWED BY REIJO KEKKONEN

Director of publishing at the SULASOL music publishers

Artikel auf Deutsch

Artículo en español

Article en français

### JAAKKO MÄNTYJÄRVI – COMPOSITIONS FOR CHORUS

THE CHOIR OF TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE, COND. STEPHEN LAYTON  
(HYPERION CDA68266)

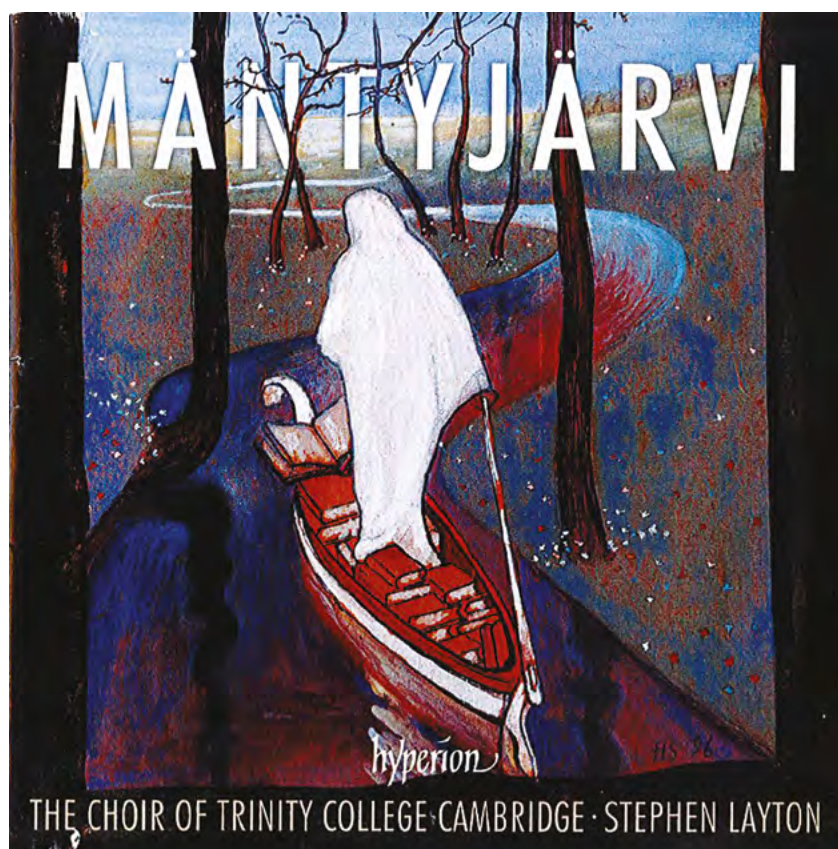
At the present time, Jaakko Mäntyjärvi is considered the brightest star in Finnish choral composition. His work is widely known and is often performed around the world. Mäntyjärvi debuted as a composer in 1995 with *Pseudo-Yoik*, followed by a piece from his youth, *Four Shakespeare Songs*. These works are continually among his most popular compositions.

Few people know that Jaakko Mäntyjärvi is a professional translator by occupation. In Finland, he seems to be considered a translator who happens to write choral music, but abroad he is seen as a top composer who happens to understand languages. His international success is based not only on pleasing harmonies, but also on his talent for orchestrating text for choirs. Since he has a great deal of experience in the choral arts, he understands a choir's different registers and how to produce different textures. An excellent example of this is the new recording by the Choir of Trinity College Cambridge, conducted by Stephen Layton.

Jaakko Mäntyjärvi's compositions include many humorous works, such as the above-mentioned *Pseudo-Yoik* and *El Hambo*. In addition, Mäntyjärvi has composed

several serious and deeply affecting pieces, like the touching *Canticum Calamitatis Maritimae* commemorating the victims of the 1994 Estonia shipwreck. For this recording, Stephen Layton commissioned a large work, an entire church service, then called *Trinity Service*. It is the main work on the CD and is accompanied by the demanding *Stuttgarter Psalmen* from 2009, written for the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart to celebrate the bicentenary of Felix Mendelssohn's birth. These expressive compositions hint at the composer's mastery of contemporary and dissonant elements even though he has claimed to love consonances.

*Trinity Service* is meant to be used at Evensong, which is a liturgical service of the Church of England and related denominations worldwide, a tradition established nearly 500 years ago. Mäntyjärvi's setting may indeed be performed as an evensong but may also be shortened to a concert version, the one heard on the recording. With the work's new, free tonalities, one can





appreciate not only the harmonies, but also the orchestral tone colours that the composer combines with them.

In order for the harmonic colours to ring true, the work needs to be performed by a top-quality ensemble. The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge is precisely that kind of choir. Excellent voice quality and tuning make the large chords and sharp dissonances sound maturely conceived yet also crisp when needed.

The smaller works on the CD include *Ave Maria d'Aosta*, *Benedic anima mea Domino*, *Pulchra es*, and *O magnum mysterium*. *Ave Maria d'Aosta* is one of the four *Ave Marias* Mäntyjärvi has composed. It was written in 2004 in Aosta, Italy, where he was teaching a course in choral composition. *Benedic anima mea Domino*, from 1994, is a kind

of a reinvention of medieval praxis used to vivid effect.. *O magnum mysterium*, from 2007, is essentially a study in low-pitched sonorities in a key in the neighbourhood of E flat, except for a brief departure toward the middle. Finally, there is Jaakko Mäntyjärvi's wonderful new piece, *Pulchra es*, composed for the wedding of his son in 2018. It is a small motet, incredibly beautiful, that creates the illusion of being easy to perform. However, accuracy and sensitivity are required to do justice to this rare jewel.

This recording is an excellent starting point for getting acquainted with Mäntyjärvi's music. Those who are already familiar with his compositions will find this CD soothing and enjoyable.

*Edited by Richard Kutner, USA*



Stephen Layton © Keith Saunders

The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge  
© Benjamin Ealovega



# NOSTRA CULPA

## VOCAL MUSIC BY EUGENE BIRMAN

**REVIEWED BY REIJO KEKKONEN**

*Director of publishing at the SULASOL music publishers*

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**NOSTRA CULPA**

**VOCAL MUSIC BY EUGENE BIRMAN**

**HELSINKI CHAMBER CHOIR, COND. NILS SCHWECKENDIEK**

**ALBA RECORDS ABCD 500, 2020**

Eugene Birman (b. 1987) is a British composer who has written music for symphony orchestras, choirs, instrumental ensembles and soloists around the world and for various venues. His public career, which includes appearances on CNN, BBC World TV, Radio France and Deutsche Welle among others, is characterized by a fearless focus on socially relevant large-scale compositions covering the financial crisis, Russian border treaties and other situations.

His connection to Finland is not only co-operation with the Helsinki Chamber Choir and Nils Schweckendiek, but he has also been appointed the sole Artist-in-Residence of the 2018 Helsinki Festival, which is Finland's biggest yearly cultural event.

The conductor Nils Schweckendiek, having studied music at Clare College, Cambridge and choral conducting in Freiburg and Helsinki, has been the artistic director of the Helsinki Chamber Choir since 2007, and in 2014 he was appointed professor of choral conducting at the Sibelius Academy.

The Helsinki Chamber Choir continues the great tradition of the Finnish Radio Chamber Choir, which was established in 1962 and came to its end in 2005 when the Finnish Broadcasting Company decided it was surplus

to requirements. The Finnish Radio Chamber Choir was very important and premiered tens of choral works which nowadays are an essential part of the Finnish classical contemporary repertoire. In addition to the Finnish repertoire, the Radio Chamber Choir made numerous first performances of contemporary international repertoire in Finland.

As the Finnish Radio Chamber Choir was closed down, the singers continued giving concerts and other performances and organised themselves under the name The Helsinki Chamber Choir. Since its first appearance it has been, and still is, the only professional chamber choir in Finland. Its wide-ranging







repertoire includes music from the Renaissance to the present day and it is particularly highly regarded for its work with new music.

An excellent example of the choir's ability to present credible performances is this recording with compositions by Eugene Birman. He really is equal to his reputation, an interesting composer who has the ability to write fascinating, influential and moving music. Besides the normal notation, Birman uses many other devices and it is interesting to hear how, for example, whistling goes very well together with singing. Of the works on this CD two pieces have been written for a choir, and the title work, *Nostra Culpa*, is for voice and string orchestra. The works for choir are *Lamentations* and *State of the Union*. *Lamentations* is a kind of "motet-cantata" in three movements using texts from the book of *Lamentations* and *The Prayer of Manasseh* (Qumran, cave 4 version). The music is breathtaking with huge and impressive sound pillars. *The State of the Union* could be called an opera. It is a thirty-seven minute huge work

in thirteen movements. Again it is the co-operation between the composer and the libretto by Scott Diel that makes the large work maintain its intensity. Scott Diel has completed six operatic projects with Eugene Birman so it is no wonder that their chemistry goes so well together. For instance the solo work *Nostra Culpa*, "sculpts the verbiage of a star economist pitted against a politician in distress – "Wonders of Austerity", "Frozen Pensions", "Internal Devaluation" – as if they were slabs of marble". *Nostra Culpa* on this recording is performed by Iris Oja (voice) and ContempoArtEnsemble.

The booklet text by Giorgio Biancorosso (Prof., Dept. of Music and Director, The University of Hong Kong) is interesting to read. It is a detailed analysis of Birman's music and the texts by Scott Deal as well as the Biblical texts and their relation to the music. The text is also a very philosophical approach to the world of the composer.

This recording and this music are worth getting to know!

*Edited by Gillian Forlivesi Heywood, UK/Italy*



**REIJO KEKKONEN (\*1961)** is currently working as a director of publishing at the **SULASOL** music publishers (since 1988). He received a Master of Music degree (music education, violin, singing, piano, oboe) from the Sibelius Academy, in Helsinki, in 1991, with special studies in composition (Vladimir Agopov, Tapani Lämsä) and in choral conducting (Matti Hyökki, Erkki Pulli-nen). He has played with various orchestras and bands and has also worked as a professional singer (2<sup>nd</sup> bass) with the Finnish Radio Chamber Choir, Sibelius Academy Vocal Ensemble, and Cetus Noster, among others. Kekkonen has served as a judge in choral competitions, composition competitions, and arrangement competitions worldwide. He has held several important positions in organisations, festivals, and competitions in Finland and elsewhere. <https://sulasol.fi>

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# CHORAL CALENDAR



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



Although we thrive to update this choral calendar with new dates for postponed festivals, we haven't been able to check the status of all these festivals listed here below. Many of them also opted for an online event. So please visit their website and show them your interest and your support. Thank you!

**15th Rimini International Choral Competition**  
**ONLINE, Rimini, Italy, 11-14 Nov 2021.** Contact:  
Rimini International Choral Competition, Email:  
[info@riminichoral.it](mailto:info@riminichoral.it) - Website: [www.riminichoral.it](http://www.riminichoral.it)

**JSFest International Choral Competition,**  
**Turku, Finland, 11-15 Nov 2021.** Contact:  
JSFest International Choral Competition,  
Email: [info@semconsulting.fi](mailto:info@semconsulting.fi) - Website:  
<https://www.jsfestcompetition.com>

**16th International Warsaw Choir Festival Varsovia**  
**Cantat, Poland, 12-14 Nov 2021.** Contact: MELODY  
& Polonia Cantat, Email: [info@varsoviacantat.pl](mailto:info@varsoviacantat.pl) -  
Website: [www.varsoviacantat.pl](http://www.varsoviacantat.pl)

**39th International Choral Festival of Karditsa,**  
**Greece, 18-28 Nov 2021.** Contact: International Choral  
Festival of Karditsa, Email: [nke@otenet.gr](mailto:nke@otenet.gr) - Website:  
<http://festivalofkarditsa.blogspot.gr/>

**Vienna Advent Sing, Austria, 25-30 Nov, 2-6, 9-13 &**  
**16-20 Dec 2020.** Contact: Music Contact International,  
Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website:  
[www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**Misatango Choir Festival Vienna, Austria, 26-30**  
**Nov 2021.** Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email:  
[info@misatango.com](mailto:info@misatango.com) - Website: [www.misatango.com/](http://www.misatango.com/)

**Deutsche Chormeisterschaft 2021, Koblenz,**  
**Germany, 26-28 Nov 2021.** Contact: Interkultur  
e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website:  
<https://www.interkultur.com/>

**International Festival of Advent and Christmas**  
**Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 2-5 Dec**  
**2021.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email:  
[info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**International Competition for Girls'**  
**Choir Compositions, Riga, Latvia, 10 Jan**  
**2022.** Contact: Latvian Composers Union,  
Email: [komponisti.lv@gmail.com](mailto:komponisti.lv@gmail.com) - Website:  
<http://www.rdk.lv/en/par-skolu/kori/meitenu-koris/>

**IFCM International Choral Composition**  
**Competition, 15 Jan 2022.** Contact: IFCM, Email:  
[manager@ifcm.net](mailto:manager@ifcm.net) - Website: <https://ifcm.net>

**3rd Sing'n'Pray Kobe, Japan, 20-24 Jan**  
**2022.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur,  
Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website:  
<https://www.interkultur.com/events/2022/kobe/>

**Singing in Castara, Trinidad and Tobago, 20-27 Feb**  
**2022.** Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek,  
Email: [lucy@lacock.org](mailto:lucy@lacock.org) - Website: [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org)

**ON STAGE in Israel, Israel, 9-13 Mar 2022.** Contact:  
Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) -  
Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Fingal International Festival of Voices,**  
**Dublin, Ireland, 10-13 Mar 2022.** Contact:  
Fingal International Festival of Voices, Email:  
[manager@fingalfestivalofvoices.com](mailto:manager@fingalfestivalofvoices.com) - Website:  
<https://www.fingalfestivalofvoices.com>

**Discover Puerto Rico and its Choral Music, Ponce,**  
**Puerto Rico, 18-21 Mar 2022.** Contact: Music Contact  
International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) -  
Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**Corsham Voice Workshop, United Kingdom, 20-**  
**25 Mar 2022.** Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew  
van der Beek, Email: [avdb@lacock.org](mailto:avdb@lacock.org) - Website:  
[www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org)

**Young Prague Festival, Prague, Czech Republic,**  
**23-27 Mar 2022.** Contact: Music Contact International,  
Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website:  
[www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**ON STAGE in Verona, Italy, 24-27 Mar**  
**2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation,  
Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website:  
<https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Voices & Wine Alba, Italy, 7-11 Apr 2022.** Contact:  
Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) -  
Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>



**Vox Lucensis, Lucca, Italy, 9-13 Apr 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**16th Concorso Corale Internazionale, Riva del Garda, Italy, 10-14 Apr 2022.** Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Slovakia Cantat, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 21-24 Apr 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**Dartmouth Music Week, United Kingdom, 24-29 Apr 2022.** Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: [avdb@lacock.org](mailto:avdb@lacock.org) - Website: [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org)

**15th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 27 Apr-1 May 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**15th International Choir Competition & Festival Bad Ischl, Austria, 27 Apr-1 May 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**67th Cork International Choral, Ireland, 27 Apr-1 May 2022.** Contact: Cork International Choral Festival, Email: [info@corkchoral.ie](mailto:info@corkchoral.ie) - Website: [www.corkchoral.ie](http://www.corkchoral.ie)

**20th Venezia in Musica, International Choir Competition and Festival, Venice and Caorle, Italy, 27 Apr-1 May 2022.** Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**22nd Statys Šimkus Choir Competition, Klaipeda, Lithuania, 12-15 May 2022.** Contact: Klaipeda Choir Association „AUKURAS“, Email: [aukuras@ku.lt](mailto:aukuras@ku.lt) or [simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com](mailto:simkus.competition.lt@gmail.com) - Website: <https://www.aukuras.org/simkus>

**We Are Singing Cracow International Choral Festival, Poland, 13-15 May 2022.** Contact: - Website: <https://www.wearesinging.org/festival-we-are-singing-cracow>

**International Choral Competition Ave Verum 2021, Baden, Austria, 13-15 May 2022.** Contact: Wolfgang Ziegler, chairman, Email: [aveverum.baden@gmail.com](mailto:aveverum.baden@gmail.com) - Website: [www.aveverum.at](http://www.aveverum.at)

**SING FOR GOLD, The World Choral Cup, Calella/Barcelona, Spain, 14-22 May 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation e.V., Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

Ambleside Music Week, United Kingdom, 15-20 May 2022. Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: [lucy@lacock.org](mailto:lucy@lacock.org) - Website: [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org)

12th International festival of choirs and orchestras, Venice, Jesolo, Italy, 18-22 May 2022. Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [post@musikreisenfaszination.de](mailto:post@musikreisenfaszination.de) - Website: [www.mrf-musicfestivals.com](http://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com)

**ON STAGE in Florence, Italy, 19-22 May 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**13th European Festival of Youth Choirs, Basel, Switzerland, 24-29 May 2022.** Contact: Europäisches Jugendchor Festival Basel, Kathrin Renggli, Email: [info@ejcf.ch](mailto:info@ejcf.ch) - Website: [www.ejcf.ch](http://www.ejcf.ch)

**Meeting of Children's and Youth Choirs, Thuir, France, 25-29 May 2022.** Contact: , Email: [Alix.Bourrat@Orange.Fr](mailto:Alix.Bourrat@Orange.Fr) - Website: <https://choralethuir.wixsite.com/chanterie-cantilene/festival-jvm-2022>

**CantaRode International Choral Festival & Competition, Kerkrade, The Netherlands, 26-29 May 2022.** Contact: CantaRode, Email: [info@cantarode.nl](mailto:info@cantarode.nl) - Website: [www.cantarode.nl](http://www.cantarode.nl)

**Dublin & Belfast Choral Festival 2022 with John Dickson, Ireland, June 2022.** Contact: Klconcerts, Email: [info@klconcerts.com](mailto:info@klconcerts.com) - Website: [www.klconcerts.com](http://www.klconcerts.com)

**17th International Chamber Choir Competition Marktoberdorf, Germany, 3-7 June 2022.** Contact: Modfestivals, International Chamber Choir Competition, Email: [office@modfestivals.org](mailto:office@modfestivals.org) - Website: <https://www.kammerchorwettbewerb.org>

**ON STAGE in Albania, Tirana, Albania, 8-12 June 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Bratislava Choir Festival, Slovak Republic, 9-12 June 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**2021 Choral Festival in Ireland with John Dickson, Belfast and Dublin, Ireland, 11-16 June 2022.**

Contact: Klconcerts, Email: [info@Klconcerts.com](mailto:info@Klconcerts.com) - Website: [www.Klconcerts.com](http://www.Klconcerts.com)

**Beethoven Choral Festival, Vienna, Austria, 12-16 June 2022.** Contact: Music Celebrations International,

Email: [info@musiccelebrations.com](mailto:info@musiccelebrations.com) - Website: <https://beethoven250.org/choral-festival/>

**Dublin Choral Festival, Ireland, 15-19 June 2022.**

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

**Krakov International Choral Festival, Poland, 15-19 June 2022.** Contact: Music Contact International,

Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: [www.music-contact.com](http://www.music-contact.com)

**25th Alta Pusteria International Choir Festival, 1st GREEN EDITION, Alto Adige-Südtirol, Italy/Austria, 15-19 June 2022.** Contact: Alta Pusteria Festival

Office, Email: [info@festivalpusteria.org](mailto:info@festivalpusteria.org) - Website: [www.festivalpusteria.org](http://www.festivalpusteria.org)

**Grieg International Choir Festival and NINA Solo Competition for Young Singers, Bergen, Norway, 16-19 June 2022.** Contact: Grieg International Choir

Festival, Email: [post@griegfestival.no](mailto:post@griegfestival.no) - Website: <https://griegfestival.no>

**International Choral Festival in Tuscany, Montecatini Terme, Italy, 16-20 June 2022.** Contact: Music Contact International,

Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: <http://tuscany.music-contact.com/>

**Montréal Choral Festival 2022 with Rollo Dillworth, Canada, 18-22 June 2022.** Contact: Klconcerts, Email: [info@Klconcerts.com](mailto:info@Klconcerts.com) - Website: [www.Klconcerts.com](http://www.Klconcerts.com)

**Italian Alpine Choral Festival, Dolomites, South Tyrol, Italy, 22-26 June 2022.** Contact: Music Contact International, Email: [travel@music-contact.com](mailto:travel@music-contact.com) - Website: <https://home.music-contact.com/>

**Rome Choral Festival, Rome, Italy, 22-26 June 2022.** Contact: Music Celebrations International, LLC, Email: [info@musiccelebrations.com](mailto:info@musiccelebrations.com) - Website: <http://romechoralfestival.org/>

**International Festival Verona Garda Estate, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, Vicenza, Italy, 23 June-11 July 2022.** Contact: Prof. Giuliano Rinaldi, Email:

[info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu](mailto:info@festivalveronagardaestate.eu) - Website: [www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu](http://www.festivalveronagardaestate.eu)

**Per Musicam Ad Astra, International Copernicus Choir Festival and Competition, Toru , Poland, 25-29 June 2022.** Contact: Meeting Music,

Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**20th Nordic Choral Directors Conference, Reykjavík, Iceland, 27-29 June 2022.**

Contact: FÍK - Félag íslenskra kórstjóra, Email: [conference2022@nordklangkorfestival.org](mailto:conference2022@nordklangkorfestival.org) - Website: <https://conference.nordklangkorfestival.org>

**Salzburg Choral Festival Jubilate Mozart!, Austria, 29 June-2 July 2022.** Contact: Music Celebrations

International, LLC, Email: [info@musiccelebrations.com](mailto:info@musiccelebrations.com) - Website: <https://salzburgchoralfestival.org/>

**6th International Choir and Orchestra Festival, Budapest, Hungary, 29 June-3 July 2022.**

Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [post@musikreisenfaszination.de](mailto:post@musikreisenfaszination.de) - Website: [www.mrf-musicfestivals.com](http://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com)

**18th Nordklang Festival 2022, Reykjavík, Iceland, 29 June-2 July 2022.** Contact:

FÍK - Félag íslenskra kórstjóra, Email: [nordklang2022@nordklangkorfestival.org](mailto:nordklang2022@nordklangkorfestival.org) - Website: <https://nordklang.nordklangkorfestival.org>

**28th Béla Bartók International Choir Competition and Folklore Festival, Debrecen, Hungary, July 2022.** Contact: Fonix Event Organizing NP LLC.,

Email: [info@bbcc.hu](mailto:info@bbcc.hu) - Website: [www.bbcc.hu](http://www.bbcc.hu)

**2022 Choral Festival in Ireland with Rollo Dilworth, Prague, Czech Republic, 1-6 July 2022.** Contact:

Klconcerts, Email: [info@Klconcerts.com](mailto:info@Klconcerts.com) - Website: [www.Klconcerts.com](http://www.Klconcerts.com)

**15th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, Vienna, Austria, 1-6 July 2022.** Contact:

CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: [office@scfestival.org](mailto:office@scfestival.org) - Website: [www.scfestival.org](http://www.scfestival.org)

**12th World Choir Games, Gangneung, Gangwon, Korea (Democratic People's**

**Rep. of), 4-14 July 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>



**International Choral Kathaumixw, Powell River, Canada, 5-9 July 2022.** Contact: Powell River Academy of Music, Email: [info@kathaumixw.org](mailto:info@kathaumixw.org) - Website: [www.kathaumixw.org](http://www.kathaumixw.org)

**International Youth Music Festival I & Slovakia Folk, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 6-9 July 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**International Choir Festival InCanto Mediterraneo, Milazzo (Sicily), Italy, 10-16 July 2022.** Contact: Associazione Corale "Cantica Nova," Email: [festival@festivalincantomediterraneo.it](mailto:festival@festivalincantomediterraneo.it) - Website: [www.festivalincantomediterraneo.it](http://www.festivalincantomediterraneo.it)

**International Boys and Men's Choral Festival, Flagstaff, Arizona, USA, 12-19 July 2022.** Contact: IBMCF, Email: [IBMCF@internationalchoralfestival.com](mailto:IBMCF@internationalchoralfestival.com) - Website: [www.internationalchoralfestival.com](http://www.internationalchoralfestival.com)

**International Choral Festival of Missoula, Montana, USA, 13-16 July 2022.** Contact: International Choral Festival, Email: [info@choralfestival.org](mailto:info@choralfestival.org) - Website: [www.choralfestival.org](http://www.choralfestival.org)

**11th Musica Eterna Roma International Choir Festival and Competition, Italy, 16-20 July 2022.** Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**European Seminar for Young Choral Composers, Aosta, Italy, 17-24 July 2022.** Contact: FENIARCO, Email: [info@feniarco.it](mailto:info@feniarco.it) - Website: <https://www.feniarco.it/>

**Chanakkale International Choir Festival and Competition, Chanakkale, Turkey, 19-24 July 2022.** Contact: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Email: [info@canakkalekorofestivali.com](mailto:info@canakkalekorofestivali.com) - Website: <http://www.canakkalekorofestivali.com/>

**International Youth Music Festival II and Bratislava Cantat I, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 25-28 July 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**Leading Voices, Utrecht, Netherlands, 27-31 July 2022.** Contact: European Choral Association, Email: [info@leadingvoices.nl](mailto:info@leadingvoices.nl) - Website: <https://leadingvoices.nl>

**1st Classical Music Summer Festival, Vienna, Austria, 5-8 Aug 2022.** Contact: CONCERTS-AUSTRIA, Email: [office@concerts-austria.com](mailto:office@concerts-austria.com) - Website: <http://www.concerts-austria.com/summer-festival-vienna>

**Riga Sings, International Choir Competition and Imants Kokars Choral Award, Riga, Latvia, 17-21 Aug 2022.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Brighton International Festival of Choirs, Brighton, United Kingdom, 2-5 Sep 2022.** Contact: Brighton International Festival of Choirs, Email: [festival@brightonifc.com](mailto:festival@brightonifc.com) - Website: <https://www.brightonifc.com/>

**Trogir Music Week, Croatia, 4-9 Sep 2022.** Contact: Lacock Courses, Andrew van der Beek, Email: [avdb@lacock.org](mailto:avdb@lacock.org) - Website: [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org)

**ForEverYoung International Choral Festival, Budapest, Hungary, 8-11 Sep 2022.** Contact: ForEverYoung Choral Festival, Email: [info@fey-festival.com](mailto:info@fey-festival.com) - Website: <http://www.fey-festival.com/>

**ON STAGE in Lisbon, Portugal, 9-12 Sep 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**4th Kalamata International Choir Competition and Festival, Greece, 22-26 Sep 2022.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**10th International Choir Festival & Competition "Isola del Sole", Grado, Italy, 25-29 Sep 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Cracovia Music Festival 2021, Cracow, Poland, 28 Sep-2 Oct 2022.** Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [info@mrf-musicfestivals.com](mailto:info@mrf-musicfestivals.com) - Website: [www.mrf-musicfestivals.com](http://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com)

**Internationales Chorfest, Magdeburg, Germany, 5-9 Oct 2022.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Sing'n'Joy Bohol, Tagbilaran City, Bohol, Philippines, 5-9 Oct 2022.** Contact:

Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**Bratislava Cantat II, Slovak Republic, 6-9 Oct 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**Lago di Garda Music Festival, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2022.** Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [info@mrf-musicfestivals.com](mailto:info@mrf-musicfestivals.com) - Website: [www.mrf-musicfestivals.com](http://www.mrf-musicfestivals.com)

**Choral Workshops for International Oratorio choirs, Lake Garda, Italy, 13-16 Oct 2022.** Contact: MusikReisenFaszination Music Festivals, Email: [info@mrf-musicfestivals.com](mailto:info@mrf-musicfestivals.com) - Website: <http://choral-workshops.com>

**We Are Singing Ljubljana International Choral Festival 2022, Slovenia, 21-23 Oct 2022.** Contact: - Website: <https://www.wearesinging.org/festival-we-are-singing-ljubljana>

**10th Canta al Mar International Choral Festival, Calella, Barcelona, Spain, 21-24 Oct 2022.** Contact: Förderverein Interkultur, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**ON STAGE in Prague, Czech Republic, 10-13 Nov 2022.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 1-4 Dec 2022.** Contact: Bratislava Music Agency, Email: [info@choral-music.sk](mailto:info@choral-music.sk) - Website: [www.choral-music.sk](http://www.choral-music.sk)

**Sound Waves Linz International Choir Competition & Festival, Austria, 7-11 June 2023.** Contact: Interkultur Foundation, Email: [mail@interkultur.com](mailto:mail@interkultur.com) - Website: <https://www.interkultur.com/>

**2021 Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choir Festival, Oakland, California, USA, 9-15 July 2023.** Contact: Piedmont Choirs, Email: [info@goldengatefestival.org](mailto:info@goldengatefestival.org) - Website: [www.goldengatefestival.org](http://www.goldengatefestival.org)

**13th International Choir Competition, Miltenberg, Bavaria, Germany, July 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)

**20th EUROTREFF 2021, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 6-10 Sep 2023.** Contact: Arbeitskreis Musik in der Jugend AMJ, Email: [info@amj-musik.de](mailto:info@amj-musik.de) - Website: <http://www.eurotreff.amj-musik.de>

**In Canto sul Garda International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda & Arco, Italy, 13-17 Oct 2023.** Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**Adriatic Pearl International Choir Festival & Competition, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 27-31 Oct 2023.** Contact: Meeting Music, Email: [info@meeting-music.com](mailto:info@meeting-music.com) - Website: [www.meeting-music.com](http://www.meeting-music.com)

**World Symposium on Choral Music 2023-24, Doha, Qatar, 30 Dec 2023-5 Jan 2024.** Contact: IFCM Office, Email: [office@ifcm.net](mailto:office@ifcm.net) - Website: <https://www.wscm2023.com>







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